

2025 Federal Grid and Permitting Legislative Landscape

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Rainey
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As the United States confronts unprecedented growth in electricity demand driven by artificial intelligence, data centers, and the reshoring of industrial manufacturing, there is a durable, bipartisan consensus emerging in Washington around the urgent need to modernize our nation's energy infrastructure.

Both Congress and key federal agencies are advancing a suite of pragmatic, market oriented policies focused on two critical pillars: streamlining the permitting process to unlock private investment and establishing robust guardrails to ensure grid reliability. This memo provides an overview of the key legislative and administrative actions shaping this new landscape.



Overall, the state of federal grid and permitting legislation in 2025 reflects significant bipartisan momentum but remains incomplete.

Congress has advanced several permitting reform and reliability bills through committees and even passed some measures in the House, yet most have not cleared both chambers. The Standardizing Permitting and Expediting Economic Development (SPEED) Act has emerged as the primary vehicle for comprehensive National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) reform, while the Streamlining Powerlines Essential to Electric Demand (SPEED) & Reliability Act represents the leading transmission permitting framework. At the same time, reliability-focused bills such as the Reliable Power Act (RPA) and the Guaranteeing Reliability through the Interconnection of Dispatchable (GRID) Power Act signal congressional recognition that grid stability must accompany clean energy growth. Agency rulemakings at the Department of Energy (DOE), Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), Department of the Treasury (Treasury), and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) are moving in parallel, meaning much of the near-term impact will come from administrative action even as Congress continues to negotiate larger legislative packages.



What Has Moved This Year (So Far)

There have been several positive developments in the permitting reform space in 2025, many in a bipartisan manner, creating space for future action.

NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) Permitting Reform (SPEED Act)

[The Standardizing Permitting and Expediting Economic Development \(SPEED\) Act](#) sponsored by Reps. Bruce Westerman (R-AR) and Jared Golden (D-ME) is a bipartisan bill that represents the key vehicle for permitting reform. It narrows NEPA scope, codifies lead-agency authority, limits remands, and shortens statutes of limitations. The goal: fewer do-overs, faster transmission and generation approvals.



SPEED & Reliability Act

[The Streamlining Powerlines Essential to Electric Demand \(SPEED\) and Reliability Act](#) is a transmission-focused permitting bill led by Reps. Andy Barr (R-KY) and Scott Peters (D-CA) in the House and Sen. John Hickenlooper (D-CO) in the Senate. The bill establishes a single FERC-led review process for high-voltage, multi-state transmission lines. It sets a 2-year permitting timeline and allows concurrent state and federal review, potentially cutting permitting time by five years.

Reliability + Interconnection (“GRID Power Act”)

[The Guaranteeing Reliability through the Interconnection of Dispatchable \(GRID\) Power Act](#), led by Rep. Troy Balderson (R-OH) in the House and Sens. John Hoeven (R-ND) and Todd Young (R-IN) is a House-passed bill that lets grid operators fast-track dispatchable resources that address reliability gaps, reducing interconnection queue times.

Agency Actions

The Department of Energy (DOE) launched an [RFI](#) to identify large-scale generation/transmission projects for AI, data center, and industrial loads. Treasury, FERC, and CEQ continue rulemakings to implement IRA and IIJA programs.

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Nominations

Laura Swett and David LaCerte have both been approved by the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee but [await floor votes](#); a full Commission is key for transmission planning and queue reform rules to move forward. Recent Senate procedural reforms should expedite floor consideration.





Reliability and Infrastructure Policies

Building on momentum in legislation, there are a number of key bills ready for future action. Recently, the House Energy and Commerce markup advanced a package of reliability-oriented bills, discussed below.

Reliable Power Act ([H.R. 3616](#))

The Reliable Power Act led by Rep. Troy Balderson (R-OH) gives the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) authority to flag federal regulations that would harm bulk-power reliability and require agencies to address Electric Reliability Organization (ERO) concerns.

Power Plant Reliability Act ([H.R. 3632](#))

The Power Plant Reliability Act led by Rep. Morgan Griffith (R-VA) requires 5-year notice of retirements, allows challenges if retirements risk reliability.

State Energy Accountability + Planning Bills ([H.R. 3157](#), [H.R. 3628](#))

The State Energy Accountability Act led by Rep. Nick Langworthy and the State Planning for Reliability and Affordability Act led by Rep. Gabe Evans (R-CO) direct states and utilities to integrate 10-year reliability planning into clean energy and integrated resource plan (IRP) decisions.

Electric Supply Chain Act ([H.R. 3638](#))

The Electric Supply Chain Act led by Rep. Rob Latta (R-OH) directs the Department of Energy (DOE) to assess and mitigate grid component supply chain vulnerabilities.

Hydropower Relicensing Transparency ([H.R. 3657](#))

The Hydropower Relicensing Transparency Act led by Rep. Kim Schrier (D-WA) forces reporting on hydropower relicensing delays to preserve existing baseload.



Where Permitting Stands

The key to unlocking American energy dominance is permitting reform to limit the ability of litigation to slow development, a streamlined bureaucratic process and better interagency coordination. There have been several positive steps over the past year.

SPEED Act is the main congressional vehicle: the legislation limits litigation windows (150 days), clarifies NEPA's procedural role, and locks prior environmental findings to prevent serial reviews.

SPEED & Reliability Act would create a clear federal backstop for high-impact transmission lines, combining DOE and FERC processes into one and setting hard permitting deadlines.

Interagency Efforts: Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Phase 2 NEPA rule and DOE's transmission coordination programs align with SPEED's goals, potentially shortening permit and interconnect timelines if enacted.



What Could Come and What To Do

More Power Legislation Being Developed

New bills are forthcoming that will address existing power constraints, facilitate speed to market solutions, and support long term affordability challenges while prioritizing expansion and capacity additions of the power grid.

Reliability Guardrails

Bills requiring notice and review of retirements and state planning integration could slow disorderly thermal exits, supporting reserve margins.

Supply Chain Awareness

Congressional and DOE focus on critical components, conductors, and transformers highlights that “steel in the ground” depends on parts availability as much as permits.

Action Items

Engage DOE’s RFI and agency processes now to position shovel-ready gen/transmission projects; support clear, technology-neutral reliability criteria to keep fast-track authority credible.





**Rainey
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info@raineycenter.org
raineycenter.org

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