

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 1, 2022

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing to encourage you to take further action to address the urgent supply chain shortages threatening our region's electric infrastructure. Beyond the current invocation of the Defense Production Act for certain energy infrastructure components, more must be done to ensure electric reliability heading into storm season.

We have heard from Local Power Companies serving our region that the availability of transformers is particularly dire. Transformers are a crucial component of electricity delivery at substations and utility poles. This equipment is important not only for keeping up with economic growth, but for restoring power after storms and other extreme weather events. In the past months, costs are skyrocketing, and lead times for some manufacturers are up to two years - while others are not taking orders at all.

At issue is the availability of raw materials like steel. Your Capstone report on America's Supply Chains notes that there is only one domestic manufacturer of the steel used to produce transformers, and this company is unable to meet demand. The Department of Energy's (DOE) February 2022 report which informed that conclusion recommends, among other things, lowering manufacturing costs of large power transformers.

At a minimum, we request that you direct DOE to temporarily suspend its most recent conservation standards for transformers, which require manufacturers to use more steel than previously required. According to a letter sent to DOE Secretary Jennifer Granholm by the American Public Power Association and National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, this would allow manufacturers to increase transformer availability by allowing less steel to be used for each device.


Further, we request you engage the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to engage with suppliers and utilities to determine whether stockpiles of transformers, particularly those that may have been purchased with federal funds, may exist that can be called upon in emergency situations.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Bill Hagerty
United States Senator



Roger Wicker
United States Senator

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515



Marco Rubio
United States Senator



Cindy Hyde-Smith
United States Senator



Tommy Tuberville
United States Senator



David Kustoff
Member of Congress



Diana Harshbarger
Member of Congress



John Rose
Member of Congress



Scott DesJarlais, M.D.
Member of Congress



Tim Burchett
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H. Morgan Griffith
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Chuck Fleischmann
Member of Congress