

Committee on Energy and Commerce

**Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of**

**Subcommittee on Energy
Ranking Member Kathy Castor**

***Hearing on “Protecting America's Energy Infrastructure in Today's Cyber and Physical
Threat Landscape”***

January 13, 2026

I look forward to talking today about ways we can make our grid more resilient and improve cybersecurity. As evidenced by the bills that we will be discussing, this is an area where this Committee has a history of bipartisan success, and I look forward to building upon that.

However, we cannot ignore that right now, the greatest threat to grid reliability and security is President Trump and Republican policies. They have driven us into an electricity crisis.

Over the past year, President Trump has ensured that we will have less, and more expensive, energy. In December, he halted five offshore wind projects – which could supply 6 GW of electricity. The Administration is blocking new federal permits for wind farms, an action that courts have ruled is unconstitutional.

Secretary Burgum has required every wind or solar project on federal lands to get his personal sign-off – so last year, only one got permission to build.

DOE canceled final approval for what would have been the largest US solar farm – a 6.2 GW project in Nevada. DOE also cancelled billions of dollars to upgrade our power grid, like the Grain Belt Express transmission line.

EPA is trying to revoke billions of dollars for solar installations in low-income communities. And of course, Republicans in Congress eliminated tax credits for solar and wind projects starting later this year.

All, together, that's 266 GW of planned electricity generation projects cancelled in 2025. And that doesn't even fully consider many other canceled projects, and the full damage that will come thanks to more cuts in the Republican Big Ugly Bill. The US has never faced a self-inflicted energy crisis of this magnitude.

We need a grid that can meet rising electricity demand and lower energy costs – which, under this Committee's jurisdiction, means policies that help the US build out significant transmission infrastructure. I hope my Republican colleagues will work with us on this.

Unfortunately, the only Republican response to the energy crisis they've created is to turn to the same old and ineffective answer – coal.

Last year, DOE forced six old, broken-down coal plants in Michigan, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Colorado, and Washington to stay online. This includes plants that were days away from retirement, and some that have been offline for months because they're broken!

These decisions have already cost customers over \$163 million dollars. If the Trump Administration continues this path, it could cost nearly \$6 billion a year.

Since House Republicans sole goal is to appease President Trump, they have no problem with this. Last year, they even tried to pass legislation that would expand DOE's authority to run old, polluting, and expensive coal plants.

According to NERC data, coal plants are America's least reliable power source. But this isn't just about coal.

In a large swath of the Mid-Atlantic region, offshore wind has one of the highest "resource-adequacy" scores among energy types. In other words, when it comes to lowering the probability of blackouts there, offshore wind outcompetes all other types of renewable energy — and is even on par with the most efficient gas-fired power plants.

Furthermore, right now, in PJM, a 6-hour battery contributes more to reliability than a gas-fired combustion turbine, thanks to the battery's better reliability in the winter.

When Republican policies get in the way of the cheapest, fastest, and most reliable sources of energy, our grid is less secure. And that means that energy is more expensive for our neighbors back home. As this Committee discusses legislation to make our grid more secure, we have to remember that the American people deserve better.

I yield back.