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ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

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March 9, 2026

Ms. Rebecca O'Neil
Research Principal, Infrastructure
Energy and Environment Directorate
Pacific Northwest National Laboratory
PO Box 999
Richland, WA 99352

Dear Ms. O'Neil:

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?
2. All the bills included in this hearing reflect measures that would support constant learning and improvement, whether through improved leadership, assistance and sharing, or coordination. How would these be useful to strengthen your work to safeguard and respond to threats?

The Honorable Rick Allen (R-GA)

1. The Savannah River National Lab (SRNL) is adjacent to my district. As I mentioned in the first panel, national labs play a critical role in grid security.
 - a. How can national labs be leveraged to use their trained cyber operators to enhance security operating technologies?

The Honorable Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R-IA)

1. You led the effort to help all 56 states and territories complete their energy security plans. The SECURE Grid Act would add requirements related to supply chain security and threats to local distribution systems. Based on your work with states:
 - a. How well are states currently assessing supply chain risks in their energy security plans?
 - b. What challenges do states face in getting visibility into supply chain vulnerabilities, especially for critical components like transformers and inverters?
 - c. How would the proposed changes in the SECURE Grid Act improve state planning around supply chain risks?
2. Your research focuses on transmission infrastructure and wildfire hazards. I lead legislation, the Limiting Liability for Critical Infrastructure Manufacturers Act, that provides domestic manufacturers of critical grid components legal certainty so they can invest in American workers rather than hedging against frivolous legal risk. Can you speak to:

- a. How do wildfire risks and associated liability concerns affect utilities' ability to source critical equipment like transformers and switchgear?
 - b. What does this liability risk do to domestic manufacturers when utilities must turn to foreign, potentially Chinese, suppliers who don't face the same liability risk?
 - c. From a research perspective, how important is it to maintain a robust domestic manufacturing base for critical grid components?
3. 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?