

2024 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 2

BY REPRESENTATIVE ECHOLS

ENERGY PRODUCTION: Urges and requests the United States Congress to enact reforms to federal permitting policies to accelerate deployment of new energy infrastructure

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the United States Congress to enact reforms to federal permitting  
3 policies to accelerate deployment of new energy infrastructure.

4 WHEREAS, Louisiana recognizes that abundant, resilient, and diversified domestic  
5 energy production in the United States enhances American national security, economic  
6 competitiveness, and energy independence; and

7 WHEREAS, environmental stewardship that keeps our air and water clean, protects  
8 public health, ensures biodiversity and species protection, and conserves public lands is a  
9 worthy goal that is important to achieve; and

10 WHEREAS, the excessively complex federal permitting and environmental review  
11 processes that have built up around America’s environmental laws – including the National  
12 Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the National  
13 Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), Clean Water Act (CWA), and dozens of other federal  
14 requirements – have grown to be so cumbersome that they often unnecessarily slow or  
15 prevent the construction of essential new energy infrastructure and therefore discourage  
16 domestic energy production without advancing the goals of these laws; and

17 WHEREAS, energy is produced in the United States at a much higher environmental  
18 standard than is typically the case in the countries from which energy is imported, so  
19 prevention of domestic energy production undermines environmental stewardship; and

20 WHEREAS, delays caused by permitting inefficiencies inhibit the building of all of  
21 the essential components of a low-cost, reliable, and modern energy infrastructure that is

1 needed to support economic competitiveness and domestic manufacturing, to enhance  
2 reliability and prevent blackouts, to lower costs for consumers and businesses, and to  
3 achieve the goals of America's environmental laws; and

4 WHEREAS, after nearly two decades of flat electricity demand, demand for  
5 electricity in the United States is projected to dramatically increase in the coming decades,  
6 requiring major increases in domestic energy production and a more than doubling of  
7 domestic electricity transmission grid capacity; and

8 WHEREAS, regulatory barriers today mean that more than two thousand gigawatts  
9 of energy production and storage, which accounts for more than the entire current American  
10 electricity capacity combined, are stuck in electricity interconnection queues and the average  
11 amount of time to interconnect new energy resources has nearly doubled from about two  
12 years to nearly four years; and

13 WHEREAS, the average time it takes to process an environmental impact statement  
14 under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for major infrastructure projects has  
15 risen to an excessive length of four-and-a-half years; and

16 WHEREAS, the United States is highly reliant on China and other countries that do  
17 not share our interests to mine and process critical minerals, with demand for some of these  
18 minerals potentially growing by more than forty times by 2040; and

19 WHEREAS, other developed nations that share our goals to protect the environment  
20 while producing abundant energy resources, such as Canada and Australia, have shown that  
21 they can permit new mines within two to three years instead of nearly ten years, as is often  
22 the case in the United States; and

23 WHEREAS, both linear infrastructure; such as pipelines and transmission lines; as  
24 well as energy generation infrastructure each face extraordinary and indefensible delays due  
25 to excessive litigation, inappropriate blocking of nationally important projects by  
26 unrepresentative and often radical groups that hold those projects hostage, and excessive use  
27 of our court system to hamstring worthy projects; and

28 WHEREAS, major delays in projects caused by inefficient permitting or over  
29 litigation can dramatically increase costs and make projects less viable, costing consumers,  
30 businesses, and taxpayers money and making our energy system less reliable; and

1           WHEREAS, unnecessary permitting and regulatory delays also increase American  
2 dependence on energy produced by foreign dictators and authoritarian regimes; and

3           WHEREAS, unnecessary permitting delays limit investments made in modernizing  
4 our nation’s infrastructure that would result in a more efficient energy system with reduced  
5 emissions and environmental impact; and

6           WHEREAS, overlapping federal permitting requirements lack the flexibility to allow  
7 for efforts that reflect the spirit and intent of traditional environmental laws by protecting  
8 human health and the environment instead of procedural compliance with outdated  
9 regulations; and

10          WHEREAS, failure to reform federal permitting laws is already resulting in fewer  
11 jobs, reduced security, and higher prices for Americans without providing additional benefits  
12 for the environment; and

13          WHEREAS, failing to reform these laws in the coming months will result in even  
14 greater limitations on our energy infrastructure, costing even more American jobs while  
15 raising costs for consumers and businesses and leaving America vulnerable to unreliability,  
16 blackouts, and resulting in severe harm to the American people.

17          THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the  
18 Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request federal legislators to work in good  
19 faith to enact legislation that reforms federal permitting and environmental review processes  
20 to promote economic and environmental stewardship by expediting the deployment of  
21 modern energy infrastructure.

22          BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that these reforms should enable faster and lower-  
23 cost construction of energy infrastructure of all kinds, without prejudice, including by  
24 considering steps to do the following:

- 25           (1) Limit excessive use of judicial processes to slow projects inappropriately.
- 26           (2) Prevent inappropriate usage of the Clean Water Act and other laws to hamstring  
27 the lawful building of linear energy infrastructure, such as pipelines and transmission lines.
- 28           (3) Enact reforms to plan, permit, and pay for the necessary build-out of electricity  
29 transmission infrastructure to support a more reliable energy grid that lowers costs for  
30 consumers and businesses.

1 (4) Enable the domestic build-out of the full array of modern energy technologies,  
2 including nuclear, emissions management, hydrogen, critical mineral mining and processing,  
3 and all other needs for a modern energy system.

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that these legislative reforms should also strive to  
5 ensure accountability for federal agencies conducting permitting and environmental review  
6 processes, including better data, more aggressive time lines, and permitting shot clocks.  
7 Additionally these legislative reforms must be accompanied by a redoubling of efforts to  
8 streamline federal regulations to support the efficient building of new energy infrastructure.

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that failure to act to update our federal permitting  
10 system to support building new energy infrastructure will further harm consumers, workers,  
11 and businesses, while making the United States less competitive and more vulnerable to both  
12 foreign adversaries and domestic outages.

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Congress must act with urgency in the coming  
14 months to fix our broken permitting system.

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the  
16 presiding officers of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Congress of the  
17 United States of America and to each member of the Louisiana congressional delegation.

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#### DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

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HR 2 Original

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