

Chairman Brett Guthrie
Opening Statement—Subcommittee on Energy
“Securing America’s Energy Infrastructure: Addressing Cyber and Physical Threats to the Grid”
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As prepared for delivery

Thank you, Chairman Latta, and thank you to the witnesses for appearing before our committee to discuss threats and hazards facing the energy sector.

Throughout our nation’s history, the affordable, reliable, and abundant supply of energy has underpinned our prosperity and security.

Today’s world is no different.

A complex web of interwoven energy systems and networks of linear infrastructure power the facilities and technologies that Americans rely on to for work, health care, financial services, modern communications, and myriad other everyday necessities.

Our society’s ubiquitous reliance on digital systems to power all of these applications also makes the underlying energy systems a target for nefarious actors, including state-sponsored attacks from China, Russia, and Iran.

The Committee has noted throughout this Congress that we are on the precipice of great technological advancements that could reshape the next generation economy.

But as these developments take root, our reliance on energy will continue to grow, and the surface area for potential threats will widen, potentially even equipping bad actors with sophisticated tools to cause harm and sew chaos in the lives of everyday Americans.

Ten years after Russia conducted the world’s first largescale cyberattack in Ukraine that shut down the grid for 200,000 residents, we witnessed the first documented largescale AI-driven

cyberattack against governments, financial institutions, and businesses around the globe last month.

This attack served as a test case demonstrating the capability of advanced computing models to conduct wide-ranging attacks with minimal human intervention.

But AI can also be deployed to promote security and resiliency on the cyberspace battlefield and equip operators with tools they need to *protect* against attacks and *respond* in the case of disaster. The witnesses before us today are on the frontlines of protecting critical energy infrastructure and the efforts to address an evolving threat landscape.

One witness in particular I'd like to welcome is Tim Lindahl, president and CEO of Kenergy Electric, an electric co-operative that serves several counties across Western Kentucky.

Co-operatives like Kenergy are a key partner in efforts to protect reliability and security of the electric sector in our rural communities.

I look forward to today's discussion on such a critical issue and yield back the balance of my time.