



West Virginians

for Reliable Power

PRESS RELEASE

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Five Years after worst US blackout, concerns remain

CHARLESTON-- (August 14, 2008) – America experienced the worst blackout in history five years ago and energy experts say that enhancements to the current electric power infrastructure are necessary to ensure continued reliability and meet future demand.

The blackout occurred on August, 14, 2003 and affected 50 million people in the Northeast, Midwest and part of Canada. While federal regulators have approved standards for upkeep of the power grid and utilities have new systems to monitor the network, the need still exists for significant investment in the regional electricity infrastructure. .

Dan Larcamp, a spokesperson for the Edison Electric Institute and a former chief of staff at the U.S. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission said, "In the five years since the last major blackout, utilities have begun building significant amounts of new transmission but this trend will need to continue in the future to maintain reliable service and deliver more renewable power to customers."

Noting that electricity demand will grow by 18 percent over the next decade and that our current transmission grid will be unable to meet the future demand for electricity, Larcamp said "now is the time to invest in new transmission infrastructure."

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West Virginians for Reliable Power, a diverse coalition of West Virginia businesses, trade associations and labor representatives, is committed to educating West Virginia citizens on the urgent need for an improved electric transmission infrastructure.