

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1015

To require the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to initiate a rule-making to reform the interregional transmission planning process, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 25, 2021

Mr. HEINRICH introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

A BILL

To require the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to initiate a rulemaking to reform the interregional transmission planning process, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Interregional Trans-
5 mission Planning Improvement Act of 2021”.

1 **SEC. 2. RULEMAKING TO INCREASE THE EFFECTIVENESS**
2 **OF INTERREGIONAL TRANSMISSION PLAN-**
3 **NING.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the
5 date of enactment of this Act, the Federal Energy Regu-
6 latory Commission shall initiate a rulemaking address-
7 ing—

8 (1) the effectiveness of existing planning proc-
9 esses for identifying interregional transmission
10 projects that provide economic, reliability, oper-
11 ational, public policy, and environmental benefits
12 (including reductions in carbon emissions), taking
13 into consideration the public interest, the integrity of
14 markets, and the protection of consumers;

15 (2) changes to the processes described in para-
16 graph (1) to ensure that efficient, cost-effective, and
17 broadly beneficial interregional transmission solu-
18 tions are selected for cost allocation, taking into con-
19 sideration—

20 (A) the public interest;

21 (B) the integrity of markets;

22 (C) the protection of consumers;

23 (D) the broad range of economic, reli-
24 ability, operational, public policy, and environ-
25 mental benefits that interregional transmission

1 provides, including reductions in carbon emis-
2 sions;

3 (E) the need for single projects to secure
4 approvals based on a comprehensive assessment
5 of the multiple benefits provided;

6 (F) that projects that meet interregional
7 benefit criteria should not be subject to subse-
8 quent reassessment by transmission planning
9 authorities;

10 (G) the importance of synchronization of
11 planning processes in neighboring regions, such
12 as using a joint model on a consistent timeline
13 with a single set of needs, input assumptions,
14 and benefit metrics;

15 (H) that evaluation of long-term scenarios
16 should align with the expected life of a trans-
17 mission asset;

18 (I) that transmission planning authorities
19 should allow for the identification and joint
20 evaluation of alternatives proposed by stake-
21 holders;

22 (J) that interregional planning should be
23 done regularly and not less frequently than
24 once every 3 years; and

1 (K) the elimination of arbitrary project
2 voltage, size, or cost requirements for inter-
3 regional solutions; and

4 (3) cost allocation methodologies that reflect
5 the multiple benefits provided by interregional trans-
6 mission solutions, including economic, reliability,
7 operational, public policy, and environmental bene-
8 fits (including reductions in carbon emissions).

9 (b) TIMING.—Not later than 18 months after the
10 date of enactment of this Act, the Federal Energy Regu-
11 latory Commission shall promulgate a final rule to com-
12 plete the rulemaking initiated under subsection (a).

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