

Subcommittee on Energy
The Changing Energy Landscape: Oversight of FERC
Opening Statement by Chairman Bobby L. Rush
July 27, 2021

Good morning. Today, the Subcommittee on Energy convenes to continue our work in establishing a path forward to achieve net zero greenhouse gas pollution and combat climate change. In order to achieve these important missions, it is critical that the Federal Government harnesses to the fullest extent all of its capabilities. In addition to this, as the energy landscape continues to change and grow, it is vital that Congress and the administration works closely together. It is for these reasons that I am pleased to have the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) before the Subcommittee on Energy today.

Before I continue, Chairman Glick, I would like to publicly congratulate you on being named Chairman of FERC this past January. I enjoyed the opportunity to meet with you at the beginning of your tenure and look forward to our continued partnership. Also, Commissioner Chatterjee, I believe this may be your last hearing before the Committee during your tenure. I thank you for your years of service and wish you well as your time at FERC comes to an end.

It is well known that the electricity sector is one of the largest sources of greenhouse gas pollution within the United States. Further, the sector has had a disproportionate impact on the health, environments, and pockets of historically marginalized communities. Although it is not traditionally viewed as a climate regulator, FERC's vast authority over the electricity sector makes it a principal player in our race to tackle climate change.

As we know, FERC regulates critical elements of the U.S. energy industry and its systems. This includes the transmission and wholesale purchase of electricity, transport of natural gas, and the permitting of a variety of energy infrastructure projects. Along with this, FERC possesses the necessary tools to support the transition to a safe, affordable, and equitable clean energy future. For example, FERC, through a technology neutral approach, has the ability to address barriers within competitive wholesale electricity markets to facilitate the deployment of new low-cost technologies, like wind and solar.

FERC is also key to the creation of a 21st century grid, which we need to reduce electricity costs all while delivering reliable clean energy to consumers. This is why I am pleased that FERC, under Chairman Glick's leadership, is taking long-awaited steps to make grid reforms that will support zero carbon electricity. Equally important, FERC, along with our Federal agencies, must take the needs of historically marginalized communities into greater consideration. With this in mind, I commend FERC and my colleagues, Congresswomen Schakowsky and Kuster, for their work to establish a FERC office to do just that.

The climate crisis requires a whole of government approach. Therefore, today, I look forward to discussing how FERC plans to sustain its critical momentum in this regard. And with that, I yield to my friend and colleague, the Gentleman from Michigan, Ranking Member Upton, for five minutes.