

S 604

Highway Rights-of-Way Permitting Efficiency Act of 2017

Congress: 115 (2017–2019, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Transportation and Public Works

Introduced: Mar 9, 2017

Current Status: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Latest Action: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works. (Mar 9, 2017)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/604>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Hatch, Orrin G. [R-UT]

Party: Republican • **State:** UT • **Chamber:** Senate

Cosponsors (4 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Daines, Steve [R-MT]	R · MT		Mar 9, 2017
Sen. Fischer, Deb [R-NE]	R · NE		Mar 9, 2017
Sen. Capito, Shelley Moore [R-WV]	R · WV		Mar 23, 2017
Sen. Ernst, Joni [R-IA]	R · IA		Apr 4, 2017

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Environment and Public Works Committee	Senate	Referred To	Mar 9, 2017

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Transportation and Public Works

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
115 HR 4824	Related bill	Sep 17, 2018: Received in the Senate.

Highway Rights-of-Way Permitting Efficiency Act of 2017

This bill requires the Department of Agriculture (USDA), with respect to National Forest System land, and the Department of the Interior, with respect to Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land, to establish a program to enter into memoranda of understanding with states to allow for the permitting of broadband within an operational right-of-way to enable broadband providers to install infrastructure that allows users to originate and receive high-quality voice, data, graphics, and video telecommunications.

The "operational right-of-way" is defined as all real property interests (including easements) acquired for the construction or operation of a project.

A state's governor, or a state's top-ranking transportation official in charge of highway construction, may enter into such a memorandum for a term not to exceed 10 years if the state consents to: (1) federal court jurisdiction, (2) federal environmental review procedures, (3) judicial review of decisions regarding the public availability of documents, (4) maintenance of necessary financial resources, and (5) the provision of any information that USDA or Interior needs to ensure that the state is carrying out its responsibilities.

USDA and Interior must designate projects within an existing operational right-of-way as actions categorically excluded from federal regulations relating to environmental assessments or environmental impact statements.

Interior must establish a Federal Permit Streamlining Project in each BLM field office with responsibility for issuing permits for broadband projects. Under the program, Interior acts as the lead agency for the issuance of a single permit on behalf of all other federal agencies involved in a broadband project through a memorandum of understanding with USDA, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Federal Highway Administration, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Actions Timeline

- **Mar 9, 2017:** Introduced in Senate
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