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House Passes GRID Act to Secure Power Supply

The House of Representatives today passed H.R. 5026, the Grid Reliability and Infrastructure Defense (GRID) Act. The bill was based on H.R. 2165, the “Bulk Power System Protection Act of 2009,” legislation introduced in 2009 by Congressman John Barrow (GA-12), along with Congressman Edward J. Markey (MA-7), and Energy and Commerce Chairman Henry Waxman (CA-30). H.R. 5026 will amend the Federal Power Act to give FERC new authorities to protect the electric grid against cyber and other threats and vulnerabilities. Congressman Barrow has been working on this legislation since 2009.

Congressman Barrow delivered the following remarks on the floor of the House of Representatives in support of H.R. 5026:

“Mr. Speaker, the grid that generates and distributes electricity across our country is one of the engineering wonders of the world. But it took generations to build, and it grew up in peace time, safely removed from any physical attack by our enemies, and long before the Internet. Today we use the Internet to run this vast infrastructure, and that leaves us vulnerable to a potentially devastating cyber attack.

“The GRID Act takes the first steps toward protecting our electrical grid from those who want to do us harm. The necessary costs are modest compared to the costs of doing nothing. We can’t count on our enemies to wait for us. The threat is real, and the solution is in our hands. So I encourage my colleagues to support the bill and I yield back.”

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