



FROM: Kountoupes Denham Carr & Reid

DATE: Wednesday, June 3, 2026

RE: House Appropriations Full Committee Markup of Fiscal Year 2027 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill and Fiscal Year 2027 Transportation, Housing, Urban Development and Related Agencies Bill

Topline Summary (Part 1)

- The House Appropriations Committee convened to mark up the FY 2027 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies bill and the FY 2027 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) bill. As of the conclusion of Part 1 of this report, only the Interior bill has been discussed, with further amendments still pending and no final vote yet taken. Dialogue on the THUD bill has not yet begun.
- Democrats voiced strong opposition to the Interior bill, focusing on cuts to the EPA, water infrastructure, environmental justice initiatives, the National Park Service, and arts and humanities funding, as well as the bill's treatment of clean energy. Republicans defended the bill as a balanced measure that upholds tribal trust and treaty responsibilities, supports domestic energy production, and makes fiscally responsible reductions.
- The Simpson Managers Amendment was adopted by voice vote, several Democratic amendments were withdrawn in exchange for further engagement with the chairman and ranking member, and a series of additional Democratic amendments were rejected largely along party lines.

Members Attending: Chairman Tom Cole (R-OK), Ranking Member Rosa DeLauro (D-CT), Rep. Harold Rodgers (R-KY), Rep. Grace Meng (D-NY), Rep. Dale Strong (R-AL), Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D-OH), Rep. Sanford Bishop (D-GA), Rep. Andrew Clyde (R-GA), Rep. Betty McCollum (D-MN), Rep. Jefferson Shreve (R-IN), Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL), Rep. Henry Cuellar (D-TX), Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ), Rep. Joseph Morelle (D-NY), Rep. Madeleine Dean (D-PA), Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-MD), Rep. Mark Pocan (D-WI), Rep. Pete Aguilar (D-CA), Rep. Norma Torres (D-CA), Rep. Adriano Espaillat (D-NY), Rep. Lauren Underwood (D-IL), Rep. Mike Levin (D-CA), Rep. Veronica Escobar (D-TX), Rep. Robert Aderholt (R-AL), Rep. Michael Simpson (R-ID), Rep. John Carter (R-TX), Rep. Ken Calvert (R-CA), Rep. Mario Diaz Balart (R-FL), Rep. Steve Womack (R-AR), Rep. Chuck Fleischmann (R-TN), Rep. David Joyce (R-OH), Rep. Andy Harris (R-MD), Rep. Mark Amodei (R-NV), Rep. David Valadao (R-CA), Rep. Dan Newhouse (R-WA), Rep. John Moolenaar (R-MI), Rep. John Rutherford (R-FL), Rep. Ben Cline (R-VA), Rep. Ashley Hinson (R-IA), Rep. Julia Letlow (R-LA), Rep. Michael Cloud (R-TX), Rep. Michael Guest (R-MS), Rep. Ryan Zinke (R-MT), Rep. Stephanie Bice (R-OK), Rep. Scott Franklin (R-FL), Rep. Jake Ellzey (R-TX), Rep. Juan Ciscomani (R-AZ), Rep. Chuck Edwards (R-NC), Rep. Mark Alford (R-MO), Rep. Nick LaLota (R-NY), Rep. Celeste Maloy (R-UT), Rep. Riley Moore (R-WV), Rep. James Clyburn (D-SC), Rep. Chellie Pingree (D-ME), Rep. Mike Quigley (D-IL), Rep. Lois Frankel (D-FL), Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ),



Rep. Ed Case (D-HI), Rep. Josh Harder (D-CA), Rep. Susie Lee (D-NV), Rep. Mike Levin (D-CA), Rep. Frank Mrvan (D-IN), Rep. Marie Gluesenkamp Perez (D-WA), & Rep. Glenn Ivey (D-MD).

[Live Hearing Link](#)

Meeting called to order by Chairman Cole.

Legislation

FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill

FY27 Transportation, Housing, Urban Development and Related Agencies Bill (Not yet covered)

FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill

Opening Statements:

Rep. Mike Simpson (R-ID): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your continued engagement throughout this process. And thank you to Ranking Member Pingree, who has been a great partner and continues to demonstrate her commitment to the issues in this bill. I should also tell all of you that Ms. Pingree and I talked about trying to create a bipartisan bill. We were never able to get where Schultz and Judd Carter came to, but we tried. And in spite of that, we decided the best alternative was to have a bipartisan lunch. Today, lunch will be provided courtesy of the best of Maine and the best of Idaho: Idaho French fries with fry sauce and lobster rolls from Maine, and I just found out, handmade blueberry pies -- Ms. Pingree spent all weekend making those. So it will be a bipartisan lunch, and maybe by the end of it, we will have a bipartisan vote on this bill. Who knows?

With Ranking Member Pingree's support, the subcommittee held nine hearings and one roundtable on this bill. I know Mr. Hoyer is not here, but I am actually saying this for him because he always brings up that we are not holding hearings. In March, the subcommittee hosted the annual member day hearing. The subcommittee also hosted two full days -- four sessions -- of tribal witness days, where we heard from 77 tribal members and representatives. In April, the subcommittee held a roundtable on preserving birds of prey, and we had an incredibly informative discussion with the Peregrine Fund, followed by a demonstration in this room of some amazing birds. We also held hearings with Chief of the Forest Service Tom Schultz, Secretary Doug Burgum of the Department of the Interior, Administrator Lee Zeldin of the Environmental Protection Agency, and Clayton Fulton from Indian Health Services. These hearings informed the important work of this subcommittee and truly helped shape our appropriations bill.

The FY 2027 Interior bill reflects our commitment to our nation's natural resources, unleashing American energy dominance, and upholding our trust and treaty responsibilities to the tribes. The bill totals \$38.9 billion. This bill prioritizes investments in Indian Country. I have consistently said, and will say it again, that we refuse to balance the budget on the backs of tribes. This commitment continues with the funding decisions made in this bill. The bill provides \$1.055 billion to the Bureau of Indian Education, an increase of \$181.6 million above the enacted level, and \$8.7 billion for Indian Health Services, a \$639.8 million increase over enacted. The bill also continues advanced appropriations for Indian Health Services, providing \$6.1 billion available in fiscal year 2028.



For the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the bill provides a total of \$3.2 billion, an increase of \$721 million above the enacted level, including \$774 million for public safety and justice programs to support law enforcement in Indian Country, a \$2.4 million increase over the enacted level. This includes \$33 million for the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women initiative, which continues to be very important to me and to the members of our subcommittee. This bill also fully funds all must-pay costs for the tribes, including contracts, support costs, and Section 105(l) leases, as well as the Payment in Lieu of Taxes program, which provides payments to nearly every state -- I believe 49 out of 50 -- for tax-exempt federal lands.

The bill also prioritizes funding for domestic energy production by providing the requested increases for oil and gas within the Bureau of Land Management and Energy Resources within the U.S. Geological Survey, and by increasing funding for offshore oil and gas development. This funding supports the President's strategy of unleashing America's vast energy resources and reducing energy costs for American families. The bill also includes a commonsense measure to protect taxpayer dollars and provide parity across all offshore energy producers. The Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement is required by law to conduct safety inspections for all offshore energy facilities. Right now, the oil and gas industry is required to pay fees for these inspections. BSEE is also required to inspect offshore wind facilities, but currently does so at no charge. This bill includes new language to also charge fees for wind inspections, as proposed in the budget request. With this provision, no energy source gets a free ride.

This bill also supports streamlining firefighting activities. While the bill does not transfer wildfire fighting activities and funding from the Forest Service, it does support the unification of fire management throughout the Department of the Interior by implementing the administration's proposal to establish a U.S. Wildland Fire Service. This would unify all fire agencies currently within the Department of the Interior -- the BLM, the BIA, the National Park Service, and the Fish and Wildlife Service -- while not transferring wildfire fighting from the Forest Service. The bill continues support for federal wildland firefighters and provides additional funding for firefighter pay, helping to improve recruitment and retention and giving financial certainty to the men and women protecting our communities from catastrophic wildfires.

Given these priorities, the bill makes fiscally responsible reductions to most other appropriations. The EPA is cut by nearly \$1.8 billion, or 20% below the enacted level -- even after the enacted level had already reduced EPA funding by more than \$300 million. As you know, community project funding in this bill is within EPA. The bill provides funding for almost 1,200 clean and drinking water infrastructure projects for 316 members, an increase of almost 300 projects compared to the FY 2026 House bill. While requests greatly exceeded available funding, we did our best to provide some funding for all eligible projects given the impact these dollars will have in communities across the country. Even with funding for community project funding, the bill also continues to protect and provide funding for grants that go directly to states and tribes for water projects and to help fulfill their delegated authority under federal law, including the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Clean Air Act, and the Clean Water Act. This bill provides more funding to states through the State Revolving Funds than our FY 2026 bill did last year.

As I mentioned, in order to uphold our commitments to the tribes, to support our federal wildland firefighters, and to promote domestic energy production, cuts had to be made. Although agencies in Title III saw cuts, the bill supports the President's request for the Smithsonian Institution, the National Gallery of Art, the Kennedy Center, the Commission of Fine Arts, and the Holocaust Memorial Museum. While cuts were made to the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities, the bill protects them from elimination and directs funding to the state partnerships that support programs



in every congressional district. While some tough decisions had to be made, this bill effectively balances competing priorities while focusing spending where it is needed most.

I look forward to working with Ranking Member Pingree and the other members to move the Interior bill toward enactment. I would also like to extend my thanks to the members and staff on both sides of the committee, without whose hard work this bill would not get done -- and to all of the offices in our conference and in Congress for the contributions and recommendations you have made.

Lastly, I want to take a moment to recognize two members who are not here today: Rep. Amodei and Rep. Zinke. This is the last Interior markup for both of these distinguished subcommittee members. They have both been leaders on many important issues and assets to the subcommittee. We will truly miss them and wish them the best of luck in the next chapter of their lives.

I yield back.

Rep. Chellie Pingree (D-ME): First, I want to thank Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro, and I want to give a big shout out to the staff on both sides of the aisle who do an incredible job and are wonderful to work with -- in particular, those we work with on the Democratic side.

Chairman Simpson, I really appreciate our working relationship and the fact that we were able to find common ground last year to enact a bipartisan, full-year funding bill. Let's hope that after today's bipartisan lunch we can do the same. Unfortunately, the bill before us reverts back to the same partisan playbook we started with last year, with grossly insufficient funding and a surplus of poison pill riders.

The bill cuts the EPA by 20%. This agency has already lost one-fifth of its workforce since President Trump took office, and the cuts in this bill would completely cripple EPA's ability to fight climate change, respond to environmental disasters, and hold polluters accountable. Meanwhile, the administration continues to roll back regulations that protect public health and the environment, including a recent announcement that will increase exposure to forever chemicals in drinking water.

I am also very disappointed that the bill further cuts funding to states for water infrastructure. This is the first year that states will not have the additional funding provided by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, and I believe it is critical that we do not lose the momentum we built with those investments. I am also very concerned by the cuts to the National Park Service's facilities operations and maintenance. The bill cuts that funding by \$163 million, or 17%. Meanwhile, in the Commerce, Justice, Science funding bill, Republicans have provided up to \$152 million to renovate Alcatraz into a functioning prison. It is painfully obvious that the majority is prioritizing resurrecting a nineteenth-century prison over today's underfunded and understaffed national parks.

At the same time, the president is diverting significant resources toward pet projects that most Americans oppose -- a \$1 billion gilded ballroom from which toxic demolition debris was taken and dumped on a national park-owned golf course, no-bid contracts to resurface the Reflecting Pool, and his so-called Garden of Heroes, all of which he personally handpicked, along with a 20-story triumphal arch that veterans groups have sued to block. How is the president paying for all of these vanity projects? While he may claim it is all private fundraising, the real answer appears to be raiding national park entrance fees that typically go toward maintenance and diverting funding from the National Endowments for the Arts and the Humanities.



Speaking of vanity projects, I would be remiss not to mention the absolute mess the president has made of the Kennedy Center over the past eighteen months. I am very pleased with the court's confirmation last Friday that it is plainly illegal for him to rename the center after himself and remake it in his own image. But we need real and committed oversight from this committee to protect this critical institution and the artists, workers, and audiences that make it so special. This administration has spent an inordinate amount of time trying to dictate what it deems artistically and culturally worthy, while simultaneously trying to rob our communities of funding for local museums, historical societies, and arts education programs by cutting the NEA and NEH. I am vehemently opposed to the bill slashing each endowment by 35%, or \$72 million. The bill also cuts funding for cultural institutions such as the National Gallery of Art and the Smithsonian Institution. Last year we came to an agreement and beat back these cuts -- we must do so again this year.

While the administration is focused on building a gilded ballroom and triumphal arch, Americans are facing soaring gas and energy prices. Yet this bill does nothing to rein in the administration's assault on energy projects that states like mine have been counting on. As the administration spends nearly \$2 billion in taxpayer dollars to pay off companies for abandoning offshore wind projects, this bill piles on by adding additional fees for offshore wind companies and drastically cutting funding for renewable energy projects.

Finally, I must express my opposition to the dozens of poison pill riders included in the bill. These riders aim to cripple environmental protections, undermine climate change policies, and override the Endangered Species Act. As written, I cannot support the bill before us today. I oppose it, I urge my colleagues to oppose it, and I yield back.

Chairman Tom Cole (R-OK): Thank you, Chairman Simpson, and thank you to Ranking Member Pingree and Ranking Member DeLauro. It is always a pleasure to work with you, and I extend that to all the members here today.

Today, we continue our fiscal year 2027 appropriations work with consideration of the Interior and Environment bill. This measure funds a wide range of agencies and programs, including the Department of the Interior, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Environmental Protection Agency. Yet the significance of this measure extends far beyond the departments and programs named within it. At its core, this bill is about stewardship -- one where we effectively balance conservation, responsible resource development, and the long-term management of our public lands. From recreation opportunities and strengthening wildfire response to supporting domestic energy and mineral production, we are investing in priorities that impact communities in every corner of the country. Chairman Simpson ensured that each provision and investment reinforces America's natural, cultural, and environmental resources.

Importantly, this bill also reflects our commitment to upholding our sacred trust and treaty obligations to protect Native American communities. This is a national imperative, but also one of personal importance to me. I am proud that this legislation continues to make meaningful investments in Indian Country, building on prior efforts to strengthen support for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Indian Education, the Bureau of Trust Funds Administration, and the Indian Health Service. These resources help ensure that tribes have the tools and services needed to thrive for generations to come, because delivering better outcomes for tribal communities strengthens our nation and supports long-term stability.

Stewardship also means investing in the basic infrastructure that supports public health and quality of life. Through district-focused investments, this bill helps communities modernize aging water systems, improve access to clean and safe drinking water, and address critical local needs.



At its best, stewardship is about preparing for the future while meeting the challenges of today. That is why this legislation takes a commonsense approach to managing our nation's resources -- protecting what should be preserved, improving what must be strengthened, and responsibly developing the resources that power our economy. The bill reduces unnecessary regulatory burdens, promotes domestic production, and supports the mapping, exploration, and development needed to bolster American competitiveness and strengthen our national security. Throughout, the measure ensures that Americans continue to have responsible access to the lands, waters, and natural resources that support communities, recreation, jobs, and opportunity across the country.

Chairman Simpson has crafted a thoughtful and balanced bill. I thank him, Ranking Member Pingree, and the majority and minority staff for their hard work and collaboration. I look forward to advancing this bill out of the full committee. With that, I yield back.

Ranking Member Rosa DeLauro (D-CT): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to Chairman Simpson and Ranking Member Pingree. I also want to thank the committee staff -- Rita Culp and Tyler Coe on the minority side, and Maggie Earl, Sarah Perry, Andrea Sparksibanga, and Lucy Alford on the majority side -- for all of the hard work that goes into these bills.

I oppose the bill we are considering today. It is a gift to corporate polluters who would poison our communities in pursuit of even greater profits, saddle cities, towns, and working families with higher utility bills, and allow President Trump to continue raiding public funds to pay for his own vanity projects.

This bill cuts the EPA's budget by \$1.8 billion, or 20%, and cuts the EPA's enforcement budget nearly in half. This will substantially erode the agency's ability to enforce the laws that help protect the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the ground that grows our food. Last month, the Trump administration announced it was rolling back restrictions on forever chemicals in our drinking water -- harmful contaminants that we know can weaken our immune system and lead to cancer, kidney disease, liver disease, and birth defects. The Trump administration has decided that the commercial interest in continued pollution is more important than the public interest in clean drinking water. Administrator Zeldin has abandoned much of the EPA's responsibility. He has weakened restrictions on dangerous chemicals in our drinking water, on poisonous pesticides in our farming soil, and on particulate matter in the very air that we breathe. The cuts proposed in this bill would make this dereliction of duty permanent, so that when a new administrator steps in who believes the job of the Environmental Protection Agency is to actually protect the environment, they will be unable to do so. There are also a number of policy riders in this bill designed to further chip away at the EPA's ability to enforce regulations under the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, and other laws governing hazardous waste. A safe and clean environment is something that every American should expect -- it should not be a privilege that depends on your ZIP code.

At a time when more and more families are struggling with rising utility costs, this bill slashes funding for water infrastructure by \$576 million, including an \$80 million cut to states for projects that support clean drinking water and sanitary wastewater systems. Eliminating this support will saddle our communities with additional costs. This bill also continues the president's war on wind power by imposing additional fees on offshore wind projects, disincentivizing the production of new energy sources. Generating more energy is key to bringing down costs, and investing in clean energy is how we prepare for the future. This administration is punishing clean energy companies that innovate while rewarding fossil fuel companies that pollute.



The bill slashes funding for the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities by \$72 million each, a 35% cut. It has been said that robust investment in the arts is a mark of an advanced society. The use of public funds for private ends, however, is a mark of a civilization in decline. In its current form, this bill allows the Trump administration to continue raiding public funds intended to support the arts and humanities to pay for a 250-foot arch dedicated to himself -- funding that is supposed to support libraries, museums, and historical sites to educate the public and enrich our culture. Last year, the Trump administration took \$15 million from the National Endowment for the Humanities and earmarked it for the arch. If my Republican colleagues objected to that use of funds, this bill was their chance to stop it. They chose not to, and that choice speaks volumes.

At a time when the American people are struggling to make ends meet, this bill makes the problem worse. It does nothing to bring down costs while allowing billionaires and big corporations who have profited by polluting our communities to get even richer. I encourage my colleagues to oppose this bill. We are all on this planet together, and we ought to take better care of it. I encourage my friends across the aisle to work with Democrats to craft a bipartisan bill that protects the environment, keeps our communities safe and healthy, and helps bring down costs for working families. Thank you, and I yield back.

Discussion:

Rep. Hal Rogers (R-KY) spoke in appreciation of the bills protection of vital programs, specifically as the Abandoned Mine Lands Economic Revitalization (AMLER) program at DOI to help communities impacted by the decline of coal by putting former mine lands into productive use. He said the AMLER program had bipartisan support and remained a strong example of a federal investment that made a real difference in communities. He thanked the chairman for maintaining full funding the Payments In Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program for communities to recover tax revenue from federal lands to support schools, emergency services, and other public services. Rep. Rogers said the bill made responsible cuts while continuing to further the missions of the department and agencies under it's jurisdiction.

Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D-OH) discussed the importance of honoring the greatest generation and the importance of protecting the great lakes. She thanked the Committee's leadership for the inclusion of \$369 million in funding for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative at EPA. Rep. Kaptur emphasized the important economic and environmental role that the great lakes play and highlighted that this funding would help control harmful algae blooms and restrict other invasive species in these waters. Rep. Kaptur then highlighted the continued need to preserve the United States' national heritage and noted support for the WWII memorial included in the bill. Rep. Kaptur ended by noting her overall opposition to the bill, citing insufficient funding for the EPA and other key Interior programs.

Rep. James Clyburn (D-SC) began by expressing his opposition to the bill. He talked about how the largest economies in his home state have shifted from textiles and tobacco to transportation and tourism, particularly heritage tourism. He talked about how in 2024, visitor spending in communities near national parks resulted led to a \$55 billion benefit to the national economy and supported over 400,000 jobs. Rep. Clyburn expressed concern with the OBBA's \$267 million in cuts from NPS and BLM that Congress previously approved. He then listed examples of consequences from these cuts. He talked about how the administration has spent more than \$67 million in fees paid by park visitors for unauthorized and unwarranted vanity projects. Rep. Clyburn concluded by emphasizing his concern for the \$17 million difference from enacted levels in FY26 and urged his colleagues to oppose the bill.

Rep. Sanford Bishop (D-GA) rose in opposition of the bill, expressing his gratitude that it reversed cuts proposed by the Trump administration, while noting it did not provide adequate funding for programs that



would help to reduce energy costs, protect the environment and American's involvement with the arts. He criticized the bills restrictions to renewable energy projects and the fee on offshore wind projects and said the provisions would lead to higher energy bills for hard working Americans while also weakening the country's position in the global marketplace for innovative energy technologies. He expressed concern about the cuts to EPA's State and Tribal Assistance grants especially with the expiration of the IJJA. Rep. Bishop warned against delaying infrastructure repairs and opposed cuts to the National Parks Service.

Rep. Celeste Maloy (R-UT) rose in support of the underlying bill. She noted the importance of the Great Salt Lake to Utah and highlighted provisions in the bill that would help to address declining water levels. She also noted language in the bill intended to address and prioritize abandoned mine remediation, particularly by reducing liabilities for third parties. Rep. Maloy also highlighted language in the bill that supports various national monuments, ecosystems, and local stakeholders in Utah. Rep. Maloy also noted the underlying bill's funding for payment in lieu of taxes for areas with large amounts of federal land, prioritization of geothermal permitting, wildfire mitigation and prevention, and NEPA permitting.

Rep. Lois Frankel (D-FL) rose in opposition to the bill, focusing her remarks on the bill's cuts to the National Endowments for the Arts and Humanities. She argued that the more than 35% reduction in funding for these programs represents a cut not merely to budget line items but to institutions and programs that preserve history, inspire creativity, strengthen the economy, and connect Americans to one another. Rep. Frankel contended that the arts are not a luxury but a core part of American identity, arguing that they help young people develop creativity, confidence, and critical thinking skills. She also emphasized the role of art in teaching history and cited the economic impact of arts and culture in her home county, which she said generates more than \$355 million in economic activity annually. Rep. Frankel urged her colleagues to support investment in the arts, arguing that cutting these programs diminishes communities rather than strengthening them.

Rep. Dan Newhouse (R-WA) said the bill responsibly spent taxpayer dollars while conserving public lands and natural resources. He highlighted increased funding for wildfire response and mitigation programs and changes to the endangered species act list. He discusses report language that called out judicial abuse by anti-farmer activists.

Rep. Henry Cuellar (D-TX) highlighted provisions in the underlying bill that would support historic trails in his district and help to address invasive species in the Rio Grande River, noting the environmental, water quality, and immigration implications.

Rep. Marie Gluesenkamp Perez (D-WA) thanked Ranking Member Pingree, Ranking Member DeLauro, and the subcommittee ranking member for their support. She drew attention to the mental health crisis facing law enforcement, noting that officers are approximately 54% more likely to die by suicide than the general population and arguing that the true numbers are likely even higher. Rep. Gluesenkamp Perez said that available resources are not meeting the needs of officers and emphasized that law enforcement needs community and human support rather than technology-based solutions. She also raised concerns that officers are often reluctant to seek help due to fear of stigma or losing their badges. Rep. Gluesenkamp Perez highlighted two areas of progress on this issue. First, she noted that Congress last year affirmed that chaplains can access federal funding for law enforcement mental health purposes, a provision she said has had meaningful impact in her district in southwest Washington. Second, she expressed appreciation for the inclusion in the bill of a provision related to community camp-style recreation for law enforcement on federal lands, citing research linking time in nature to improved



wellbeing. She noted that Congress has previously authorized special use permits on federal lands for nonprofits and similar groups and argued that extending comparable access to law enforcement need not be burdensome or costly.

Rep. Adriano Espaillat (D-NY) noted his opposition to the underlying bill, arguing that it favors polluters and companies over constituents. Rep. Espaillat argued that the underlying bill would cut EPA funding by 20%, limiting the agency's ability to continue critical environmental protection and renewable energy development. He also argued that the bill would raise energy and utility costs by shifting costs to state and local governments. Rep. Espaillat criticized the funding reductions across the bill and again expressed his opposition.

Simpson Managers Amendment to FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill

Rep. Mike Simpson (R-ID) said that this amendment makes some changes to the report that are of interest to many members of the committee.

Rep. Chellie Pingree (D-ME) rose in support of the amendment and expressed her gratitude for the bipartisan effort.

Rep. Marie Gluesenkamp Perez (D-WA) rose in strong support of the amendment and emphasized the importance to her constituents.

Rep. Henry Cuellar (D-TX) thanked the chairmen for their inclusion of his outcome-based program review language.

Simpson Managers Amendment to FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill was favorably adopted by voice vote.

Pingree Amendment 1 to FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill, as amended

Rep. Chellie Pingree (D-ME) explained her amendment would prohibit the use of funds from the bill being used for the Trump arch in Washington DC, citing concerns about the view to Arlington National Cemetery.

Pingree Amendment 01 to FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill, as amended, was not favorably adopted by a vote of 24Y-32N.

Clyde Amendment 1 to FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill, as amended

Rep. Andrew Clyde (R-GA) explained that his amendment would reduce the EPA's Categorical Grant Programs budget by a little more than \$1 billion. He argued that this amendment would bring the funding for this program in line with President Trump's FY27 budget request and the funding for the overall bill below FY26 funding. Rep. Clyde discussed the national debt and argued that Congress' continued spending represents a threat to U.S. national security and future generations. He argued that the President's FY27 budget would eliminate duplicative programs; cut waste, fraud, and abuse; and keep American businesses competitive. He argued that environmental statutes like the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act no longer require the federal grants provided by EPA's categorical grants because nearly every



state has introduced policies supporting them. Rep. Clyde argued that states should take an increased role in standing up these statutes and argued that his amendment would maintain essential programs at EPA.

Rep. Mike Simpson (R-ID) rose in opposition to the amendment, saying that the funding for Categorical Grants was distributed to states to carry out their delegated authorities under various federal environmental laws. He explained that the cooperative federalism approach empowered states to issue permits and make decision that were best for them which was critical for economic growth. He agreed with Rep. Clyde's concerns about the national debt but noted the issue was because of entitlement spending and not discretionary spending, citing the cuts they had already made to the EPA.

Rep. Chellie Pingree (D-ME) said that she appreciates the subcommittee chair opposing the amendment and emphasized her opposition. She encouraged her colleagues to vote against the amendment.

Rep. Betty McCollum (D-MN) gave examples of grants received by those in her district and by tribal reservations that benefitted from Categorical Grant Programs.

Rep. Andrew Clyde (R-GA) ended by encouraging his colleagues to support the amendment.

Clyde Amendment 1 to FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill, as amended, was not favorably adopted by voice vote.

Pingree Amendment 2 to FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill, as amended

Rep. Chellie Pingree (D-ME) spoke about renovations to the Kennedy Center and asked the chair to commit to conducting oversight hearings in the coming months and working with her to get the information they needed in FY27 and beyond. She explained the amendment would require monthly reports from the center for oversight.

Pingree Amendment 2 to FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill, as amended, was not favorably adopted by voice vote.

Moore Amendment 1 to FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill, as amended

Rep. Riley Moore (R-WV) discussed dirty drinking water in his district and highlighted the lengths some of his constituents have to go to access clean water. Rep. Moore explained that his amendment would provide \$50 million to address the drinking water issues in his district and West Virginia. He explained that the amendment would require that 50% of the funding go to the nine southern counties in his district and require the state to provide a 25% match to receive the funding.

Moore Amendment 1 to FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill, as amended, was not favorably adopted by voice vote.

DeLauro Amendment 1 to FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill, as amended

Ranking Member Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) noted that her amendment would prohibit the closure of two U.S. Forest Service facilities in her district that are conducting critical research around issues like invasive species. She spoke to the importance of this research in addressing the spread of invasive species and highlighted the mounting closures of similar facilities across the country. She expressed concern over



the consolidation and reorganization of these research facilities and argued that more assurances need to be provided to Congress about the continuity of these activities.

DeLauro Amendment 1 to FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill, as amended, was withdrawn.

Cuellar Amendment 1 to FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill, as amended

Rep. Henry Cuellar (D-TX) introduced an amendment to restore \$10 million in funding for a program that supports border communities lacking access to basic infrastructure such as water, sewage, and electricity. He noted that the program works in conjunction with the North American Development Bank, which was established under NAFTA, and argued that the funding reduction would harm communities along the U.S. border living in substandard conditions. Rep. Cuellar offered to withdraw the amendment in exchange for the opportunity to work with the chairman and ranking member to restore the funding, and the amendment was subsequently withdrawn.

Cuellar Amendment 1 to FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill, as amended, was withdrawn.

Wasserman Schultz Amendment 1 to FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill, as amended

Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL) introduced an amendment on behalf of the Miccosukee Tribe of Florida that would add the Osceola Camp to the Miccosukee Reservation and direct the tribe and the Department of the Interior to jointly protect the camp from flooding during ongoing Everglades restoration projects. Rep. Wasserman Schultz stated she had been working with Rep. Diaz-Balart on resolving the issue and, in hopes of reaching a resolution through that process, withdrew the amendment, pledging to return if the matter is not resolved.

Wasserman Schultz Amendment 1 to FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill, as amended was withdrawn

Pocan Amendment 1 to FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill, as amended

Rep. Mark Pocan (D-WI) explained his amendment prohibited funds from the bill from being used for the White House East Wing Modernization Project.

Pocan Amendment 1 to FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill, as amended was not favorably adopted by a vote of 26Y-31N

Frankel Amendment 1 to FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill, as amended

Rep. Lois Frankel (D-FL) explained the amendment required the EPA's new fluoride assessment be reviewed by the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine.

Frankel Amendment to FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill, as amended was withdrawn

Watson Coleman Amendment 1 to FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill, as amended



Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ) introduced an amendment to restore Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund funding to FY 2026 levels, including IIIA supplemental funding, arguing that reductions would force utilities to raise rates on households already facing an affordability crisis. She cited specific funding losses facing her colleagues' states without the supplemental funding, ranging from \$37 million for Idaho to \$312 million for Texas, and urged support for the amendment.

Watson Coleman Amendment 1 to FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill, as amended was not favorably adopted by voice vote

Watson Coleman Amendment 2 to FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill, as amended

Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ) introduced an amendment to restore EPA funding for environmental justice initiatives, which the bill eliminates entirely. She argued that these cuts disproportionately harm low-income and minority communities that already face higher rates of pollution-linked illnesses, citing research showing that minority communities experience asthma at significantly higher rates and that communities with larger Black and Hispanic populations are more likely to have PFAS contamination in their drinking water. She urged her colleagues to support the amendment.

Watson Coleman Amendment 2 to FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill, as amended was not favorably adopted by a voice vote of 26Y-33N

Espailat Amendment 1 to FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill, as amended

Rep. Adriano Espailat (D-NY) introduced an amendment directing the EPA to report on the projected public health consequences of any reductions to environmental justice programs and staffing. He argued that cuts to these programs disproportionately harm low-income communities and communities of color that already bear a greater burden of pollution-linked illnesses such as asthma, cardiovascular disease, and cancer, while contributing far less to pollution themselves. Rep. Espailat framed environmental justice as a bipartisan issue affecting red and blue states alike and urged his colleagues to support the amendment.

Espailat Amendment 1 to FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill, as amended was not favorably adopted by a vote of 27Y-33N

Lee Amendment 1 to FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill, as amended

Rep. Susie Lee (D-NV) spoke about previous Republican advocacy for an all of the above energy approach for energy independence and national security and explained that her amendment would require equal treatment of all forms of energy during the permitting process at DOI. She noted that it did not give special treatment to solar or wind but ended the political gamesmanship that was raising costs for constituents. She advocated coming together to provide real permitting certainty and fairness to let investors pick winners and losers. Rep. Lee emphasized that solar energy was the cheapest, most abundant and accessible source of energy in Nevada and other parts of the country, and underscored that there was bipartisan support for solar, along with support from Energy Secretary Chris Wright. She spoke about DOI's requirement of the Secretary or his office signing off on all solar and wind projects and highlighted a letter she and Nevada Governor Joe Lombardi (R) sent to the Secretary after the memo was implemented. She stressed that permitting weaponization and politically driven attacks on America's solar and battery storage continued to threaten over 450 projects that could be powering 16 million homes, which was over a third of the planned new generation in the United States. Rep. Lee reiterated that the amendment was all of the above and encouraged adoption.



Rep. Mike Simpson (R-ID) rose in opposition to Rep. Lee's amendment, stating that the bill already supports the administration's strategy to expand domestic energy production through increased funding for Bureau of Land Management oil, gas, and coal development activities. He argued that the administration has its own process for reviewing energy projects and that he is not inclined to direct the department on what it can and cannot consider in that process, particularly given that aspects of it are currently under court review. Rep. Simpson urged his colleagues to oppose the amendment.

Rep. Chellie Pingree (D-ME) rose in support of Rep. Lee's amendment, arguing that the administration is not pursuing an all-of-the-above energy strategy but instead stacking the deck against clean energy while protecting fossil fuel companies. She pointed to the bill's inclusion of new fees on offshore wind companies alongside the Department of the Interior's failure to issue new leases and its payments of nearly \$2 billion to companies to abandon existing leases as evidence of that imbalance. Rep. Pingree asserted that the amendment's reporting requirements would further committee oversight of energy development and help ensure that permitting actions are carried out evenhandedly and urged her colleagues to support it.

Rep. Mike Levin (D-CA) rose in support of Rep. Lee's amendment, arguing that the administration's energy strategy undermines its own stated commitment to an all-of-the-above approach by actively stifling clean energy development. He criticized the bill for imposing inspection fees on offshore wind projects that far exceed those for offshore oil and gas projects, and detailed a series of actions by Secretary Burgum that he argued systematically disadvantage wind and solar energy, including requiring his personal sign-off on virtually every permitting activity for clean energy facilities and directing the department to consider the "capacity density" of energy projects in permitting decisions. Rep. Levin contended that courts have repeatedly blocked these actions as arbitrary, capricious, and likely unlawful, yet the administration has responded by paying companies billions in taxpayer dollars to abandon offshore wind projects rather than comply with court orders. He argued that the Department of the Interior's obstruction currently represents the most significant obstacle to bipartisan permitting reform, and urged colleagues who have supported an all-of-the-above energy strategy to back the amendment as a step toward ensuring a fair and timely permitting process.

Rep. Ryan Zinke (R-MT) spoke about the discussion and said affordable, reliable energy was baseload energy rather than solar, wind, and storage that was reliant on China for supply chains. He said the most affordable, reliable and consistent energy was fossil fuel and until they moved forward with nuclear the others were just a fantasy.

Rep. Sanford Bishop (D-GA) rose in support of the amendment and yielded his time to Rep. Levin for further remarks.

Rep. Mike Levin (D-CA) spoke again in support of Rep. Lee's amendment, pushing back on arguments that renewable energy only appears cost-competitive because grid connection costs are hidden, contending that the market already prices those costs in and renewables still win. He argued that utilities and grid operators choose wind and solar not for ideological reasons but because the delivered cost beats new gas even after accounting for storage and transmission, and noted that unlike gas, renewable energy sources are not subject to fuel price volatility driven by geopolitical events such as the ongoing conflict with Iran. Rep. Levin also addressed arguments around baseload power and land use, contending that a flexible renewable portfolio better matches supply to demand than traditional baseload plants, that wind and solar can coexist with farming and ranching, and that in 2026 excluding wind and solar from a national energy strategy makes no sense.



Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D-OH) expressed her belief in all of the above energy policies, specifically for competition, highlighting her representation of the most important domestic solar manufacturer in America. She emphasized that the grid was old, but solar could be done behind the grid and warned about falling behind Chinese advancements in solar. She noted increased energy demand from AI data centers and other energy challenges, noting that behind the grid energy could save money for companies and families.

Rep. Riley Moore (R-WV) explained that they had taken 170 gigawatts of coal fired energy off the grid in the last twenty years and cited that as the cause of energy scarcity in the United States. He said perverse investment incentives coerced investment in green energy over company returns, and advocated for energy below the ground such as coal, gas, oil and uranium. He said wind and solar could not be increased in peak hours which is why coal and gas were critical. Rep. Moore emphasized Chinese investment in coal power and opposed the amendment.

Rep. Lauren Underwood (D-IL) spoke in support of the amendment and yielded her time to Rep. Levin.

Rep. Mike Levin (D-CA) responded to a colleague's remarks on coal plant retirements, arguing that the dominant driver of the roughly 170 gigawatts of coal retirements was cheap natural gas from the shale boom beginning around 2010 rather than regulatory policy. He noted that retirements continued under both Democratic and Republican administrations, including during the first Trump administration when the president was actively attempting to preserve the coal industry, and argued that if policy were the primary lever, retirements would track which party held the White House rather than gas prices and plant age. Rep. Levin contended that the retired capacity was largely replaced by gas, wind, and solar, meaning total U.S. generating capacity has grown rather than shrunk.

Rep. Ashley Hinson (R-IA) yielded her time to Rep. Moore.

Rep. Riley Moore (R-WV) said coal plants shut down during the Obama administration under the clean powerplant rule and called the standards impossible to meet. He argued that if coal did not work, China would not be building so many coal fired power plants, emphasizing that coal could be exported. He highlighted job losses in West Virginia as a result of the coal plant closures.

Rep. Veronica Escobar (D-TX) yielded her time to Rep. Levin

Rep. Mike Levin (D-CA) pointed to China's 2025 energy capacity additions, including 311 gigawatts of solar, 119 gigawatts of wind, and 78 gigawatts of coal, asserting that China's massive investment in renewables is driven by economic and energy security considerations rather than ideology. He said that undermining wind and solar in the United States runs contrary to shared goals of energy dominance and energy security. He argued that every gigawatt of domestic renewable capacity is a gigawatt that cannot be cut off by a blockade or sanctions and contended that true energy dominance should encompass all energy sources, including clean energy, not just fossil fuels.

Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-MD) spoke in support of the amendment, stating that it makes sense to have as many energy options as possible.

Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D-OH) expressed support for the amendment while taking a moment to acknowledge the economic hardship experienced by her colleague from West Virginia, drawing a parallel to the devastation that steel and automotive industry collapses brought to Ohio. She argued that neither Republican nor Democratic administrations have done enough to support industrial communities that



have had to rebuild from the ground up without the advantages of being capital cities, financial centers, or major university hubs. Rep. Kaptur called for future presidents to make a genuine commitment to industrial America, contending that the economic neglect of working communities has contributed significantly to the political divisions seen across the country.

Rep. Susie Lee (D-NV) reiterated that they should be for free markets, and argued they were using the permitting process to tip the scale, acknowledging the previous unfair treatment of oil and gas, but noting this was about the future. She highlighted China's rapid deployment of solar and wind. She concluded that they were in a race against China for energy and they needed to even the scales.

Lee Amendment 1 to FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill, as amended, was not favorably adopted by a voice vote of 28Y-33N

Simpson En Bloc Amendment to FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill

Rep. Mike Simpson (R-ID) introduced an en bloc amendment containing four provisions. The first would prevent the EPA from developing or issuing assessments under the Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS), consistent with the administration's current approach to the program. The second would protect the rights of valid mining claim holders who have paid their maintenance fees to the Bureau of Land Management, addressing recently identified vulnerabilities to potential abuse of existing processes. The third is report language flagging concerns to the Department of the Interior about the potential impact on communities and agriculture of a possible Endangered Species Act listing of certain species. The fourth would require the agency to report on the new offshore wind inspection fees included in the bill, which Rep. Simpson said are based on the actual cost to the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement to conduct the inspections, the same methodology used for oil and gas inspection fees. Rep. Simpson pushed back on characterizations that the fees were intended to disadvantage wind energy, emphasizing that the fees reflect the cost of inspections that BSEE is legally required to conduct for both offshore oil and gas and offshore wind facilities. He urged his colleagues to support the amendment.

Rep. Chellie Pingree (D-ME) rose in opposition to the amendment, saying it added more poison pills riders, specifically a provision that prohibited funds to develop, finalize, or issue assessment under EPA's Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS). She emphasized that that IRIS had been used for decades to develop impartial toxicity information to set national standards and clean up hazardous sites, through its assessments that quantified the highest safe levels of exposure to a chemical before it triggers health effects. She noted the wide respect for IRIS in the scientific community and said the chemical industry had been working to systematically undermine the program, including in Project 2025 and by the Trump administration, such as disclaimer language on the EPA website. Rep. Pingree added that there was also authorizing language related to mining claim maintenance fees at BLM which was counter to earlier debates that they should only focus on funding in the bill.

Rep. Glenn Ivey (D-MD) asked what the wind inspection fees were.

Rep. Mike Simpson (R-ID) explained that it cost money to do inspection on wind platforms as well as oil and gas platforms but oil and gas had to pay a fee so they were trying to level it.

Rep. Glenn Ivey (D-MD) asked what exactly they were inspecting on wind platforms.

Rep. Mike Simpson (R-ID) said inspections on wind platforms were harder than those on oil and gas.



Rep. Glenn Ivey (D-MD) asked what they were looking at.

Rep. Mike Simpson (R-ID) said structural machinery but he was unsure as he was not an inspector. He closed saying the amendment was good and disagreed with Rep. Pingree's assessment of the IRIS provision, asserting they were not getting rid of it, nor did the chemical industry want to get rid of it, but they were not supposed to use the results of the analysis for regulation, rather they were used to inform the science, which was a concern many stakeholders had. He said the amendment improved the bill and encouraged support.

Simpson En Bloc Amendment to FY27 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill was agreed to favorably by a voice vote

The remainder of the markup will be covered in Part 2.