



## Electric Grid Reliability

*Committee on Energy and Natural Resources United States Senate*

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Affordability and reliability of the electric grid is so commonplace in America today that most people spend little time even thinking about it. Except, of course, when the power goes out and when the lights go off. In a small neighborhood just a few blocks from the New York Stock Exchange in 1882 Thomas Edison's Pearl Street Station in lower Manhattan illuminated 400 lamps in homes, offices and businesses for the first time for 85 customers. The U.S. electrification rate steadily increased from there from a few percentage points in the early 1900s to about 70 percent in the early 1930s. But at that point only 10 percent of rural households in America had electricity compared to 90 percent of urban homes. With government action and great effort on the part of many parties, rural electrification ramped up and was near 100 percent by 1960. Today our committee is here to receive testimony about what both the public and private organizations that have responsibility for the electric grid are doing to maintain it and to prevent brown outs or black outs. Can this grid be made smarter, safer, more secure? Can we do so in a cost effective way?

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