

O&I Subcommittee Hearing – March 24, 2021
"Power Struggle: Examining the 2021 Texas Grid Failure"
Statement – 2 minutes

As Prepared for Delivery

Thank you, Ranking Member Griffith. Last month's crisis in Texas and the surrounding region was utterly tragic. The worst winter storm in nearly one hundred years caused blackouts that impacted over 5 million Americans across Texas, Oklahoma, and Louisiana, among other states. Lives were lost, livelihoods were ruined, and our faith in our electric system was shaken. Americans are angry and deserve answers.

Unfortunately, we cannot overlook the fact that this is only the latest such tragedy. In recent years similar events have occurred in California and the North East. While the causes of each blackout are unique, the results are the same: unnecessary suffering and economic disruption. This Committee has direct jurisdiction over much of the energy sector and has a responsibility to address many shortcomings of our electric system.

I'd also like to express my support and appreciation for the work at the state level in Texas. Significant criticism has been levied against my state, the grid operator, and the public utility commission. The state legislature has already held no less than six hearings to find answers, bring accountability, and make necessary reforms. Texans can and will solve this problem within its borders.

Finally, I'd like to voice my strong concern about the politicization of this crisis. No one policy caused this crisis and no one policy could have prevented it. I implore my colleagues to use this hearing to study the crisis in full. The reliability of our country's electric supply is not a partisan priority, it's a national priority.

Thank you and I yield back.