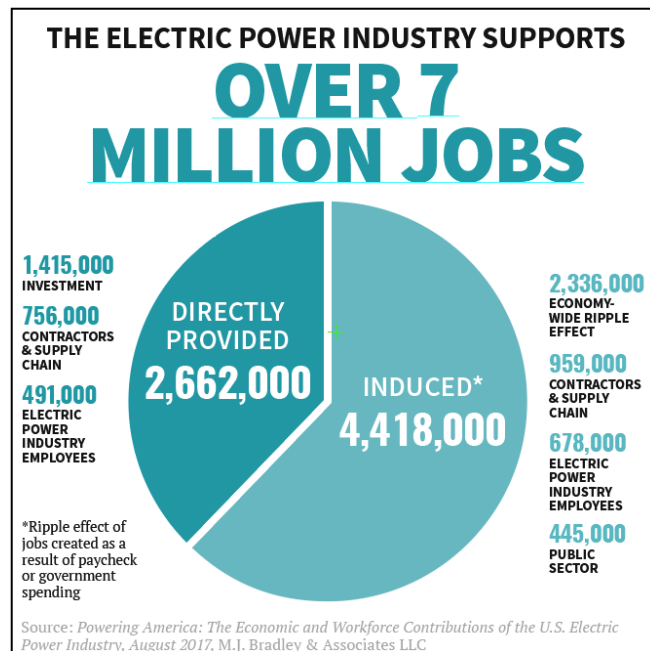


August 4, 2017

TO: NRECA Board of Directors
Distribution CEOs
Statewide Managers
G&T Managers

Electricity Sector Jobs Report Highlights U.S. Economic Impacts

NRECA is actively promoting a new [economic study](#) that shows the electric power industry supports more than 7 million jobs and pumps \$880 billion into the economy. NRECA cosponsored the study that shows the electric power industry directly provides nearly 2.7 million jobs nationwide through its employees, contractors and supply chain, and investments. More than 4.4 million additional jobs are supported through the effects of electric sector jobs. The electric power industry supports many other sectors of the economy, contributing \$880 billion annually (5 percent of total GDP) to the nation's economy, according to the report prepared at our request by M.J. Bradley and Associates.



In a media [statement](#), NRECA CEO Jim Matheson emphasized that affordable and reliable electricity is essential to the nation's economic growth, and that not-for-profit, member-owned electric co-ops also serve a broader purpose to empower local communities. He also highlighted co-op efforts to recruit employees from local communities, including military veterans. Electric co-ops can use this report in discussions with federal, state and local officials and leaders.

FERC Nominees Confirmed to Restore Quorum; More than 60 Nominations Approved

The Senate confirmed the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission nominations of Neil Chatterjee, senior energy adviser to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) and former NRECA Government Relations employee, and Robert Powelson, a Pennsylvania Public Utility Commissioner. The votes fill two vacant seats and restore a commission quorum needed to issue major policy decisions and ratemakings. It happened the day after President Trump sent the nomination paperwork for Kevin McIntyre, an energy attorney, for commission chairman and Richard Glick, Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Democratic General Counsel, to fill another vacant seat. A confirmation hearing is scheduled for September 7.

The Senate also confirmed more than 60 other nominations before starting its August recess,

including Deputy Energy Secretary Dan Brouillette. He fills a key position at the Energy Department, where he served as Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs under President George W. Bush. The Senate also confirmed U.S. Agency for International Development Administrator Mark Green. Other nominees confirmed include Commodity Futures Trading Commission Chairman J. Christopher Giancarlo and Commissioners Brian Quintenz and Rostin Behnam; and Federal Communications Commission Commissioners Brendan Carr and Jessica Rosenworcel.

NRECA Supports Bill to Protect Pension Benefits, Urge Your House Members to Cosponsor

Electric co-ops are actively [supporting](#) bipartisan House legislation to reduce Pension Benefit Guaranty Corp. insurance premiums paid by NRECA's Retirement Security Plan by more than 80 percent (\$30 million just in 2017). The Rightsizing Pension Premiums Act of 2017 ([H.R. 3596](#)) would also reduce pension premiums for co-ops with their own defined-benefit pension plans. Go to [Action.coop](#) and join your statewide associations and NRECA in urging your House members to cosponsor [H.R. 3596](#). Ask co-op employees to join in this pocketbook issue that affects their future. NRECA signed a [letter](#) with rural co-ops and charities supporting the bill led by Reps Mike Kelly (R-PA) and Ron Kind (D-WI). The bill is similar to [legislation](#) the Senate Finance Committee unanimously passed last year.

FCC to Start Public Comment on Rural Broadband Auction Rules

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) issued an order to start taking comment on proposed rules for a Connect America Fund (CAF) Phase II "reverse auction" that will award \$2 billion over 10 years to develop rural broadband. The exact language of the commission order is not yet publicly available. The CAF Phase II bidding will focus on providing broadband in unserved and underserved rural areas not currently served by providers. The reverse auction will include a weighting scheme that rewards bids featuring high speed service and low latency (data delivery delays). That approach was strongly opposed by the traditional for-profit providers, satellite industry and wireless interests. The FCC decision on bidding weights will help ensure that rural consumers have access to broadband services that are reasonably comparable in cost and quality to typical service in urban areas.

NRECA Push Co-op Concerns in Migratory Bird Rulemaking

NRECA participated in comments with coalition partners to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) on its review of [Migratory Bird Permits and Reports Information Collection](#). FWS did not take any action or make adjustments based on information provided in previous comments. The second round of comments continue to urge the FWS to consider electric co-op concerns with the severely underestimated costs and burdens associated with migratory bird and eagle permitting and reporting. While the agency is trying to address issues with eagle permits, we continue to be concerned that the costs and burdens for co-ops to obtain and implement permit conditions are not being given full consideration. The comments also expanded on issues with conducting third-party monitoring and pre-construction surveys of electrical infrastructure.