



March 28, 2023

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Speaker  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries  
Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

**AGC KEY VOTE: VOTE “YES” ON H.R. 1 – THE LOWER ENERGY COSTS ACT**

Dear Speaker McCarthy and Minority Leader Jeffries,

On behalf of the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC) – the leading construction association representing America’s top general contractors and specialty-contracting firms in every state – I write in support of *The Lower Energy Costs Act*, H.R. 1. **AGC urges all representatives to vote “YES” on H.R. 1 and will KEY VOTE final passage for the education of its 27,000 member companies.**

Our nation faces many challenges that require the delivery of timely infrastructure projects to help address them. But waiting years just to start construction will only undermine any efforts to build as:

- The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is the [most frequently litigated](#) federal environmental statute and lawsuits stemming from it can delay [infrastructure projects](#) for years on end;
- Transmission lines can take as long as [14 years](#) to permit; and
- [Fossil fuels](#) and [renewable energy](#) projects alike can also take years to obtain approvals.

*The Lower Energy Costs Act* sets forth a host of reforms that will help deter unwarranted litigation and mitigate permitting review delays at federal agencies so our nation can build for the future. For example, the legislation would require prospective plaintiffs to participate in the NEPA review process before filing suit and shortens the statute of limitations for case filing to 120 days. These improvements will help bring interested parties to the table during the review process so their concerns may be addressed then rather than after the completion of federal permitting and review decisions. In addition, the bill provides for more federal agency transparency and accountability by requiring them to report to Congress on not only when they miss critical deadlines, but also why they did so. Clearly defining the parameters for litigation and agency review will not diminish environmental quality or outcomes. Federal agencies still have the same obligation to comply with the letter of the law for environmental protection and federal courts will hold them to it.

*The Lower Energy Costs Act* will also help lower energy costs. The price of fuel has [driven up costs](#) for the construction industry and project costs nationwide. Construction companies see increased costs in delivering equipment and materials to jobsites and hauling away dirt, debris, and equipment. Likewise, construction workers themselves feel the pain with commuting to job sites – this can be especially challenging for jobs in rural areas where workers have long commutes.

While H.R. 1 does not include reforms to several key federal environmental permitting and review processes and statutes, it does represent a significant step forward to advance America’s commitment to build today to help ensure a better tomorrow. For these reasons, AGC urges representatives to vote “YES” on final passage of H.R. 1.

Sincerely,

James V. Christianson  
Vice President, Government Relations

**Cc: Members of the U.S. Representatives**