

Chair Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Subcommittee on Energy, Climate, and Grid Security
Hearing: “Oversight of FERC: Adhering to A Mission of
Affordable and Reliable Energy for America”
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As prepared for delivery

Thank you, Chairman Duncan.

And thank you to Chairman Phillips and the FERC Commissioners for being here today.

FERC has a very important role to play to ensure affordable and reliable energy for America’s economic and national security.

I look forward to hearing from each of you today as we examine FERC’s mission...

...its authorities under the Federal Power Act, the Natural Gas Act, and other statutes passed by Congress...

... and its performance over the last year.

As Chairman Duncan said, energy reliability and affordability are two of the top pillars of your congressionally-mandated mission.

I believe you have done a good job on steps to reset the priorities of FERC – but more is needed.

Through its authorities to regulate energy, natural gas, and electricity, FERC touches 7% of our economy.

Without affordable and reliable energy, our economic and national security are at risk.

We have witnessed this over the past two years through President Biden’s damaging energy policies.

Recent energy blackouts and rationing, as well as increased prices, have harmed American families and our industrial base.

We cannot allow this to continue.

FERC plays an important role in ensuring energy costs are affordable for people.

That’s why it’s essential the Commission return to its core mission of facilitating the delivery of abundant, affordable energy resources, like natural gas and electricity, to Americans.

FERC must resist calls by the radical left to circumvent the Commission's mandated priorities.

These calls have upended the nation's energy sector.

E&C Republicans have sent several letters highlighting our concerns with FERC's current environmental overreach in a recent proposed rulemaking implementing its electric transmission siting authorities...

...we've inquired as to how FERC plans to implement the latest guidance from the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ)...

...which, if implemented, would significantly shift FERC's mission as an economic regulator to an environmental regulator.

FERC should be working to ensure that reliable, dispatchable supplies of energy are properly valued in wholesale electricity markets...

...issue timely decisions on interstate natural gas facilities and liquefied natural gas terminals...

...and grant certainty to hydroelectric power and electric transmission developers.

If FERC sticks to these core functions, energy prices will decrease, and reliability will improve.

Last week, we heard from expert witnesses regarding how the Biden administration's new EPA regulations will weaken and harm our electric power sector, particularly coal and natural gas-fired generators.

This new suite of environmental red tape comes despite significant energy capacity shortfalls across the country.

Nearly every grid operator across the country has warned it is facing an energy adequacy crisis now, which will continue in the near future.

We can reverse this trend if we commit to an energy expansion.

Chairman Phillips, at a recent conference, you noted that...

"Building things, like new energy infrastructure, is something we are all in agreement on."

I could not agree more.

We're committed to building more nuclear, more natural gas pipelines, and more wind power, and more hydroelectric power.

America's electrical grid keeps our hospitals, military bases, homes, and businesses powered.

It's security and reliability are critical to keeping people safe and our economy moving.

An American energy expansion will lead to a more reliable grid and reverse the reliability crisis that currently looms over our energy sector.

In addition, FERC also has significant authority to license and permit hydropower facilities.

Hydropower is vital for a secure, affordable energy future.

It has been vital for grid reliability and economic development in my home state of Washington.

Just yesterday, I introduced a hydropower licensing reform bill.

The legislation includes significant reforms to the burdensome hydropower licensing process....

...which currently takes a considerable amount of time and investment.

A recent DOE report found it takes an average of 5 years to obtain an original license, 7.6 years for relicensing, and some complex projects can take more than a decade.

These timelines are unacceptable.

America has been blessed with an abundance of natural resources and we are a better steward of them.

It's critical that we foster these resources so Americans have access to reliable, affordable, clean energy.

It powers our way of life and is foundational for human prosperity and flourishing. I look forward to hearing from the Commissioners on how FERC can help secure America's energy future.

I would like to thank each of you again for being here today and look forward to your testimony.

I yield back.