

BRETT GUTHRIE, KENTUCKY
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ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

2125 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

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March 9, 2026

Dr. Nate Melby, Ph.D.
Vice President and Chief Information Officer
Dairyland Power Cooperative
3200 East Avenue South
P.O. Box 817
La Crosse, WI 54602

Dear Dr. Melby:

Thank you for agreeing to testify at the Subcommittee on Energy hearing on Tuesday, January 13, 2026, at 10:15 a.m. in 2123 Rayburn House Office Building. The hearing is entitled “Protecting America’s Energy Infrastructure in Today’s Cyber and Physical Threat Landscape.”

Pursuant to the Rules of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, the hearing record remains open for ten business days to permit Members to submit additional questions for the record, which are attached. The format of your responses to these questions should be as follows: (1) the name of the Member whose question you are addressing, (2) the complete text of the question you are addressing in bold, and (3) your answer to that question in plain text.

To facilitate the printing of the hearing record, please respond to these questions with a transmittal letter by the close of business on Wednesday, November 12, 2025. Your responses should be mailed to Seth Ricketts Legislative Clerk, Committee on Energy and Commerce, 2125 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515 and e-mailed to Seth.Ricketts@mail.house.gov.

Thank you again for your time and effort preparing and delivering testimony before the Subcommittee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert E. Latta". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R" and a stylized "Latta".

Robert E. Latta
Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy

cc: Kathy Castor, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Energy

Attachment

Additional Questions for the Record

The Honorable Brett Guthrie (R-KY)

1. DOE is the energy sector authority and must work with other agencies and States. To do this effectively, it must have a culture of constant learning and improvement, which will benefit the whole federal approach to support the energy sector.
 - a. Would you speak to the importance of a culture of constant learning and constant improvement for the stakeholders you represent?

The Honorable Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R-IA)

1. You mentioned that cooperatives are asked to 'do more with less' and that one in four co-ops has annual income below \$35,000. This creates unique challenges when funding cybersecurity investments through member rates. Can you help the Committee understand:
 - a. What does the resource gap between electric cooperatives and investor-owned utilities actually look like in practical terms? For example, when a large IOU faces a cybersecurity threat, what resources can they deploy that a rural cooperative simply doesn't have access to?
 - b. How do the approaches differ, not just in budget, but in available expertise, technology, and vendor relationships?
 - c. Why is federal support through programs like RMUC not just helpful, but essential for bridging this gap?
2. You mentioned that RMUC helps cooperatives invest in 'the people, processes, and technologies' needed to secure the grid. Can you be more specific about the workforce development component?
 - a. What specific cybersecurity roles and skills do cooperatives most urgently need to hire or develop?
 - b. How do training programs funded by RMUC differ from traditional utility workforce development?
 - c. What role do you see for community colleges, universities, and programs like Iowa State's CyDERMS in building the rural utility cybersecurity workforce?"
3. You mentioned that Dairyland was awarded \$3.5 million under RMUC to work with 20 distribution cooperatives, but that much of the \$80 million in announced funding hasn't yet been released by DOE, including funding for Iowa.

- a. How long have you been waiting for your awarded funds?
 - b. What specific cybersecurity improvements are you unable to implement until those funds are released?
 - c. What message would you send to DOE about the urgency of getting these dollars out to utilities that are defending critical infrastructure every day?
4. Iowa State University is leading CyDERMS, a regional cybersecurity center focused on securing Distributed Energy Resources. As we integrate millions of new devices we're dramatically expanding the attack surface of our grid. At the same time, we're deploying AI and machine learning tools to detect attacks and manage these distributed systems. This creates a paradox: we're using high-tech AI solutions to secure increasingly complex systems, but that technology itself could be a vulnerability.
- a. How do you think about this balance?
 - b. Are there certain applications where simpler, lower-tech approaches might actually be more secure?
 - c. How do we ensure that the AI tools we're deploying to defend the grid don't become the vector for attack?