

# **U.S. Department of Energy 2012 National Electric Transmission Congestion Study**

Eastern Regional  
Workshop  
St. Louis, MO

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# Congestion Means:

- Convergence of Political and Technological Limitations on Operation of Grid
- Price signal to incent investment in local generation or/and regional transmission or/and increased energy conservation investments
- An impediment to moving large amounts of lower-cost renewable energy to distant load centers
- An opportunity for the DOE to Partner with stakeholders on innovative programs to address the political impediments to alleviating congestion

# Commend DOE Efforts to Address Political Congestion:

- Reaching out to Lauren Azar and an RTO Engineer
- Carefully Considering DOE Electricity Advisory Committee Recommendations
- Making greater efforts to participate in NCSL, NARUC, CSG, other Policy-Maker and Stakeholder Meetings
- Funding policy-maker and regulator education on how technological options can reduce conflicts (e.g., DOE-NCSL-NARUC Transmission Technology Workshop)

# Political Congestion:

- NIMBY, Build Nothing/Conserve, Cost Allocations, least cost option vs. long-term benefits
- Maximize local renewable energy options – regardless of price
- Federal and sensitive areas unavailable for transmission construction
- Different state PUC timelines, criteria, processes for making decisions
- Technological Congestion can be addressed more easily than Political Congestion

# Further Opportunities for DOE to Address Political Congestion:

- Encourage elected officials to determine how much local renewable energy can cost-effectively (from customers' perspective) be developed and how much “imported”
- Better promote technological options to address specific constraints (e.g., burial of transmission lines, overbuild existing corridors with higher voltage or DC, energy storage)

# Further Opportunities:

- Better educate policy-makers that higher construction and O&M costs may be the least cost long term option to consumers, especially if court costs and project delays are included
- Identify “model legislation” at state level that provide maximum regulatory options that emphasize reliability, responsible timelines for decision-making, interstate cooperation for regional/national policy priorities

# Partnership and Leadership Opportunities:

- Council of State Governments' Interstate Transmission Siting Compact Task Force efforts
- Serve as Convening Agency on the consequences of “Sovereignty” fights for inter-state priority consensus building (e.g., NARUC, NGA, NCSL, CSG, The Nature Conservancy)
- Convene RTOs/ISOs, NARUC, and FERC to accelerate addressing seams, reliability, other regional and national issues

# Partnership and Leadership Opportunities:

- Promote GridWise Architecture and NIST efforts to promote Inter-Operability
- Convene media and media Editorial Boards to accelerate awareness of economic consequences to consumers of Political Congestion





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