



COMMITTEE ON

SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY

REPUBLICANS Frank Lucas, Ranking Member

Floor Remarks
Energy Subcommittee Ranking Member Randy Weber

H.R. 5760, the Grid Security Research and Development Act

September 29th, 2020

Thank you for yielding me time, Ranking Member Lucas, and thank you, Representative Bera, for introducing this bill with me. I'm proud to rise in support of H.R. 5760, the Grid Security Research and Development Act.

Cyber and physical threats to our electric grid are constantly evolving in technique and increasing in number. This challenge is magnified by its complexity: no two attacks are exactly the same.

Last year in the United States, the energy sector ranked ninth in industries most targeted by cyberattacks. In fact, IBM estimated that cyberattacks against vital energy sector technologies like industrial control and operational systems increased by more than two thousand percent from 2018. It is clear that we must be prepared to address this threat as we continue to build on the success of our clean energy future and long-term international competitiveness.

Every aspect of our daily lives and each economic sector in our nation is dependent on the uninterrupted flow of power. Therefore, we must focus heavily on early-stage research into new technologies that will improve the resilience, reliability, and emergency response capabilities of our electric grid.

H.R. 5760 does that by authorizing a multi-agency research and development program to bolster the cyber and physical security capabilities of the energy sector. It authorizes key federal agencies like the Department of Energy and the National Science Foundation to support early stage research, development, and demonstration activities

that will advance critical cybersecurity technologies and enhance the security of energy sector information systems.

I am also pleased to say that this bill is truly bipartisan. We worked closely together to develop good legislation. And we included a key Science Committee Republican priority: a critical infrastructure research program and test facility. This provision, originally offered as part of Ranking Member Lucas' bill, H.R. 5685, the Securing American Leadership in Science and Technology Act, was accepted as an amendment at committee markup.

In coordination with the Department of Defense and the Department of Homeland Security, the DOE-led research program and test facility will allow for U.S. researchers to conduct a variety of high-priority tests on critical infrastructure systems at the industry scale. This facility is a perfect example of a research asset that the federal government is best suited to provide.

As recent events have shown us - it's not a question of "if" the U.S. power grid will face a significant physical or cyber threat – it is a question of "when." In order to improve the cyber and physical security of our Nation's energy sector, we in Congress must continue to prioritize R&D to modernize and strengthen the national electricity system.

We can't agree on everything, especially when wish-lists and partisan messaging exercises rule the day. However, when we identify our shared goals and work together in good faith, we can put together real legislation and find a path forward for the benefit of the American people.

I want to thank Mr. Bera for introducing this legislation, and Members and staff on both sides of the aisle for working in a collaborative manner to reach a consensus on this standalone bill. I encourage my colleagues to support this bipartisan legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.