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September 9, 2025

Congressman Bruce Westerman, Chairman
House Committee on Natural Resources
Submitted via email

Re: Support for the Standardizing Permitting and Expediting Economic Development (SPEED Act)

Dear Chairman Westerman:

The Alaska Miners Association (AMA) writes to provide its support for the Standardizing Permitting and Expediting Economic Development (SPEED Act). We sincerely appreciate you and Congressman Golden's introduction of this bipartisan bill aimed to improve America's permitting process.

AMA is a professional membership trade organization established in 1939 to represent the mining industry in Alaska. We are composed of more than 1,400 members that come from eight statewide branches: Anchorage, Denali, Fairbanks, Haines, Juneau, Kenai, Ketchikan/Prince of Wales, and Nome. Our members include individual prospectors, geologists, engineers, suction dredge miners, small family mines, junior mining companies, and major mining companies, Alaska Native Corporations, and the contracting sector that supports Alaska's mining industry.

Alaska's miners have long faced significant challenges in permitting mining projects and expansions of existing operations. As referenced in a recent study, U.S. mine development timelines are second to last in the world. A 29-year process to open a mine, at a time when our nation desperately needs mineral independence, is unacceptable and we applaud the Committee's efforts to address this flawed process.

The SPEED Act contains important provisions that address many of AMA's concerns, including, but not limited to:

- Prevents duplicative reviews at both the state and federal levels.
- Prohibits agencies from interjecting political preferences into NEPA reviews by clarifying that alternatives included in environmental documents must meet the purpose and need of the proposed action.
- Limits comments from cooperating agencies to their specific areas of jurisdiction and gives agencies discretion in considering new scientific research. This ensures that only pertinent information is considered, improving timelines, maintaining integrity, and bring more certainty to the process.
- Limits the scope of environmental review with specifics that environmental reviews for EAs and EISs must focus only on effects that are proximately caused by the project itself and may not include effects that are speculative or separate in place and time. This reform provides clarity to

agencies and the public, reduces page counts so that stakeholders can meaningfully engage, and limits litigation.

- Establishes timelines and sideboards for judicial review under NEPA, codifying key pieces of the Supreme Court's decision in *Seven County Infrastructure Coalition v. Eagle County, Colorado* (Seven County).
- Establishes sideboards so that plaintiffs have no more than 150 days to file a civil action against a final agency action. In addition, the judicial review provisions require plaintiffs to have standing, requiring that one must have submitted a comment on an action, and the comment must be "unique and substantive," and not a form letter. Plaintiffs must prove that they would suffer direct harm if their comments were not addressed. These provisions ensure that agencies have the opportunity to correct NEPA deficiencies before litigation and that claims are filed by those truly impacted by the underlying action and deserve special considerations.
- Requires courts to resolve NEPA-related cases within 180 days and NEPA-related appeals within 60 days. This provision reduces the time spent in litigation, thereby reducing delays and cost overruns.

It is high time to enact meaningful permitting and litigation reform that will establish efficient permitting processes and predictable timelines to bring new mineral production online in America.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if AMA can provide any further information about its regulatory challenges and our support for the SPEED Act.

Sincerely,



Deantha Skibinski
Executive Director