

**Washington, D.C.** - Responding to the urgent need to protect America's energy infrastructure from cyber attack, Congressmen John Barrow (D-GA), Edward J. Markey (D-MA), and Energy and Commerce Chairman Henry Waxman (D-CA) introduced H.R. 2165, the "Bulk Power System Protection Act of 2009" yesterday.

According to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and national security experts, our electricity grid is increasingly vulnerable to sophisticated cyber attacks from outside our borders. The bill provides the FERC new authority to protect the electric grid from cyber threats.

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**"Our power sources are at risk, and we need to be able to respond," said Barrow. "The system we've got right now isn't good enough, and we need to give FERC the ability to step in if there's a problem. This isn't something that can wait until later. We've got to protect folks right now."**

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**"The nation's electricity grid is dangerously vulnerable to attack," said Markey. "The alarm bells are ringing, and dramatic action is needed to defend our electricity infrastructure against cyber attacks. As Chairman of the Energy and Environment Subcommittee, I look forward to working with my colleagues to take up this vitally important bill to provide FERC the necessary authorities to protect the grid."**

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**"Our Committee takes very seriously any threat to the reliability and operations of the power grid, and has been involved over the past year in developing the legislative**

**approach Mr. Barrow's bill reflects,&quot; said Waxman. &quot;I appreciate his initiative and leadership on this important national issue and look forward to working with him in moving this legislation forward.&quot;**

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According to national security experts, the U.S. electric grid is vulnerable to cyber attack by skilled hackers, especially to those known to be supported by nations who are potential adversaries. According to a survey by the North American Electric Reliability Corporation, many of the grid's critical facilities, systems, and equipment have not even been identified yet. Additionally, recent reports have indicated that foreign agents have used the internet to systematically map the vulnerabilities of the electricity grid to cyber attack.

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