

Chairman Bob Latta

Subcommittee on Energy Hearing:

“AI and the Grid: Meeting Growing Power Demand While Protecting Ratepayers”

April 29, 2026

Good morning and welcome to today’s legislative hearing to discuss proposals to improve the power sector during this time of historic load growth and affordability challenges.

Access to reliable and affordable energy is the linchpin to U.S. leadership in AI development.

This subcommittee has spent considerable time examining the opportunities and challenges that arise from U.S. leadership in artificial intelligence.

From that work, it is safe to assume AI is one of the defining challenges of our time. It encompasses the race for economic strength, technological leadership, and national security in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Today, AI is already driving a significant share of economic growth. It is making businesses more productive, workers more efficient, and industries more competitive.

We also examined the risks of the United States losing this global AI race.

The ability of malign actors like Russia and Communist China using AI models to disrupt global economies are no longer theoretical, but a reality.

At the same time, the American people are understandably uneasy. Many question whether AI, and the data centers that power it, will ultimately do more harm than good, particularly when it comes to individual energy costs. These concerns deserve to be taken seriously.

Our global competitors are not slowing down. China is investing heavily in AI with the explicit goal of surpassing the United States.

That’s why it’s vital that we ensure that interconnecting new data centers lowers costs and brings benefits to households like grid modernization, more dispatchable energy resources, and significant state and local tax revenue.

In fact, the Lawrence Berkely National Lab and others have found that data center load growth lessens retail electricity costs.

While we may not agree on every provision, the legislation under consideration today raises policy solutions to ensure this outcome is replicated across the country.

However, demand growth continues to outpace our generation resources.

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The North American Electric Reliability Corporation's recent yearly assessment estimated that peak demand over the next 10 years would grow by 224 GW while 105 GW of dispatchable generation is expected to retire.

Earlier this Congress, we advanced several bills to resolve the reliability crisis caused by the Biden Administration and bring dispatchable baseload energy to keep the lights on year-round.

These efforts have been bolstered by the Trump Administration's decisive actions to refocus federal authorities on policies that matter most to the American people – abundant and reliable energy supplies at an affordable price.

Today's legislation will shape how the bulk power system is planned, built, and paid for to ensure it works for everyone, not just special interests or corporations.

The Ratepayer Protection Act would ensure that states have the necessary policies in place to safeguard households from footing the bill for data center energy needs.

The Load Forecasting Enhancement Act would usher in bottom-up planning to improve the accuracy of demand growth projections to right-size cost-effective generation and transmission build out.

The Fair Allocation of Interstates Rates Act, introduced by my colleague from North Dakota, is a practical solution to place the burden of renewable portfolio standard costs on the states that choose to adopt those requirements.

The Advanced Transmission Technologies to Reduce Rates Act would leverage the important work of DOE and enhance the use of advanced transmission technologies to bring more cost-effective solutions to our growing energy needs.

I look forward to the discussion with our witnesses who have valuable expertise and experience to provide key insights into the bills before us.

Mr. Nick Myers, Chairman of Arizona's Corporation Commission plays an essential role on retail electricity and the importance of state involvement in transmission planning and development.

Mr. Nelson Peeler from Duke Energy brings operational experience from an investor-owned utility to provide practical understanding of how our transmission system is built and operated.

Mr. Tom Falcone, president of the Large Public Power Council, brings the unique perspective of municipally owned utilities that serve large communities and cities across the country.

And Ms. Whitney Muse brings power sector expertise from both the public and private sector.

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This hearing continues the important work of our subcommittee to power future industries in a way that lowers costs and fuels economic growth for communities across the country.

I look forward to today's discussion and yield back.