



**INTERNATIONAL  
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**LONNIE R. STEPHENSON**  
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June 16, 2015

The Honorable Fred Upton  
Chairman  
House Committee on Energy and Commerce  
2125 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Energy and Commerce  
2322A Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Upton and Ranking Member Pallone:

On behalf of the approximately 750,000 active members and retirees of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), I write in support of the *Hydropower Regulatory Modernization* discussion draft, legislation to reform the licensing and regulation of hydro electricity generation.

As the United States moves toward a lower-carbon future, it has become clear that hydropower – the original renewable energy resource – has become burdened with excessive, time-consuming, and costly regulation. Nowhere is this truer than in the relicensing process where procedures for renewal have become difficult and duplicative. Lacking in transparency and efficiency the process to relicense an existing hydropower facility can, in some cases, take more than a decade.

The regulatory process to license and construct a new hydropower facility, while better than existing, remains considerably longer than it should be especially when compared with wind and solar. For example, the Integrated Licensing Process established specifically for hydropower projects is structured to be completed in five years, while the development time for wind and solar can be as short as 18 to 24 months.

To help address these problems the *Hydropower Regulatory Modernization* discussion draft would improve administrative efficiency and transparency, encourage new hydropower infrastructure, reduce duplicative oversight, and promote efficient and timely decision-making in the licensing process.

Hydro generation continues to be a very viable renewable energy resource, an essential component of an “all of the above” energy policy. Moreover, being a carbon-free source of electricity, it is incumbent on the federal government to support the efficient and timely approval of hydropower projects. I appreciate your attention to this issue and support the conception of the *Hydropower Regulatory Modernization* discussion draft.

Sincerely yours,

Lonnie R. Stephenson  
International President

LRS:mlm

Copy to Rep. Edward Whitfield, Chairman, Energy and Power Subcommittee  
Rep. Bobby Rush, Ranking Member, Energy and Power Subcommittee

