The Rundown

By: CLEARPATH ACTION



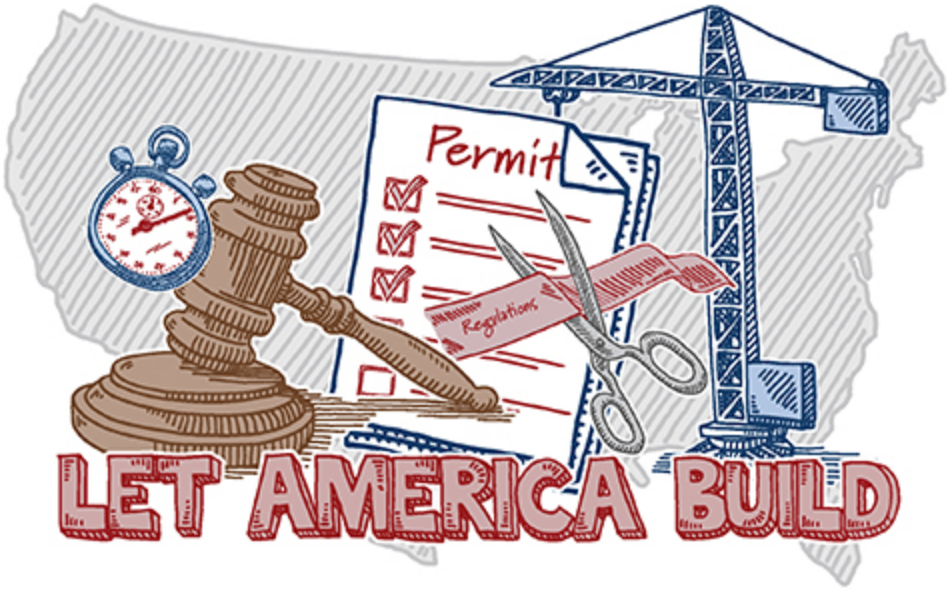
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ClearPath Action Rundown
October 30th, 2026

Happy Friday!

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1. Let America build: the permitting push



This week: How House Republicans laid the foundation.

Senate negotiators advanced a proven framework to cut red tape and let America build. The **Bipartisan American Affordability and Jobs Act** (BAAJA) builds on the permitting bills House Republicans passed last December. Those bills set the terms of the debate and gave the Senate a tested starting point. This week, we examine how House action laid the groundwork for a bipartisan Senate agreement.

How BAAJA builds on the House's work:

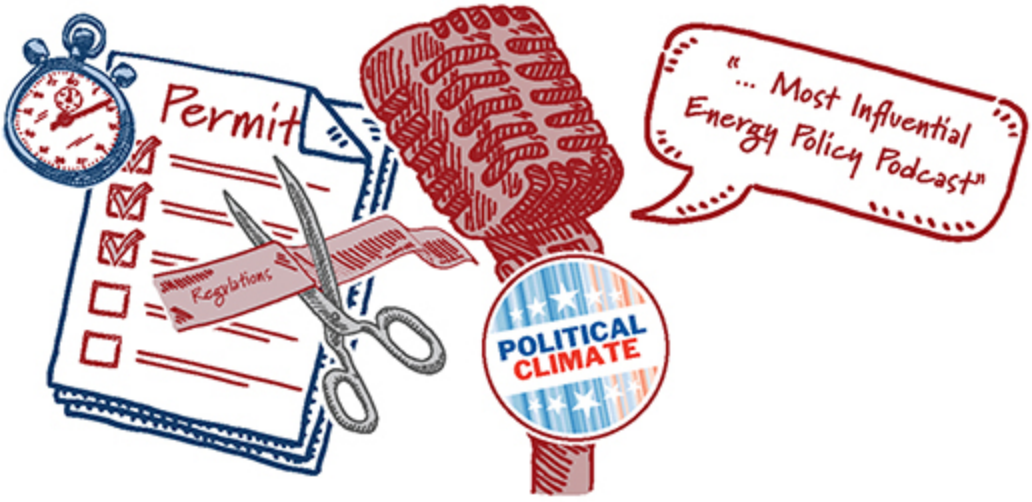
- The House passed the **SPEED Act** 221-196 and the **PERMIT Act** 221-205 in December 2025, and the Senate deal carries key provisions from both;
- More than 15 House bills shaped BAAJA in whole or in part, from ratepayer protections to advanced grid technologies to **geothermal leasing**; and
- BAAJA keeps the SPEED Act's **150-day window** to challenge a project, down from the six years allowed under current law.

What's clear: The House laid the foundation first, and the Senate built a bipartisan bill on that foundation. Congress should finish the job and let America build. Now, more than 25 right-of-center groups, including ClearPath Action, have endorsed BAAJA in a **letter to congressional leadership**, calling its reforms "the most significant modernization of the federal permitting system in a generation."

Read and share: **Share this week's takeaway on X** with your network and read ClearPath's "**Permitting 101**" for how permitting delays hold back new energy and what it will take to fix them.

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2. NEW Political Climate episode: "Can the Permitting Reform Coalition Hold?"



The bipartisan permitting deal has united a remarkably broad coalition, and that momentum gives Congress a clear opportunity to act this year. On the latest episode of **Political Climate**, Punchbowl News senior energy reporter Josh Siegel joined its hosts to discuss how support for BAAJA can carry the bill through the midterms and into the lame-duck session.

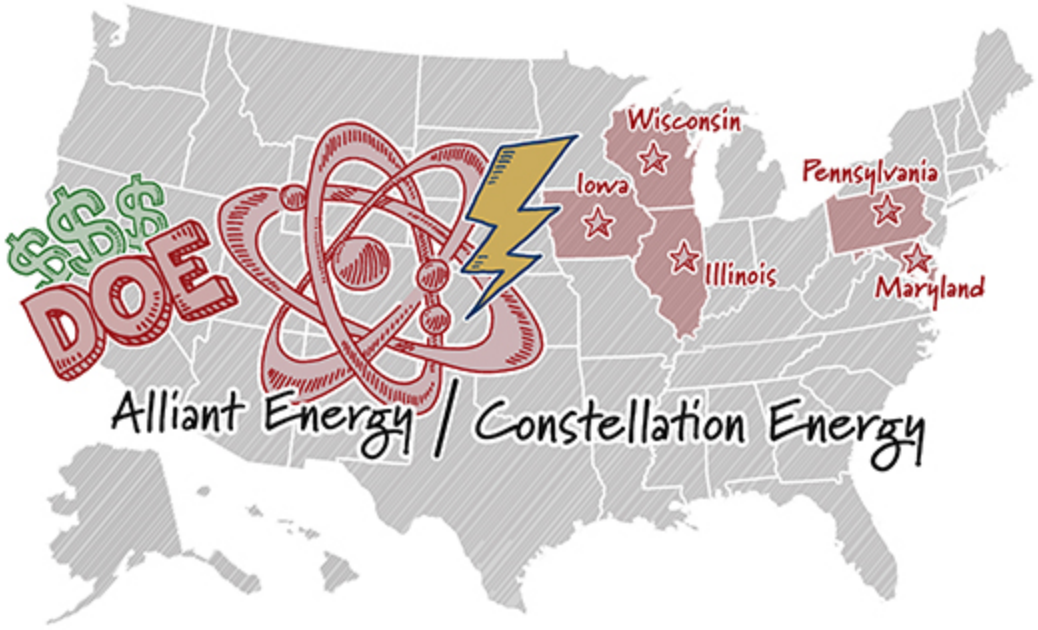
The episode covers:

- How BAAJA brings Republicans', Democrats' and all energy groups' interests together behind a shared goal of building faster;
- How faster permits, transmission and grid connections pair with new protections that keep data center power costs off ratepayers' bills; and
- The path to passage in the lame-duck session after the midterms.

Listen and share: **Share this episode on X** with your network and **listen to the full episode** for an inside look at the broad support behind the permitting deal and its path to passage.

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3. DOE finances new firm power across the Midwest and Mid-Atlantic



DOE's Office of Energy Dominance Financing (EDF) made two major announcements this week. EDF finalized a **$5.1 billion loan package** with **Alliant Energy** to add more than 2.6 gigawatts of new or upgraded generation across Iowa and Wisconsin. EDF also announced a new conditional commitment of up to **$5 billion earlier this week to Constellation Energy** for nuclear uprates in Illinois, Maryland and Pennsylvania.

The financing will:

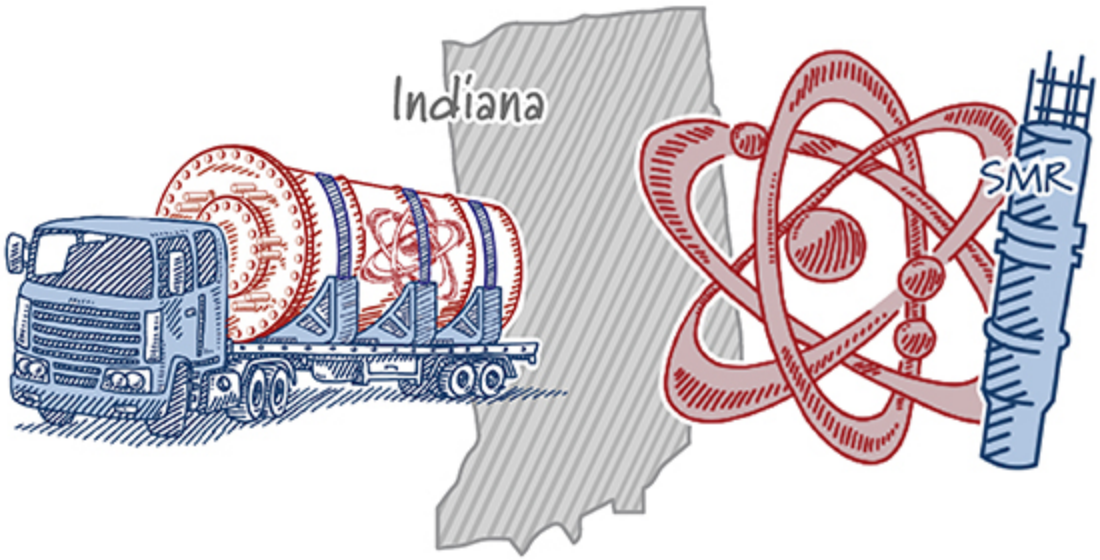
- Support new natural gas-fired power plants, energy storage systems and upgrades to existing generation facilities, including nuclear power plants;
- Deliver more than $1 billion in electricity cost savings for families and businesses across both regions; and
- Produce enough electricity to power nearly 2 million homes in Alliant's footprint in Iowa and Wisconsin, and 930,000 homes in Illinois, Maryland and Pennsylvania receiving power from Constellation.

What's clear: Affordable, reliable power depends on utilities adding generation as fast as demand grows. Low-cost federal financing lets utilities expand capacity while passing savings on to ratepayers, and pairing new natural gas plants with upgrades to existing facilities delivers firm power on the timeline that rising demand requires.

Read and share: **Share this announcement on X** with your network and read ClearPath's "**The New Realities of Grid Planning: A Dominion Energy Case Study**" for how utilities are adding generation to keep pace with surging electricity demand.

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4. Indiana advances three paths to new nuclear power



Indiana is emerging as a proving ground for American nuclear energy. In October alone, Indiana has been home to announcements exploring microreactors for military use, a cluster of high-temperature gas reactors and 6 gigawatts of large Canada Deuterium Uranium (CANDU) reactors.

What to know:

- **American Electric Power (AEP)**, **Amazon** and **X-energy** **signed agreements** to evaluate a 960-megawatt deployment of 12 X-energy Xe-100 reactors at the former Breed Generating Station, a retired coal plant in Sullivan County, with Amazon funding development and pledging to cover the project's full costs;
- **AtkinsRéalis**, the state of Indiana and **Hoosier Energy** **signed a memorandum of understanding** to evaluate a campus of up to eight CANDU reactors delivering up to 6 gigawatts of baseload power; and
- The U.S. Navy **selected** **Radiant's** one-megawatt Kaleidos microreactor for Naval Weapons Station Crane under the Janus program.

What's clear: Rising demand calls for reactors of every size, and Indiana shows how utilities, cooperatives, technology companies and the military can each advance new nuclear. Repowering retired coal sites and pairing private capital with willing communities offer a model other states can follow.

Read and share: **Share this announcement on X** with your network and read ClearPath's "**Advanced Nuclear Energy Is Coming to U.S. Military Bases**" for why deploying advanced reactors at military installations strengthens energy security and the broader nuclear industry.

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5. USDA backs farm innovation with new conservation grants



American farmers adopt new practices fastest when they can test them on their own land. USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service **is investing $65 million** in 34 Conservation Innovation Grant projects that develop and field-test new tools, practices and technologies for conservation on private working lands. Many of the awardees focus on nutrient management and fertilizer innovation, helping farmers apply nutrients more precisely and use every input more efficiently, thereby reducing nitrous oxide emissions.

The grants will:

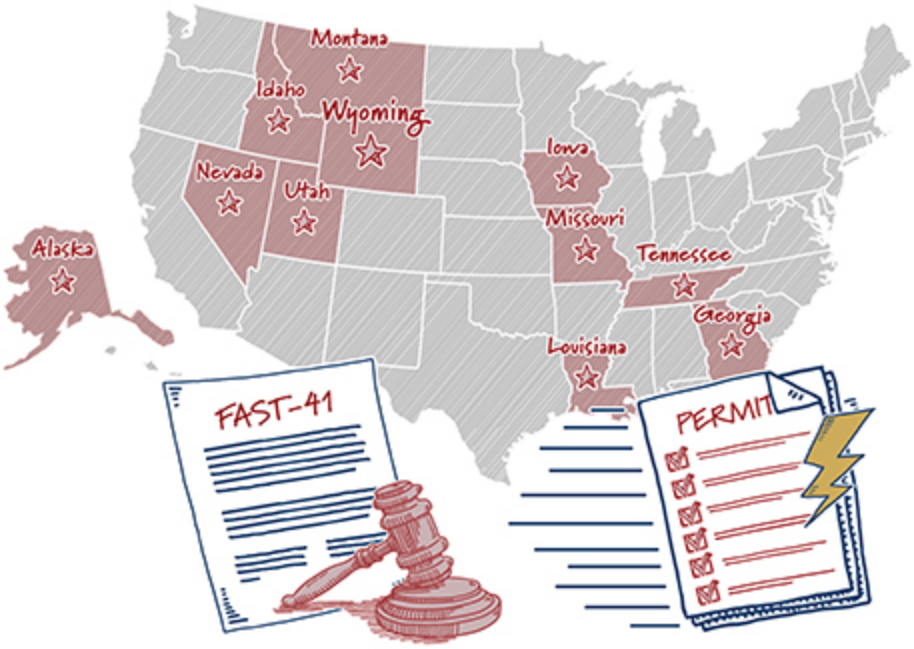
- Fund 16 On-Farm Trial projects with up to $50 million, offsetting the risk of testing new approaches on producer operations;
- Support 18 Classic projects with up to $15 million for the development of new tools, technologies and market-based solutions; and
- Advance fertilizer innovation, from an Illinois decision tool that uses field sensors and weather data to guide when and where farmers apply nitrogen to projects on biochar and biological products.

What's clear: Innovations that farmers can test on their own fields turn into adoption. Precision nutrient management helps American farmers grow more with every dollar spent on fertilizer while reducing emissions and conserving the soil and water their operations depend on.

Read and share: **Share this announcement on X** with your network and read ClearPath's "**Conservation Innovation Grants: Putting American Farmers First Through Fertilizer Innovation**" for how these grants can expand fertilizer innovation and lower farmers' input costs.

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6. Wyoming and Montana bring Permitting Council's state MOUs to 11



Critical infrastructure projects advance faster when state and federal environmental reviews are coordinated and transparent. This week, the Permitting Council (FPISC) signed its 10th and 11th federal-state agreements to align state permitting timelines with federal reviews. FPISC **signed with Wyoming** in Cheyenne on Monday, and the state said all new projects that qualify for FAST-41 will opt in to the program. On Wednesday, FPISC Executive Director Emily Domenech and Montana Gov. Greg Gianforte **signed Montana's agreement** in Philipsburg, making it the 11th state to opt into the FAST-41 process.

What to know:

- State and federal reviews for critical infrastructure in both states will run in parallel instead of sequentially, so projects avoid stacked delays;
- Wyoming's and Montana's state permitting actions will appear on the public **Federal Permitting Dashboard** alongside federal milestones; and

- The two states join Alaska, which signed the first federal-state agreement last year, along with Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Louisiana, Missouri, Nevada, Tennessee and Utah.

What's clear: Aligning the state and federal permitting processes makes them efficient and predictable for key energy infrastructure. Predictable timelines lower the risk for project sponsors, and lower risk brings more investment into the states that provide it. Congress can bring more projects into coordinated review by **lowering FAST-41's eligibility threshold**.

Read and share: **Share this announcement on X** with your network and read ClearPath Action's "**Expanding the FAST Track Act**" for how cutting FAST-41's project threshold from $200 million to $50 million would give smaller energy projects coordinated federal review.

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7. ARPA-E aims to double output from America's shale



America's subsurface holds far more energy and minerals than today's wells recover. To tap more of this energy potential, DOE's Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-E) **opened up to $45 million** in funding for its new Unlocking New Levels of Output and Capacity for Key Subsurface Resources (UNLOCK) program. The program will develop technologies to increase oil and gas recovery from tight rock formations like shale, with applications for geothermal energy and the extraction of critical minerals and rare earth elements.

What to know:

- The program aims to **double per-well recovery** while holding per-unit costs and wastewater flat or lower, since more than 80 percent of the resource in these formations now stays in the ground;
- ARPA-E expects to fund nine to 12 projects that pair new stimulation or recovery methods with integrated sensing and modeling, validated in lab and field trials; and
- Eligible work extends to enhanced geothermal systems and in-place recovery of minerals and metals.

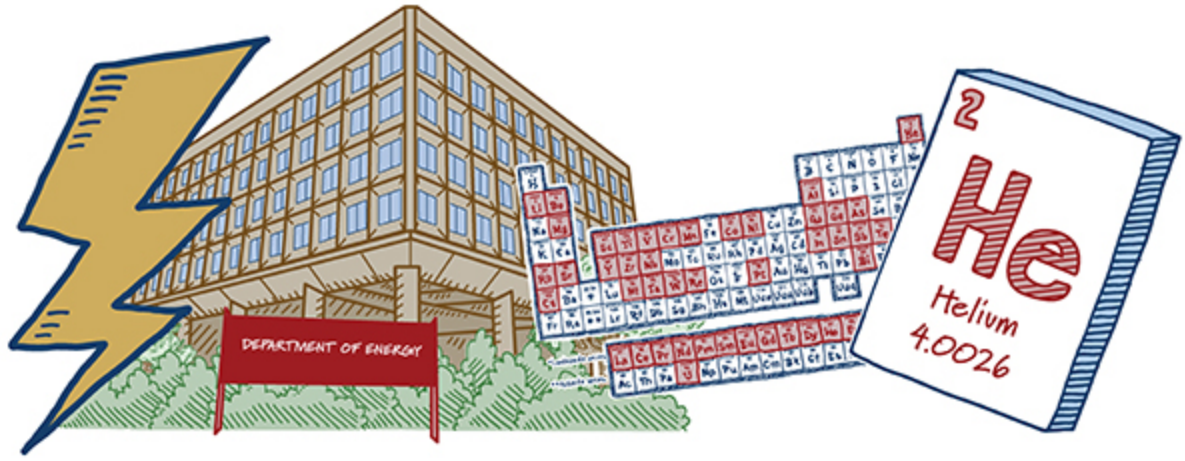
Coming down the pipeline: To see ARPA-E innovations firsthand, **register** for the Energy Innovation Showcase: ARPA-E on the Hill, hosted by ClearPath, Third Way and Bipartisan Policy Center on November 17.

What's clear: American drilling expertise built the shale revolution, and the same know-how can deliver far more from every well. Advancing subsurface innovation strengthens domestic supply chains for energy and minerals and expands the reach of next-generation geothermal.

Read and share: **Share this announcement on X** with your network and read ClearPath's "**Geothermal and the Next Era of American Energy**" for how American drilling expertise positions the U.S. to lead in next-generation geothermal.

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8. DOE names helium a critical material



DOE **designated helium as a critical material**, citing its essential role in semiconductor manufacturing and growing supply chain risks. The United States holds significant deposits of helium-rich natural gas, yet limited refining capacity and lengthy permitting timelines continue to constrain domestic production.

What to know:

- Helium has no viable substitute in many applications and is critical to semiconductor manufacturing.
- Cultivating the significant domestic sources of helium-rich natural gas will protect against supply shocks and support industrial growth.

What's clear: DOE's critical material designation recognizes a material's importance to U.S. energy security and helps prioritize federal research, development and funding opportunities. This action will help expand U.S. production and processing capacity to support U.S. manufacturing competitiveness and national security.

Read and share: **Share this announcement on X** with your network and read ClearPath's "**Could Enhanced Mineral Recovery Solve America's Critical Minerals Bottleneck?**" for how American innovation can recover scarce materials at home and reduce reliance on overseas suppliers.

9. The Circuit



ClearPath's Emily Johnson and Bill Meierling toured the **Duane Arnold Energy Center**, the only nuclear power plant in Iowa. NextEra is planning to bring the plant back online by early 2029, backed by a 25-year PPA with Google and a $1.9 billion loan from DOE's EDF.

10. ICYMI

- Sen. Kevin Cramer (R-ND) **urged Congress** to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank of the United States before its charter expires in December in his latest op-ed in *The Hill*.
- USDA **is investing** more than $325 million in 42 Regional Conservation Partnership Program projects across 37 states and territories, pairing federal and partner funding for producer-led conservation.
- USDA and NASA **signed an agreement** to bring NASA's Earth observation data and analytical expertise to USDA's crop and agricultural statistics.
- Applied Carbon **secured** $72 million through Citi's new innovative financing structure: a Carbon Removal-Linked Note to support scaling of Applied Carbon's biochar operations in Texas to turn agricultural residue into soil-enriching biochar for farms.
- DOE **awarded** a total of $16 million through its **PROSPECT** initiative to 16 universities to expand training for America's mining and critical minerals workforce.
- Interior Secretary Doug Burgum **signed an order** to open more federal land to grazing and clear the backlog of grazing permit renewals through a new Rangeland Health Initiative.
- USDA's Agricultural Research Service **opened** the Southwest Watershed Research Center in Tucson, Arizona, to help farmers and ranchers make the most of scarce water across the Southwest.
- The Bureau of Land Management's California geothermal lease sale **drew** about $3.7 million in winning bids for 16 parcels spanning more than 33,000 acres, surpassing its 2025 sale.
- The EPA published a **proposal** to approve Utah's application to permit its own Class VI carbon storage wells, which would make Utah the eighth state to hold that authority.
- DOE **unveiled** a national battery strategy that aims to build a fully integrated domestic battery supply chain by 2030 and secure U.S. leadership in battery

technology and manufacturing by 2035.



ClearPath believes America must lead the world in innovation over regulation… markets over mandates…providing affordable, reliable, clean energy.

That's all from us. Thanks for reading and have a great weekend!

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