

By: Hall

S.C.R. No. 55

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

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

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

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

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

24 WHEREAS, Even if an EMP threat never materializes, protecting

1 the grid would provide substantial economic benefits; as the
2 federal government closes military bases around the country, Texas
3 bases would likely survive closure, due to their enhanced energy
4 security; moreover, companies considering relocation or expansion
5 would clearly find the assurance of secure power immensely valuable
6 and look to the Lone Star State; and

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

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

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

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

1 threats; and, be it further

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

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