



U.S. Senate Committee on Energy & Natural Resources  
Subcommittee on Energy  
304 Dirksen Senate Building  
Washington, DC 20510

7/14/2016

**RE: Securing Energy Infrastructure Act of 2016**

Protect Our Power respectfully requests that the following comments concerning S. 3018, the Securing Energy Infrastructure Act, be included in the record for the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy's July 12, 2016 hearing on the bill.

*Background on Protect Our Power*

Protect Our Power (PoP) is a coalition of concerned stakeholders that recognize the importance of a reliable electric system and whose sole purpose is to facilitate efforts by the government, industry and other stakeholders to take the steps necessary to improve the security and resiliency of our nation's power grid. In the wake of emerging threats, including natural threats, such as hurricanes and solar storms, and deliberate attacks such as cyber and physical attacks as well as the potential for a nuclear electromagnetic pulse (EMP) attack, we believe this mission must be an urgent national priority.

Protect Our Power advocates for practical, consensus-driven, timely solutions that will meaningfully address the vulnerability of the electric power grid. To that end, Protect Our Power is convening stakeholders and power system experts to develop and support initiatives—whether legislative, regulatory, policy, or industry-driven—that effectively respond to 21st Century threats to the security of the electric grid.

*Comments*

PoP supports the goal of S. 3018 to study and better understand the many threats facing our critical electricity infrastructure and evaluate technological changes and advances that could improve the resiliency of the electric grid. PoP encourages the Committee to act expeditiously in advancing this legislation so that this important research, development, and testing can begin. Given the vulnerabilities of the electric grid and potentially catastrophic consequences of a successful attack, time is of the essence.

PoP also urges the Committee, and Congress as a whole, to engage industry, regulators, and other stakeholders to take further action to address this pressing matter of national and economic security. While this legislation reflects a positive step, all should recognize that a comprehensive, coordinated plan of action is required to adequately secure the electric grid against 21st Century threats. PoP's independent research confirms that there is widespread support among the public to address this vital issue. Indeed, according to a national poll conducted by PoP, more than 91 percent of respondents consider electricity to be critically or very important to their day-to-day needs, and 66 percent believe that the current state of the grid is vulnerable to physical or cyber attacks. In short, the public is aware that the electric grid is vulnerable, and considers this vulnerability to be one of vital importance. Further, the poll data also shows that a majority of the public not only appreciates the significance of grid security risks, but supports making investments that are necessary to address such risks. PoP urges further action on practical, consensus-driven solutions to this vital issue.