

U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
September 4, 2025 Hearing: The Swett and LaCerte Nominations
Questions for the Record for Ms. Swett

Questions for the Record Submitted from Ranking Member Heinrich

Question 1: Grid Enhancing Technologies

Secretary of Energy Chris Wright has noted the importance of grid enhancing technologies, or GETs, for relieving grid congestion, specifically referencing dynamic line ratings. A 2024 study by RMI estimates that GETs could save PJM, the nation's largest regional transmission organization, approximately \$500 million.

FERC currently has an ongoing rulemaking proceeding addressing dynamic line ratings. If confirmed, how will you support this rulemaking that could result in hundreds of millions of dollars in savings, and improve congestion, for our nation's regional transmission planners?

Answer: As I stated at the hearing, I support maximizing the existing grid. I recognize the value of Grid Enhancing Technologies, including dynamic line ratings, to optimize the use of the existing grid and provide cost savings for America's consumers. If confirmed, I would work with my colleagues on this rulemaking proceeding.

Question 2: Permitting Reform

Last Congress, this Committee advanced S.4753 to the full Senate, a bipartisan permitting reform bill that, among other things, would have granted FERC backstop transmission siting authority. S.4753 also directed FERC to issue an interregional transmission planning rule.

Do you believe that granting FERC this additional transmission siting authority could streamline the transmission challenges our country currently faces?

How would FERC requiring more interregional transmission planning coordination help ensure grid reliability?

Answer: I respect the traditional primacy of the states in siting transmission facilities. I see benefits in FERC having additional transmission siting authority. If confirmed, I will assist Congress with development of legislation in this area. I believe that more interregional transmission planning will only help in enhancing grid reliability. I commit to work with my colleagues on these issues.

Question 3: Order No. 1920

Order No. 1920 attempts to facilitate long-term regional electric transmission planning and cost allocation. In Order No. 1920, FERC noted that a robust, well-planned transmission system ensures an affordable, reliable supply of electricity.

Given that the initial compliance deadlines are slated to begin later this year, what are your views on the current state of federal transmission policy?

If confirmed, how would you work to implement the long-term regional electric transmission planning requirements while reviewing compliance filings?

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Answer: As you note, compliance filings for Order No. 1920 are due beginning later this year. I recognize the importance of a robust transmission system to ensuring reliable and affordable service to customers. Without prejudging any matter that may come before me, if confirmed, I look forward to working with my colleagues to evaluate these compliance filings.

Question 4: Independence

In your response to questions asked during the hearing, you noted that the Department of Energy Organization Act explicitly provides that DOE will not review any FERC action. The Department of Energy Organization Act also explicitly establishes FERC as an “independent regulatory commission.”

As an attorney, do you believe that the statute codifies FERC’s independence from the White House? If no, please explain what level of independence FERC has from the White House.

Answer: During the hearing, I was referring to DOE Organization Act Section 402(g):
The decision of the Commission involving any function within its jurisdiction, other than action by it on a matter referred to it pursuant to section 404, shall be final agency action within the meaning of section 704 of title 5, United States Code, and shall not be subject to further review by the Secretary or any officer or employee of the Department.

While the DOE Act itself, which created FERC, does not explicitly mention any entity other than DOE, this does not compromise FERC’s status as an independent agency. I believe that every Commissioner must independently decide each matter before them based upon its specific merits. If confirmed, I will do exactly that, drawing upon my independent knowledge base and opinions formed after litigating FERC law for the past 15 years.

Questions for the Record Submitted from Senator Murkowski

Question 1: Alaska depends on hydropower as a backbone of affordable energy, yet the licensing and relicensing process often costs small utilities millions of dollars and takes years to complete.

- How would you work to scale FERC’s requirements to the size and risk of projects, particularly for remote communities where the alternative is costly diesel?

Answer: Recognizing that the Federal Power Act and other legislation give mandatory authority over aspects of hydropower licensing to state and other federal agencies, I appreciate the challenges facing small hydropower projects and, if I have the honor to be confirmed, would work with my colleagues and Congress to address those challenges.

Question 2: License amendments for upgrades with no additional environmental impact such as adding a turbine or replacing penstocks still face duplicative reviews and long delays.

- What reforms would you support to ensure routine maintenance and low-impact upgrades can move forward quickly?

Answer: I do not at this time have any specific reforms in mind, but if I am confirmed, I would look forward to working with Congress and my colleagues to see what we can do to address this issue.

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Question 3: Alaska utilities have experienced severe consequences from permitting delays, including lost construction seasons, equipment damage, and worker fatalities.

- How will you ensure FERC coordinates more effectively with state and federal agencies to prevent these kinds of outcomes?

Answer: If I have the honor to be confirmed, I will work with my colleagues and Commission staff to ensure that FERC coordinates effectively with its state and federal partners to see what efficiencies may speed up permitting delay.

Question 4: The Alaska Energy Authority has emphasized the urgency of projects like the Dixon Diversion amendment, which would displace 1.5 billion cubic feet of natural gas for Southcentral Alaska. At Bradley Lake, duplicative studies may add years of cost and delay.

- Would you support allowing recent studies to be reused across projects where conditions remain unchanged?

Answer: If I have the honor to be confirmed, I would support using recent studies where conditions have remained unchanged in the circumstances you reference.

Question 5: Alaska is also exploring marine energy opportunities, such as the East Foreland Tidal Energy Project in Cook Inlet.

- How do you see FERC's role in fostering innovation in emerging technologies like marine energy, while maintaining appropriate safeguards?

Answer: It is my understanding that FERC has established a process designed specifically to foster emerging technologies and if I have the honor to be confirmed I would support such efforts.

Questions for the Record from Senator Wyden

Question 1: FERC's credibility depends on its independence. FERC plays a critical, non-partisan role in regulating electric and gas markets across the country to ensure that Americans have access to secure, reliable, and affordable energy. A partisan, politicized FERC could disrupt markets and undermine the stability that American families and businesses rely on. If confirmed as a FERC Commissioner, do you commit to doing everything in your power to ensure that FERC remains independent of Administration influence and continues to operate on a nonpartisan basis?

Answer: If confirmed as a FERC Commissioner, I commit to independently decide every matter before me based on the relevant law and specific facts.

Question 2: FERC's workforce is already stretched thin, and its work is paramount to keep our country's energy systems operating smoothly. Further staff reductions would jeopardize our country's access to secure, reliable, affordable energy. If confirmed as a FERC Commissioner, do you commit to protecting FERC staff from layoffs and/or restructurings?

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Answer: As I have an outside perspective of FERC, I do not want to prematurely judge staffing levels. If confirmed, I will work with my colleagues to evaluate the agency's staffing needs and advocate for whatever is necessary, including hiring if relevant, to best position FERC to serve the American people.

Question 3: The surge in electricity demand from Artificial Intelligence threatens to overwhelm the grid. A 2024 Grid Strategies report projected a likely increase of 128 GW in just 5 years, much of it from data centers. Transmission expansion is one of the only cost-effective ways to meet this demand, but progress is slow. What specific actions would you take as FERC Commissioner to accelerate transmission buildout? What should FERC do to incentivize or require data centers to be flexible in their energy consumption to reduce costs for all consumers and protect grid reliability?

Answer: If confirmed, I look forward to working with my colleagues to consider the Commission's role in accelerating transmission development. The Commission has a number of open proceedings relating to transmission expansion and large loads such as data centers. Without prejudging any of those issues or related issues that I may be called on to address if confirmed, I recognize that transmission development is one of critical importance to the nation's energy, manufacturing, and economic growth imperatives. As such, I will give these matters careful consideration if confirmed. The Commission's role under the Federal Power Act is limited, and so to the extent that the Commission has jurisdiction as to matters involving data centers, I look forward to considering this issue further with my colleagues.

Question 4: Electricity prices jumped nearly 10% between January and May 2025, and are projected to keep increasing. Reconductoring existing transmission lines with advanced conductors is one of the fastest and cheapest ways to add capacity — it often costs less than half of new construction and avoids years of permitting battles. Given FERC's statutory mission to help ensure reliable, affordable electricity for consumers, will you support using FERC's authorities to encourage and enable reconductoring of existing transmission lines with advanced conductors to help keep electricity affordable for American families?

Answer: As I stated at the hearing, I support maximizing the use of the existing grid. Advanced conductors can improve the use of the existing transmission infrastructure thereby increasing access to lower-cost electric supplies.

Questions for the Record from Senator Cantwell

Question 1: Enforcing Anti-Market Manipulation

In the wake of the Enron scandal, Congress required greater transparency in electricity and natural gas markets and empowered FERC to go after bad actors who manipulated markets to exploit consumers.

Since 2005, FERC has built a permanent cadre of internal energy experts that continually monitor and investigate anomalous market trends and anticompetitive behavior. These policemen

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on the beat have uncovered numerous schemes. To date approving over 130 settlement agreements, assessing nearly \$900 million in civil penalties, and disgorging over \$662 million in illegal profits.

That's why it is imperative the Commission continues to focus on preventing market manipulation. Particularly now when markets are transitioning or under extreme stress, because that means there are more opportunities for fraudsters to rip off ratepayers.

- Do you believe market manipulation and other forms of fraud impact the competitiveness of energy markets and the ability to produce just and reasonable rates?
- If FERC determines that an energy market participant made financial gains based on fraud or manipulating markets, do you believe those gains should be promptly returned to injured parties or consumers?
- Like the CFTC and other independent agencies, do you believe FERC should have the authority to permanently ban entities that have been caught manipulating electricity or natural gas markets from trading in energy markets ever again?

Answer: Yes, market manipulation and all types of fraud threaten the integrity of energy markets and undercut competitive market forces that produce just and reasonable rates.

It is long-standing Commission practice to order disgorgement of unjust profits when it is determined that an entity profited from violation of the law. Without prejudging the facts of any specific case, I generally support disgorgement to ensure that market manipulators will not profit from wrongdoing and that victims can recover losses.

It is important that the Commission's enforcement tools are sufficient to deter and penalize anti-competitive behavior, and I appreciate the concerns about entities who manipulate Commission-jurisdictional markets. If Congress provides the Commission with the authority to ban market manipulators and I am confirmed, I commit to supporting the use of that authority as appropriate.

Question 2: Boosting Transmission Capacity

A lack of transmission capacity has caused lengthy interconnection queues, stalling billions in development of urgently needed new generation capacity. This has resulted in increased electricity costs for consumers and missed opportunities to increase investments in our growing communities.

We are experiencing this first-hand in the state of Washington and Pacific Northwest. Last Spring, the Northwest Power and Conservation Council released a 20-year forecast for power demand in the Pacific Northwest. It found that within the Northwest, electricity demand could double within twenty years. The 2025 forecast by the Pacific Northwest Utilities Conference suggests that by 2030, demand could outpace supply.

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The Pacific Northwest has some of the cheapest and most reliable power in the country, but we now need a lot more of it. Which means we must invest in our grid, diversify our energy supply and deploy new generation and transmission.

I am hearing from local communities about significant delays in the interconnection queue and that overloaded powerlines are impacting their ability to attract economic opportunities.

In the Northwest, Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) owns 75% of the high voltage transmission. I have been able to get BPA additional borrowing authority to invest in transmission.

- How can FERC help BPA plan for needed transmission in the Pacific Northwest?
- What do you think FERC needs to do to encourage or require utilities and other companies to invest in and build out the grid?
- What new technologies and processes could FERC support to reduce delays in building transmission capacity?
- The Big Beautiful Bill is expected to eliminate billions in planned electricity capacity additions in my state, how do you think that will impact that Pacific Northwest economy?

Answer: I understand that BPA participates in the NorthernGrid transmission planning region, which includes coordinated transmission planning between and among BPA, public power utilities, and public utilities subject to the Commission's jurisdiction. NorthernGrid performs regional transmission planning to identify, evaluate, and select more efficient or cost-effective transmission solutions to the region's transmission needs. While the Commission's authority with respect to federal power marketing administrations such as BPA is more limited than its authority with respect to public utilities, if confirmed, I look forward to working with my colleagues to consider any proposals to engage in voluntary, collaborative transmission planning efforts so that BPA, other federal power marketing administrations, and their respective customers can realize the benefits of participating in these processes.

I agree that sound investment in the transmission grid has the potential to both improve reliability and provide lower electricity costs to consumers. If confirmed, I will work with my colleagues on issues related to technologies or processes that could result in increased transmission.

Question 3: Maintaining FERC Independence

The FERC we know today was created to keep politics out of regulating our nation's energy infrastructure. For close to 50 years, FERC's role as an independent agency has protected taxpayers by working to keep energy markets just and reasonable.

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It has not always been perfect as we saw with the ENRON crisis, but the independence of FERC has helped protect the public interest over political gain.

Today, FERC's statutory independence is being threatened. In February, the President issued an Executive Order asserting more control over independent agencies across the federal government, including FERC, through Office of Management and Budget reviews of agency decisions.

This means OMB and the White House will be putting their political thumbs on the scale on decisions that impact our nation's energy security and prices. Also, OMB would have to review the approximately 1,500 decisions FERC makes per year, which could result in significant delays in projects to increase transmission and reduce prices.

For both reasons, this Executive Order is not in the best of interest of the public and will cost the American public more.

- If confirmed, do you commit to upholding the Department of Energy Organization Act of 1977, which established FERC and gave it independent regulatory authority?

Answer: I intend to uphold the law as written.

- Do you believe the Office of Management and Budget and the White House should review or have influence over any FERC decisions?

Answer: Per the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) and the Department of Energy Organization Act, any FERC action must be: (1) supported by a full evidentiary record, (2) voted on by a majority of independent Commissioners, (3) subject to public comment, including an opportunity to seek rehearing before the agency, and (4) subject to appeal in the federal courts. At bottom, these required procedures protect against the potential for undue influence from any source.

- If the President asked you to resign, would you do so?

Answer: I do not anticipate the President asking me to resign. I have formulated my own independent beliefs about energy policy and the organic statutes Congress passed both creating FERC and granting it jurisdiction.

Question 4: Meeting Surging Electricity Demand

It is troubling that this Administration is moving away from an all-of-the-above energy strategy that was proving to be so successful in diversifying our nation's energy mix. This strategy has made wind and solar the cheapest source of new generation and was bringing new power sources, like advanced nuclear and fusion, online.

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- Why do you think that last year wind, solar, and other renewables represented 93 percent of the capacity added to the grid?
- Do you agree with most analysts that renewables, even when paired with energy storage, are still often the cheapest energy resources to deploy?
- Do you think we'll be able to supply our forecasted demand without wind and solar, particularly with the price of gas turbines soaring?
- Given the extent of the demand growth we are anticipating across the country, do you believe new data centers will be able to go online without renewable generation being in the mix?

Answer: Many variables impact the economic viability and relative cost of energy resources. I am committed to ensuring that the nation has a reliable and affordable supply of energy, including the resources necessary to serve recent increases in forecasted demand growth. While states retain authority over generation under the Federal Power Act and state policies largely drive the nation's resource mix, if I have the honor of being confirmed, I will work with my colleagues to ensure that FERC fulfills its statutory mandate to ensure that rates for jurisdictional service are just and reasonable and not unduly discriminatory or preferential and support the Commission's longstanding commitment to resource neutrality.

Question 5. Extreme Weather

With climate change driving more frequent and severe weather events – like hurricanes, wildfires, ice storms, flooding, and heat waves— it is abundantly clear that we need to move quickly to improve reliability and resiliency of our electricity grid.

- Are you aware that over 80% of major outages over the past two decades were attributed to weather events. And that the number of extreme weather caused outages shot up by roughly 78% over the last decade?
- What can you do as a FERC Commissioner to help harden the nation's grid against extreme weather?

Answer: I understand that extreme weather regularly causes power outages. Overall, if confirmed, I would build on Commission efforts to streamline generator interconnection processes and ensure robust transmission planning to ensure a reliable, resilient transmission grid to withstand extreme weather.

In addition, I understand that the Commission has approved several extreme cold weather Reliability Standards proposed by the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) that require generators to winterize and transmission planners to plan for extreme heat and cold events. If confirmed, I would seek to continue the Commission's work with NERC to monitor

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implementation and consider further efforts to improve winter preparation and generator winterization as ways to minimize the threat of extreme cold weather to grid reliability.

Question 6. Hydropower Relicensing

In Washington state hydro supplies two-thirds of all the electricity used in Washington state. That hydropower is clean, affordable, reliable, and has been the backbone of my state's economy for many decades. Not only that, hydro's ability to provide firm dispatchable power when it's needed most is the key to integrating more intermittent power sources like wind and solar.

As the Commissioners know, FERC leads the licensing and relicensing process for non-federal hydropower facilities.

- Do you agree with the four former Commissioners that the current hydropower licensing process needs reform?
- Are there specific changes to highlight that Congress should consider making to the hydroelectric licensing process?
- Do you think there anything we should pay particular attention to when ensuring that fish passage mitigation remains a core tenant in the licensing process?

Answer: My understanding is that the Federal Power Act requires the Commission to license hydropower projects that have the best plan for using a waterway for not only power generation, but also for fish and wildlife habitat enhancement, irrigation, flood control, water supply, and recreational purposes. The current statute requires the Commission to include license conditions based on recommendations from federal and state fish and wildlife agencies, and to require such fishways as may be prescribed by the Secretaries of Commerce and the Interior. I do not have any specific changes in mind for the current statutes but, if I have the honor to be confirmed, I would work with Congress and my colleagues to understand what reforms are needed for this important infrastructure.

Questions for the Record from Senator Hirono

Question 1: As part of my responsibility as a member of this committee to ensure the fitness of nominees, I ask each nominee to answer two questions:

- a. Since you became a legal adult, have you ever made unwanted requests for sexual favors, or committed any verbal or physical harassment or assault of a sexual nature?

Answer: No.

- b. Have you ever faced discipline or entered into a settlement related to this kind of conduct?

Answer: No.

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Question 2: Hawaii does not fall under FERC's jurisdiction over interstate energy transactions, but in 2012, the FERC and the Hawaii Public Utilities Commission signed an agreement to share information on energy issues and regulatory practices. At the time of the agreement, FERC recognized that Hawaii could provide special insight into integrating high levels of renewable energy, demand response, microgrids, and energy storage. FERC's knowledge and resources can be helpful to the state's transition to 100 percent renewable power by 2045. If you are confirmed, will you commit to continuing FERC's information sharing agreement with Hawaii?

Answer: I am informed that the Commission regularly shares information with state counterparts, including the Hawaii Public Utilities Commission, on items of interest. Such information exchange about regulatory experiences and practices importantly supports efficient and effective execution of our respective statutory mandates. If I am confirmed, I would support this continued productive exchange with state partners.

Question 3: Earlier this year, Secretary of Energy Wright picked five people to write a report on greenhouse gas emissions who all had a record of rejecting the established scientific consensus that burning coal, oil, gas is heating the planet. The five climate skeptics produced a report in July that downplays the threat of climate change, a report which the EPA is now citing in its efforts to justify overturning the EPA's greenhouse gas endangerment finding.

Do you believe that FERC should base its decisions on science? If confirmed, will you ensure that FERC relies on unbiased scientific data to inform decisions?

Answer: If I am confirmed, I will consider all record evidence in deciding any matter before me.

What will you do if the President or other federal agencies, such as the Department of Energy, present you with reports relying on biased, cherry-picked data?

Answer: If I am confirmed, I will do everything in my power to ensure that I take a hard look at all record evidence in deciding any matter before me.

Questions for the Record from Senator King

Question 1: FERC currently provides a 0.5% return on equity investment for utilities who participate in their Regional Transmission Organizations (RTOs) or Independent System Operators (ISOs), largely for the purpose of promoting capital investment in transmission infrastructure. In Colorado and Nevada, state law mandates that utilities join their RTO or ISO. In states where participation is legally enforced, should FERC provide an incentive when it is already state mandated?

Answer: My understanding is that the Commission has found, and U.S. Courts of Appeals have upheld, that to qualify for a return on equity adder for participation in an RTO or ISO, a public

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utility's participation must be voluntary under state law. Without prejudging a matter I may be called on to address if confirmed, I will carefully apply the facts and the law in any future proceeding on this issue.

Questions for the Record from Senator Cortez Masto

Question 1: Energy prices are rising across the country, as they are projected to continue climbing in 2026. In fact, recent data from the Department of Energy shows that the nationwide average retail price for electricity is about 7 percent higher than this time last year.

Do you support an all-of-the-above solution to growing energy demand? Why or why not?

Answer: Yes. From a statutory standpoint, the Federal Power Act dictates that FERC may not unduly discriminate against any type of generation. From a policy standpoint, given unprecedented demand and resource issues facing the country, it is more important than ever that every electron is available to the grid.

If confirmed, will you commit to upholding FERC's tech-agnostic and independent approach to electrons?

Answer: Yes, for the above reasons.

Question 2: Recent reports have determined that extreme weather is increasingly becoming a major threat to U.S. grid reliability.

How can FERC better ensure that the U.S. grid is more resilient against the threats of extreme weather?

Are there opportunities for FERC to further coordinate with additional stakeholders or other federal entities to harden the grid?

Answer: I understand that the Commission has approved several extreme cold weather Reliability Standards proposed by the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) that require generators to winterize and transmission planners to plan for extreme heat and cold events.

If confirmed, I would seek to continue the Commission's work with NERC to monitor implementation and consider further efforts to improve winter preparation and generator winterization as ways to minimize the threat of extreme cold weather to grid reliability. Further, I would build on Commission efforts to streamline interconnection processes and ensure robust transmission planning to ensure sufficient generation and transmission infrastructure to withstand extreme weather.

I do believe that there are opportunities to work with NERC and those in the gas and electric industries as well as state and federal stakeholders to plan for extreme weather, coordinate

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emergency operations, and identify methods to harden the grid. If confirmed, I would pursue such opportunities.

Question 3: FERC is an extremely busy agency with statutory requirements to keep the country's energy systems operating smoothly. FERC already operates on very tight staff margins, and I am concerned that any further staff reductions – like those we have seen at other agencies – could jeopardize our country's access to secure, reliable energy.

If confirmed, will you commit to protecting FERC staff from major layoffs or restructurings?

Answer: From my perspective outside of FERC, I am concerned that after significant attrition, there currently may not be enough staff to execute on the extremely important issues before FERC and that are anticipated on the horizon. If confirmed, I will work with my colleagues to evaluate the agency's staffing needs and advocate for whatever is necessary, including hiring if relevant, to best position FERC to serve the American people.

Question 4: In an effort to root out any manipulative or anticompetitive behavior, FERC's Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Budget Request continues to prioritize a strong and robust energy market surveillance program.

If confirmed, will you commit to working with this Committee to combat energy market manipulation? In your opinion, does FERC need additional enforcement tools or authorities to deter bad actors?

Answer: Yes. If confirmed, I look forward to working with this Committee and my fellow Commissioners to evaluate and ensure that the Commission has the necessary tools and authorities to keep the energy markets free from market manipulation and anticompetitive conduct.

Question 5: The U.S. power system is experiencing increased incidents of physical attacks and a surge in state-sponsored cyber attacks on critical infrastructure.

If confirmed, what are some of the cyber priorities you'd bring to FERC? Are there existing efforts that you support? Or ways FERC can further incorporate public-private partnerships to combat emerging threats?

Answer: Protecting the grid from cyber and physical attacks is one of my highest priorities. As I stated in my testimony, keeping the lights on is a core goal of mine, and that requires staying ahead of emerging technologies and the risks they create. If confirmed, I would continue to support FERC's efforts on these important issues.

FERC's partnership with the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) in developing and enforcing Critical Infrastructure Protection (CIP) Reliability Standards provides the foundation for this work. These mandatory standards are essential to establishing baseline protections for the bulk power system. Still, I believe the Commission must also go beyond compliance to stay ahead of rapidly evolving threats.

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Question 6: As a FERC Commissioner, what steps would you take to advance public participation and outreach? Are there ways that FERC can be more accessible to the public?

Answer: Participation from stakeholders is important to FERC's mission. If confirmed, I will support public participation in Commission proceedings.

Questions for the Record from Senator Hickenlooper

Question 1: FERC Order 1920-A was recently issued on a bipartisan basis to expand state regulator's role in and reaffirm the requirement for proactive interregional transmission planning to meet load growth. If confirmed, will you continue to support Order 1920 implementation and interregional transmission planning to make sure the grid can reliably serve increasing load?

Answer: If confirmed, I will continue to support reform of interregional transmission coordination processes, to ensure a reliable grid by requiring the nation's transmission providers to plan for needed transmission to serve load.

Question 2: If confirmed as a FERC commissioner, do you intend to coordinate with members of the Trump Administration, outside of FERC, in connection with how you will exercise your judgment and your authority as a FERC commissioner? If so, how and with whom? If not, do you commit to *not* coordinate or discuss your decisions with Administration officials prior to voting at commission meetings?

Answer: If I am confirmed as a FERC Commissioner, while I cannot anticipate what specific hypothetical future conversations will occur with any individual or entity in the scope of my work, I commit to independently decide every matter before me based on my own individual experience as a FERC litigator and the applicable law and specific facts. Furthermore, I take ethical obligations very seriously and would fully comply with all *ex parte* communication regulations relevant to the position.

Question 3: Wholesale electric market competition has been a cornerstone policy of the FERC since a unanimous FERC issued Order 888 in 1996. Competition has been a powerful force for good in the U.S. economy in general. Are you committed to protecting and further competition in the wholesale electric power sector? How will you support such competition?

Answer: The Commission's statutory mandate under the Federal Power Act is to ensure that rates for the interstate transmission and wholesale sales of electricity are just and reasonable and not unduly discriminatory or preferential, and the Commission has found that both market-based and regulatory mechanisms can result in just and reasonable rates. If I have the honor of being confirmed, I will use the Commission's statutory tools and work with my colleagues to ensure that competition in wholesale electricity markets supports the Commission's statutory mission.

Question 4: Do you think FERC has any role to play in requiring coal-fired power plants to continue to operate past planned retirement dates in the United States? If so, what is that role?

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Answer: My understanding is that the Commission has limited authority under the Federal Power Act over the operation of generating facilities. However, if confirmed, I will work with my colleagues within the authority Congress has granted us to ensure that there are sufficient resources to meet system needs.

Question 5: If confirmed, what would you want for your legacy and your signature achievements as a FERC commissioner to have been when you leave the Commission?

Answer: If confirmed, I would want my legacy to be one of safely steering the American people through averting one of the most potentially disastrous demand precipices in American history, while maintaining just and reasonable rates and safeguarding national security and economic prosperity. I also hope to be part of facilitating, with the help of Congress, an infrastructure boom during which we finally solve the severe constraints facing our country and improve the quality of life for future generations.