



June 12, 2020

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write to commend the bold and swift action your administration has taken to minimize unnecessary red tape and lock in regulatory relief as our country responds to the COVID-19 pandemic. Your recent Executive Order on Accelerating the Nation's Economic Recovery from the COVID-19 Emergency by Expediting Infrastructure Investments and Other Activities, along with Executive Order 13924 on Regulatory Relief to Support Economic Recovery, help to connect the dots between removing barriers to emergency response and a stronger economic recovery as our country starts to reopen for business.

Under your leadership, federal agencies have rescinded, suspended, and fast-tracked hundreds of unneeded or counter-productive rules to fight the disease as well provide flexibility to American businesses, workers, and innovators to deliver essential goods and services. These orders constitute a starting gun for these agencies to redouble these efforts and think more broadly about removing barriers to a stronger economic recovery.

We are proud to support this effort, as well as to be a partner of the White House's Initiative on Workforce Mobility and Regulatory Innovation. We believe that pushing forward with commonsense reforms of burdensome regulations is necessary and creates a path for broad, durable reforms to an administrative state that all too often stands in the way of economic opportunity and growth.

Whether it is skyscrapers, wind turbines, roads, bridges, ventilators, or hospital beds, building things in our country has become unnecessarily difficult. When federal approval is required, these regulatory hurdles can stop projects altogether through endless delays, years of litigation, and thousands of pages of paperwork – prohibiting any of the intended community impacts and resulting in few if any benefits to the environment, health, or safety to show for it. These reviews can add a decade or more to key construction projects and, according to estimates from the Texas A&M Transportation Institute, can add between \$87,000 and \$1.3 million of cost for every month of delay, depending on the size of the project.

This red tape is not limited to requirements under the National Environmental Policy Act and Endangered Species Act. Federal agencies should cast a wide net and consider emergency and economic exemptions, and the attached report identifies a variety of statutory, executive order, and regulatory barriers to infrastructure and recovery projects that could be waived under the legal authorities identified.



We also agree with underlying goals like continued environmental improvement and getting individuals back to work in good-paying jobs, but a better way to achieve these outcomes at this time is to remove barriers to opportunity and unleash economic growth. These federal requirements, while well-intentioned, can needlessly hold up important projects, from hospitals to repairs of road and bridges to renewable energy generation to manufacturing facilities for critical products, that would result in *real* health, environmental, and safety progress.

Our state and grassroots leaders are ready to continue working with your administration to empower every community as they start their path for a robust economic recovery.

We believe Congress should do its part to make many of these changes permanent by enacting lasting, bottom-up reforms that address decades of unchecked and often unnecessary regulatory accumulation. But with millions of Americans out of work right now, congressional inaction should not derail the decisive steps you are taking to remove barriers to work and revive every American business.

We stand ready to keep working together to remove barriers to opportunities for millions of Americans, especially the least fortunate in our society.

Sincerely,

Brent Gardner
Chief Government Affairs Officer
Americans for Prosperity