

FRAMEWORK TO ACHIEVE ENERGY INDEPENDENCE, SECURITY, & AFFORDABILITY



New Dem Environment, Climate, & Clean Energy Working Group

I. Introduction

The New Democrat Coalition recognizes the need and is committed to lead in advancing legislation that enhances American energy independence, lowers energy bills, and grows our economy. Rather than follow Congressional Republican efforts that undermine investments in energy, tax or delay projects for political reasons, or eliminate billions in private investment and millions in good-paying jobs, our efforts will build on our bipartisan work in recent years to unleash American energy through unprecedented investments and cutting red tape.

To meet the moment, America needs to build infrastructure faster and more cost-effectively to lower energy bills, keep the lights on, and power economic opportunity. Tax, energy, and environmental policy should all recognize that we can build the future we need efficiently, sustainably, and to meet future needs. Energy demand is growing, particularly due to a rise in manufacturing and increased processing power required by artificial intelligence. This booming demand and rising prices threaten Americans with blackouts, brownouts, and a lower quality of life. To counter this, we believe that energy solutions must value speed, community buy-in, and meet economic needs.

Last Congress, New Dems endorsed [six key priorities](#) to build out energy infrastructure to get power where it is needed. This Congress, we laid out our [policy platform](#) to boost economic growth, create healthy and safe communities, and ensure strong national security. American energy development is key to fueling our economy, enhancing the resiliency of our communities, and making sure that our supply chains and infrastructure are secure.

II. New Dem Principles

1. Unleash the **full breadth** of **American energy prowess**
 - a. Promote economic growth;
 - b. Ensure Americans can afford their energy bills; and
 - c. Responsibly transition to a more efficient, cleaner and healthier society.
2. Enhance **energy independence, resiliency, and security** by **bolstering American supply chains and the grid**
 - a. Promote community energy efficiency;
 - b. Enhance our industries against foreign competition; and
 - c. Keep the lights on and power moving wherever Americans need it.

3. **Improve environmental review efficiency**

- a. Be efficient and fast, making sure we build the infrastructure we need;
- b. Value community engagement without compromising our ability to get things done; and
- c. Fuel our economic competitiveness, opportunity, and growth.

III. Goals

- **Sustain economic growth** by bringing more megawatts of power online, building more miles of transmission infrastructure, and getting more projects through environmental review;
- **Quickly and safely connect new power generation onto the energy grid** to enhance grid security, resiliency, and get energy to where it is needed;
- **Make sure energy is abundant and cheap at home**, and competitive against foreign energy in overseas markets; and
- **Create a new ecosystem of family-sustaining jobs.**

IV. Policy Priorities

1. **Unleash the full breadth of American energy prowess.**

- a. **Defend clean energy tax credits** that create jobs, expand domestic manufacturing, drive innovation, and lower energy bills.
- b. **Remove tax incentives for coal**, including additions to the Advanced Manufacturing Production Credit.
- c. **Remove arbitrary barriers for offshore wind** such as the Jan. 20, 2025 Presidential Memorandum that stops all offshore wind permitting and prohibits future lease sales.
- d. **Ensure an equal playing field for all forms of energy**, for example, by lowering fees for solar and wind energy to match lower rates for oil and coal.
- e. **Maintain long-standing and durable regulations on fugitive methane emissions** to reduce waste, make American industry cleaner, and enhance our global competitiveness.
- f. **Invest in biofuels**, like sustainable aviation fuels, to lower costs at the pump for consumers, grow markets for American farmers, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

2. **Enhance energy independence, resiliency, and security by bolstering American supply chains and the grid.**

- a. **Modernize mining laws and responsibly develop American critical minerals.** Modifications should accelerate mineral production and recycling across the supply chain and provide greater certainty for project sponsors, while upholding strong environmental, labor, safety, Tribal consultation, and community engagement standards.
- b. **Remove sourcing requirements on renewable energy** that are burdensome, impossible to follow in practice, and increase energy costs while eliminating projects and jobs.
- c. **Establish minimum levels of energy transfer capabilities** between Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Order 1000 planning regions by directing FERC to assess the existing transfer capacity and requiring each region to coordinate with its neighbors to plan for the required interregional transmission.

- d. **Improve interregional and interstate electric transmission capacity and ensure an equal playing field for energy transportation** by ensuring that the siting and permitting process for transmission and the grid is on par with pipeline and liquified natural gas (LNG) development. Congress should consider giving FERC exclusive siting authority for interstate lines or lines in the national interest.
- e. **Modernize American nuclear power** and make it easier to develop advanced nuclear reactors by establishing an independent organization to manage the back end of the nuclear fuel cycle, provide for a collaborative siting process for nuclear waste facilities, and ensure adequate and reliable funding for managing nuclear waste.
- f. **Provide an investment tax credit of 30% for regionally significant transmission projects**, which will unlock energy deployment, improve grid resiliency, and reduce costs to consumers.

3. **Improve environmental review efficiency.**

- a. **Replace outdated paper systems with a centralized, cloud-based platform for all permitting processes.** With digital permitting, agencies can process applications faster and collaborate more efficiently, cutting down approval timelines.
- b. **Provide for pre-qualifications of projects where greenhouse gas reductions have the highest chance potential** and where projects don't cause other environmental harms, such as projects that enhance energy grid resiliency, upgrade existing infrastructure with greater transmission capacity, are on pre-approved federal lands with low environmental sensitivity, or are covered by categorical exclusions.
- c. **Ensure that Federal agencies are properly staffed** to effectively enforce the law. While reforms to process are necessary, without trained staff to handle the increasing volume of permit applications there will be delays to project review and approval.
- d. **Increase cross-agency standardization for programmatic reviews** through use of tools such as common project-tiering.
- e. **Create frameworks and incentives for early, affirmative public engagement** in infrastructure planning, siting, and permitting to build local community support and ensure shared benefits.
- f. **Expedite projects on previously developed areas** through use of categorical exclusions or environmental assessments on already disturbed areas.
- g. **Accelerate agency reviews** through the use of shot-clocks for projects that strengthen the electric grid, specifically by requiring reviews to begin within a certain timeframe after receipt of a completed project proposal.

V. Next Steps

The New Democrat Coalition looks forward to engaging in discussions on related topics including agency implementation and accelerating the build out of a clean energy grid.