

Infrastructure Funding and the Utilities: Pennies from Heaven or Green Stress?

WASHINGTON, DC, USA, December 12, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- It is widely understood that the electric grid needs upgrading, and that new power lines are needed to bring electricity from those places with renewable energy sources, including solar and wind, to those places where the power is used.



This is a vitally important briefing. It is critical that the electric utility industry knows what is happening, and the process of infrastructure funds allocation.”

Llewellyn King

Congress has passed, on a bipartisan basis, and the President has signed a \$1 trillion-plus infrastructure bill. Some \$73 billion is earmarked for electricity, including cybersecurity, transmission, broadband expansion, electric vehicle charging, and other upgrades to the electricity supply system.

For the utilities, the Department of Energy is the principal disbursement agency. But other agencies are involved, including the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the departments of

Homeland Security, Interior and Transportation.

The first funds, sources say, probably won't be disbursed until the first quarter of 2022, but more likely in the second quarter.

DOE and the other agencies are working to determine how the money should be apportioned, the role of the states, and even the role, if any, of the regulatory authorities in the states. Some fear Green New Dealers, either those inside the government or outside activists, will try to have funding reflect their agenda.

Divvying up infrastructure funds is a massive undertaking; and to most of the electric utility industry, it is an opaque process. The agencies are reaching out for input -- DOE, in particular, has been active in soliciting inquiries.

To help clear the air and to give the nation's utility stakeholders some idea of what to expect, and whether they should lobby the government or simply wait to see the outcome of its deliberations, the [United States Energy Association](#) is presenting a virtual press briefing on Wednesday, December 15, at 11 a.m. Eastern Time. A panel of experts -- people with deep knowledge of what is going on -- will make brief remarks and then will be questioned by a panel

of knowledgeable reporters.

The experts are:

Justin Driscoll, Interim President and CEO of the New York Power Authority

Andrew Shaw, Partner at Dentons, the world's largest law firm

Katie Jereza, Vice President of Corporate Affairs at the Electric Power Research Institute

Peter Londa, President and CEO of Tantalus, a company serving more than 200 small public power entities

The reporters are:

Robert Walton, Utility Dive

Ellie Potter, S&P Global

Jeff Beattie, The Energy Daily

Ken Silverstein, Forbes

Veteran energy journalist and publisher Llewellyn King has organized and will moderate the hour-long press briefing, one in a series presented by the USEA, a nonprofit, non-lobbying multi-fuel association. USEA Acting Executive Director Sheila Hollis will give introductory remarks.

"This is a vitally important briefing. It is critical that the industry knows what is happening, and the process of funds allocation. The bill is general in its mandates," King said. "Much depends on DOE and on how thoroughly it understands the needs of private and public utilities -- the latter includes 700 rural electric cooperatives."

King added, "On Wednesday morning, we hope to lift the curtain and give stakeholders some idea of the process, and what they should be doing if they want to be heard."

The press briefing, which is open to members of the press and the general public, will be held on Zoom. Registration is required.

[Register](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_x6p3FFfxQnOm2dB3AGQQIQ) here: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_x6p3FFfxQnOm2dB3AGQQIQ

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