

September 1, 2021

The Honorable Joe Manchin
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and
Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Barrasso
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and
Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Chairman
U.S. House Committee on Energy and
Commerce
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Ranking Member
U.S. House Committee on Energy and
Commerce
2322 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Manchin, Ranking Member Barrasso, Chairman Pallone, and Ranking Member McMorris Rodgers:

For the first time in a decade, the country is exploring opportunities to evaluate, develop, and improve organized wholesale electricity markets. We are proud to represent States across the West that are leading these efforts.

Important to our individual states, organized wholesale electricity markets not only support grid reliability and promote energy savings for consumers, but they also encourage energy efficiency and allow increased renewable energy onto the grid.

This year, Nevada passed and enacted legislation requiring “every transmission provider in the State to join a regional transmission organization” by 2030.¹ Similarly, Colorado passed and enacted legislation which would require all Colorado transmission utilities to join an organized wholesale market by 2030.² Oregon also passed and enacted legislation, directing the Oregon Department of Energy to conduct a study, specifically identifying benefits, opportunities, and challenges posed by the development or expansion of a regional transmission organization (RTO) in the State.³ Across the West, our States are establishing a path forward to evaluate and expand organized wholesale electricity markets.⁴

In the Southeast, the North Carolina General Assembly is considering legislation to study restructuring North Carolina’s wholesale electricity market.⁵ This bill is similar to legislation South Carolina enacted last year—legislation which established the Electricity Market Reform Measures Study Committee to examine a range of potential electricity market reforms and their

¹ See, [S.B. 448, Nevada State Legislature 81st Session](#), Jun. 10, 2021.

² See, [S.B. 21-072, Colorado General Assembly 73rd Session](#), Jun. 24, 2021.

³ See, [S.B. 589, Oregon Legislative Assembly 81st Session](#), Jun. 10, 2021.

⁴ See also, Sangree, H. (2021, July 25). *Arizona to Weigh RTO Membership*. RTO Insider. Retrieved from <https://www.rtoinsider.com/articles/28285-arizona-to-weigh-rto-membership>. (“The head of the Arizona Corporation Commission has requested a new proceeding to explore the merits of requiring utilities to join an RTO, as Colorado and Nevada did earlier this year and other Western states are considering doing.”)

⁵ See, [H.B. 611, North Carolina General Assembly 2021-2022 Session](#), Apr. 21, 2021.

benefit to South Carolina's ratepayers.⁶

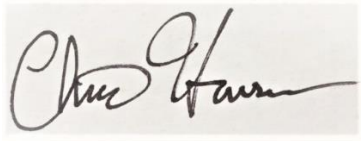
Simultaneously, both Congress and the Biden Administration are advancing bipartisan policies to spur infrastructure development, promote clean energy, and decrease emissions, including "achieving 100 percent carbon-free electricity by 2035."⁷

As our States lead the way, exploring options to evaluate, develop, and improve organized wholesale electricity markets, we look forward to working with the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Electricity (DOE-OE), as they "work to ensure that the Nation's energy system is secure, resilient, and reliable", specifically working "to develop new technologies to improve the infrastructure that brings electricity into our homes, offices, and factories, and the federal and state electricity policies and programs that shape electricity system planning and operations."⁸ Moreover, as we seek to evaluate, develop, and improve organized wholesale electricity markets in regions of the country where historically they do not exist, we also look forward to collaborating with the DOE-OE, given their tools and expertise, specifically grid, economic, and emission modeling.

Our States are actively exploring opportunities to evaluate, develop, and improve organized wholesale electricity markets. As such, we want to collaborate with our federal partners, both in Congress and the Executive branch, to advance markets and develop needed infrastructure.

As we build a better system, powering our economy into the future, we stand ready to work with you.

Sincerely,



Chris Hansen
State Senator – District 31
Colorado



Don Coram
State Senator – District 6
Colorado



Chris Brooks
State Senator – District 3
Nevada



Dallas Harris
State Senator – District 11
Nevada

⁶ See, [H.B. 4940, South Carolina General Assembly 123rd Session](#), Sep. 29, 2020.

⁷ See, [Fact Sheet: The American Jobs Plan](#).

⁸ See, [U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Electricity](#).



Kathleen Taylor
State Senator – District 21
Oregon



Alex Valdez
State Representative – District 5
Colorado

Cc: The Honorable Jennifer M. Granholm, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Energy
The Honorable Richard Glick, Chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
The Honorable Gina McCarthy, National Climate Advisor, White House Office of
Domestic Climate Policy