

By: Hall, Bettencourt

S.C.R. No. 55

1 SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Our food and water supplies, communications,
3 banking, hospitals, law enforcement, and countless critical
4 functions depend on the electric grid, and its protection is vital
5 to homeland security; and

6 WHEREAS, Numerous national publications have reported on the
7 great danger to the electric grid from an electromagnetic pulse, or
8 EMP; national experts regard a potential attack on our electric
9 grid system, whether natural or manmade, as a grave threat to our
10 American way of life; and

11 WHEREAS, The risk of an EMP attack has been acknowledged
12 since the 1960s, and the congressional EMP Commission warned in its
13 2004 and 2008 reports that terrorists or state actors using
14 relatively unsophisticated missiles armed with nuclear weapons
15 could stage such an attack; in 2009, the congressional Commission
16 on the Strategic Posture of the United States, led by former
17 Secretaries of Defense William Perry and James Schlesinger, urged
18 immediate action to protect the electric grid; and

19 WHEREAS, Although the federal government has thus far
20 neglected to take action, Texas is fortunate to have its own power
21 grid; the state is thus capable of hardening its own electric system
22 to ensure reliable electricity in a hostile environment for
23 residents, businesses, and state and local government, as well as
24 for U.S. military bases; and

1 WHEREAS, Even if an EMP threat never materializes, protecting
2 the grid would provide substantial economic benefits; as the
3 federal government closes military bases around the country, Texas
4 bases would likely survive closure, due to their enhanced energy
5 security; moreover, companies considering relocation or expansion
6 would clearly find the assurance of secure power immensely valuable
7 and look to the Lone Star State; and

8 WHEREAS, The protection of the electric grid is essential to
9 the security and continued prosperity of our state and nation, and
10 Texas is prepared to do its part to ensure that citizens can rely
11 completely on the power system that sustains our society; now,
12 therefore, be it

13 RESOLVED, That the 85th Legislature of the State of Texas
14 hereby request the lieutenant governor and the speaker of the house
15 of representatives to create a joint interim committee to study the
16 security of the Texas electric grid, including critical
17 infrastructure and its vulnerability to electromagnetic pulse,
18 geomagnetic disturbance, and cybersecurity threats; and, be it
19 further

20 RESOLVED, That the committee include members of the Electric
21 Reliability Council of Texas and other relevant stakeholder groups;
22 and, be it further

23 RESOLVED, That the committee coordinate with the Commission
24 to Assess the Threat to the United States from Electromagnetic
25 Pulse (EMP) Attack, the United States Department of Defense, the
26 United States Department of Energy, and the United States
27 Department of Homeland Security to apply research and information

1 on electromagnetic, geomagnetic, physical, and cyber-attack
2 threats; and, be it further

3 RESOLVED, That the committee submit a full report, including
4 findings and recommendations, to the 86th Texas Legislature in
5 January 2019; and, be it further

6 RESOLVED, That the committee's proceedings and operations be
7 governed by such general rules and policies for interim committees
8 as the 85th Texas Legislature may adopt.