

# WIRES News - April 2009



WIRES VOICE OF THE ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION INDUSTRY

March / April 2009

## Quick Links

[WIRES Home](#)  
[WIRES Calendar](#)  
[WIRES Members](#)

## In This Issue

[WIRES Sees Progress in Proposed Bills](#)

[WIRES Takes Its Views on Smart Grid To House Panel](#)

[Can The Transmission Grid Be Planned Interconnection-Wide?](#)

[NERC Chair: Integrating Renewable Resources a 'Priority'](#)

["Transmission 102" Gives Capitol Hill A Look at Policy Challenges Ahead](#)

[Wyoming Voices Support in D.C. for Grid Modernization](#)

[WIRES Welcomes Newest Members!](#)

[In the News](#)

**If You Need, Own or Depend on Electric Transmission - You Should Join WIRES!**

## WIRES News

An Update on Public Policy Developments from the Working group for Investment in Reliable and Economic electric Systems

### WIRES Sees Progress In Proposed Transmission Bills



U.S. Senate and House leaders have circulated draft legislation to address challenges facing the nation's electric grid. [WIRES President William Kaul welcomed the developments](#), but warned that "the growing number of differing reform proposals ... narrowly aimed at facilitating renewable energy development, are no guarantee of a workable result" for the future of the grid overall. In a related news release, [WIRES officials also expressed a desire](#) for the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to "consistently and proactively" enforce the principles of FERC's Order No. 890, rather than relying in planning rules that vary from region to region and even by sub-region. WIRES emphasizes that the integrated nature of the high voltage network requires stronger federal leadership.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV), proposed [new federal authority](#) to build special lines that link zones of location-constrained renewable generation - including wind and solar facilities - to major load centers. Under [S. 539](#), the Federal government could override state authorities in directing where the lines would go and who would pay for them.

The Democratic Majority Staff of the Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee - under its Chairman, Sen. Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) - released its draft legislation ([draft](#))([summary](#)) addressing issues of transmission siting, interconnection-wide planning with broad objectives, and cost allocation. ([Joseph L. Welch, President & CEO of ITC Holdings, Corp. \(a WIRES Member\), offered his company's views before the committee on March 12](#)). The E&NR Committee is expected to mark up a revised version of the draft on April 27; it has already met to discuss the energy efficiency portions of an energy bill.

House Energy and Commerce Chairman Henry Waxman and Subcommittee Chairman Ed Markey issued a large discussion draft

WIRES is the transmission industry's voice on key public policy issues at all levels of government. During the coming year of change and challenge in Washington, your support for WIRES - and participation in its advocacy programs - are essential to building America's electrical grid to meet both current and emerging challenges.

If you're not already a member, join WIRES by contacting Jim Hoecker (202-378-2316 or 202-549-0584/ email: [jhoecker@helppllc.com](mailto:jhoecker@helppllc.com)) or check out our Website at: [www.wiresgroup.com](http://www.wiresgroup.com)

Check the  
**[WIRES Calendar](#)**  
to Learn About the Latest  
Events And Conferences  
Related to Transmission Issues

on climate change, with a section on transmission planning.

Finally, [Senator Byron Dorgan introduced S. 774 \(read the bill\)](#), which provides for regional planning and development of a high voltage grid overlay to transmit remote renewable and fossil resources to market. An amendment or stand-alone legislation on transmission is expected from Rep. Jay Inslee.

WIRES is monitoring developments in the area and analyzing the merits of these bills.

---

## WIRES Takes Its Views on Smart Grid To House Panel on Energy Independence/Global Warming

WIRES Counsel Jim Hoecker was on Capitol Hill recently to address members of the House of Representatives' **Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming** (<http://globalwarming.house.gov/>) during their hearing on "Get Smart on the Smart Grid: How Technology Can Revolutionize Efficiency and Renewable Solutions."



In his [statement](#), Hoecker told them, "*If we are to fulfill our national ambition of a more secure, environmentally sustainable and efficient power system, we need a workable regulatory process that ensures that transmission can be built on a timely basis, based on collaboration with stakeholders and a clear regulatory path to completion.*"

---

## Can The Transmission Grid Be Planned Interconnection-Wide?

On April 8, many of the participants in the [Joint Coordinated System Plan](#), and other industry participants in the Eastern Interconnection, will meet in Atlanta to see if a "partnership" can be developed to plan transmission across the entire Interconnection. Questions about the workability of the idea, and the possibility that Congress could enact such a mechanism for the major Interconnections, remain unanswered. Stay tuned.

---

## NERC Chair: Integrating Renewable Resources a 'Priority'

In the keynote address at a Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) technical conference, Rick Sergel, president and CEO of the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC), urged the electric industry to focus on solutions to the technical challenges posed by large-scale integration of renewable resources. For details, visit: [http://www.nerc.com/news\\_pr.php?npr=256](http://www.nerc.com/news_pr.php?npr=256)

---

## "Transmission 102" Gives Capitol Hill A Look at Policy

## Challenges Ahead

On February 27, WIRES joined with the Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) and the American Wind Energy Association (AWEA) to conduct a Capitol Hill briefing on key policy issues associated with the upgrade and expansion of the interstate electric transmission system. The briefing follows January's Transmission 101 session. WIRES is now planning Transmission 103 to address changes in transmission technologies.

Read a summary of the "Transmission 102" event:  
[http://www.eesi.org/022709\\_transmission](http://www.eesi.org/022709_transmission)

Download the "Transmission 102" speakers' presentation:  
<http://www.wiresgroup.com/transmission102.html>

---

## Wyoming Voices Support in D.C. for Grid Modernization to Link Renewable Generation to Consumers

A top advisor to Wyoming Gov. Dave Freudenthal this month [urged congressional leaders to invest in electricity transmission infrastructure](#) and to work toward modernizing the existing grid to help Western states deliver their significant renewable energy resources to market. The Wyoming Infrastructure Authority has been a member of WIRES.

---

## WIRES Welcomes Newest Members!

Two key players in the transmission world have joined WIRES.

**Dominion Resources** (<http://www.dom.com>) is one of the nation's largest producers of energy, headquartered in Richmond, VA.

**Bright Source Energy, Inc.** (<http://www.brightsourceenergy.com>) develops, builds, owns and operates large-scale solar plants that reliably deliver low-cost solar energy to industrial and utility companies worldwide.

---

## In the News

[Climate Bill Seeks New Energy Era](#), from *theHill.com* (March 31, 2009)

[Even With Solar, Power-Line Battles Loom](#), from *The Arizona Republic* (March 22, 2009)