



West Virginians

for Reliable Power

For Immediate Release

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Upgrading Electric Infrastructure Beneficial to WV, Region

Bridgeport, WV (November 10, 2008) – According to local, state and national presenters at a Monday energy forum in Bridgeport, West Virginia, maintaining and upgrading our system of electric infrastructure will not only lead to a more reliable regional power grid, but also more jobs, economic development potential and an even stronger fossil and renewable energy industry here in West Virginia.

Dan Larcamp, a spokesperson for the Edison Electric Institute and a former chief of staff at the U.S. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, said, “Transmission infrastructure in this country continues to be stressed and electricity demand continues to rise. While we need a steady approach to infrastructure development, it is something that has to be done, and done sooner rather than later.”

“Additionally, economic vitality is dependent upon reliable and affordable energy, and taking the necessary steps to maintain and upgrade the system in West Virginia is vital to the state’s economic growth.”

Bill Raney, President of the West Virginia Coal Association, said, “West Virginia currently enjoys one of the lowest unemployment rates in the nation and our state budget has a surplus of nearly \$90 million due to our coal and energy industries. As a state, we need to continue to build out the electric infrastructure to help sustain the positive economic momentum and to meet future energy demand.”

Roy Smith, retired Secretary-Treasurer of the West Virginia Building & Construction Trades Council, said, “The jobs associated with the construction of a power line are just the tip of the iceberg. These types of projects create a ripple effect throughout the state’s economy. More transmission capacity allows us to generate more electricity. The demand for more electricity offers the opportunity to sell more coal, gas and renewables.”

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Nick Fantasia, President of Fantasia Broadcasting in Fairmont, said, “While people seem to understand the need to develop our road, water and sewer infrastructure, we often take electricity and its delivery system for granted. As just one example, our radio stations wouldn’t be able to broadcast the news, music and community announcements – not to mention employing the people who bring it to you – without access to a reliable and plentiful source of electricity.”

Robert McLaughlin, a north central West Virginia economic developer with over three decades of experience, said, “Companies look at the overall reliability of the electrical system when making a decision as to where to locate their facilities. If we in West Virginia do not continue to upgrade our transmission system it may impact our ability to attract and grow business which can negatively affect job growth and economic prosperity.”

The event was conducted by *West Virginians for Reliable Power*, a coalition representing more than 80 West Virginia businesses, trade associations and labor representatives. The organization is committed to educating West Virginia citizens on the need for an improved electric transmission infrastructure.

A complete list of coalition members is provided with this release. For additional information, or to join the coalition, visit www.ForReliablePower.org.

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