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**If You Need, Own  
or Depend on  
Electric  
Transmission -**

## WIRES News

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

### Legislative Pace Quickens; WIRES Is At Heart of the Action

As electricity transmission-related legislative activity accelerates in Washington, WIRES is carefully monitoring developments and conferring with legislative leaders and their staffs about our members' concerns.

At this time, two bills appear destined to move forward in their respective chambers. The [Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee majority drafts of transmission and renewable portfolio standards](#) have survived mark-up and await action on nuclear, cyber security and related issues. The committee is chaired by Sen. Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) and its action may fend off a move by [Senate Majority Leader Reid \(D-NV\) to bring his bill, S. 539](#), directly to the floor. [Sen. Byron Dorgan \(D-ND\) has introduced S. 774](#) to promote a high-voltage superhighway serving renewable and coal resources stranded without customers in the Plains states.

The preeminent legislation in the House of Representatives is the 900+ page [H.R. 2454](#) sponsored by Energy & Commerce Committee Chairman Henry Waxman (D-CA) and Subcommittee Chairman Edward Markey (D-MA). Approved by the committee in a 33-25 vote on May 21, it contains major climate change and energy efficiency provisions, plus a transmission planning section. [Rep. Jay Inslee \(D-WA\) has introduced H.R. 2211](#), giving FERC authority to site interstate power lines built to deliver renewables. And [House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer's \(D-MD\) H.R. 2347 would finance advanced transmission cable technologies](#). The House is taking its lead on transmission from the Senate.

Issues common to all these bills are discussed in a new Congressional Research Service paper, [Electric Power Transmission: Background and Policy Issues](#).

### "Transmission 103" Scheduled for Capitol Hill June 4

On Thursday, June 4, WIRES and the Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) will co-host the third in a series of Capitol Hill seminars designed to educate lawmakers and staff as they consider a host of legislation with implications for the electric transmission system.

**WIRES University's Transmission 103: Upgrading the Grid will be held from 2:00-3:30 p.m. in Room 210 of the Cannon House Office**

## You Should Join WIRES!

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

**Building.** It is free and open to the public; no registration is required.

Additional information, including a full list of speakers, is available at: [http://www.eesi.org/060409\\_transmission](http://www.eesi.org/060409_transmission)

### High-level Military Board: "Fragile" Domestic Grid Threatens Security

A new study from CNA's Military Advisory Board, *Powering America's Defense: Energy and the Risks to National Security*, explores the impact of America's energy choices on our national security policies and includes significant concerns about the electric grid.

Read the report:

<http://www.cna.org/documents/PoweringAmericasDefense.pdf>

### WIRES Letter to White House Advisor Browner Warns Against Further Balkanization of Regulatory System

In a detailed [April 17 letter to Carol Browner](#), President Obama's advisor for energy and climate change, WIRES cautioned the Administration not to support energy legislation that would create further risk of making the regulatory system "....Balkanized regionally, by resource type, size or according to governing rate or siting regimes."

In the letter, WIRES calls for "significant and sensible" reforms to the nation's processes for planning, siting and allocating the cost of high-voltage electric transmission lines.

### WIRES Launches Analysis of Investment Trade-Offs Between Smart Grid and Strong Grid

WIRES is developing an analysis of the investment trade-offs between the significant efficiency benefits to be derived from deploying digital technologies, on one hand, and the benefits that depend on expanding and upgrading the high voltage network of wires on which "smart" technologies are being installed, on the other.

As with its other studies, WIRES aims to promote an understanding of the relationship between digital technology innovation and the high voltage network.

The analysis is expected to be ready for public release Oct. 1.

### FERC Approves Funding Plan For Major International Transmission Project

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission on May 21 approved the funding arrangement for a [major transmission project linking Hydro-Quebec with ISO New England](#) that would deliver low-cost hydropower to

consumers in the New England region. The project is expected to eliminate 4-6 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions per year by displacing gas-fired generation in New England.

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## Member News

### **Xcel Energy Makes Boulder, CO Model for Smart Grid**

Xcel Energy, a WIRES member, has begun developing the nation's first fully integrated smart grid community in Boulder, CO.

The project combines traditional and cutting-edge technology to modernize the grid and provide new, innovative ways to provide the best service possible. Over the next several years, this SmartGridCity initiative offers the potential for adding more clean and green power sources, building a grid that allows customers to more actively participate in decisions about when, how much and what kind energy they use; providing a digitally enhanced, more resilient and stable energy grid that is less prone to outages, and creating more energy efficiency and conservation options for customers.

To learn more, visit: <http://birdcam.xcelenergy.com/sgc/news/news-releases.html>

### **FERC Okays Incentives for ITC's Green Power Express, Intended to Integrate Power from Renewable Sources**

In a decision that supports renewable wind resources supplying an important share of the nation's electric energy, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission has approved Green Power Express LP's request for favorable transmission investment incentives and authorized establishment of a regulatory asset for development and pre-construction costs.

Green Power Express LP is a limited partnership formed by WIRES member ITC Holdings Corp. to develop and build the Green Power Express Project - a network of transmission lines carrying 12,000 megawatts of power from wind-abundant areas of the Upper Midwest to Midwestern and Eastern states that demand clean, renewable energy.

To learn more, visit: <http://www.thegreenpowerexpress.com/>

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## In The News

*Many gains and a big constraint for wind industry*  
San Francisco Chronicle (from Associated Press)  
May 8, 2009

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/n/a/2009/05/08/financial/f114015D72.DTL&type=business>

*'Smart Grid' Presents Great Promise, Complications*

The Sun (Baltimore)

April 26, 2009

<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/nation/bal-te.smartgrid26apr26,0,6462984.story>