

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

August 18, 2026

The Honorable Doug Burgum
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Burgum:

We write to request an update on the status of clean energy projects that the Department of the Interior (DOI) has been delaying arbitrarily. The bipartisan Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (Division C of Public Law 119-74) requires status reports on the reviews of energy projects every 60 days. The Department missed three deadlines—March 24, 2026, May 23, 2026, and July 22, 2026—to provide Congress with these reports, and has only recently provided the first report. As the backlog of projects continues to grow, we urge your timely submission of these required reports to Congress, and that you lift the procedural hurdles to clean energy deployment that the Department has implemented.

Since President Trump has been in office, the Department of the Interior has been systematically disadvantaging wind and solar energy projects, while propping up fossil energy. Throughout your tenure, you have issued arbitrary directives, including the consideration of an energy project's "capacity density,"¹ the July 15, 2025, directive requiring that "all decisions, actions, consultations, and other undertakings" related to wind and solar energy receive your personal approval,² and the payment of \$2.5 billion of taxpayer funds to energy companies to walk away from their offshore wind projects.³ Other energy sources are not facing this same scrutiny. As a result of this increased and unnecessary bureaucracy, clean energy projects are taking longer to build or are being outright cancelled, right as prices rise and demand skyrockets.

We are in the midst of an affordability crisis, with electricity prices rising faster than inflation, yet the Department's actions continue to keep energy prices high for American families and set us back as the rest of the world accelerates the deployment of new technologies. The Department's policies have put hundreds of projects at risk, including 450 solar projects, representing 36% of all new planned power capacity in the United States.⁴ Constraints on clean energy development could add an estimated \$81.2 billion to household energy bills over the next

¹ Secretarial Order No. 3438, <https://www.doi.gov/document-library/secretary-order/so-3438-managing-federal-energy-resources-and-protecting>

² Memorandum titled "Departmental Review Procedures for Decisions, Actions, Consultations, and Other Undertakings Related to Wind and Solar Energy Facilities", <https://www.doi.gov/media/document/departamental-review-procedures-decisions-actions-consultations-and-other>

³ Utility Dive, <https://www.utilitydive.com/news/trump-administration-buys-out-four-more-offshore-wind-leases-for-765m/823314/>

⁴ Solar Energy Industries Association, <https://seia.org/blog/permitting-reform-let-solar-build/>

seven years.⁵ As the Department continues to institute discriminatory policies against clean energy, these trends will only accelerate as energy demand outpaces supply.

In order to improve transparency to ensure that we can power our country reliably and affordably, Congress mandated bimonthly reports from the Department on the status of energy permitting in the FY2026 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act. The Department has failed to provide timely reports and only recently has provided an initial status report. However, the information included in this first report was outdated. We urge you to provide these reports to Congress on time going forward, and to include information current to this point in time.

Specifically, the reports are required to detail the execution of funds to fulfill the timely review of all energy projects. We request that you provide to Congress an updated report by August 28, 2026, that includes:

1. A comprehensive list of all the projects currently under review by the Department that fall under the July 15, 2025, directive, including each projects' specific current status in the review process.
2. A list of the wind and solar projects that DOI has completed required reviews for under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and issued the necessary authorizations to begin construction, since July 15, 2025.
3. A list of the wind and solar projects that the Department has rejected or that the project sponsors have withdrawn since July 15, 2025, including how much electricity generation capacity has been lost as a result of these rejections or withdrawals.
4. The total number of employees, broken down by field office, responsible for permitting wind and solar energy projects.
5. The total number of employees, broken down by field office, responsible for permitting oil, gas, and coal energy projects.
6. What steps the Department is taking to comply with the requirement in Public Law 119-74 to "ensure the timely review of all energy projects" and provide status reports every 60 days on the execution of funds to fulfill those timely reviews?

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

⁵ Corporate Energy Buyers Association, <https://ceba.org/ceba-analysis-shows-restrictions-on-new-solar-and-wind-resources-increase-u-s-energy-prices/>



Mike Levin
Member of Congress



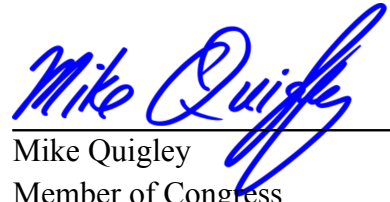
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Ranking Member, House
Natural Resources Committee



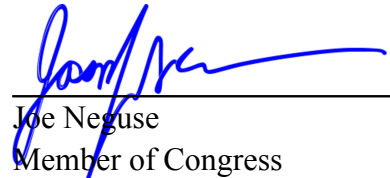
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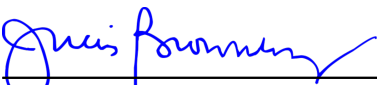
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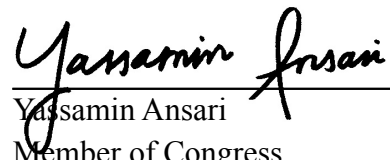
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Member of Congress



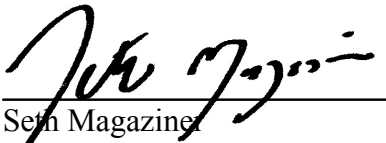
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Member of Congress



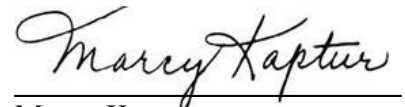
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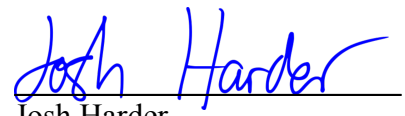
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