



UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON

ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

SENATOR LISA MURKOWSKI, *Chairman*

Electric Transmission Infrastructure Permitting Improvement Act

S. 1217 creates an interagency team with a lead contact to improve the timeliness of transmission project permitting.

Background

Electric transmission projects involve multiple stakeholders and are subject to numerous permitting requirements. In 2009, the Obama Administration recognized that federal agencies needed to coordinate their transmission-related work since “delays in securing needed statutory reviews, permits, and consultations can threaten timely completion of these projects.” This legislation would establish an Interagency Rapid Response Team to streamline and enhance the transparency of the federal permitting process. It would also create a Transmission Ombudsperson position to resolve issues and bring accountability to the process.

Key Provisions

- Builds off the Obama Administration’s [Memorandum of Understanding](#) Regarding Coordination in Federal Agency Review of Electric Transmission Facilities on Federal Land, October 23, 2009, to establish a rapid response team, comprised of representatives from nine Federal agencies, to facilitate coordination and documentation among electric transmission infrastructure project permit applicants and government agencies.
- Ensures that all electric transmission infrastructure projects are posted on the Federal permitting transmission public tracking system, [e-Trans](#), to facilitate transparency and accountability. Posted information would include the current status and expected completion date for each project.
- Requires annual reports to Congress on the average completion time for projects.
- Creates a Transmission Ombudsperson within the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to address interagency issues or delays on permits, and to receive and resolve complaints from parties involved in electric transmission infrastructure permit applications.
- Ensures that Federal entities are allowed to construct and maintain electric transmission projects on existing rights-of-way without additional Federal requirements.