

Rep. Sloan In Washington, D. C. for Energy Meetings

Rep. Tom Sloan (R, Lawrence) participated in several energy meetings in Washington, D. C. He participated in the Department of Energy's Electricity Advisory Committee (DOE EAC) as the only state legislative member. He also met with three of the four Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Commissioners and had a separate meeting at the Department of Energy.

The EAC advises the Assistant Secretary of Energy, Office of Electricity, and the Secretary on policy matters involving DOE research priorities, communications with the public, and relations with other groups and agencies. "I recommended that the EAC members receive a briefing on Transactive Energy, the technologies and policies by which customers can be both buyers and sellers of electricity depending on their needs and price signals," said Sloan. "The transactive energy presentation framed subsequent discussions involving EAC members and panelists."

In transactive energy, a customer who can generate electricity through wind, solar, or other technologies can decide whether to sell such power to the electric grid or purchase power based on the price that the traditional utility pays or charges for electricity. Transactive energy also applies between a utility's customers where one customer may curtail its use or self-generate in order that another customer does not have to curtail usage during peak demand periods.

Rep. Sloan is also a member of the GridWise Architecture Council (GWAC), an organization that is developing the theoretical framework that describes transactive energy. GWAC was created and funded by the DOE. "As residential and commercial customers increasingly have affordable ways to generate some or all of their own electricity, their relationships with the traditional electric utility and other customers is changing," Sloan said. "It is important that the DOE's advisors and staff understand the evolving electric business because it will increasingly redefine the federal agency's role in the electric grid policy debates."

The EAC also heard several persons describe the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) proposed carbon emission rules. While providing flexibility to states in implementing programs with their electric utilities to reduce carbon emissions, the proposed rules also have the potential to impact the electric grid's reliability and resiliency. It was concerns about the impact of those proposed EPA rules that resulted in Rep. Sloan meeting with three of the FERC Commissioners. "I support improving air quality in the U.S. to help those who suffer from respiratory diseases," Sloan said. "I also am concerned that electric service to our homes and businesses remain affordable and reliable. FERC

Commissioners and staff interact regularly with the EPA officials and I wanted to make sure that they understand that state officials are concerned about keeping the lights on and businesses open.”

Rep. Sloan also met with members of the DOE’s Quadrennial Energy Review (QER) staff about the Council of State Governments’ (CSG) Interstate Electric Transmission Siting Compact. Constructing high voltage electric transmission lines to carry Kansas’ and other high plains states’ wind energy to customers on the East and West coasts will require new and upgraded transmission lines. Much of the land that must be crossed in the western and Appalachian states is owned or managed by the federal government (e.g. Forest Service, Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, Corps of Engineers). “I met with the QER team because siting the necessary electric transmission lines requires federal and state approvals. Integrating the two processes will save time and money for the applicants and for citizens who have concerns about where the proposed lines will be located,” said Sloan. “I have talked with members of the QER team before through teleconference calls, but the chance to meet with them and impress upon them that a majority of state officials want to partner with federal agencies to meet our nation’s electricity needs was important.”

Sloan has filed comments with EPA, DOE, FERC, Corps of Engineers, Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and federal agencies on issues that will impact Kansans. He has also organized state and regional meetings that bring federal and state policy-makers together. He is serving his 10th term in the Kansas House of Representatives.

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