

CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE LAWS

Corporate-backed bills threaten rights of peaceful protesters

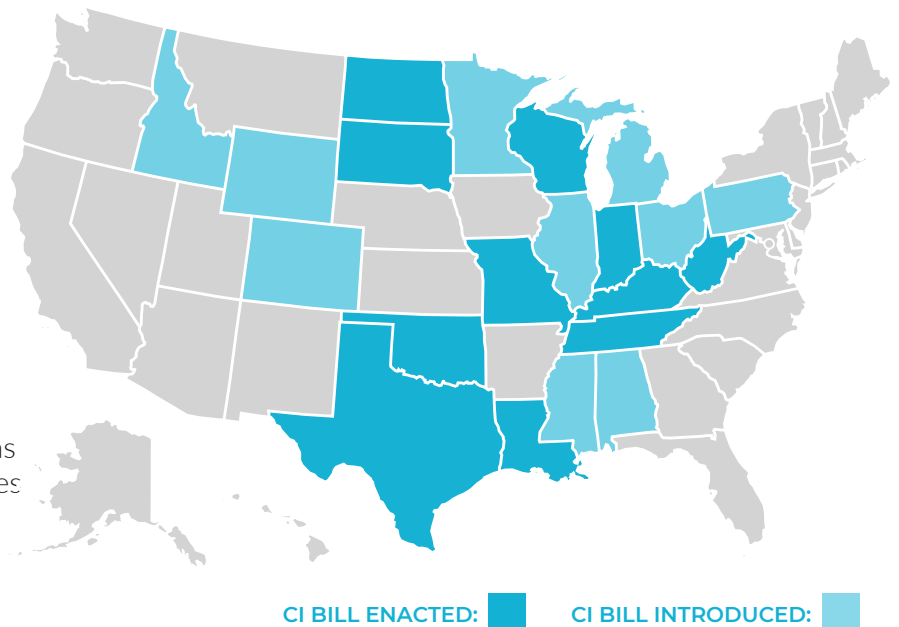
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Across the country, communities are gathering at rallies and marches to express concerns about pipelines' impact on the environment, landowner rights, and indigenous land. "Critical infrastructure" laws target these kinds of gatherings.

What is a "Critical Infrastructure" Law?

Their provisions vary, but most bills:

- Create a broad definition of "critical infrastructure" that includes oil and gas pipelines, as well as common structures like telephone poles.
- Impose harsh felony penalties for trespass or interference with construction. Protesters can trigger these penalties by actions like disrupting construction during a march or crossing momentarily onto land where a company has the right of way.
- Make protesters or organizers liable for the actions of others at a gathering.



Role of Outside Corporate Interests

Critical infrastructure laws are often promoted by the fossil fuel industry and have been introduced in over 20 states. ALEC is an industry-backed organization that produces model legislation and promotes it across the country, playing a significant role in the spread of these laws. Provisions of ALEC's model legislation have appeared in proposed state bills nationwide.

Guilt by Association

Most critical infrastructure bills allow for protesters or organizers to be held liable if someone at the protest acts unlawfully. For instance, a group that organizes a protest could be considered part of a criminal conspiracy if one person at the demonstration trespasses.

**THESE
ANTI-PROTEST
BILLS ARE:**

UNNECESSARY

There are already laws on the books that protect legitimate property interests.

EXTREME

They create felonies, punishable by years in jail, for a range of peaceful protest-related activities.

VAGUE

They are susceptible to misinterpretation or abuse by authorities, and vulnerable to legal challenge in the courts



Did you know?

There are over **2,000,000 miles** of pipelines in the US. It is common for them to run across public parks and streets as well as private property.