

American Conservation Coalition Action

May 5, 2025

The Honorable Bruce Westerman
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources
U.S. House of Representatives
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Westerman:

On behalf of the American Conservation Coalition Action (ACC Action) and our 75,000 young leaders across the country, I write to express strong support for provisions in the House Committee on Natural Resources Reconciliation Committee Print that would streamline permitting processes for clean American energy and expand access to domestic geothermal energy and critical minerals. Even though this is not the perfect path forward to making the changes needed to secure America's energy future, we are happy to see the Committee make progress and look forward to a more substantial bipartisan effort in the future.

It's no secret that America is at a crossroads on energy. As we compete to win the AI race and revive domestic manufacturing, electricity demand is surging—projected to grow nearly 16% by 2029, with an annual growth rate of 3% over the next five years. Meeting that demand will require six times our current planning and construction of generation and transmission infrastructure. Yet, average permitting timelines hover around four years, with many projects taking a decade or more. To meet demand, reduce emissions, and secure American energy dominance, we must let America build. The reforms outlined in Section 80151 are a welcome step in the right direction.

At the same time, China continues to dominate critical mineral supply chains, controlling nearly 70% of production and 90% of processing of global rare earth elements. This isn't just a national security threat—it's also a threat to the health and safety of people and our planet. With little to no labor or environmental standards, it is bad policy to cede these supply chains to China. Instead, we should work to unlock our resources here at home, where we have some of the highest environmental standards. Sections 80131 and 80132, which aim to unlock some of these resources, are a welcome step forward.

Additionally, ACC Action is excited to see Section 80111, which recognizes geothermal energy as a critical tool in our toolbox to secure American energy dominance. With the potential for next-generation geothermal energy to provide up to 300 GW of clean, firm, home-grown power by 2050, unleashing this energy source is common sense.

While these provisions are an important step toward securing America's energy future, more work remains. Comprehensive permitting and judicial review reform will be essential to fully address the

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barriers facing energy and critical mineral development in the United States. We are grateful for your leadership in advancing some reforms through the reconciliation process and look forward to working with you and the Committee to enact additional measures during the 119th Congress needed to achieve American energy dominance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Barnard", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Chris Barnard
President
American Conservation Coalition Action

