

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FOR MORE INFORMATION:
CONTACT: Ed Legge, EEI, 202-657-2592
Dan Dolan, EPSA, 202-349-0153**

Electric Industry Supports Federal Cyber Authority, Calls for Increased Cooperation Between Agencies, Industry

WASHINGTON (July 21, 2009) – The federal government should have explicit statutory authority in certain emergency situations to protect the nation’s electric grid and its computer systems, a representative of the electric utility industry on Tuesday told a subcommittee of the House Committee on Homeland Security.

But any new federal authority over grid cybersecurity should complement existing federal electric reliability standards, said Steven T. Naumann, Exelon Corporation’s Vice President of Wholesale Market Development, speaking on behalf of the Edison Electric Institute and the Electric Power Supply Association at a hearing of the House Subcommittee on Emerging Threats, Cybersecurity, and Science and Technology.

Naumann emphasized the importance of the “collaborative framework” between utilities, industries and the federal agencies that protect the nation’s infrastructure and called for “greater cooperation, coordination and intelligence sharing between government and the private sector” in order to maximize security against cyber attacks.

As the electric grid becomes more digitally automated, the electric industry, Naumann said, is fully dedicated to working with the federal government to protect the grid and “believes it is appropriate for Congress to consider legislation providing new emergency authority to address imminent cyber security threats.”

Any new authority should complement the industry-wide mandatory and enforceable reliability and cyber security rules that already exist under Section 215 of the Federal Power Act, he said, and should be “limited to true emergency situations involving imminent cybersecurity threats where there is a significant declared national security or public welfare concern.”

Naumann cautioned that “overly broad authority would undermine the collaborative framework that is needed to further enhance security.”

Naumann said new legislation additionally “should clarify the respective roles, responsibilities and procedures of the federal government and the industry, including those for handling confidential information, to facilitate an expeditious response” to any cyber threat or attack.

--more--

Further modernization of the grid, known as the “smart grid,” and the ongoing development of standards for smart grid interoperability, also offer the chance to further enhance the grid’s security.

“With smart grid solutions in the early stages of development, opportunities exist to ensure this vision is fulfilled,” he said. “EEI and EPSA support the process currently underway at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) to develop a framework of standards that will become the foundation of a secure, interoperable smart grid.”

#

The [Edison Electric Institute \(EEI\)](#) is the association of U.S. shareholder-owned electric companies. Our members serve 95 percent of the ultimate customers in the shareholder-owned segment of the industry, and they represent approximately 70 percent of the U.S. electric power industry. We also have more than 65 International electric companies as Affiliate members, and more than 170 industry suppliers and related organizations as Associate members.

EPSA is the national trade association representing competitive power suppliers, including generators and marketers. These suppliers, who account for nearly 40 percent of the installed generating capacity in the United States, provide reliable and competitively priced electricity from environmentally responsible facilities. EPSA seeks to bring the benefits of competition to all power customers. For more information about EPSA, please visit www.epsa.org.