



**National Rural Electric
Cooperative Association**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Glenn English
Chief Executive Officer

May 8, 2012

The Honorable Pete Olson
United States House of Representatives
Room 312 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Rep. Olson:

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) appreciates your introduction of the “Resolving Environmental and Grid Reliability Conflicts Act of 2012”, H.R. 4273. NRECA supports H.R. 4273’s effort to protect electric utilities that comply with a Department of Energy (DOE) emergency order from Environment Protection Agency (EPA) fines and private citizen law suits.

Currently, if DOE determines that an emergency exists involving the reliability of the electric grid, DOE has the authority to issue an order involving such generation, delivery, interchange, or transmission of electric energy that, in its judgment, will best meet the emergency. However, it is also clear that although electric utilities comply with a DOE emergency order, if such compliance results in violations of environmental laws or regulations, electric utilities face EPA fines and law suits initiated by private citizens. To address these problems, H.R. 4273 seeks to clarify that electric utility compliance with a DOE emergency order will not violate environmental laws or regulations, subject electric utilities to civil or criminal liability, or activate private citizen law suits.

NRECA strongly supports such clarification and believes the introduction of H.R. 4273 is an important first step in the overall House and Senate process. We look forward to working with Congress to ensure the bill fully resolves the conflict between DOE emergency orders and environmental laws or regulations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Glenn English", is written over a white rectangular background.

Glenn English