

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Natural Resources
Washington, DC 20515

September 9, 2022

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steny Hoyer
Majority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-107, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader Hoyer:

The permitting and public notice and comment provisions mandated by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) are among the only tools local communities have to force careful review of federal projects that may have serious, long-term, environmental, and public health consequences in those communities. Congress should continue to provide increased funding to assist federal agencies in completing the NEPA process but ***attempts to short-circuit or undermine the law in the name of “reform” must be opposed.***

According to media reports, there is agreement to advance a series of anti-environmental and anti-environmental justice provisions through the House, at the behest of the American Petroleum Institute (API). These destructive provisions will allow polluting manufacturing and energy development projects to be rushed through before the families who are forced to live near them are even aware of the plans.

The proposed legislation would restrict public access to the courts to seek remedies against illegal project development; place arbitrary limits on the amount of time the public is given to comment on polluting projects; and curtail public input, environmental review, and government accountability. Additionally, the API plan would require a certain number of harmful fossil fuel projects to be designated as “projects of strategic national importance” to receive priority federal support, assistance, and expedited environmental review. These permitting “reforms” would weaken other important public health protections, including the Clean Water Act and more.

We remain deeply concerned that these serious and detrimental permitting provisions will significantly and disproportionately impact low-income communities, indigenous communities, and communities of color. The inclusion of these provisions in a continuing resolution, or any other must-pass legislation, would silence the voices of frontline and environmental justice communities by insulating them from scrutiny. Such a move would force Members to choose between protecting EJ communities from further pollution or funding the government.

We urge you to ensure that these provisions are kept out of a continuing resolution or any other must-pass legislation this year.

Sincerely,



Raúl M. Grijalva
Chair
House Committee on Natural Resources



Alan Lowenthal
Chair
Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources



Katie Porter
Chair
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations



Ed Case
Member of Congress



Grace Napolitano
Member of Congress



Melanie A. Stansbury
Member of Congress



Betty McCollum
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Jared Huffman
Chair
Subcommittee on Water, Oceans, and Wildlife



Joe Neguse
Chair
Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests,
and Public Lands



A. Donald McEachin
Member of Congress



Nydia Velázquez
Chair
Committee on Small Business



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress



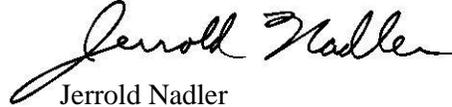
Darren Soto
Member of Congress



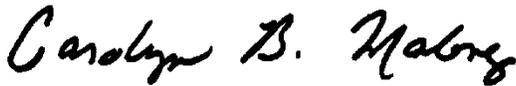
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Member of Congress



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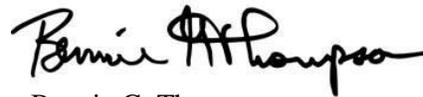


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Committee on Veterans Affairs



Adam Smith
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Committee on Armed Services

/s/ Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Chair
Committee on Education and Labor



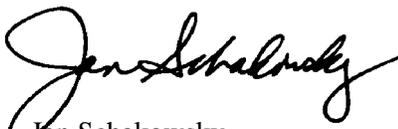
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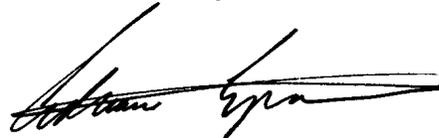
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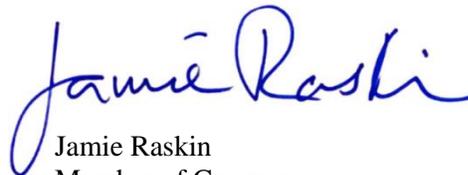
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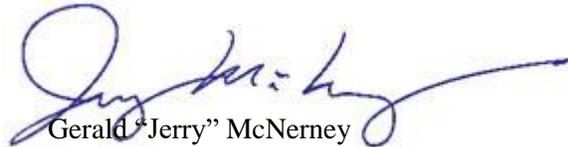
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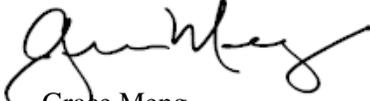
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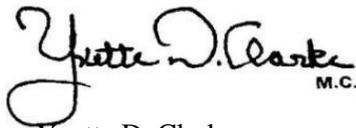
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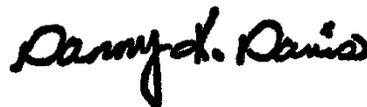
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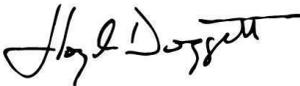
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