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House Panel Advances Grid Reconductoring Bill

The House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy recently advanced Rep. Julie Fedorchak's (R-ND) High-Capacity Grid Act, legislation to encourage the use of advanced transmission conductors in new and upgraded transmission projects.

The bill would direct FERC to establish a standard for "best-available transmission conductor" technology and provide favorable cost-recovery treatment for qualifying projects. The goal is to help utilities increase transmission capacity, reduce line losses, and improve grid efficiency without relying solely on new long-distance transmission construction.

The bill complements the Senate REWIRE Act, authored by Sen. Dave McCormick (R-PA) and Sen. Peter Welch (D-VT), which focuses on reducing barriers to reconductoring projects that use existing rights-of-way. Together, these efforts reflect growing congressional interest in grid-enhancing technologies that can expand capacity faster and more cost-effectively than traditional infrastructure approaches.

NAED supports efforts to accelerate deployment of advanced grid technologies that strengthen reliability, improve efficiency, and help meet rising electricity demand. For distributors, expanded use of advanced conductors and related technologies could create new opportunities to support utility, public power, cooperative, industrial, and infrastructure customers as they modernize the electric grid.

Congress Grapples with Data Center Policy

Artificial intelligence is driving unprecedented demand for data centers, prompting Congress to confront one of the energy sector's fastest-growing policy challenges: how to support America's AI leadership while ensuring consumers are not paying for the infrastructure needed to power it.

The House Energy and Commerce Committee recently advanced the bipartisan Ratepayer Protection Act, which would require states to consider a federal standard ensuring large electricity users to pay the full cost of new generation and transmission infrastructure required to serve them. The measure has attracted support from companies as well as the Data Center Coalition but still faces additional committee and floor consideration.

At the same time, lawmakers remain sharply divided over how aggressively to regulate the industry. Some members, including House Energy and Commerce Ranking Member Frank Pallone (D-NJ), have called for a nationwide moratorium on new data center development until broader environmental and consumer concerns are addressed. Others, including Committee Chairman Brett Guthrie (R-KY), argue a moratorium would undermine U.S. competitiveness in artificial intelligence and cede ground to China.

Beyond the Ratepayer Protection Act, Congress continues to consider legislation addressing load forecasting, grid modernization, transparency, and consumer protections as data center development accelerates. Meanwhile, the Senate has yet to prioritize comprehensive data center legislation, with several key senators signaling that regulators, like the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, should be given time to address the issue before Congress acts.

Whether Congress ultimately requires data centers to finance their own infrastructure, expands transmission investment, or adopts new grid policies, federal action will shape demand for electrical equipment and influence the pace of AI-related infrastructure development for years to come.

Highway Reauthorization Moves Forward in Congress

Congress has officially begun work on the next long-term surface transportation authorization, one of the most important infrastructure measures of the 119th Congress. The current authorization under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) expires on September 30, making reauthorization a priority before the end of the fiscal year.

In May, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Sam Graves (R-MO) and Ranking Member Rick Larsen (D-WA) introduced the bipartisan BUILD America 250 Act, a five-year, approximately \$580 billion reauthorization proposal. Last month, the committee approved the bill by an overwhelming bipartisan vote, demonstrating broad support for a long-term transportation package.

The bill now awaits consideration by the full House, while the Senate is expected to develop its own proposal through several committees with jurisdiction over transportation policy and funding. If the House and Senate pass different versions, lawmakers will negotiate a final compromise before sending legislation to the President. Given the limited legislative calendar, Congress could also consider a short-term extension if negotiations continue beyond September.

For electrical distributors, the legislation would provide continued investment in highways, bridges, freight corridors, and related infrastructure projects that drive demand for our products. As Congress moves through the reauthorization process, NAED will continue advocating for policies that strengthen infrastructure investment, improve project delivery, and support a resilient electrical supply chain.

Have You Encountered Counterfeit Electrical Products?

The proliferation of counterfeit electrical products poses risks to manufacturers, contractors, distributors, and end users. While reports remain relatively limited, even a single counterfeit component can create serious safety, reliability, and liability concerns.

NAED is gathering examples from members who have encountered suspected counterfeit products in the marketplace. Have you discovered counterfeit or altered products in your inventory or at a customer site? Were products misrepresented as genuine, or sold through unauthorized channels?

Your experiences will help NAED better understand the scope of the issue, identify emerging trends, and inform future advocacy and industry education efforts. If you have a story to share, please contact the Government Relations team with details about the product, how it was identified, and any lessons learned.