

letter to United States Secretary of Energy Rick Perry warned that “premature retirements of fuel-secure baseload generating stations reduces resilience to fuel supply disruptions”; and

Whereas, The recent United States Department of Energy Staff Report to the Secretary on Electricity Markets and Reliability made clear that resiliency must be addressed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and there is an “urgent need for clear definitions of reliability- and resilience-enhancing attributes and should quickly establish the market means to value or the regulatory means to provide them”; and

Whereas, The 2014 polar vortex exposed problems with the resiliency of the electric grid when PJM Interconnection struggled to meet demand for electricity because a significant amount of generation was not available to run due to weather-related outages; and

Whereas, Pennsylvania’s fuel-secure baseload generation plants employ thousands of workers in high-paying jobs and contribute significantly to State and local economics; and

Whereas, Pennsylvania’s coal industry, including coal power plants, is a vital contributor to the State’s economy, providing support through direct, indirect and induced impacts, including approximately 36,100 full and part-time jobs, and \$4.1 billion in total value added to the Commonwealth’s economy; and

Whereas, Pennsylvania’s nuclear industry, including nuclear power plants, is a vital contributor to the State’s economy, providing support through direct, indirect and induced impacts, including approximately 15,900 in-State full time jobs and \$2 billion to the Commonwealth’s gross domestic product, and \$69 million in net State tax revenues annually; and

Whereas, In addition to the reliability, security, grid resilience and economic attributes, Pennsylvania’s fuel-secure baseload coal plants have made significant investments to meet increased environmental standards, helping to improve air and water quality in the Commonwealth; and

Whereas, Pennsylvania is also home to unique fuel-secure coal generation sources that use waste coal as a fuel-source, employing 3,800 Pennsylvania residents and producing 1,500 megawatts of renewable energy, also helping to remove approximately 200 million tons of refuse coal from mine scarred land in Pennsylvania; and

Whereas, In addition to the reliability, security, grid resilience and economic attributes, Pennsylvania’s fuel-secure baseload nuclear power plants also provide more than 93% of this Commonwealth’s emissions-free electricity and are the only emissions-free, predictable and reliable electric generation source; and

Whereas, Pennsylvania’s diverse portfolio of fuel-secure baseload generation resources are vital to our Commonwealth’s economic competitiveness, natural environment and public health and safety; and

Whereas, It is in the public interest that fuel-secure baseload generation resources be properly compensated for providing these positive attributes and under the current design of the wholesale electric markets, prices are set in a manner that undervalues fuel-secure generation resources; and

Whereas, The Secretary of Energy has proposed, for consideration by FERC, a Grid Resiliency Pricing Rule with the goal of ensuring our nation’s energy security; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania acknowledge the grid resilience and reliability benefits that fuel-

secure baseload electricity generation resources provide to the residents, business and economy of this Commonwealth and assert that fuel-secure baseload generation resources receive proper compensation for these positive attributes; and be it further

Resolved, That the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania agree with the goals of the United States Department of Energy’s proposed Grid Resiliency Pricing Rule and urge the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to swiftly implement policies and approve tariff provisions to ensure fuel-secure baseload electricity generation resources receive proper compensation for all of the positive attributes they provide our nation’s and this Commonwealth’s electric system; and be it further

Resolved, That the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, while expressing support for FERC’s swift action to ensure the positive attributes provided by fuel-secure baseload generation resources receive proper compensation in the wholesale market, will continue to exercise the General Assembly’s authority to make energy policy consistent with the health, safety and welfare of our residents; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, United States Secretary of Energy Rick Perry, FERC Commissioners, the presiding officers of each house of Congress, each member of Congress from Pennsylvania and the Board of Managers of PJM Interconnection.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. TILLIS (for himself and Mr. PETERS):

S. 2126. A bill to amend the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 to provide a temporary exemption for low-revenue issuers from certain auditor attestation requirements; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Mr. SULLIVAN, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mr. COCHRAN):

S. 2127. A bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the United States merchant mariners of World War II, in recognition of their dedicated and vital service during World War II; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mr. WARNER, Mr. HELLER, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. BOOZMAN, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 2128. A bill to improve the coordination and use of geospatial data; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BROWN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. KAINE, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. PETERS, Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. WARNER):

S. 2129. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to establish a punitive article in the Uniform Code of Military Justice on domestic violence, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. TESTER:

S. 2130. A bill to establish within the Department of the Interior the Outdoor Recreation Advisory Committee; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Mr. TESTER):

S. 2131. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to furnish medically necessary transportation for newborn children of certain women veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans Affairs.

By Mr. FRANKEN (for himself, Mr. BENNET, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. COONS, Mr. BROWN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. UDALL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. KING, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. KAINE, Mr. SANDERS, and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 2132. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that working families have access to affordable health insurance coverage; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. UDALL (for himself and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 2133. A bill to amend the Food Security Act of 1985 to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to enter into alternative funding arrangements with certain community irrigation associations and community land grants; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. MORAN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. TESTER, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 2134. A bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish processes to ensure that non-Department of Veterans Affairs health care providers are using safe practices in prescribing opioids to veterans under the laws administered by the Secretary, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans Affairs.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. HATCH, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. HELLER, and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 2135. A bill to enforce current law regarding the National Instant Criminal Background Check System; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. MANCHIN (for himself and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. Res. 332. A resolution commemorating the christening of the USNS Hershel “Woody” Williams; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. ISAKSON (for himself and Mr. TESTER):

S. Res. 333. A resolution permitting the collection of clothing, toys, food, and housewares during the holiday season for charitable purposes in Senate buildings; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. Res. 334. A resolution authorizing the taking of a photograph in the Senate Chamber; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 16

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 16, a bill to require a full audit of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and the Federal reserve banks by the Comptroller General of