

H.R. 3592, Protect LNG Act

As ordered reported by the House Committee on the Judiciary on September 10, 2025

By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2026	2026-2030	2026-2035
Direct Spending (Outlays)	0	*	*
Revenues	0	0	0
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	0	*	*
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	*	*	not estimated
Increases <i>net direct spending</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2036?	No	Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply?	Yes
		Mandate Effects	
Increases <i>on-budget deficits</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2036?	No	Contains intergovernmental mandate?	Yes, Under Threshold
		Contains private-sector mandate?	Yes, Under Threshold
* = between -\$500,000 and \$500,000.			

H.R. 3592 would amend litigation procedures for challenges to environmental reviews of liquefied natural gas (LNG) projects. The Department of Energy typically conducts environmental reviews for projects to export or import natural gas, while the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) conducts them for projects related to LNG facilities.

Specifically, the bill would:

- Prohibit courts from vacating permits or licenses for LNG projects while the environmental review is being challenged (requiring the relevant federal agency to resolve any disputes concurrently),
- Require courts to expedite cases that challenge certain environmental reviews,
- Establish time limitations for challenging the environmental review in court, and
- Prohibit plaintiffs in such cases from being awarded attorneys' fees.

CBO expects that implementing H.R. 3592 could streamline the environmental review process for LNG projects and thus accelerate the production of natural gas on federal lands and increase royalty payments for that natural gas. Because CBO does not expect that the

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changes under the bill would significantly affect the time needed to construct LNG infrastructure, CBO estimates that any increases in offsetting receipts from royalty payments (which are recorded in the budget as reductions in direct spending) would total less than \$500,000 over the 2026-2035 period.

In addition, CBO expects that prohibiting the government from reimbursing attorneys' fees under the bill would reduce claims out of the Judgment Fund; such payments are classified as direct spending. Based on the number of expected cases per year, CBO estimates that enacting that provision would reduce direct spending by less than \$500,000 over the 2026-2035 period.

CBO further estimates that implementing the bill would have no significant net effect on spending subject to appropriation. The bill would not significantly affect the scope of federal agencies' reviews of applications for LNG projects, and CBO expects that meeting the requirements in the bill would not require a significant change in the level of discretionary funding provided to those agencies. Further, because FERC is authorized to collect fees to recover its costs (which are controlled through annual appropriation acts), CBO estimates that net costs for FERC would be negligible.

H.R. 3592 would impose intergovernmental and private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) by prohibiting courts from invalidating or setting aside permits, licenses, or approvals of LNG facilities. This would impose a mandate under UMRA by significantly curtailing the ability of public and private entities to compel agencies to address deficiencies in their application of the Natural Gas Act or the National Environmental Policy Act. Because challenges made under the Administrative Procedures Act typically do not result in monetary damages, CBO estimates the cost of the mandates would not exceed the UMRA thresholds for intergovernmental and private-sector mandates (\$103 million and \$206 million in 2025, respectively, adjusted annually for inflation).

The CBO staff contacts for this estimate are Aaron Krupkin (for the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission), Lilia Ledezma (for onshore gas), and Brandon Lever (for mandates). The estimate was reviewed by H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis.

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