

FRANK PALLONE, JR., NEW JERSEY
CHAIRMAN

CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS, WASHINGTON
RANKING MEMBER

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

2125 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6115

Majority (202) 225-2927

Minority (202) 225-3641

June 6, 2022

The Honorable Jennifer Granholm
Secretary of Energy
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, Southwest
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Secretary Granholm:

Last week, the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) issued an alarming assessment, raising concerns about the reliability of the bulk power system for the upcoming summer months.¹

NERC reported that more than half the nation will be at elevated risk of power outages this summer. This is because of insufficient resources to provide power to peoples' homes when their demand for power peaks during extreme weather conditions.

The electricity resource shortfall is estimated to be even worse for customers living in a large region in the middle of the nation, extending from Wisconsin to Louisiana, where the report warns about outages during *normal* summer conditions.²

Other authorities, including grid operators³ and officials in Texas and California confirmed the threats. The Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) has already issued conservation alerts this year, warning of potentially inadequate generation capacity. California energy

¹ North American Electric Reliability Corporation. (May 2022). *2022 Summer Reliability Assessment*, NERC, May 2022. https://www.nerc.com/pa/RAPA/ra/Reliability%20Assessments%20DL/NERC_SRA_2022.pdf

² North American Electric Reliability Corporation. (May 2022). *2022 Summer Reliability Assessment: Energy Emergency Risk Areas*, NERC, May 2022.

https://www.nerc.com/news/Headlines%20DL/NERC_SRA_infographic_2022.pdf

³ Blunt, Katherine. "Electricity Shortage Warnings Grow Across U.S.," *The Wall Street Journal*, May 8, 2022.

https://www.wsj.com/articles/electricity-shortage-warnings-grow-across-u-s-11652002380?st=t5wsgp37ks939gp&reflink=share_mobilewebshare

officials, confronting yet another year of what has become a persistent electricity emergency, note that state residents will be facing black outs every summer for another four years.⁴

This troubling situation represents the most immediate example of a broader and growing trend of increasing reliability risks across the nation's electricity systems – risks that are mounting in the winter as well as summer months, according to NERC assessments.⁵

These reliability risks have been unfolding in plain sight, yet we have seen little concerted effort during the Biden administration to address relevant policies that contribute to these risks—policies relating to the delivery of energy fuels, market-design issues, environmental agendas, and regulations that threaten power generation.

The DOE serves a central role to assure reliable delivery of power, especially when people need it most. We write today for information to help us assess what the DOE is doing to prepare for and to alleviate the immediate risks to reliability this summer, as well as to reduce the reliability threats over the next few years.

Please respond to the following by June 21, 2022:

1. Describe what specific actions you are taking or are prepared to take to address energy or electricity emergencies this summer in the bulk power system.
2. Describe your interactions with other federal agencies, the states, NERC, and independent system operators related to assuring reliability in the bulk power system and the affordable, reliable delivery of electricity.
3. Describe your interactions with the Environmental Protection Agency concerning potential and proposed rulemakings and enforcement activity that may affect the reliable delivery of electricity, such as the recent enforcement actions involving the disposal of coal combustion residuals from electric utilities rule.
 - a. List all potential and proposed rulemakings upon which you have provided technical comment.
 - b. List all enforcement actions upon which you have provided comment.
4. List all waivers or other emergency actions you are considering or have taken over the past two years in connection with electricity reliability.
5. List all regulatory actions you are considering or have taken over the past two years to alleviate reliability risks.

⁴ Mulkern, Anne. "Calif. faces possible blackouts every summer until 2026," *Energywire*, May 23, 2022. <https://subscriber.politicopro.com/article/eenews/2022/05/23/calif-faces-possible-blackouts-every-summer-until-2026-1-00034252>

⁵ See, for example, "2021–2022 Winter Reliability Assessment," NERC, November 2021. [https://www.nerc.com/pa/RAPA/ra/Reliability Assessments DL/NERC_WRA_2021.pdf](https://www.nerc.com/pa/RAPA/ra/Reliability%20Assessments%20DL/NERC_WRA_2021.pdf)

We look forward to your prompt response to this request.

Sincerely,



Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Republican Leader
House Energy and Commerce
Committee



Fred Upton
Member of Congress



Michael C. Burgess, M.D.
Member of Congress



Steve Scalise
Member of Congress



Robert E. Latta
Member of Congress



Brett Guthrie
Member of Congress



David B. McKinley
Member of Congress



Adam Kinzinger
Member of Congress



H. Morgan Griffith
Member of Congress



Gus M. Bilirakis
Member of Congress



Bill Johnson
Member of Congress



Billy Long
Member of Congress



Larry Bucshon, M.D.
Member of Congress



Markwayne Mullin
Member of Congress



Richard Hudson
Member of Congress



Tim Walberg
Member of Congress



Earl L. "Buddy" Carter
Member of Congress



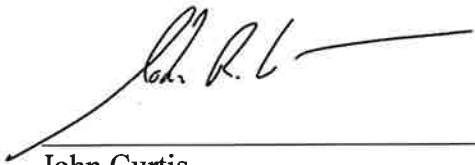
Jeff Duncan
Member of Congress



Gary J. Palmer
Member of Congress



Neal P. Dunn, M.D.
Member of Congress



John Curtis
Member of Congress



Debbie Lesko
Member of Congress



Greg Pence
Member of Congress



Dan Crenshaw
Member of Congress



John Joyce, M.D.
Member of Congress



Kelly Armstrong
Member of Congress