



American Exploration & Production Council's 2025 Energy Policy Blueprint

This Congress and administration have an exciting opportunity to enact durable reforms that will unlock our country's full energy potential. Reforms are needed across the supply chain to meet an ever-increasing demand, while providing ever more affordable, reliable, and cleaner sources of fuel. Accomplishing this means greater domestic energy independence and global energy stability, while providing more local jobs, greater economic growth, and lower costs.

The AXPC's 2025 Energy Policy Blueprint is a resource for the 119th Congress and the Trump Administration, offering commonsense solutions that address some of the most pressing issues facing American energy. We look forward to working to enact a pro-American energy agenda.

Re-Open Federal Lands for Energy Production

Topline

The Trump administration should restore leasing for new oil and natural gas production on federal lands as required by statute. Additionally, policymakers should reconsider policies and burdensome regulations that are putting undue roadblocks in front of developing taxpayer-owned energy resources, which only worsens Americans' concerns about energy prices.

- **Reverse Record Low Leasing:** Oil and gas development cannot happen without leases, yet even with growing demand for oil and natural gas, the last administration leased a record low amount of acres. At times, the previous administration deferred or even canceled lease sales in defiance of Congressional mandates in statute or court decisions. Development on federal lands is an essential part of US oil and natural gas production. In fact, if oil and gas produced from onshore Federal Lands were a "country," it would be the 14th largest producer of oil in the world and 18th largest producer of natural gas in the world. However, leasing slowed drastically under the Biden administration, which onshore issued only 69,265 acres in FY 2024, 91,792 acres in FY 2023, 74,758 acres in FY 2022, and zero acres in FY 2021. For context:
 - The two Obama administrations averaged 1.35 million acres per year.
 - The first Trump administration averaged 1.65 million acres per year.
- **It's Not Either/Or:** The American people deserve both responsible management of federal lands and energy production. We can be leaders in energy production while also being good stewards of the environment and recreational land at the same time.
- **Bypassing Congressional Approval:** Federal lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) are supposed to be used for the economic benefit of the taxpayer who owns them, but damaging rules like the BLM's so-called Conservation and Landscape Health Rule is nothing more than an attempt to bypass Congress and prioritize non-use of these lands, preventing responsible mineral development.

Policy Fixes

- Enact a more prescriptive mandatory onshore leasing program that reduces discretion to arbitrarily/politically forgo offering lands that were made available for leasing through the extensive public-stakeholder process.
 - For example, Sen. Steve Daines' (R-MT) [Supporting Made in America Energy Act \(S.460\)](#) requires the Department of the Interior to hold regular oil and gas lease sales on federal lands and waters for all nominated acreage eligible under the approved state plan. The bill mandates four annual onshore lease sales in each of the key energy-producing states and two annual offshore lease sales in the Gulf of America and Alaska's Cook Inlet.
- Enact reforms to ensure predictable permitting for the development of oil and natural gas on federal lands and promote equitable land management when the Federal government has only a minority interest.
- Repeal BLM's Conservation and Landscape Health Rule through the administrative process.

Protect Americans' Wallets through Tax & Fiscal Policies

Topline

In the competitive global energy marketplace, American-made energy can out-compete anyone; we just need policies that encourage production, rather than enact self-imposed economic headwinds.

- **Protect Americans from Energy Tax Hikes:** In an era of persistent inflation, we should make it easier, not harder, to responsibly produce energy here at home. If greater taxes, fees, tariffs, or other deterrent fiscal policies are put on the American energy industry, it would limit capital investment, reduce production, impact local jobs, and hurt American families with higher costs.

Policy Fixes

- **Pass Rep. Mike Carey (OH-14) and Rep. Vicente Gonzalez's (TX-34) [Promoting Domestic Energy Production Act \(H.R.662\)](#) and Sen. James Lankford's (R-OK) companion bill (S. 224).**
 - These bills would fix the disparate tax treatment created by the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and allow for the immediate deduction of intangible drilling costs (IDCs) under the corporate alternative minimum tax (CAMT). This means more jobs, more production, and lower energy costs.
- **Maintain the current corporate tax rate to ensure that American companies can thrive in a competitive global marketplace.**

Fix Regulations, Especially on Methane

Topline

*Through continuous innovation, the US upstream oil and gas industry has led the way in emission reductions. The upstream oil and natural gas industry has reduced its methane intensity by **61% and total methane emissions by 42% since 2015**. In order to continue responsibly lowering emissions while producing the energy America and the world needs, we need smart, workable regulations, especially when it comes to methane. Burdensome regulations, like parts of the methane rule or the IRA's methane tax, are damaging to our economy and must be reconsidered.*

- **American Technological Ingenuity:** The Trump administration should enact pragmatic regulations that support American ingenuity and encourage innovation and flexibility. Technology is our greatest asset; the US leads the world in the development of technologies and approaches to detect and mitigate methane emissions. Instead, command-and-control regulations from the Biden Administration are restricting innovation and hindering the development and broad adoption of more efficient methane emission reduction technologies.
- **Implement Practical Rules:** Regulations should be workable and implementable in the real world; and should work cohesively together, while balancing the cost with the benefits.
- **Federal-State Alignment:** We must work to avoid creating duplicative and overlapping regulatory regimes at both federal and state levels, and work more collaboratively with states who are often the primary point of implementing regulations.
- **Methane Tax:** The methane tax is a punitive fee that raises costs on American energy production and ignores significant investment by producers to identify, mitigate, and reduce U.S. emissions, and it should be repealed.

- **Co-Sponsor and Pass Rep. August Pfluger's (TX-11) [Natural Gas Tax Repeal Act \(H.R. 313\)](#) and Sen. Ted Cruz's (R-TX) companion bill ([S.143](#))**
- Support reconsideration of EPA's Methane Rule (OOOOb/c) and direct EPA to work with states and industry to arrive at final rules that are actually implementable and achieve the intended purpose without needlessly compromising state programs and the responsible production of U.S. oil and natural gas.
- Support reconsideration of EPA's GHG Reporting Rule Revisions (Subpart W) to remove inappropriate burdens, biased methodologies, and limits on use of alternative technologies that could improve the accuracy of emissions inventories.

Promote the Export of American Energy

Topline

Our energy resources have become one of the most effective strategic tools to enhance national security, limit geopolitical uncertainty, reduce global emissions, and keep prices low and stable at home. Despite these clear benefits, U.S. LNG has recently faced significant political and policy headwinds, questioning the reliability of America as a global supplier. The Trump administration recently ended the LNG export approval pause, and now is the time to regularly approve LNG projects.

- **Supports Lower Energy Prices:** American energy exports support lower prices both domestically and globally. We have more than enough reserves to meet domestic demand and supply international partners, while keeping prices low and stable here at home.
- **U.S. LNG Provides Geopolitical Leverage:** According to the Energy Information Administration (EIA), natural gas demand is going to increase by 2050. That demand will be either met by the U.S. or our adversaries.
- **Environmental Benefit:** U.S. LNG is cleaner than foreign sources of natural gas or other higher carbon fuels in international markets like Europe and Asia. As we work towards reducing emissions, if U.S. LNG is not expanding into international markets, foreign countries will fill the void by using higher-carbon fuels.

Policy Fixes

- **The Trump administration is off to an encouraging start after lifting the prior administration's LNG export approval pause. The Trump administration should use U.S. LNG as leverage on the world stage to help our allies and prevent our adversaries from extending their influence.**

Modernize the Federal Permitting Process Under NEPA

Topline

To meet growing domestic and global demand, we need modern energy infrastructure. Unfortunately, our ability to produce, transport, and deliver all energy sources – from the molecules in the ground to the energy and products demanded by families and businesses – is hampered by outdated permitting processes.

Environmental reviews required for permitting for most energy and infrastructure projects take on average over 4 years and then is often delayed even longer because of frivolous third-party challenges and litigation delays. These pitfalls go well beyond affecting traditional energy: advanced manufacturing, infrastructure development, electricity transmission, carbon sequestration, and renewable deployment are all caught in the same morass that is the federal permitting process.

- **Nebulous, Bloated Environmental Review Process:** Before any infrastructure project is approved in the U.S., it must go through nebulous environmental review processes with ever-shifting goal lines and a constant threat of litigation. The lack of a clear, reasonable standard for judicial review makes it more difficult for agencies to defend even good-faith actions leading to more paperwork but ultimately less informed decision-making. America needs modernized NEPA processes that are concentrated on its statutory procedural purpose and issues truly significant to the action in question, rather than amassing needless detail.
- **Frivolous NEPA Lawsuits Delay Projects:** According to a 2020 study by the DOJ, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is the most frequently litigated environmental statute. Thirty-seven percent of NEPA cases challenge oil and natural gas projects, while 33% of cases challenge renewable projects. Yet courts upheld the federal-agency action 71% of the time. Delays caused by this litigation can stretch for years, adding significant uncertainty and chilling investment for these critically needed projects. Despite this, the previous administration made NEPA reviews more obscure and subjective and thus more vulnerable to litigation.

Policy Fixes

- **Reform NEPA to establish a clear standard, and predictable outcomes for agency reviews and safeguard legitimate, approved projects from undue third-party litigation.**

The American Exploration & Production Council urges policymakers to support a balanced, forward-looking approach to American energy production.