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ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS

U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
Washington, DC 20515-6115

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March 1, 2005

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**FREE THE HOSTAGE**  
**SUPPORT ELECTRIC RELIABILITY REFORM NOW**

Dear Colleague:

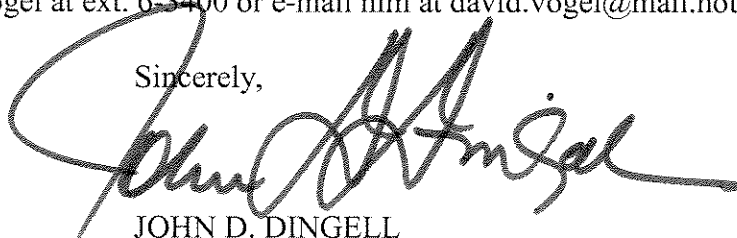
It has been 19 months since one of the worst blackouts in our Nation's history and yet the Congress still has not enacted electric reliability reform legislation. Why? Because it is being held hostage to the failed energy bill that the Republican majority has not been able to pass for the last two Congresses.

Let's be clear: The electric reliability language in the energy bill is non-controversial and widely supported by industry and consumer groups. Everyone agrees that we need mandatory and enforceable rules in place to assure we do not suffer a repeat of the August 2003 blackout. In fact, the U.S.-Canada Power Outage Task Force assigned to investigate the blackout called for Congress to pass electric reliability legislation, terming it "the single most important step" toward preventing another blackout. Yet this commonsense provision has become entangled in what has become an annual energy bill morass.

With the Department of Energy's recent estimates that blackouts cost the U.S. economy approximately \$80 billion annually, we cannot afford to play games with electric reliability. If you believe that the reliability of the Nation's transmission grid is too important for this kind of brinkmanship, I urge you to cosponsor H.R. 878, the "Electric Reliability Improvement Act of 2005."

For more information on this legislation, please contact Sue Sheridan or Bruce Harris of the Committee on Energy and Commerce Democratic staff at ext. 6-3400. To cosponsor H.R. 878, please contact David Vogel at ext. 6-3400 or e-mail him at [david.vogel@mail.house.gov](mailto:david.vogel@mail.house.gov).

Sincerely,



JOHN D. DINGELL  
RANKING MEMBER