



May 2, 2025

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

Dear Chairman Westerman:

President Trump and Congress were elected with a clear mandate to unleash American energy. After four years of hostilities by the Biden Administration, including restricting federal onshore oil and natural gas leasing, limiting permitting, and threatening projects, Americans decided it was time to put the energy beneath our feet to work. We have the oil and natural gas resources necessary to independently power our modern economy, from our homes, phones, and cars, to the future yet to be imagined with the power of artificial intelligence.

Today, Congress has a unique opportunity through the budget reconciliation process to advance legislation that carries out that mandate. Western Energy Alliance wholeheartedly supports the Committee Print released by the House Natural Resources Committee to accompany the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2025 (H. Con. Res.14).

Working with a vibrant membership base for over 50 years, Western Energy Alliance stands as a credible leader, advocate, and champion of independent oil and natural gas companies in the West. Our expert staff, active committees, and committed board members form a collaborative and welcoming community of professionals dedicated to abundant, affordable energy and a high quality of life for all. Most independent producers are small businesses, with an average of fourteen employees.

In 2022 when Congress last utilized the reconciliation process, it culminated in the inaptly named Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). The law included numerous provisions targeting oil and natural gas, intentionally designed to decrease American production and increase costs for consumers. The few provisions in the law intended by then-Senator Joe Manchin to support federal onshore leasing were promptly abused by Biden officials in their implementation.

In an almost complete reversal, the Committee's provisions would eliminate the damage caused by the Biden administration and enable the Department of the Interior to enact President Trump's energy dominance vision. We're pleased to see so many good ideas included in the reconciliation bill to advance American oil and natural gas production, such as:

- Enabling commingling of production is one of the quickest ways to increase production onshore. Many projects in the West have been held up for years by the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) failure to approve the commingling of federal and nonfederal oil and natural gas in consolidated projects, even though today's metering equipment enables accurate measurement for royalty calculations. With the bill, producers can consolidate facilities thereby reducing the number of well pads and impact on the land while still accurately calculating federal royalties.

- Removing the need for a federal permit for wells on nonfederal lands is perhaps equally important for quickly enabling more production. With two- to three-mile laterals, horizontal wellbores may touch small pockets of federal minerals underground. By reducing the need for a federal permit when only a small amount of federal minerals are traversed, it frees BLM from extra paperwork while still ensuring the American taxpayer receives the revenue. This provision is particularly necessary in North Dakota, where access to the energy that the state and private citizens own is often blocked for years by unnecessary federal process.
- Completing National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis in a reasonable amount of time. By letting companies pay for their NEPA analysis, the bill sensibly relieves the government of the cost and time of the analysis, while still enabling government oversight. Removing the ability of unaccountable groups to sue clears one of the largest impediments to getting projects done in a timely manner.
- Requiring obstructionist groups to pay a fee when they protest leases would finally hold them responsible for a tiny fraction of the billions of dollars of economic activity they stop with their constant protests and litigation. It is appropriate and equitable for these otherwise unaccountable groups to pay for the burden they place on the government and for constantly preventing projects that create jobs and federal revenue.
- Making the federal government more efficient, such as by establishing a permit-by-rule system. By enabling the timely approval of routine permits that meet stringent requirements, BLM could spend less time pushing redundant paperwork and more time actively managing the land. Likewise, setting a four-year term for drilling permits eliminates the need for BLM to revisit them after two years, a needless red tape exercise.
- Clarifying quarterly lease sales prevents future administrations from issuing a ban on leasing, as President Biden did by unlawful decree as well as by bureaucratic inertia.
- Overturning five Biden resource management plans that locked away millions of acres of lands appropriate for oil, natural gas, and coal development at the behest of the environmental left to keep them in the ground.

Americans can wait no longer. They want lawmakers to send a bill to President Trump that secures our energy security for decades to come. The House reconciliation bill includes many important measures that would break down burdensome barriers, protect the environment, and reduce energy costs.

Chairman Westerman, we appreciate your enduring work on this comprehensive package as well as the efforts of your committee members and staff. Thank you for your leadership on these issues. Please lean on the Alliance to help Congress get this bill passed so that the American producer can deliver more oil and natural gas and bring down energy costs for all.

Sincerely,



Melissa Simpson  
President