



**House Committee on Energy and Commerce
Subcommittee on Energy, Climate, and Grid Security**

**“Powering AI: Examining America’s Energy and Technology Future”
June 4, 2024**

Witnesses

Philip J. Dion, Sr. Vice President, Customer Solutions, Edison Electric Institute

Tony Clark, Senior Advisor, Wilkinson Barker Knauer, LLP

Tom Hassenboehler, Chair, Advisory Committee, Electricity Customer Alliance

Melissa C. Lott, Professor, Climate School, Columbia University

Overview

On June 4, the House Energy and Commerce Committee's Energy Subcommittee held a [hearing](#) entitled, "Powering AI: Examining America's Energy and Technology Future." Subcommittee members heard from several witnesses discussing the intersection of artificial intelligence (AI), increasing energy demands, and future technological infrastructure in the United States.

Subcommittee Chairman Jeff Duncan (R-SC) [emphasized](#) the critical role of energy in supporting AI advancements and the need for reliable, 24/7 energy sources. He highlighted the increasing energy demands driven by digital information processing industries, such as data centers essential for AI and cloud services, pointing to significant projected increases in power requirements in states like Virginia and Georgia. He expressed concern over policies leading to the shutdown of reliable baseload power sources, warning of potential catastrophic blackouts and higher consumer prices.

Ranking Member Frank Pallone Jr. (D-NJ) [voiced](#) disappointment over the committee not addressing allegations of oil companies colluding to manipulate gas prices. Shifting focus to the hearing's topic, he acknowledged the surge in electricity demand due to the American manufacturing renaissance and the growing importance of data centers for AI technologies. Pallone stressed the need to connect more clean energy resources to the grid and criticized the idea of reverting to polluting power plants.

The hearing concluded with acknowledgments of the complex challenges and opportunities at the nexus of AI, energy demand, and technological advancement. There was a clear call for collaborative efforts between government, private industry, and technical experts to ensure a



secure, reliable, and sustainable energy future that supports the growth of AI and other critical technologies.

Key Takeaways

Energy Infrastructure and Reliability. There was a consensus on the need for significant upgrades to the U.S. energy grid to handle the increasing power demand from AI and other digital technologies. Witnesses and representatives stressed the importance of a reliable and modernized grid to prevent blackouts and ensure economic stability.

Role of Renewable Energy. While renewable energy was acknowledged as a critical component of the future energy mix, concerns were raised about its ability to provide continuous, reliable power. Witnesses discussed the need for a combination of renewables, storage solutions, and traditional baseload power to meet the growing demand effectively.

Role of Government and Private Sector in Energy System Design. There was a debate on the extent of government involvement in energy system design. Some representatives and witnesses argued for leaving technical decisions to engineers and private industry, while others emphasized the need for government coordination and support to ensure a robust energy infrastructure.

Environmental and Regulatory Concerns. The hearing also touched on the balance between advancing energy infrastructure and adhering to environmental regulations. Discussions highlighted the challenges of transitioning to cleaner energy sources without compromising grid reliability and affordability for consumers.