

TRII Submits Testimony to Texas Senate Committee on Business and Commerce

Texans for Responsible Infrastructure

Investment submitted written testimony

to the Texas Senate Committee on Business and Commerce today

AUSTIN, TX, UNITED STATES, July 29, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Texans for Responsible](#)

[Infrastructure Investment](#) Executive Chair Bill Lauderback submitted written testimony to the Texas Senate Committee on Business and Commerce today, presenting TRII's support and reasoning for major upgrades to the state's electric transmission infrastructure. He urged legislators to consider the critical importance of a reliable and affordable electric grid that can keep up with the state's sustained and robust growth. The testimony is attached below. Supplementary documents TRII also supplied to the committee are available upon request.

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*Bill Lauderback - Executive
Chair*

Texans for Responsible Infrastructure Investment is a non-partisan, statewide coalition — spanning business and

commerce, rural communities, energy and industry, independent experts, and local leaders — united by one conviction: Keeping the lights on in Texas requires the courage to build.

We are testifying today because this hearing concerns the Texas Miracle — the economic engine that has made this state the envy of the nation — and the growing demand for electricity that sustained growth requires. Every other question before this Committee is simply a matter of how Texas will meet that challenge.

Texas needs additional electric infrastructure — both generation and transmission — to maintain its rate of growth and meet its needs over the coming decades while keeping electricity reliable and affordable. In the near future, the state will require more electricity than it generates today. But generation alone is not sufficient. Texas must be able to move available power from wherever it is generated to wherever it is needed, and it must be able to do so on demand. That is the fundamental purpose of a grid. We are confident that Texas will meet this challenge, but the state must act quickly. New plants — and the wires that make them useful — take years to build, and Texas is already behind. Transmission congestion is already imposing costs on

ratepayers and businesses, and those costs will only grow as the state grows. For that reason, pausing ongoing upgrades to revisit planning and studies that have already been completed would be a serious mistake. Left unaddressed, congestion could slow — or even halt — the remarkable growth that defines the Texas Miracle.

The transmission challenge will be solved; the only question is how efficiently.

Texas needs this upgrade to maintain a reliable and affordable grid as its economy and population expand. The Legislature, ERCOT, and the Public Utility Commission of Texas have studied the matter carefully, considered the alternatives for upgrading the infrastructure that

moves electricity across the state, and concluded that 765kV is the right choice. We will not minimize the facts: these are significant structures at any voltage, and new infrastructure inevitably draws some opposition. But scale is precisely what makes 765kV more attractive than the alternatives. It requires substantially less land than lower-capacity lines to deliver the same power. It is more efficient, losing less electricity in transit and delivering more power where it is needed. And lower-capacity lines would require upgrading sooner, adding both expense and land use over time. According to ERCOT's head-to-head analysis, choosing 345kV over 765kV to serve the same projected load would save the state about \$800 million in initial capital. But those savings would be offset by the need for roughly 420 additional miles of new right-of-way and about 11% greater line losses, requiring more land while delivering less of the generated electricity to Texans. It makes no sense to waste power when a shortage of power is the very problem being addressed. Nor is it reasonable, when the goal is to minimize the private and public land required, to choose the option demanding hundreds of additional miles of right-of-way. And any potential upfront saving disappears quickly: building at 765kV is projected to save Texas roughly \$230 million per year over the 30-year life of the lines. Within approximately four years, the initial cost difference will be fully recovered. ERCOT's own numbers tell the story.

Demand for electricity is growing.

ERCOT's planning forecasts show statewide peak demand is on track to roughly double within about a decade, driven by manufacturing, oil-and-gas electrification, population growth, and new large loads. In the Permian Basin alone, ERCOT data filed in Oncor's application place demand near 11,000 megawatts today, rising toward 26,000 megawatts by 2038. A grid built for



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yesterday's peaks cannot carry that load.

Congestion cost is a hidden tax, on ratepayers' bills today.

Between 2021 and 2024, Texas ratepayers paid more than \$7 billion in transmission congestion costs. West Texas — the fastest-growing region in the system — now posts the highest average electricity prices in ERCOT precisely because the wires there are constrained, even as its load grew more than 12% in a single year. Congestion is a tax on growth: it strands power that has already been generated and forces the grid to rely on more expensive resources. Every year of delay compounds that hidden tax, and every Texan pays it.

[765kV is proven technology, not an experiment.](#)

Texans are being told that these lines are novel and risky. They are neither. American Electric Power energized the nation's first 765kV line in 1969 and today operates roughly 2,200 miles of it across six states — Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Kentucky, West Virginia, and Virginia — the largest extra-high-voltage AC network in North America. More than 2,400 miles of 765kV transmission have operated safely across the United States and Canada for decades. The difficult questions Texans are asking today — why so high a voltage, why the right-of-way, why build at all — were asked and answered in the 1960s and 1970s. The technology has not changed. Texas's demand has.

[The real risk is delay.](#)

Pausing to re-study a plan that has already been studied does not produce a better answer — it produces a more expensive one. A pause would back up the interconnection queue, defer the generation everyone agrees is needed, and hand the next decade of growth to states that keep building — while sending the catch-up bill to every Texan with a meter.

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