

July 23, 2019

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-230, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
S-221, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators McConnell and Schumer:

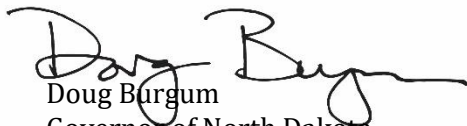
The importance of the security and reliability of the nation's electric grid cannot be overstated. Effective cybersecurity programs require standards, testing, functional relationships, information-sharing, and innovation.

The Securing Energy Infrastructure Act ([H.R. 680](#) and [S. 174](#)) promotes these elements of a robust cybersecurity environment through: (1) a two-year pilot program in which the Department of Energy partners with voluntary energy sector participants to identify security vulnerabilities in the energy sector and develop standards and technologies to address those vulnerabilities; and (2) a working group to further evaluate the technology and standards for the pilot program and develop a national cyber strategy for the energy sector. Western Governors supported this bill in the 115th Congress ([September 6, 2017 letter](#)) and reaffirm that support in this Congress.


The bill's focus on identifying, testing and reducing vulnerabilities aligns with the objectives of WGA Policy Resolution [2019-02, Cybersecurity](#), which cites the importance of real-world simulations of cyberattacks; supports innovation in detecting, preventing, and responding to continually evolving cyber threats; and calls for federal funding and technical assistance for cybersecurity research and development. The bill's pilot program and working group furthers the objectives in the Governors' [Energy Vision for the West](#) of creating programs and standards to defend infrastructure from cyberattacks. Western Governors also appreciate the bill's requirement that the working group must include a representative from a state or regional energy agency and its provisions regarding the investigation of liability protections.

The cybersecurity of our energy systems and other infrastructure is a high priority of Western Governors. Thank you for your attention to this critical issue. We look forward to working with you to strengthen our states' and the nation's cybersecurity.

Sincerely,



Doug Burgum
Governor of North Dakota
Chair, WGA



Kate Brown
Governor of Oregon
Vice Chair, WGA