



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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WIRES Letter to FERC Incorrectly Pits Collaboration Against Transmission Competition

WASHINGTON - Paul Cicio, Chair of the Electricity Transmission Competition Coalition, released the following statement in response to the WIRES's letter to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC):

“WIRES, an organization that represents electric utilities that are opposed to transmission competition, filed comments to the FERC Transmission Planning NOPR docket on February 23, 2024. The filing includes a report by Grid Strategies entitled “Fostering Collaboration Would Help Build Needed Transmission.

While making specific reference to FERC Order 1000, a rule in which FERC determined that transmission competition was in the public interest, WIRES directly implies that the Grid Strategies report opposes transmission competition and supports WIRES' view favoring reinstatement of a federal Right of First Refusal (ROFR) for incumbent transmission owners.

WIRES attempts to leverage the Grid Strategies report in an effort to justify reinstatement of federal ROFRs to protect incumbent transmission owners from competition.

The Grid Strategies report finds that Order 1000 has discouraged beneficial collaboration and calls for policymakers to “take care to foster, rather than discourage or prevent, effective collaboration in transmission development.” The report does not say that collaboration and transmission competition cannot co-exist and that the latter must be discouraged or prevented to foster the former.

WIRES latest propaganda is a distraction and no ‘good cause’ exists for its consideration in the proceeding at this late juncture.

Furthermore, WIRES conveniently fails to mention that thousands of miles of supplemental and local transmission projects were built collaboratively by utilities specifically to avoid competition, increase their profits, and increase consumer electricity costs.

ETCC believes that we need both collaboration and competition to ensure an efficient and cost-effective build-out of transmission. Competition versus collaboration is a false dichotomy. ETCC welcomes more effective transmission collaboration, particularly among competitive transmission projects developed under Order 1000.

As Chairman Chandler of the Kentucky PSC observed in response comments to the FERC NOPR, reinstating federal ROFRs based on delays created by incumbent actions would “reward bad behavior and set a terrible precedent moving forward.” The US Department of Justice, the US Federal Trade “Commission, ETCC, many state utility commissions, and scores of other parties in the NOPR docket have steadfastly opposed any reinstatement of federal ROFRs.”

About the Electricity Transmission Competition Coalition

The Electricity Transmission Competition Coalition (ETCC) is a broad-based, nation-wide coalition committed to increasing competition in America’s electricity transmission infrastructure. We advocate for common-sense policies and solutions that result in competitively priced transmission projects, which reduce energy costs for all ratepayers – from large manufacturers to residential consumers. The ETCC represents a diverse group of more than 93 companies and organizations from all 50 states, including manufacturing groups, retail electric consumers, state consumer advocates, public power representatives, think tanks, and non-incumbent transmission developers.

For more information, visit: www.electricitytransmissioncompetitioncoalition.org.

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