

March 16, 2026

Representative Brett Guthrie, Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington DC 20515

Representative Bob Latta, Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington DC 20515

Dear Chairman Guthrie and Chairman Latta:

I am writing to briefly highlight information to help inform your March 17 hearing “Winter Storm Fern Lessons: Supplying Reliable Power to Meet Peak Demand.” This information is based on a report prepared by Energy Ventures Analysis (EVA).

The EVA report [analyzed](#) the performance of different electricity resources in regions of the country that were the most heavily impacted by Fern. These regions include the Southwest Power Pool (SPP), Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO), PJM Interconnection (PJM), Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT), and the southeastern U.S. EVA found that **almost 90% of the incremental demand on the peak electricity demand day was met by dispatchable fossil-fuel generation** (coal, natural gas, and oil). Wind and solar provided 7% of the incremental demand.

To meet the greater demand for electricity during extreme weather, power sources must increase their capacity factors if they can. EVA used EIA data to compare capacity factors during the first two weeks of January (before Fern) and during Fern, when more electricity was needed. Across the five regions that have coal power plants, the average capacity factor for the coal fleet increased from 43% to 78%, natural gas rose from 34% to 57%, wind declined from 32% to 26%, and solar remained unchanged at 13%. Nuclear plants were already running at their maximum capacity factors prior to Fern.

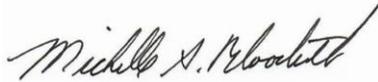
Coal power plants also saved consumers money during Fern. To illustrate the effect of the coal fleet on power prices, EVA assumed that the coal fleet was removed from the grid in four regions of the country – PJM, MISO, ERCOT, and SPP – when Fern peaked. Without their coal power plants, these regions, which collectively have 110,000 megawatts of coal-fired generation, would have been forced to rely more on natural gas

power plants at a time when gas prices were high. Without coal, power prices were estimated to increase on the peak day of Fern by 45% (\$111/MWh higher) in PJM, 54% (\$108/MWh higher) in ERCOT, 79% (\$187/MWh higher) in SPP, and 93% (\$184/MWh higher) in MISO.

These increases in power prices that were avoided because of the coal fleet translate into savings for ratepayers of almost \$1.15 billion across all four regions on the peak electricity demand day. The savings by region were estimated to be \$420 million for MISO, \$347 million for PJM, \$195 million for SPP, and \$185 million for ERCOT. It is important to note that these savings are for a single peak day in each region, not for the entire duration of the storm, which lasted for roughly one week. Thus, the coal fleet likely saved ratepayers considerably more than \$1.15 billion before Fern ended.

We commend the subcommittee for holding this hearing and trust this information is helpful.

Sincerely,



Michelle Bloodworth
President and CEO

Copy to:

Representative Kathy Castor, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Energy
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington DC 20515