



Expert Panel Urges Development of a Timely Plan to Make Electric Infrastructure More Resilient

WASHINGTON, Feb. 17, 2017 – Protecting the U.S. electric grid must be an urgent priority and collaborative national security initiative, a forum of 20 experts concluded at Protect Our Power’s first advisory panel summit this week.

Protect Our Power, founded in 2016, is a not-for-profit organization that seeks to unite key industry groups, utilities, security experts, government -- including military authorities -- and public policy influencers to expedite efforts toward fortifying the grid against all threats, foreign and domestic.

The coalition gathered to launch a collective effort among diverse stakeholders to address the vulnerabilities of the grid and to illuminate the path to successfully securing the power infrastructure from physical harm and cyber threats.

“Electricity is the essential component that sustains the American way of life,” said Jim Cunningham, executive director of Protect Our Power. “We must defend our electric infrastructure against all threats.”

The nation’s electric grid is comprised of both private and public generation and distribution companies, which are under both federal and state regulation. This complexity poses additional challenges to creating effective resiliency solutions and the funding methods that will be required. Two nationwide surveys conducted by Protect Our Power revealed that more than two-thirds of Americans were concerned about the resiliency of the grid. The [complete poll results are available on the Protect Our Power website.](#)

“Protect Our Power serves a vital role in identifying the range of issues and developing a comprehensive strategy to ensure greater resiliency of the grid,” said Suedeen Kelly, chair of the energy regulation, markets and enforcement practice at Akin Gump, and a former commissioner with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. “No other organization has taken such a collaborative approach to this challenge.”

“Electricity is the engine of the American economy,” Cunningham said. “It’s easy to take this precious resource for granted. We want to ensure water flows, the food supply is secure, vital healthcare is provided, our cities are safe, and our nation is defended from its enemies.”

Comprised of experts representing the energy, cybersecurity, environmental, financial, science, and legal sectors, as well as former military and government officials, the panel will work with all private and public stakeholders to accelerate the process of finding an across-the-board solution. A complete list of Protect Our Panel advisory panel members is available [here](#).

About Protect Our Power:

Protect Our Power (POP) is a not-for-profit organization designed to build a consensus among key stakeholders, decision-makers and public policy influencers to launch a coordinated and adequately funded effort to make the nation’s electric grid more resilient and more resistant to all external threats. The national program must also ensure establishment of an enhanced power restoration and recovery component for all grid operations that would include communications protocols to protect the American public.

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