

President Trump Explains With a Chart How Government Stifles Growth

President Donald Trump didn't necessarily need to show the huge chart to his audience in the room, but he knew they weren't the only people listening to what he had to say.

And, in just under a minute, he fully explained the magnitude of the job-creation problem in the United States. Cliffs Notes version: Government over-regulation is stifling development and economic growth in our country, and he's working hard to root it out.

The president was speaking to CEOs of companies that account for more than 7 million jobs and more than \$1 trillion to the U.S. economy annually about the burdens they face. That's when he pulled out the chart that describes the federal permit application process just to build a highway.

"[T]his is to build a highway in the United States," he said. "Now, this was just done yesterday. I saw it for the first time. I said, 'I'm speaking to some of my friends who are builders, really great builders, and they've gone through the process—we've all gone through it in New York—we call it the zoning process in New York.

"But you start up here and this is anywhere from a 10- to 20-year process. You have—is it 17 agencies? You have hundreds and hundreds of permits. Many of them are statutory, where you can't even apply for the second permit until six months go by.

"So this is to build a highway. This is a simple highway. And these are the agencies—so it's 17 agencies. How many different steps is it?"

One of his staffers interjected and said there were 16 different approvals required from the federal government bureaucracy just to build a highway. He noted that's 29 different statuses the project must achieve, and five different executive orders that apply to the project, as well.

"This is indicative, so this is not a specific project, but this is the type of process that a government—this is a state government—would have to go through to permit a highway federally," he said. "This is just federal, not state regulations."

"So it can take anywhere from 10—if you're really good—10 years to 20 years," the president said. "And then they vote, and you lose. They don't want it. And it costs sometimes hundreds of millions of dollars just to go through the process."

President Trump then spoke from his own personal experience as a builder:

I've always liked it because it gave people that could go through that process an advantage, like Jerry, but it gave us an advantage if you could get through the process. But getting a building approved in New York is a horrible, horrible thing. And that's nothing compared to when you get into the highways and the dams—they don't even talk about dams anymore.

Hydropower is a great, great, form of power—we don't even talk about it, because to get the environmental permits are virtually impossible. It's one of the best things you can do—hydro. But we don't talk about it anymore.

So we've come to a halt. We have a tremendous person that we put in charge of EPA, Scott Pruitt, who is an environmental person. He wants clean air, he wants clean water, but he doesn't think it takes you 26 years to get a permit to build a building and to have jobs, at which time those companies

are usually gone, out of business, et. cetera.

So we're really speeding up the process. We're going to try and take that process from a minimum of 10 years down to one year. I said, 'Can't we make it four months? Can't we do it in four months?' And there is a certain logic to that, but we'll be satisfied with the year—but it won't be any more than a year.

So we have to build roads. We have to build highways. We're talking about a very major infrastructure bill of a trillion dollars—perhaps even more. And when we have to do—our jobs—I mean, if we say, we're giving to New York City hundreds of millions of dollars to build a road someplace, it doesn't help if they can't start because it's going to take seven and a half years to get the permits.

Even to redo a road takes years to get the permits. You know, you have a road that's there and you want to redo it, and you have to get new permits for the kind of asphalt you're using, the kind of concrete you may want to use.

And if we're going to give all of this money—you know, there was very large infrastructure bill that was approved during the Obama administration—a trillion dollars—nobody ever saw anything being built. I mean, to this day, I haven't heard of anything that's been built.

They used most of that money. It went, and they used it on social programs. And we want this to be on infrastructure.

Watch the entire event in the video above. {eo}