



Ms. Brenda Mallory
Chair, Council on Environmental Quality
730 Jackson Place
Washington, D.C. 20506

Chair Mallory,

Last Congress, the New Democrat Coalition was proud to work with the administration to fight climate change, bring back American manufacturing, and revitalize the American workforce through the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and the bipartisan CHIPS and Science Act. The United States is going through a new industrial revolution brought about by a commitment shared by New Democrats and President Biden to good-paying jobs, revitalizing the manufacturing base, and a clean energy economy.

This Congress, we are focused on implementing these laws in a timely fashion. Climate change does not wait for permits or siting authorities, and the negative impacts of climate change are being felt in every corner of the country. The administration has already taken thoughtful steps towards meeting our energy and infrastructure needs by rolling out the Federal Infrastructure Permitting Dashboard and moving to implement the Biden-Harris Permitting Action Plan. We in Congress have also invested \$1 billion through the Inflation Reduction Act to improve permitting efficiencies, but more must be done. By 2050, we must triple the size of the power grid in order to meet future demand and our clean energy goals. We currently have enough wind, solar, and storage projects in the pipeline to power nearly 85% of our economy, but 80% of these projects could be canceled due to insufficient transmission capacity. It can take 7-10 years to finalize a geothermal project and more than a decade to build interstate transmission lines and offshore wind facilities. Our country has done big things in the past; we mobilized American ingenuity and industry to win two world wars, put a man on the moon, and invented the semiconductor. The climate crisis challenges us with that same sense of urgency to marshal innovations in science and industry again, and we must tackle federal barriers to meeting that challenge.

We applaud the administration's efforts to use Section 216(h) of the Federal Power Act to bolster the U.S. Department of Energy's authority in taking the lead on coordinating federal authorizations and environmental reviews to site more electric transmission lines. This crucial authority is part of a multilayered solution, alongside legislative action, to establish American clean energy security in the 21st century green economy, and we look forward to a strong final Memorandum of Understanding that enables the Administration to better coordinate federal



reviews and authorizations for proposed electric transmission facilities. Section 216(h) authority is only part of the solution, however, and New Democrats look forward to leading bipartisan efforts in Congress to address barriers to clean energy deployment. Our communities cannot wait; they have already experienced brownouts and blackouts from unreliable energy grids, extreme weather events like tornadoes and superstorm hurricanes, and pollution's deadly health effects, like asthma or cancer. As discussions develop on reforming permitting processes and updating governance for transmission siting authorities, we look forward to working with the Administration and all partners to achieve true bipartisan permitting reform that ensures robust community input, lowers barriers to clean energy, and delivers the outcomes we need to lower energy costs and achieve climate justice.

Sincerely,

Rep. Scott Peters
Chair, New Democrat Coalition Climate
Change and Clean Energy Task Force

Rep. Sean Casten
Vice Chair, New Democrat Coalition Climate
Change and Clean Energy Task Force

Rep. Susan Wild
Vice Chair, New Democrat Coalition Climate
Change and Clean Energy Task Force

Rep. Eric Sorensen
Vice Chair, New Democrat Coalition Climate
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