



**National Conference of State Legislatures
Office of State-Federal Relations**

President Issues Executive Order for High Priority Infrastructure Projects

Jan. 24, 2017

President Donald Trump [signed](#) an executive order (EO) on Jan. 24 aimed at expediting reviews and approvals of high priority infrastructure projects. After citing the positive effects of infrastructure projects, the EO notes such projects are too often delayed because of “agency processes and procedures.” To that end, the EO establishes a process for infrastructure projects that requires federal environmental reviews and approvals to be declared “high priority.”

A project may be declared “high priority” if a governor, the head of any executive agency or department, or the chairman of the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) requests it. If a declaration is requested, the CEQ would then have 30 days to make a decision, taking into account the project's importance to the general welfare, value to the nation, environmental benefits, and other factors as the chairman deems relevant.

Upon receiving the status of “high priority,” the chairman of the CEQ would coordinate with the relevant agency to establish expedited procedures and deadlines for completion of environmental reviews and approvals, consistent with current law. The executive order concludes, however, by noting that nothing in the order shall affect authority already granted in law to executive departments or agencies.

In addition to this executive order, Trump also issued four other presidential memorandums concerning [Construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline](#), [Construction of the Keystone XL Pipeline](#), [Construction of American Pipelines](#), and [Streamlining Permitting and Reducing Regulatory Burdens for Domestic Manufacturing](#).

For any further questions or concerns, please contact NCSL staff [Ben Husch](#) (202-624-7779) or [Kristen Hildreth](#) (202-624-3597).