

Members Seek Study of Alternatives to Power Lines

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THIRTY MEMBERS OF CONGRESS SIGN LETTER TO DOE SEEKING STUDY OF ALTERNATIVES TO BUILDING HIGH VOLTAGE TRANSMISSION LINES

Click [here](#) to read the letter to Secretary Bodman

Washington, D.C. — Rep. Frank Wolf (R-VA) today released a letter signed by 30 members of Congress, including six U.S. senators, asking the Department of Energy (DOE) to immediately initiate a study incorporating the most modern technology available to transmit power instead of building huge high voltage transmission lines that destroy landscapes, split communities and neighborhoods, and threaten historic and natural resources.

The letter comes after DOE's recent designation of two National Interest Electric Transmission Corridors, which many believe will just pave the way for utility companies and regional transmission operators to build more lines instead of exploring alternatives.

“We understand that the Department of Energy has already been investing in research and development of new technology to help upgrade America's energy infrastructure and reduce energy demand,” the letter said. “This is a prime opportunity to put those efforts to work through a study examining possible savings associated with demand side management programs, smart grid technology or higher conductivity lines, among other options. Such a study also could provide possible rate restructuring options as well as demand side management targets to assist states, utilities and public regulatory boards considering new transmission infrastructure plans.”

The six senators who signed the letter are: John Warner (R-VA), Jim Webb (D-VA), Arlen Specter (R-PA), Robert Casey (D-PA), Joe Biden (D-DE), Thomas Carper (D-DE).

The 24 representatives who signed the letter are: Wolf (R-VA), Tom Davis (R-VA), Jim Moran (D-VA), Maurice Hinchey (D-NY), John McHugh (R-NY), John Hall (D-NY), Michael Arcuri (D-NY), Don Payne (D-NJ), Chris Smith (R-NJ), Albio Sires (D-NJ), Scott Garrett (R-NJ), Rush Holt (D-NJ), Rodney Frelinghuysen (D-NJ), Jim Saxton (R-NJ), Todd Platts (R-PA), Chaka Fattah (D-PA), John Murtha (D-PA), Chris Carney (D-PA), Allyson Schwartz (D-PA), Jim Gerlach (R-PA), Paul Kanjorski (D-PA), Michael Castle (R-DE), Susan Davis (D-CA) and Raul Grijalva (D-AZ).

Below is a copy of the letter.

October 12, 2007

The Honorable Samuel Bodman
Secretary, Department of Energy
1000 Independence Ave SW
Washington DC 20585-0001

Dear Mr. Secretary:

With the announcement last week by the department designating two National Interest Electric Transmission Corridors, which include our constituencies, we write to seek federal investment in energy efficiency policies and new technologies to advance our nation's electric energy infrastructure in the designated areas.

The designation of National Interest Electric Transmission Corridors will force utility companies, regional transmission operators and even public regulatory boards to aggressively place the building of new transmission before the exploration of increased conservation and

smart grid technology to meet electricity needs. We call on the Department of Energy to order an immediate study of cutting-edge alternatives using 21st century technology that can be utilized without resorting to the standard answer that building transmission infrastructure is the only solution.

We understand that the Department of Energy has already been investing in research and development of new technology to help upgrade America's energy infrastructure and reduce energy demand. This is a prime opportunity to put those efforts to work through a study examining possible savings associated with demand side management programs, smart grid technology or higher conductivity lines, among other options. Such a study also could provide possible rate restructuring options as well as demand side management targets to assist states, utilities and public regulatory boards considering new transmission infrastructure plans.

To build a reliable grid for the future, we recognize that we must start today to ensure America's economic and national security. With your partnership, the states and local regulators we represent can be better informed about measures available to them as they make decisions to help solve the congestion issues you have identified as well as protect our constituents' neighborhoods.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

(SIGNATORIES ARE LISTED ABOVE)