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NAED Member, Tom Click, Speaks at House Leadership Press Conference

On September 3, Tom Click, President and CEO of Patriot Industries, joined House Speaker, Mike Johnson, and other members of Republican Leadership, for a wide-ranging press conference. Tom, alongside his wife, Sarah, talked about the positive impact that a pro-growth, predictable tax environment has on his company and employees.

Washington Wire readers may recall that Tom was a witness at a joint Small Business Committee hearing in April to highlight changes he hoped Congress would make as debate started on the massive reconciliation bill that passed in July. [A video of the event can be seen here.](#)

Kudos to Tom and his wife for participating in the event and highlighting how NAED and our members are doing their part to keep America working!

Comments - Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Laws

NAED recently submitted comments to a Department of Justice Request for Information (RFI) on state laws that have an impact on the economy or interstate commerce.

The [comments](#) submitted focus on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) laws, which are meant to encourage a “circular economy”, which proponents claim will reduce environmental impact of packaging materials for various consumer goods. The underlying framework for these EPRs is to hold the producer responsible for the lifecycle impact of these packaging materials.

Currently, seven states have implemented these statutes, and eight states have introduced similar legislation, though some have failed.

While we raise several concerns, the argument focuses against the fact that distributors are classified as “producers”, even though distributors do not manufacture goods and have no control over the products used to package the goods. Also, third-party, non-profit firms have been granted enforcement powers over these programs, raising major questions about transparency, due process, and compliance costs. Finally, the lack of harmonization across states, retroactive fee structures, and heavy financial burdens threaten both large and small businesses.

We closed the comments by noting that the Department of Justice should review the legal arguments made by the National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors, which is engaged in a lawsuit on the Oregon law, and supplement existing recycling initiatives run by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). We note that bolstering the EPA recycling program, alongside industry-supported efforts to reduce waste, would be a more logical way to proceed.

Permitting Reform Push Begins

The legislative push to advance permitting reform has begun. On September 10, the House Natural Resources Committee held a hearing on the Standardizing Permitting and Expediting Economic Development (SPEED) Act, legislation that would help alleviate permitting backlogs by amending the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) process. The 1970s NEPA Act established a process where federal agencies evaluate the environmental impacts of their proposed actions and involve the public in the decision-making process.

Outside groups and think tanks have also increased their efforts to encourage permitting reform, arguing that streamlining regulations is essential to expand U.S. energy production, power artificial intelligence, and strengthen global competitiveness. The efforts are gaining traction but face steep political hurdles in Congress as Republicans seek Democratic buy-in amid sharp partisan divides over energy, permitting, and executive actions.

Members of the House Natural Resources Committee (one of the congressional Committees with jurisdiction over permitting) received testimony from outside experts on ways to streamline NEPA reviews in a technology-neutral way. Democrats did signal a willingness to ease federal environmental reviews for energy projects but warned they won’t support permitting reform unless President Trump halts actions blocking renewable projects like offshore wind.

Opposing OSHA Overreach

NAED joined 44 organizations to again oppose the so-called Warehouse Worker Protection Act.

Despite its title, the Warehouse Worker Protection Act (S.2613/H.R.4896) does not protect warehouse workers; rather, it would reimpose outdated and impractical regulations on distribution centers, significantly limit employers’ due process rights in contesting OSHA citations, and hinder a critical part of the nation’s supply chain.

For example, the proposal revives OSHA's discarded ergonomics standard, a rule Congress rejected more than two decades ago on a strong bipartisan basis. It would also compel businesses to adopt costly corrective actions before OSHA proves any violation, creating a burdensome regulatory regime that micromanages warehousing and distribution.

The correspondence noted that employers are committed to worker safety, but this bill would not improve conditions and instead would disrupt operations and add unnecessary costs.

Opposition to the bill has been voiced from employers across industries, as it could create serious risks to the efficient functioning of U.S. supply chains.