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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
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6115
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July 28, 2026

Mr. Clay Rikard
Senior Vice President of System Planning
Southern Company
600 18th Street, North
Birmingham, AL 35203

Dear Mr. Rikard:

Thank you for appearing before the Subcommittee on Energy on Wednesday, May 13, 2026, to testify at the hearing entitled "Wires, Rates, and States: Permitting Transmission for Reliable and Affordable Power."

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 Tuesday, August 11, 2026. 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,

Robert E. Latta
Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy

cc: Kathy Castor, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Energy

Attachment

Additional Questions for the Record

The Honorable Bob Latta (R-OH)

1. Southern Company covers several southeastern states and borders both vertically integrated utilities and RTO's. Your system has seams and bilateral agreements with your neighbors to buy and sell power when appropriate. What does Southern consider when examining investments into interregional transfers?

2. Some stakeholders who advocate for big transmission buildout to connect intermittent energy sources say they are cheaper, typically citing Levelized Cost of Electricity, or LCOE, rather than the full cost of delivered power. Does this view fully account for the costs associated with weather dependent resource generation?

The Honorable Brett Guthrie (R-KY)

1. We've seen in testimony and heard during this hearing that massive regional and interregional transmission, at least on paper, are supposed to deliver huge affordability and reliability benefits to the electric system, and consumers

    a. Do you consider this kind of transmission in your planning and, if so, why is it either getting built or not getting built?

The Honorable Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R-IA)

1. One of the things your testimony highlights is the value of integrated planning. Southern Company serves customers across three states, three separate service territories, each with their own state commission. And yet your planners sit at the same table, working from the same inputs and assumptions across all three of those service territories. Has that approach, planning across service territories rather than within each one in isolation, produced more cost effective outcomes for your customers?

The Honorable August Pfluger (R-TX)

1. Democrats like to point to wind and solar generation costs during the sunniest and windiest days to say that renewables should dominate our resource mix. But this fails to recognize the role of dispatchable resources when vulnerable communities need it most. Southern Company has all types of resources – nuclear, gas, coal, wind, solar, and batteries. When you were planning to maintain the system during Winter Storm Fern, what resources did you rely on?

2. Is it correct that, during some of these major storms, there is sometimes not enough energy to transfer from other regions? Transmission capacity is not the problem. The problem is that there's not enough dispatchable generation. Should this be fixed by federal mandates or by states and local planners?