



# Permitting Reform

Improving Pennsylvania’s competitiveness will help all our residents, workers, families and businesses have greater economic opportunity. Adopting a more welcoming tax and regulatory policy will benefit our future and lead to the building of a more modernized infrastructure system, establish advanced manufacturing hubs in innovative industries, and continue to provide the energy and goods needed in a diverse, 21st century economy.

The PA Chamber supports the following reforms to help get new projects permitted and built:

## Third-Party Review of Permits

With state agencies reporting workforce challenges, we recommend providing permitting agencies be given the option to contract with qualified third-parties to assist with the technical review of permits. Such is the case in states like Massachusetts, Washington and New Jersey.



## Codify the Governor’s One Stop Shop

The PA Chamber stood with Gov. Shapiro, his cabinet and leaders from business and organized labor for the signing of an executive order to establish a one-stop shop to streamline permits for key projects. We recommend codifying this office into statute to provide long-term durability to the approach.



## Streamlined Permit Appeals

Once a permit is issued, it is possible the decision is challenged in court. We recommend limiting the scope of review for permit challenges going before the Environmental Hearing Board to only those issues raised during public comment. This is the approach used for most federal environmental statutes. If it’s important enough to sue over, it’s important enough to have raised during public comment.



## Stop Draining Agency Resources

Permit review times are protracted in part because of DEP, should it lose a permit appeal, potentially being on the hook for attorney’s fees, which activist groups use as a source of funding. We support state government having the resources to do its job by limiting awarding of legal fees only in cases of bad faith.



## Shot Clocks and Deemed Approved

Timely permit decisions are necessary to get projects financed and built. We recommend a set timeframe for permits to be reviewed and issued — and be “deemed approved” if the agency does not make a decision in the time defined in statute.

