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For Immediate Release

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## Sierra Club Lone Star Chapter Statement on “Connect the Grid Act”

*Chapter welcomes the conversations on interconnectivity and reliability  
this bill will open up*

Austin, TX - Today several members of the Texas Congressional delegation announced new legislation called the “Connect the Grid Act” to help connect the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) grid to neighboring national grids.

Millions of Texans have struggled together since the horror of Winter Storm Uri in 2021. Governor Greg Abbott and the Texas Legislature have pushed false solutions to strengthen the ERCOT grid, such as subsidizing risky fracked gas power plants that rely on the same fuel supply that [nearly caused the grid to completely fail](#). They’ve also put billions of dollars in debt from Winter Storm Uri on the backs of everyday Texans and looked the other direction as working people struggle to pay ever-increasing utility bills. Meanwhile, our state leaders refuse to support fast, affordable, and scalable solutions like energy savings programs to help our homes and businesses consume less power.

Grid interconnection is not a new or unwelcome idea, even within our state agencies. ERCOT and the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC) recently approved a new connection through the Southern Spirit Transmission project. They limited the project’s size, however, and have failed to take action on additional proposed interconnections. In fact, when one proposed interconnection recently sought PUC approval, the PUC did not appear to even have a process in place to consider the plan. It’s time for ERCOT to make progress on modernizing.

In the face of a rapidly changing climate, it makes sense to explore connecting the grids by creating a new reliability standard for ERCOT and other regions. The Sierra Club Lone Star Chapter looks forward to the conversations that this bill will spur.

### **Statement from Dave Cortez, Director, Sierra Club Lone Star Chapter:**

“The Sierra Club Lone Star Chapter has been analyzing grid interconnection pros and cons for years and appreciates new proposals like the Connect the Grid Act. We look forward to

working with stakeholders to find the best solutions to strengthen our grid. We need more than just the same old ‘throwing taxpayer money at wealthy fossil fuel companies’ that we get from Gov. Abbott and Lt. Gov. Patrick. As Texans continue to endure record heat, record cold, ERCOT energy emergency alerts, and an apathetic state government, we will continue to advocate for centering the needs of everyday Texans who simply want clean, reliable, affordable energy.”

**Statement from Cyrus Reed, Legislative and Conservation Director, Sierra Club Lone Star Chapter:**

“For decades it has been clear that the ERCOT’s very limited ability to import electricity through interconnections with other electric grids has put Texans’ economic well-being and our lives on the line during extreme weather conditions, increased electric demand, and storms. It has also meant that Texas leaders have failed by limiting our state’s growing renewable energy industry and the economic opportunity to export power from our growing fleet of wind, solar, and battery resources to serve other parts of the country.

“We look forward to working with Rep. Casar, the co-sponsors, stakeholders, and our allies on moving forward to create more direct current (DC) grid interconnections with other regions in a way that benefits the millions of consumers in Texas who worry every time our temperatures hit new record highs and new record lows.”

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