



Unanimously Adopted on September 25, 2017

Resolution sponsored by: Governor Asa Hutchinson, Arkansas*
Representative Gary Staples, Mississippi
Representative Randy Davis, Alabama

4.2017 | Protecting the Nation's Electric Power Grid from Cyber and Physical Security Threats

WHEREAS, protecting the Nation's electric grid and ensuring a reliable and affordable supply of electricity are top priorities for federal and state/territory governments and the electric power industry; and

WHEREAS, the electric grid is a complex, interconnected network of generation, transmission, distribution, control and communication technologies that can be impacted by natural events – including earthquakes and hurricanes – as well as by malicious events such as cyber (e.g., data breach, ransomware or a control system event) or physical attacks or a combined cyber/physical attack; and

WHEREAS, Southern States Energy Board (SSEB) member states and territories depend upon secure sources of energy to power their economies; and

WHEREAS, our Nation's critical energy infrastructure appears to be under increasing cyber-attacks from multiple domestic and international threat sources; and

WHEREAS, the threat of cyber-attacks and physical security attacks against critical energy infrastructure systems cannot be eliminated but actions are being collaboratively undertaken by federal, state/territory and local governments and the private sector to reduce the likelihood of successful attack and to respond and recover from the harmful consequences of an attack; and

WHEREAS, these actions generally include threat information sharing, industry-government pre- and post- attack coordination planning, investments in research and development and strategic infrastructure security technologies and processes and cross-sector partnerships among critical energy and other sectors such as telecommunications, water and waste water to plan and respond to major incidents; and

WHEREAS, these actions require substantial investments of human and financial resources, for example, approximately \$52 billion in 2016 by electric companies to enhance and protect the energy grid and further support grid security activities; and

WHEREAS, additional public and private sector efforts need to continue to address new and emerging cyber threats such as those potentially associated with distributed energy resources; and

WHEREAS, industry trade associations and national policymaker associations such as the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, acknowledge the need for enhanced vigilance against all cybersecurity threats to our Nation's critical energy infrastructure and they encourage their members to continue their efforts to give a high priority to monitoring and evaluating cybersecurity threats to energy systems in collaboration with those agencies and entities having cyber-threat management and mitigation expertise.



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THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Southern States Energy Board encourages its policymakers in states and territories to take actions such as:

- a) Helping stakeholders and energy consumers learn about and understand the value of energy infrastructure;
- b) Reinforcing industry efforts to strengthen security defenses by expanding and building upon partnerships with federal and state/territory government;
- c) Supporting companies responsible for planning, building, operating and maintaining energy infrastructure as platforms to integrate emerging technologies as they become available;
- d) Supporting policies that promote investment in new technologies while balancing security risk, operational efficiency and customer costs;
- e) Encouraging expanded partnerships between the energy industry and leading technology companies to accelerate the deployment of new technologies;
- f) Supporting federal research and development on security technologies and expediting technology transfer to the private sector;
- g) Promoting improved and expedited background checks by federal and state/territory law enforcement for personnel with access to critical energy infrastructure;
- h) Supporting the expansion of mutual assistance and restoration initiatives, such as *Grid Assurance* for warehousing critical equipment to share in a short time, to avoid normal long deployment times; and
- i) Working with state/territory legislatures in a careful and deliberate manner to avoid unintended consequences that may impair existing federal regulations, standards, efforts and initiatives by industry when considering whether to pursue state legislative or regulatory approaches to cyber and physical security issues.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Southern States Energy Board encourages its pertinent member state agencies to continue in partnership with the relevant federal, regional, and industry organizations to work together to enhance and strengthen the cybersecurity and physical security status of the region's and Nation's critical energy infrastructure systems; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Southern States Energy Board communicates this resolution to the President of the United States, all the heads of relevant federal agencies involved with providing protection against cyber and physical security attacks, SSEB member state and territory congressional delegations, and appropriate state and territory officials.