

# Secure-the-Grid Coalition Weekly Teleconference Rollup for March 1, 2024

Members,

Many thanks to those of you who have joined in this worthy struggle.

## Attention Residents of Texas - - And Those Who Know Astute Texans...

The discussed **Align Act Campaign** to counter the irresponsible proposed legislation “**Connect the Grid Act**” that would usher-in less resilience within ERCOT is **now “live” on the [Secure-the-Grid Coalition website](#)**.

## From Joe Weiss - [The U.S. electric industry is not responding to cyber-vulnerable Chinese equipment](#)

*The electric grid is interconnected. The interconnectivity goes not only between utilities but also between facilities connected to the grid. This fact is pointed out in various interoperability studies. The Chinese (and other threat actors) are exploiting this cybersecurity gap.*

**Mike Swearingen’s report** mentioned near the conclusion of the first recorded session, which will be among the focal points of discussion on the **March 8 teleconference** is titled “**[Will Arrogance and Indifference Towards Control System and Relay Security Destroy our Grid?](#)**”

On Friday’s teleconference we had **two separate recorded sessions**. The second recorded session followed the non-recorded session to accommodate [REDACTED] **powerfully moving delivery**.

This separate recorded session with [REDACTED] will be transcribed and perfected and edited [REDACTED] to reflect his precise meaning, and then will become the **starting point for Dr. Lim’s biographical warnings to Americans** from the patriot most knowing of the mindset of the North Korean leadership, and frightfully, the terms they will use in propaganda to weaken and tear down our way of life. We are grateful to [REDACTED] for this preview!

[REDACTED] in synchronization with [REDACTED], suggested a film titled **[Beyond Utopia](#)**.

This film follows a family of five as they embark on a treacherous journey out of North Korea, aided by a pastor who has helped thousands flee one of the most oppressive places on Earth. Meanwhile, a mother desperately attempts to reunite with the child she was forced to leave behind. Despite the risk of imprisonment or execution, these individuals fight to be free, and come to see their former North Korean heroes as villains.

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## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

**Joe Weiss** briefs the panel of consultants at the **President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST)**. A recent comprehensive PCAST report [ATTACHED] recently outlined a strategic framework for fortifying the nation's **cyber-physical systems**. We know this is right in Joe's "wheelhouse." which constitutes the integrated digital and infrastructural backbone crucial to daily life, encompasses vital components such as the electrical grid, public water systems, internet and telecommunications, banking systems, air traffic control, and more.

**THIS JUST IN - - -**

Joe will testify on **March 7** before the Colorado General Assembly's **House Energy and Environment Committee** at 1:30 pm (MT). We can track committee and floor action through this link: <https://www.leg.state.co.us/public/display.nsf/index.html>

### [White House Announces Three New FERC Appointees](#)

The nominees are Judy W. Chang, David Rosner, and Lindsay S. See. Learn about their backgrounds at the above hyperlink, also view the [White House Statement](#) for these and nominees for other offices.

██████████ provides the response to these nominations by **Sen. Manchen**:

*"A fully-seated, bipartisan FERC provides more opportunity for advancing long-lasting, sensible energy infrastructure policy. As Chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, I look forward to reviewing the qualifications of the three individuals nominated today to be FERC Commissioners and assessing their commitment to American energy security,"*

Congratulations to ██████████ for his excellent article published in **[Domestic Preparedness](#)**. The title is

**["Protecting Infrastructure – Cyber, Physical, and EMP Attacks"](#)**. David explains an imaginative and workable solution set that defies the nay-sayers and silences the excuse-makers:

*Although it is impossible to prevent all hostile actions, reducing the impact of attacks is possible. Protecting water, power, communications, computing, healthcare, first responders, and transportation systems will be important for the economy to continue functioning after a catastrophic grid outage. By protecting 20% of these infrastructures each year, starting with the most critical, the impact of an attack would continually lessen.*

██████████ finds that some of what we learned from ██████████ about the roots of the ██████████ can be verified from supporter's language in **["LCV and Chispa Texas Statement on Introduction of the Connect the Grid Act."](#)**

Electric Power experts warn that the proposed legislation, if made law, would result in drastically higher costs to everyone in Texas, and create additional energy burdens on economically challenged households.

David Pyne adds another installment to [The Real War](#). This one focuses on China, titled [“China Preparing an "October Surprise" for Taiwan Including Blockade and Final Demand for Reunification to Avert War.”](#)

*President Xi Jinping plans military action by October just before the US presidential election to meet his deadline to complete reunification with Taiwan shortly after the CCP's 75th anniversary.*

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## **COMPARTMENTED ITEMS:**

### **Cyber & Control Systems & Sensors**

#### **US indicts Iranian man in cyber-espionage campaign against defense contractors**

*Alireza Shafie Nasab, 39, was allegedly involved in a hacking operation from 2016 until April 2021 that targeted more than a dozen companies, many of which were cleared defense contractors. The breach of one New York firm resulted in the infection of more than 200,000 devices, the DOJ said.*

#### **The Human Safety Factor in OT Security**

*Industrial digitization is necessary, but it opens operational environments to increased risk, including worker and consumer safety. How can OT environments stay safe?*

[Someone else is acknowledging safety – a step toward verification of measurements and all that can go wrong.]

### **Microgrids**

#### **FINDINGS REPORT: Ownership Models and Data Strategy for Microgrids**

*In addition to the key findings and procedural outcome of this overall initiative, the discussions revealed several potential recommended actions or next steps. These are not presented as prescriptive solutions but do highlight where participants felt there may be value going forward.*

**THX Terry Hill**

#### **How And Why To Add Resilience With A Residential Microgrid**

*“A microgrid for a single-family home typically includes solar panels, backup battery storage, inverters, and possibly a generator for additional resilience,” explained Troy Dunnington, a smart energy and lighting design consultant in San Diego.*

**THX Terry Hill**

## **Drones – Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS)**

### **Offutt AFB remains a No Drone Zone**

*“Unauthorized drones operating over the base pose a threat to our aircraft as they can inadvertently strike an aircraft, “said Senior Master Sgt. Daniel Sluss, 55th Operations Support Squadron tower chief controller. “We also must think about operations security, a lot of commercial off the shelf drones are equipped with high resolution recording equipment.”*

## **Solar Threat**

### **The New Yorker: What a Major Solar Storm Could Do to Our Planet**

*Disturbances on the sun may have the potential to devastate our power grid and communication systems. When the next big storm arrives, will we be prepared for it?*

**THX Michael Ravnitzky**

## **Nuclear Threat**

### **Vladimir Putin test fires nuclear missile just 24 hours after fiery speech in which he threatened to nuke the West**

*RUSSIA has test-fired a nuclear missile just 24 hours after Vladimir Putin made a fiery nuke threat to the West.*

## **Supply Chain**

### **“15-State Grid Operator Issues Troubling Outlook for Electricity Supply”**

*MISO’s new report explains the troubling outlook for electric reliability in its footprint unless urgent action is taken. The main reasons for this warning are (1) the pace of premature retirements of dispatchable fossil generation and (2) the resulting loss of accredited capacity and reliability attributes.*

### **Elon Musk: “AI will run out of electricity and transformers in 2025.”**

*“I’ve never seen any technology advance faster than this.” The chip shortage may be behind us, but AI and EVs are expanding at such a rapacious rate that the world will face supply crunches in electricity and transformers next year, says Elon Musk.*

### **Commerce Dept. to look at privacy, cyber risks from Chinese-sourced connected vehicle equipment.**

*The investigation looks to discover national security concerns before connected vehicles flood the U.S. market.*

## Strides in Nuclear Reactors

### [A Closer Look at Two Operational Small Modular Reactor Designs](#)

*83 SMR designs under development, but only the KLT-40S and HTR-PM are actually operational.*

**[ One in China – One in Russia ]**

### [House approves bipartisan bill aimed at bolstering nuclear energy](#)

*The legislation aims to bolster the U.S.'s nuclear energy production by speeding up environmental reviews for new nuclear reactors and reducing fees that applicants for advanced nuclear reactor licenses must pay. In addition, the bill would also seek to bolster nuclear approvals by requiring "efficient, timely, and predictable reviews and proceeding" for licensing reactors.*

### [Congress passes bill to accelerate advanced nuclear projects](#)

*Utah's Rep. John Curtis says nation must avoid cumbersome delays. The provision by Curtis was part of a larger bill sponsored by Reps. Jeff Duncan (R-S.C.) and Diana DeGette (D-Colo.)*

## Generation, Transmission Distribution

### [Pump the brakes on big transmission](#)

*If the all-in wager being made on big transmission fails, it promises to take with it our aspirations to rapidly electrify and decarbonize our economy.*

**THX Terry Hill**

## Energy Democracy/Equity

### [Why Utility Execs Hate Distributed Solar](#)

*The many benefits of local ownership are precisely why utility companies oppose it. They prefer to build their own generation and distribution infrastructure, no matter the cost, because they are guaranteed to earn a certain return on their investments.*

## Regulatory and Policy

### [CFOs take backseat to CISOs on SEC cyber rules](#)

*Less than half of finance chiefs are involved in the SEC's cybersecurity breach disclosure process, AuditBoard found.*

## Solutions

[Electromagnetic Pulse Shielding Mitigations: Best Practices for Protection of Mission Critical Equipment](#) (August 2022)

[Of the ten references cited in the bibliography of this DHS research paper, five of them are from NGOs, including 3 from **Dr. George Baker**, and one each from **The Foundation for Resilient Societies**, and the **EIS Council**.]

THX Terry Hill

**Multifarious Threats**

[Four Chinese Nationals Detained in Maine for Illegal Border Crossing Attempt](#)

*Recent operation at U.S.-Canada border apprehends four Chinese nationals near Fort Fairfield, Maine, shedding light on challenges of border security and illegal immigration.*

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**TRACKING THE TELECON:**

Tommy opens Friday's teleconference and moves directly to introduce the **latest A [REDACTED]**. The purpose of this campaign is to **engage Texas residents only in opposition to the [REDACTED]**, which seeks to bring Texas under FERC authority. Tommy emphasizes the importance of the campaign and encourages suggestions for additional insights.

**TIME-TRACK 3:07**

Tommy and [REDACTED] have been preparing the text of the [REDACTED], and Matt reads the prepared campaign email, which urges elected officials to review the significant, well-researched report of the **Center for Security Policy** and the **Secure-the-Grid Coalition**, titled [5 Reasons Why a Federal Takeover of Texas' Electric Grid Will Hurt Resilience](#), contest the [REDACTED] and protect the ERCOT grid from "All Hazards."

It is stressed and explained that this campaign is for Texas Residents to participate in, however, it is urged that all the STG Coalition membership enlist the action of all people each member may know residing in the Lone Star State.

**TIME-TRACK 5:43**

[REDACTED] offers the suggestion that **opposition to the [REDACTED] be incorporated into the party platforms in Texas, both Republican and Democrat**, as a step toward adopting by the official state platform. It is also discussed and encouraged that these **specimen emails be altered slightly by the sender for a more individualized and more personalized impact**. Personal anecdotes

related to electric energy problems/solutions give a more custom-approach and gain personal resonance.

#### TIME-TRACK 8:49

Tommy relates an idea that can be accomplished by creating a webpage on the STG website that would introduce the issue, **showcase the [REDACTED]** [REDACTED] as an action item.

The discussion on individualization of the [REDACTED] email template continues with [REDACTED].

#### TIME-TRACK 10:54

[REDACTED] asks for clarification about what the advertised driver for the [REDACTED]. Tommy explains that there is an **advertised driver for this proposed legislation, which differs from the actual, behind-the-scenes motivation for the Act**. Bob agrees, listing the obvious benefits of ERCOT's independence from the National Grid.

#### TIME-TRACK 12:27

[REDACTED] proposes mentioning microgrids in the Campaign's prepared email template. Tommy warns against direct association with specific legislators, clarifying the importance of maintaining a non-partisan and independent stance in the messaging.

[REDACTED] observes that the two lawmakers who initiated the proposed [REDACTED] [REDACTED] legislation are no longer in a prime public role, which raises curiosity. Tommy agrees and points to the opening paragraphs of the **"5 Reasons Why..." report** which explains the **real underlying motivation**.

#### TIME-TRACK 17:02

[REDACTED] offers that **no RTO or regional neighbor had any excess electric generation to provide Texas relief** during the February 2021 Winter Storm Uri, even if connecting pathways had been present. Moreover, southern parts of MISO were very tenuous in ability to meet their own load demand, as was SPP.

Tommy builds on that fact referring to past [REDACTED] assertions of a couple of weeks ago on a Coalition teleconference which agreed with Michael's statement.

[REDACTED] poses a question about the efficacy of non-Texas residents participating in the [REDACTED]. Tommy responds with a description of the [REDACTED] functioning; that these campaigns operate from each participating constituent's entered address to select which officials will receive the email. Since this **campaign is targeting Texas constituency, it would be wasteful, and may even be counterproductive, to flood the Inboxes of officials in other states**.

## TIME-TRACK 20:09

**Tommy** and **Matt** iron out some of the logistics for sharing the campaign and updating both websites with the report and [REDACTED] link for broader dissemination.

**Doug** adds a preview of next week's teleconference by announcing [REDACTED] **latest report** which will be included in this week's Rollup [See ABOVE.] and discussed during next week's teleconference.

The recorded portion of the teleconference concludes as Tommy Waller checks for any last comments and then shifts to the non-recorded session, which will feature discussions from various experts including talks from [REDACTED], [See EL21-69 ATTACHED] **Joe Weiss**, and a very powerful, partially biographical presentation by [REDACTED].

## TIME-TRACK 21:30

We adjourn to the Non-Recorded Session.


Truly,

-Doug

### 3 attachments

 **Joe Weiss' Unfettered blog posts incite responses from Control magazine readers.docx**  
17K

 **PCAST\_Cyber-Physical-Resilience-Report\_Feb2024.pdf**  
968K

 **EL21-99.PDF**  
5693K