



# West Virginians

for Reliable Power

## For Immediate Release

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### **Experts Cite Electricity Demand, Security Concerns As Reasons for Improving Region's Electric Grid**

**Shepherdstown, WV** (July 16, 2008) – Electric industry and homeland security experts discussed the need for an improved system of transmission infrastructure in West Virginia and the Mid-Atlantic region at a forum held in Shepherdstown today.

Daniel Larcamp, a spokesperson for the Edison Electric Institute and a former chief of staff at the U.S. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, said, "Given what we know – that electricity demand is projected to grow by 18 percent over the next decade and that our current transmission grid needs to be expanded to meet future demand – the time is now to invest in new transmission infrastructure."

Robert Hinkle, a spokesperson for PJM Interconnection, the regional transmission grid operator, said, "PJM's long term planning process has identified critical backbone transmission needs for the region within the next three to five years. A combination of these transmission upgrades along with new generation resources, demand response and renewable resources will be necessary to ensure continued electric supply reliability."

Bruce deGrazia, a homeland security expert and president of GHS Advisors, said, "The Defense Science Board – a Federal Advisory Committee established to provide independent advice to the Secretary of Defense – released a study in February [*DoD Energy Strategy – More Fight, Less Fuel*] reporting that, among other things, our military installations are highly dependent on the commercial power grid and vulnerable to extended disruption should the grid go down."

The report states, "Interconnected, interdependent infrastructure and the potential for cascading grid failures makes the resilience of the grid important to other essential services, such as telecommunications, water supplies and treatment, and operation of the pipeline systems that distribute oil and natural gas around the country."

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DeGrazia added, “Increasingly our domestic military assets are being used to assist during state and regional emergencies, such as Hurricane Katrina. We’ve seen firsthand how the loss of power affects other critical infrastructure needed to stabilize and revive an affected area. Everything is dependent on a secure power supply – communication systems, emergency response, etc.”

“As a nation, we need to look beyond our immediate electric needs and plan decades down the road to ensure reliability and security,” deGrazia said. “While we must increase conservation rates and build new renewable generation, we need reliable transmission infrastructure.”

William Brier, Vice President for Policy & Public Affairs at the Edison Electric Institute, said, “Reliable electricity is more important than ever to our daily lives and to our economy, what with our increasing dependence on technological advances and resulting demand for more electricity that makes those advances possible. We cannot scrimp on the system that serves the state and the region – we’ve got to invest to keep electricity reliable.”

The event was conducted by *West Virginians for Reliable Power*, a coalition representing a diverse group of West Virginia businesses, trade associations and labor representatives. The organization is committed to educating West Virginia citizens on the need for an improved electric transmission infrastructure.

For additional information, or to join the coalition, visit [www.ForReliablePower.org](http://www.ForReliablePower.org).

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