

RECOGNIZING BANDERA ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE EMPLOYEES**HON. LAMAR SMITH**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2015

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I want to recognize three power linemen from the Bandera Electric Cooperative: Jay Rasberry, John Hernandez and Garrett Clark. These linemen volunteered for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) International Foundation and spent three weeks in northern Haiti building and upgrading power lines. These efforts have helped communities in Haiti receive affordable, safe and reliable energy.

These three power linemen worked side by side with NRECA International on the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funded Pilot Project for Sustainable Electricity Distribution. This project commercializes power from the Caracol Industrial Park generation station that is currently serving 8,000 consumers in Caracol and surrounding communities with electricity 24 hours a day. When the project is complete, a total of 10,000 consumers will have access to electricity.

Less than 15% of the people in Haiti have access to electricity. The service and sacrifice of these linemen will impact the lives of thousands of Haitians resulting in improvements in healthcare, education, and economic opportunity.

In appreciation of all they have done, Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking them for their humanitarian efforts.

HONORING STEPHEN COOK

HON. JASON SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2015

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Stephen Cook for being awarded the American FFA Degree as a member of the National FFA Organization. Stephen is a member of the Willow Springs Chapter of the FFA and, with four of its other members, received this prestigious award. He is also currently on active duty with the U.S. Marine Corps, making this accomplishment even more impressive. FFA is an intercurricular student organization for those interested in agriculture and leadership consisting of 629,367 members, aged 12–21. Stephen is among the 463 FFA members from Missouri that received the American FFA degree, marking the highest number of recipients from any state.

As a past recipient of the American FFA Degree, I offer my highest congratulations as I understand the hard work and effort required to reach this goal. In order to obtain the American FFA Degree, a member must begin their pursuit of the award during their freshman year of high school through participation in every level of the organization and leadership events.

As a former member of FFA, I can proudly say that my experience in the organization was invaluable learning about leadership skills and public speaking. It is my pleasure to rec-

ognize Stephen Cook for receiving this prominent award and thank him for his service to our county before the United States House of Representatives.

INTRODUCTION OF THE 21ST
CENTURY POWER GRID ACT**HON. JOHN P. SARBANES**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2015

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the 21st Century Power Grid Act. The bill would finance public-private partnerships to carry out innovative projects related to the modernization of the electric grid.

Unfortunately, today the U.S. electric grid is still operating in the 20th Century. We must act now to improve grid reliability, flexibility, efficiency and security. There are literally a limitless number of ways in which the federal government can play a part to help modernize the electric grid. What we cannot afford is the status quo.

Whether it's the application of digital technologies, advanced communications and control, distributed energy resources, resilience, cybersecurity, or providing customers with more choice in energy source, usage and rates; it's a completely new world for how we can generate, distribute and consume electricity.

The federal government—in partnership with state and local governments, the private sector and ratepayers—must play a role in developing a strategy for the modernization of the electric grid and be an investor in the research, development and deployment of new advanced technologies.

The 21st Century Power Grid Act would direct the Department of Energy to provide assistance, in the form of grants or cooperative agreements, to help advance the future grid. In order to be eligible to receive this assistance, utilities can partner with entities such as national labs, universities, or state and local governments to develop or demonstrate new grid technologies or energy management techniques.

Most have heard the term “smart grid,” but I'm not sure many appreciate how truly revolutionary it could be if we were to achieve a smarter grid. “Imagine a city in the middle of a deep freeze. The local power grid is struggling to keep up with everyone's heaters. What if the grid could automatically communicate with buildings in the area and negotiate reduced power consumption in exchange for a financial incentive? A large hotel that's only half-full due to the weather could dial back its thermostats, saving money on their bill and enabling the grid to divert that energy to homes and schools.”

This scenario was taken directly from the website of one of our national labs, the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. PNNL and their partners recently completed a two year project that successfully demonstrated that this sort of communication and cooperative energy usage is possible.

In your own home, imagine if you could throw dishes in the dishwasher or clothes in the dryer and then set the device to automatically start when you can pay the optimal rate for electricity. This is a win, win. Consumers

pay less, and utilities can more efficiently manage peak loads.

And the scenarios I've described don't even begin to scratch the surface of the potential for better integration of distributed energy sources like solar, wind and geothermal; energy storage capabilities; or other advances that only become conceivable when you do the type of basic research this country has always supported and excelled in.

To not provide the Department of Energy with resources to invest in smart grid research and development would be akin to preventing the National Institutes of Health from doing medical cures research. The electric grid is an indispensable element of modern society and is critical to our national security, economy and the general well-being of the citizenry.

I urge my colleagues to support the 21st Century Power Grid Act.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL
DEBT**HON. MIKE COFFMAN**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2015

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$18,789,199,596,566.93. We've added \$8,162,322,547,653.85 to our debt in 6 years. This is over \$8 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

CLASS 1A—ARCOLA HIGH SCHOOL
FOOTBALL TEAM STATE CHAMPIONS**HON. JOHN SHIMKUS**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2015

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the Purple Raiders of Arcola Jr. High School as the IHSA Class 1A high school state champions.

On November 27, 2015 Arcola defeated Stark County by 35–17 winning the Class 1A State Championship. I would like to recognize the effort of this amazing team and congratulate them on their historic season as they celebrate their first state championship title in 27 years.

I would also like to congratulate the Strader family. Brothers Clayton and Connor and their cousin Chase for contributing to six touchdowns and several tackles. Tommy Eddleman, Jim Fishel, Aldo Garcia, Chad Hopkins, Jarod Kiger, and John Lidy make up the coaching staff which supported Athletic Director and Head Coach, Zach Zehr to provide great leadership for these talented football players.

I look forward to the continued success of the Arcola Jr. High School. I extend my best wishes for another outstanding season next year.

The following are Arcola Purple Raider Varsity Football players: Conner Strader, Clayton Strader, Parker Ingram, Kollin Seaman, Martin