



June 6, 2014

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Chair
Select Committee on Intelligence
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Saxby Chambliss
Vice Chair
Select Committee on Intelligence
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Feinstein and Vice Chair Chambliss:

The undersigned electric power sector stakeholder organizations applaud your efforts to craft bipartisan legislation to assist the nation's critical infrastructure sectors by facilitating information sharing to help prevent, detect and mitigate cyber threats.

The North American electric sector takes its role as a critical infrastructure provider very seriously. Including nuclear, it is the only sector with mandatory, enforceable standards that are already in place and specific to cybersecurity. The sector also employs a "defense-in-depth" cyber threat mitigation strategy that combines preparation, prevention, resiliency, and response and recovery efforts.

A key part of the electric sector's approach involves strong industry-government partnerships. By coordinating with relevant federal government, intelligence, and law enforcement agencies to enhance security measures in the United States and Canada, the sector can better address evolving threats. Legislation that helps promote greater sharing of actionable cyber threat information in both directions between government and the private sector in a timely, confidential manner will enhance these partnership efforts and further improve security. We encourage your continued pursuit of legislation that recognizes, maintains, and builds upon—and does not duplicate or conflict with—existing public-private information-sharing authorities and partnerships, such as the Electric Sector Information Sharing and Analysis Center (ES-ISAC) and the Electricity Subsector Coordinating Council (ESCC), the principal liaison between the federal government and the electric power sector.

Legislation should encourage the sharing of as much relevant information as possible and allow existing sharing relationships to continue. Liability protections and other incentives should be provided to ensure that any sensitive information shared or vulnerabilities identified cannot be used in regulatory or legal proceedings. Because cyber threats evolve and move literally at the speed of light, robust information sharing among potential targets and their government partners improves everyone's cybersecurity posture.

Additionally, utilities monitor their systems and share information not only for cybersecurity purposes, but for reliability and other important operational purposes as well. We encourage clarifications in your legislation to ensure that the liability protections it provides for sharing information will not be lost if critical infrastructure owners and operators are monitoring their networks for legitimate purposes.

We appreciate this positive first step toward passage of information-sharing and liability protection legislation in the Senate that will help us do an even better job of protecting the nation's critical electric infrastructure, while respecting existing electric sector efforts. We look forward to working with you and other Senators as your bill moves through the legislative process.

American Public Power Association
Canadian Electricity Association
Edison Electric Institute
Electric Power Supply Association
GridWise Alliance
Large Public Power Council
National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners
National Rural Electric Cooperative Association
Nuclear Energy Institute
Transmission Access Policy Study Group