

# MODERNIZING NEPA FOR THE 21ST CENTURY



Signed into law nearly half a century ago, **the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) was intended to ensure that new development projects protect the environment.**<sup>1</sup> But over the years, the law has been increasingly misused to block infrastructure development and investments in key projects, including for natural gas, which have helped drive emissions down to their lowest levels in a generation. **The Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) efforts to cut red tape and improve the permitting and enforcement process will strengthen America's energy security and spur new infrastructure projects in all 50 states.**

## Saving Time and Resources

The NEPA process is often used as a tool to block development of all kinds — from natural gas and oil leasing to roads and bridges. Uncertainty around costs and timelines can make projects uneconomical and, without updating NEPA, many will never be built.

### COST OF NEPA RED TAPE

**5.8 years**<sup>2</sup>

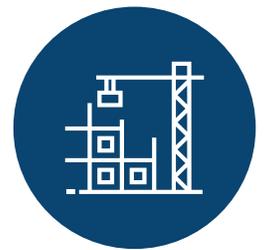
Average time to complete a review

**\$4.2M**<sup>3</sup>

Average cost to complete a review

## Building Energy and Infrastructure Development

NEPA reform will allow the efficient construction of critical infrastructure that supports lower-carbon energy options, like natural gas and renewables, as well as future clean-energy innovations. In fact, many of the “green” projects proposed by presidential candidates won't reach completion without streamlining environmental reviews.



## Better for the Environment

Reforming the NEPA process will allow businesses and federal agencies to deliver new infrastructure that:

- **Protects** the surrounding environment.
- **Increases** transportation efficiency.
- **Reduces emissions** through wind, solar and natural gas development.

## Better for Americans

The projects approved by a modernized NEPA process would improve the daily lives of Americans by:

- **Creating new job opportunities** related to infrastructure projects.
- **Increasing tax revenue and economic growth** in local communities.
- **Rebuilding our roads and bridges** and supporting energy infrastructure such as natural gas pipelines.

## Hundreds of Projects Delayed in the Last Decade by NEPA



### The Bayonne Bridge Raising project,

connecting New York and New Jersey, took more than 10 years from conception to completion and produced more than 20,000 pages of environmental reviews.



### The Seattle-Tacoma International Airport

**runway expansion** required 15 years of environmental reviews and four years to build.



### Spring Valley Wind Farm in Nevada,

proposed in 2003, was delayed for 7 years due to a time-consuming and bureaucratic NEPA process.

## Improving the Process

The intent of NEPA is to benefit the environment and future generations of Americans. But it shouldn't require billions of dollars to navigate red tape and decades of work-hours to comply with burdensome regulations. By modernizing NEPA reviews, agencies and businesses can move through permitting processes with confidence.



Interagency collaboration



Improved information management



Streamlined exclusion consideration

<sup>1</sup><https://www.epa.gov/nepa/what-national-environmental-policy-act>

<sup>2</sup><https://ceq.doe.gov/nepa-practice/eis-timelines.html>

<sup>3</sup><https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2016/03/f30/LLQR-March-2016.pdf>