

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

The Honorable Cheryl A. LaFleur  
Chairman  
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission  
888 First Street, N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20426

February 27, 2015

Dear Chairman LaFleur:

We write to voice our support for your ongoing work to study the effects of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) proposed "Clean Power Plan" regulation on electric reliability. The series of technical conferences that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is undertaking will be another important step toward fully understanding the widespread effects that this regulation will have on consumers. Especially during the winter months when our constituents rely on electricity to keep their lights on and their houses warm, our concern is that they have continued access to reliable and affordable electricity, a worthy goal that should be advanced by federal energy policy.

Electric reliability has become a growing concern across the country due to the rapid loss and conversion of many electric generation units (EGU). In fact, since 2010, 456 coal-fired generation units responsible for more than 71,000 megawatts of power have announced their retirement or conversion. The majority of those—313 units responsible for more than 47,000 megawatts of power—are permanently retiring largely due to other recently enacted EPA policies such as the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards (MATS). There is little doubt that the proposed Clean Power Plan will only increase the number of EGU retirements and exacerbate grid reliability concerns.

The real world consequences of these EPA policies made last winter an especially challenging time for electricity supply, generation, and distribution. In describing the conditions at a FERC conference on April 1, 2014, you noted that "reliability was sustained, but at times was very close to the edge." In testimony before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee on April 10, 2014, Commissioner Moeller added that "the experience of this past winter indicates that the power grid is now already at the limit." At the same hearing, American Electric Power (AEP) CEO Nick Akins testified that 89 percent of AEP's generation scheduled

for 2015 retirement was operating in January 2014. Akins aptly described the risk, saying, “This country did not just dodge a bullet—we dodged a cannonball.”

We must ensure that another cold winter does not cause this country to get hit by the proverbial cannonball. Frigid temperatures, fuel supply shortages, equipment failure, and recent generation retirements could each factor into a service interruption that our constituents simply cannot afford and that could be dangerous to their health in some cases. These very concerns were echoed in the FERC “Winter 2014-15 Energy Market Assessment” report, which highlights some of the similarities between last winter and the current one. Specifically, the report mentions “below average natural gas storage, lower coal stockpiles, regional pipeline restrictions, and increased reliance on natural gas for electricity.”

While no one can predict exactly how cold this winter will be, we are concerned about the possibility that our electric grid may not be adequately prepared to handle potential challenges that lie ahead. Millions of Americans at special risk from cold temperatures—children, the elderly, those on fixed incomes or with health conditions—are counting on reliable electricity to stay warm through the winter. As FERC has the statutory authority to oversee the establishment and enforcement of reliability standards for the nation’s electric transmission grid, we commend you for taking steps to study this issue, and would encourage you to use this opportunity to fully evaluate how the EPA’s rulemaking will affect electric reliability.

Given that this evaluative process will take time to proceed, please share with us the appropriate measures that FERC has taken already to ensure the delivery of affordable electricity through the rest of this winter and during future winter seasons, in light of the reliability issues that were so clearly evident last year. We stand ready to partner with you in any way we can to protect our constituents’ access to safe, reliable, and affordable electricity.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



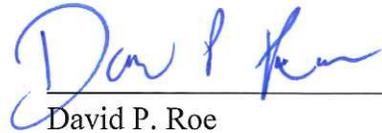
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Gregg Harper  
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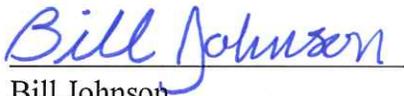
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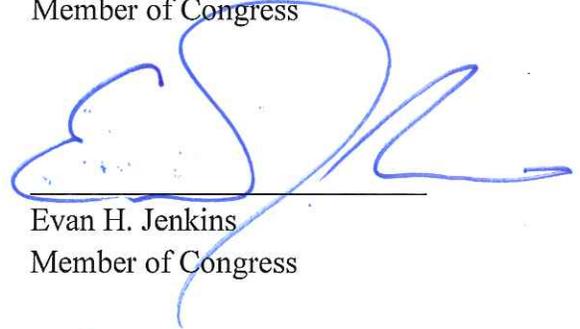
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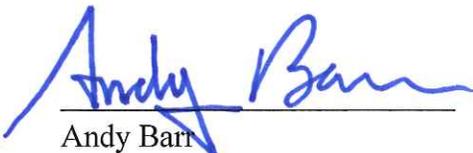
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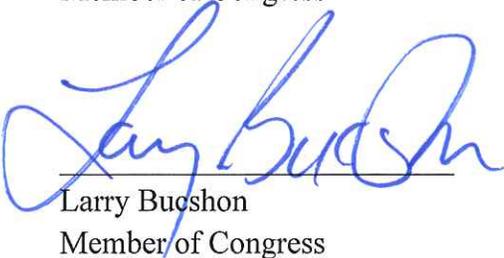
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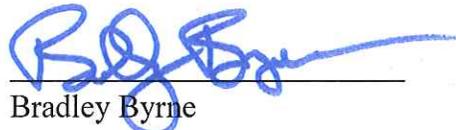
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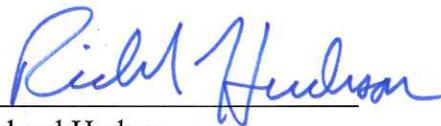
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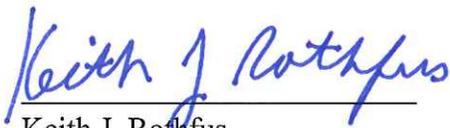
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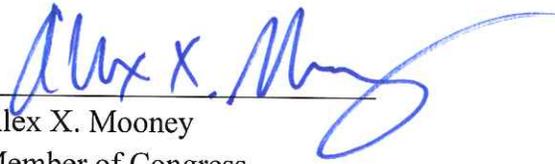
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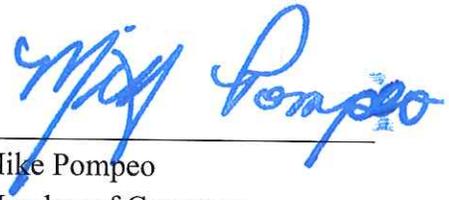
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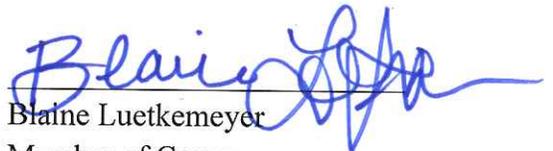
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