

Sent: Wed, 20 Aug 2003 10:56:03 -0400
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Subject: TALKING POINTS: Energy Talking Points 8-20-03
[Energy Talking Points 8-20-03.pdf](#)

TALKING POINTS: ADMINISTRATION ACTIVITY ON AUGUST 2003 BLACKOUT

The Administration is launching an aggressive investigation into the causes of the blackout and potential solutions.

- President Bush and Prime Minister Chretien have established a United States-Canada joint task force to investigate the cause of the blackout. Secretary Abraham will meet with Canadian Minister of Natural Resources Herb Dhaliwal on Wednesday to begin their work.
- The Department of Energy (DOE) has dispatched teams of experts to the Northeast and Upper Midwest to begin on-site investigations. Their findings will be added to information being collected from utilities, the North American Electric Reliability Council, and independent system operators.

In May 2001, two and a half years ago, President Bush proposed a comprehensive National Energy Policy and has taken steps to implement it.

- The President's national energy plan included **105** recommendations, a number of which were very specific to the transmission grid.
- About **90** of the recommendations have either been implemented by the Administration or are awaiting action by the Congress.
- DOE expanded research and development on transmission reliability and

- superconductivity--increasing our superconductivity budget by close to **50%**.
- DOE formed a Transmission Grid Study Team that conducted a detailed assessment of our Nation's transmission system and released a National Grid Study in May 2002. It presented **51** additional recommendations. The Administration has been implementing these important steps to help ensure a reliable transmission grid for the 21st century.
- DOE has consulted with more than **250** electric industry executives, equipment manufacturers, and Federal and local electricity policy officials to develop ways to modernize the grid.

It is time now for Congress to act on the President's comprehensive energy plan.

- The energy bills passed by the House and Senate each contain provisions that would substantially improve the reliability of the Nation's electricity transmission grid.
- The Administration urges Congress to pass legislation that includes provisions to:
 - Mandate enforceable electricity reliability standards;
 - Expedite siting of transmission facilities to remove bottlenecks that could lead to more catastrophic blackouts;
 - Expand investment in transmission infrastructure;
 - Provide incentives for more-efficient and advanced transmission technologies;
 - and
 - Ensure regional coordination of electricity transmission facilities.

As the blackout demonstrated, we cannot afford to lurch from crisis to crisis. We need a comprehensive approach to our energy needs to ensure Americans a steady, affordable, and reliable supply of energy.

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