

Rep. Richard Hudson
Subcommittee on Energy, Climate, and Grid Security Field Hearing
“Enhancing America’s Grid Security and Resilience”

June 16, 2023

As prepared for delivery

Welcome to Moore County! It is great to welcome my colleagues to my home here in the beautiful Sandhills. I want to thank Chairman Jeff Duncan, our witnesses, and my colleagues for traveling to North Carolina, taking time to see the location of our grid attack, understanding it’s sophistication, and contributing to this important discussion on how we can learn from what happened here about the vulnerability of our energy grid.

Various thanking: Sheriff Ronnie Fields, Mayor John Strickland, NC Senator Tom McInnis, and NC Representatives Neal Jackson and Ben Moss.

Earlier this morning, we toured the Duke Energy West End substation, one of two substations in Moore County that was intentionally attacked on the evening of December 3rd, leaving my house and 45,000 of my neighbors without power for up to ten days.

In the aftermath of the attack, our hospital was impacted, threatening medical treatments, schools were shutdown, businesses were affected, stoplights were dark, gas stations were closed, cell signal was impacted, and water couldn’t be heated. Our region suffered millions of dollars in damage – and just before the Christmas holiday. It really made the hundreds of pounds of room-temperature venison, elk, and duck in my freezer seem insignificant.

An attack like this could have devastated our community, and we didn’t go without our struggles. But overall, I am so proud of our resilient response. In the days and weeks that

followed, the people here truly showed the best of Moore County, the best of North Carolina, and the best of America.

Community groups stepped in and ensured our vulnerable neighbors weren't left without access to critical care and resources. Within hours, churches like the First Baptist Churches of Aberdeen and Pinehurst and the Yates Thagard Baptist Church offered shower, laundry, and meal services.

Harris Teeter offered free ice for medicine and food. Staff and volunteers at the Boys and Girls Club of the Sandhills partnered with our Food Bank to prepare 800 two-day care packages. Our Fire and Rescue, Police Department, and library opened their doors for folks to access internet and charge devices. And all throughout, I am grateful for the tireless and heroic efforts of the line workers at Duke Energy and local providers, including Randolph Electric Membership Corporation, Lee Electrical Construction, and Pike Electric who worked tirelessly in the dark and cold to replace vital equipment needed to restore service, in addition to charitable contributions to organizations providing necessary resources to our community. It was inspiring to see everyone come together in our time of need and I want to reiterate my thanks to all those who assisted recovery efforts.

I also want to thank our sheriff, Ronnie Fields, for his incredible response and leadership and local law enforcement for continuing to follow tips and leads to determine who is responsible for December's attack.

I share your frustration that we still haven't found those responsible. But in Washington, I have worked with the Select Committee on Intelligence to coordinate classified member briefings from the FBI on their assessed threat to the grid. I will continue to push the FBI to

make addressing these attacks a priority and make sure the appropriate information sharing occurs so we can hold those responsible accountable and make sure this never happens again.

Since this attack occurred, I have been in listening mode. I have heard from constituents, grid operators, community developers, and business owners who have concerns with our grid's security and resilience – all against the backdrop of historic energy costs. I share these concerns. That's why, as I promised in the days following the attack, I have brought Washington to North Carolina today. I want to show my colleagues not just the numbers and facts of grid security and resilience, but the *people personally affected and their experiences*.

Everyone needs to know the full impact of this kind of attack and the urgent need to address vulnerabilities this exposes in our grid. There are 45,000 stories of why Moore County – and our nation – need greater grid resilience. Now, we have the opportunity to hear from experts in the industry and those who call North Carolina home on the current state of our grid security, and how we move forward from these attacks. My colleagues and I welcome these testimonies to help do our jobs effectively. And I can guarantee when we head back to Washington, our critical energy transmission infrastructure and what vulnerabilities exist will be at the forefront of our conversations. So, I thank my colleagues and thank our witnesses for being here today and look forward to working together on this critical issue.