

119<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS 2<sup>ND</sup> Session

# The NSSGA Legislative Agenda

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NATIONAL STONE, SAND  
& GRAVEL ASSOCIATION

## ROCKS BUILD AMERICA

Aggregates are the second most utilized product in the world and are the foundation to create buildings, roads, airports and bridges. They are indispensable in developing the infrastructure needed to access clean water; deliver reliable energy; advance environmental stewardship; and build the transportation networks that sustain our lives.



### The National Stone, Sand & Gravel Association (NSSGA)

represents the men and women who work every day to produce over 2.5 billion tons of aggregates each year and over 100 million tons of industrial sand. NSSGA members are actively engaged in advancing policies that improve our infrastructure and build sustainable communities. Below is an overview of the specific policies NSSGA is working to address with the 119th Congress and the Trump administration, as we collectively work to build a better future.

## PASS THE NEXT SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BILL: INVEST IN OUR NATION'S INFRASTRUCTURE

*The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 (IIJA)* was a historic step toward addressing our nation's infrastructure challenges, but there are notable areas where Congress must continue to act on improving our surface transportation network. We encourage the 119th Congress to build on past investments and enact long-term legislation before *IIJA* expires this September. The next surface transportation reauthorization should ensure we have the necessary resources to keep our nation's transportation network competitive with our adversaries, grow our economy, and keep America moving safely and efficiently. Below are key issues NSSGA continues to support:

■ **Sensible Infrastructure Investment that Keeps America Competitive:** It is critical that Congress provides the necessary investment to ensure the United States stays competitive with our foreign adversaries, like China, which leads the world in transportation infrastructure spending relative to GDP. Before September 2026, Congress must consider the next surface transportation reauthorization and send a strong message to nations worldwide that the U.S. can unite to improve our outdated systems; support increased domestic manufacturing and population growth; advance our national economy; and stay competitive on the world stage.

NSSGA supports a multi-year reauthorization of the Federal-aid Highway Program, with reliable, predictable multi-year funding. Multi-year funding, with appropriate year-over-year increases, is the foundation upon which state and local governments and their partners across the construction industry plan, design, engineer, construct, operate and maintain infrastructure year-over-year.

■ **Highway Trust Fund Solvency:** While we applaud Congress for fully funding the Highway Trust Fund (HTF) in 2021, Congress must look beyond the traditional five-year timeframe to

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ensure long-term solvency. The next surface transportation reauthorization bill must incorporate visionary and evolutionary revenue increases to avoid a devastating shortfall, which has been put off for decades. NSSGA supports sustainable revenue sources to adequately fund needed investments and create financial certainty, including: vehicle-miles-traveled (VMTs) proposals; bonding measures; registration fees for electric and hybrid vehicles consistent with the user-pays principle; national registration fees; and the raising and indexing of the federal gas tax, which has been unchanged for over 30 years. As discussions about the HTF unfold, we support consideration of all potential funding methods. It's crucial to explore sustainable and stable funding sources, while explicitly avoiding reliance on yearly appropriations, which could jeopardize the consistency and effectiveness of infrastructure investments.

■ **Maintain the Construction Materials Exemption from Federal Buy America Requirements:** One of the key policy changes made under *IJA* was the creation of new federal Build America Buy America (BABA) sourcing requirements, which include the addition of “construction materials” to Buy America

## PRO-GROWTH TAX AND TRADE POLICIES

Pro-growth tax and trade policies are important to aggregate and industrial sand producers, along with the manufacturers and businesses that supply them. NSSGA supported new trade agreements, such as USMCA, that restored predictability to North American trade markets and limited disruptions to the construction equipment supply chain. Such trade agreements enable more efficient product delivery and reduced costs for equipment purchasers. We look forward to partnering with Congress and the Trump administration to introduce and enact additional agreements that will level the playing field for our nation, leading to stronger economic growth and creating good-paying jobs. NSSGA supports Congressional efforts to re-establish the Executive Branch's authority to negotiate trade agreements through “fast track” Trade Promotion Authority.

■ **Tariffs:** President Trump continues to implement global tariffs, which he has supported since the campaign. These tariffs directly affect the aggregates industry, as many parts of the country must import material from our neighboring countries and buy equipment from manufacturers utilizing global supply chains. NSSGA supports an exclusion from the tariffs for construction materials and aggregates such as stone, sand or gravel, or aggregate binding agent additives.

■ **Taxes:** NSSGA applauds passage of the *One Big Beautiful Bill*, often referred to as the Working Families Tax Cuts Act, which provides certainty for aggregates operators to make necessary capital investments, create jobs and drive economic growth. The legislation makes several key business tax provisions permanent,

preferences across federal infrastructure programs. Due to sourcing challenges, the construction materials industry fought for a statutory exclusion. Congress recognized these challenges and provided an exemption in Section 70917 (c) of “cement and cementitious materials, aggregates such as stone, sand, or gravel, or aggregate binding agents or additives,” as well as wet concrete and asphalt. We ask Congress to recognize and maintain this commonsense exclusion in the next surface transportation reauthorization bill.

■ **Material Neutrality — Ensuring Fair Access to Materials Research, Development & Deployment:** We strongly believe Congress should maintain and support material neutral, performance-based research and deployment improvement investments into building materials solutions. We urge policymakers to incorporate material-neutral language and refrain from language that gives one construction material a meritless advantage over others.

Industry operators value innovation. We are constantly working to develop state-of-the-art technologies to enhance durability and improve the performance and sustainability of our nation's infrastructure.

Congress should not limit critical research dollars or promote one material over others through exclusive marketing activities. Projects should be selected on their merits, and decisions should be left to engineers who best understand the unique costs and performance specification variables of their projects, and those with technical expertise in designing and executing projects. This will ensure that only the best solutions for our infrastructure challenges are delivered at a cost-friendly solution for taxpayers.

including bonus depreciation for eligible property acquired after January 19, 2025; domestic research expenditures; and small business deductions through qualified business income (QBI) deductions (Section 199A). Additionally, the bill maintains a higher estate and gift tax exemption, setting it at a \$15 million base for single filers starting in 2026 and indexing it for inflation, while also protecting percentage depletion for land and other property when accounting for adjusted financial statement income. We look forward to continuing to work with Congress and the IRS on implementation.

## ENSURING SAFE AND EFFICIENT PRODUCTION OF AGGREGATES

Those working in the aggregates and industrial sand industries take great pride in safely and efficiently supplying the nation with vital building materials. Health and safety are industry values inherent in the daily routines at our facilities, at our customers' sites and within our communities. NSSGA works to ensure our products can meet varying market demands and strict specifications, as efficiently as possible, to keep costs low for customers and taxpayers. We actively support policies that encourage economic growth and lead to responsible investments in the infrastructure that improve our daily lives. Below are the specific issues NSSGA continues to work on within this topic:

■ **Workforce Development:** A skilled and highly trained, inclusive and diverse workforce is paramount to safely operating quarries. Unfortunately, many producers have difficulty hiring and retaining an adequate workforce in today's challenging labor market. The aggregates and industrial sand industries take pride in investing in their employees by providing attractive salaries, competitive benefits, robust training, support, and career development. Our industry's average annual salary is over \$75,000, and most employees spend their entire careers in the industry. NSSGA supports policies and funding from the federal government to train workers, increase workforce diversity, and ensure producers can access the skilled employees needed to continue producing the building blocks of America. We support legislation that seeks to expand mine engineering and related fields at colleges and universities and develop vocational education programs supporting the mining industry. We also encourage Congress and the administration to continue its bipartisan support for programs that work with America's veterans, active and reserve service members, and their families to find meaningful careers and employment opportunities. Finally, we urge Congress to examine and update our immigration laws and provide new opportunities to increase the legal workforce in the United States.

■ **Workforce Safety and Health Standards:** Aggregates and industrial sand producers are committed to promoting the health and safety of their most precious resources - their workers. We support reasonable regulations and standards that are based on sound science. NSSGA welcomes the Mine Safety and Health Administration's (MSHA) decision to revisit portions of the Respirable Crystalline Silica Rule. NSSGA supports issuance of the rule and has been clear that it does not challenge the reduction of the permissible exposure limit from 100  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  to 50  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ . We look forward to reviewing a proposed rule that is highly protective of miners, grounded in sound science, and feasible for operators to implement. NSSGA was also pleased to hear that HHS reinstated staff at the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and specifically, in the Mining Research Division in Pittsburgh and Spokane. NIOSH plays an integral role in research and development that will help grow and improve the nation's mining industries. NSSGA is committed to working collaboratively with our members, MSHA, NIOSH and other partners to advance safety and health across the aggregates industry. By working together and embracing technology and innovation, we can modernize, improve efficiency, and create safer, healthier workplaces—while continuing to deliver the materials that are essential to building and maintaining the nation's infrastructure.

## BUILDING RESPONSIBLY

NSSGA members are leaders in taking aggressive action to protect our environment and produce construction materials responsibly and sustainably. NSSGA supports science-based federal standards that protect public health and the environment and provide economic opportunity. Below are issues NSSGA continues to work on within this topic:

■ **Permitting Reform:** All infrastructure projects, from roads and bridges to energy, housing, manufacturing and water systems, rely on a reliable local aggregate supply. Yet today's permitting system often causes long delays, duplicative reviews and ongoing legal uncertainty, driving up costs and preventing projects from moving forward, even after years of review. NSSGA supports broad, bipartisan permitting reform that includes project certainty and is project-agnostic. A core principle of reform must be to include project certainty — once a project has completed a thorough permitting process and received approval, it should proceed without indefinite delay or repeated challenges, including from presidential administrations. A second core principle must be project-agnostic support for all infrastructure types. Permitting reform is not about weakening environmental protections; it is about ensuring decisions are timely, durable and respected so

that critical projects can be built. We have seen policies shift between administrations, and we urgently need Congress to step in and provide the long-term certainty businesses need.

■ **Waters of the US (WOTUS) Rule:** Producers need clean water and clear rules to provide aggregates and industrial sand in a timely and responsible manner for vital infrastructure and environmental projects. NSSGA proudly supported the proposed definition by the EPA and Army Corps in December 2025. NSSGA believes a proper balance can be struck to protect federal waters responsibly, while allowing state control of land use, as intended under the Clean Water Act.

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■ **Particulate Matter (PM) Rule:** In 2024, the EPA reduced the PM (PM2.5) standard to a level that could send many locations in the U.S. into a nonattainment status. This could create problems for aggregates and industrial sand operators by imposing new requirements on existing operations and make permitting new operations difficult in these areas. NSSGA supports the Trump administration's delay in non-attainment designation due to data uncertainty.

■ **Endangered Species Act (ESA):** The Endangered Species Act has historically been ineffective in the revival of threatened and endangered species. NSSGA supports common-sense reforms to allow more state and local program expertise to solve complex species and habitat issues, as well as voluntary efforts by industry to create and enhance habitats.

■ **Access to Construction Materials on Federal Lands:** It is crucial for communities located near federal lands to access the resources necessary for building and maintaining roads, bridges, schools, hospitals, homes and businesses. NSSGA has long opposed unprincipled efforts to withdraw or impede mining rights on federal lands, where aggregate and industrial sand operations responsibly supply these construction materials. Additional legislative or regulatory hurdles, including enacting withdrawal proposals, would significantly increase the cost of public works projects by creating the need to import the stone, sand and gravel required to develop and repair infrastructure and buildings. This unnecessarily increases costs and uncertainty, while the nation confronts economic challenges and inflation.

■ **Utilizing Aggregates for a Sustainable Future:** Demand for aggregates and industrial sand to support renewable energy development is rapidly increasing. Innovative infrastructure projects are essential for enhancing community resiliency. Aggregate operations efficiently use energy, and greenhouse gas emissions at aggregates facilities are inherently low. However, member companies continue to make improvements, such as promoting recycling and investing in fuel-efficient mobile equipment. We support incentives, grants and opportunities to drive investments in modern technologies and equipment that reduce energy use, decrease air emissions, and increase sustainability.

■ **Sustainability and Biodiversity:** Aggregates and industrial sand producers are proactive members of their communities. Operators ensure closed sites are responsibly reclaimed and add community benefits once extraction is completed. Reclaimed quarries can take many forms depending on where they are located, including farmland, parks, wildlife habitat areas, water reservoirs, community developments, recreation spots, nature preserves and alternative energy generation. NSSGA members are effective stewards of the land. They value innovation that enhances sustainability throughout the supply chain and creates state-of-the-art solutions that improve our homes, businesses, and schools. For example, finding environmentally and socially beneficial strategies to utilize quarry fines (traditionally a waste material) in road construction, as a soil enhancement, or sequester of carbon. NSSGA supports incentive-based programs and a flexible sustainability strategy that allows our members to

*Aggregates are essential raw materials used in nearly all residential, commercial and industrial construction and public works projects, such as roads, highways, bridges, rail, dams, airports and water projects. Their vast prevalence and utilization are a testament to the time-tested benefits they provide, including being low-cost, reliable, durable and environmentally sound.*

increase their operations' sustainability during extraction and reclamation based on the individual needs of each business.

■ **Farm Bill Reauthorization:** NSSGA is working to enact legislative priorities in the next Farm Bill, which sets policy and funding for all federal engagement with our farm and food ecosystem. We are seeking to promote research and development on the use of aggregate by-products in topsoil restoration, fertilizer manufacturing and as a best practice for water retention and carbon capture. Doing so will create new opportunities to promote soil health and drive sustainability across the marketplace.

■ **Rail Service Reform:** The nation's supply chain and rail networks are currently failing the aggregates and industrial sand industries. We support pragmatic, durable and commonsense solutions to resolve these issues. We support the reforms being examined by the Surface Transportation Board (STB) that would increase competition (particularly to smaller, rural, and underserved communities) and transparency to improve rail service. We support legislative efforts to reauthorize the STB, providing the agency with the tools to level the playing field between shippers and carriers.

■ **Domestic and Renewable Energy Production:** In the face of global economic challenges, it is critical that action be taken to support our nation's domestic oil and gas industry and the workers and businesses that supply it. NSSGA encourages an "all-of-the-above" energy policy that allows for greater investment in domestic production and supply of energy resources to normalize the availability and cost of energy inputs. Aggregates and industrial sand producers face volatile, ever-changing fuel costs that hamper our ability to reliably produce materials. We urge expanded investments in domestic energy infrastructure to create thousands of jobs, while also providing our country with a diverse and durable energy industry. These investments will incorporate multiple sectors and ensure energy resources are reliably and efficiently delivered to millions of Americans. Policies must recognize that there will be a long transition period moving towards greater reliance on renewable energy, and that industries cannot change overnight. Efforts to strengthen the energy sector will help minimize future dependence on foreign producers and maintain America's position as a global energy producer.

save the  
date!



**2026 NSSGA  
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