



July 14, 2021

The Honorable Joe Manchin
Chairman, Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

The Honorable John Barrasso
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

Dear Chairman Manchin and Ranking Member Barrasso:

The BuildStrong Coalition applauds you for the development of provisions in the Energy Infrastructure Act that prioritize federal investments in resilient energy and other key lifeline infrastructure, dedicate billions of dollars to help states build a more resilient electric grid, and focus on emergency planning to address severe weather and disaster impacts. As a coalition of firefighters, emergency responders, insurers, engineers, architects, contractors, and manufacturers, as well as consumer organizations, code specialists, and many others committed to building a more resilient America, we urge yours and the Committee's support for the resilience and disaster mitigation provisions of the Energy Infrastructure Act.

In recent years we have seen the electric grid succumb to numerous disaster and extreme weather impacts with wildfires, hurricanes, and ice storms, among other events, plaguing the energy system from coast to coast. We need to prioritize investments in key lifeline infrastructure to build resilience in our communities against the next disaster. We would like to highlight that Title I, Subtitle A of the bill, in recognition of the threats posed to the energy system by disaster impacts, would drive significant investments in the nation's electric grid to improve the resilience of energy infrastructure. Importantly, this would reduce negative effects on downstream systems and consumers.

Further, in Title VIII, the legislation includes important provisions that recognize the need to address and reduce wildfire risks and hazards, and that would promote investments in technology, predictive services, and resources for state and local firefighters. These provisions would make substantial targeted investments to help mitigate the threat of wildfires that have been impacting many of our communities in western states and beyond.

As a nation, we stand poised to invest in our infrastructure making the grid, homes, and communities safer and more resilient. Thank you for your leadership in supporting these important issues.

Sincerely,

Jimi Grande
Chairman, BuildStrong Coalition

Philmore B. Anderson
President, BuildStrong Coalition