Web 57DHYAFZZFLWEKB April 27 2026 Yank authority from Trump to build new renewable energy

Yank authority from Trump to build new renewable energy RAWSEP View The main summary of this article is that Congress must pass permitting reform this year to make it easier for governments and companies to build new solar farms wind farms and power lines It needs to yank authority from the president to block energy projects that have already been approved and end the Trump de facto block on all new renewables If your utility builds a big new power plant that generates an excess of cheap clean electricity then your bills will go up not down in the short term as you pay off that investment even if wholesale power gets cheaper The government can help by stepping up and covering some of these costs directly Tech companies should be made to finance long-term improvements to the grid by contributing to a national grid modernization fund This fund could then build new large-scale power lines or buy next-generation power equipment in bulk It could also build batteries at the neighborhood level set up programs that pay households to be more flexible with their power use and make targeted improvements so that our existing wires and equipment can handle more power Lastly the government should establish a new federal grid authority that can build a long-distance high-voltage transmission grid across the country to move electricity to the places that need it from the places that produce it This new institution should be empowered to overcome local and utility opposition to procure the cheapest power for the greatest number of Americans This grid authority might already be possible to form through Presidential executive authority alone although Congress could also authorize such an effort It could also partly be funded by the new grid fund This project would help keep power costs low for every American reducing strains in those rural and exurban areas suffering from the biggest data center expansions while allowing the whole American economy to benefit from the true blessing of solar wind and battery power Back to the Article Headline The backbone of the American electrical grid is a sprawling patchwork of dated infrastructure increasingly unsuited to our needs Rapid growth of Artificial intelligence is stoking concerns about the impact hundreds of new data centers could have on electricity prices and the grid But data centers are a wakeup call A surge in demand could fuel the kind of investment that the grid has needed for decades it is the Age of Electricity and America Is not Ready Excerpts edited by Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501C3 nonprofit organization The New York Times April 27 Two Thousand Twenty Six Electricity is perhaps the most underrated issue of our time In the United States we have been blessed with a power grid that instantly responds whenever you flick on the lights It works mostly as expected cooling our homes charging our laptops and phones running life-saving equipment But as we plug more things into the grid it will come under unprecedented strain Virtually every economic goal that American politicians might strive for will require big upgrades to the electricity system Lately Americans have become fixated on the explosion in data centers and the power needs of artificial intelligence That is actually a small part of a much bigger problem Our grid is too old and our supply of electricity too small If we do not meet this moment we will face an impoverished future of more expensive less reliable energy and slower economic growth In a worst-case scenario we could see Americans defect from the grid entirely raising costs for everyone Something needs to change now If you want to fix the grid you first have to understand it The place to start is your electricity bill Electricity prices have shot up over the last five years Residential prices have risen by more than 30 percent since Two Thousand Twenty Source U S Energy Information Administration The price will likely keep rising Over the past year wholesale electricity prices have gone up While it can take years for those wholesale price changes to show up in your power bill they will eventually Electricity is already the second biggest energy expense on average that Americans pay each year second only to gasoline Electricity inflation makes any kind of big business investment such as a

new factory or office building more costly And when people feel as if their electricity rates are surging and unpredictable it can discourage them from switching to electric vehicles or electric appliances that cut air pollution and carbon emissions For the first time in more than a decade American electricity demand is steadily growing The largest regional power market of America which covers the Mid-Atlantic and upper Midwest is likely to set a new all- time demand record this summer National electricity use will also likely set an all-time high Electricity demand has started rising faster again Change in electricity sales Industrial Commercial Residential Total Source US Energy Information Administration The past Fifteen years since Two Thousand Ten have been an incredibly deviation from what is standard for the power system For more than a hundred years electricity demand rose during periods of economic growth From the power grid inception in the late eighteen hundreds to the middle of the Two Thousands American hunger for electricity grew more or less in pace with the economy Then in from about Two Thousand Five to Two Thousand Ten something unusual happened The electricity demand of America stagnated This slowdown was not chiefly because of the aftermath of the Two Thousand Eight financial crisis Instead it was technological Americans adopted more efficient lightbulbs by switching to compact fluorescent lights and LEDs from incandescent lightbulbs and suddenly needed less electricity to run them Even as the economy shifted back into growth mode in the Twenty Tens the huge efficiency gains from this transition overwhelmed big increases in electricity demand The amount of these savings has been enormous See Statistics for Electricity use for Dryers Washing machines Computers Cooking Dishwashers Fans and pumps Freezers Electric Vehicle E V charging Refrigeration Cooling Heating Televisions and Water heating from Two Thousand onward BTU Residential electricity by use Around Two Thousand lighting was the single largest use of electricity in American homes By Twenty Eighteen energy-efficient lightbulbs had shrunk the category to sixth place Energy forecasters expect that electric vehicles will come to dominate residential power use over the next few decades contributing to an increase in overall electricity use Some parts of the country such as Texas have seen electricity demand rise anyway during the past Twenty years thanks to a booming population and economic growth Because of this their grids are in some ways better prepared to absorb the next wave of new demand But in many other places the end of the LED revolution will force utilities to adapt to a new era At the same time there is of course the explosive growth of AI and data centers which will drive a new surge of demand as well Computing Cooking Lighting Office equipment Refrigeration Cooling Heating Ventilation Water heating by Quadrillion BTU Commercial electricity by use Lighting also dominated commercial activity use until about Two Thousand Fifteen But it is now changing fast The explosive growth of data centers will help drive electricity use higher than ever All of this rising demand will eventually mean higher prices unless we build more power generation in the years to come But that is not the whole story There is another driver of high prices that has little to do with electrical demand It is the cost of operating and fixing the power grid itself The power grid does not work in the way that many people expect For a long time when I paid my power bill I assumed that most of my payment went to generating the electricity I had just used In fact the cost of operating and maintaining the power grid itself moving electricity over long distances then delivering it to homes and businesses makes up a growing share of bill costs These system costs can raise prices which can then drive demand This is why states that have seen electricity demand grow the most since the pandemic such as North Dakota and New Mexico have seen their electrical prices grow the least and sometimes even decline Meanwhile the states where demand dropped such as California and Maine saw their prices grow the most In recent years higher demand has not necessarily led to higher prices Change in electricity load California Florida Maine North Dakota New York Texas Note Change is from Twenty Nineteen to Two Thousand Twenty Five The continental United States

does not have a single national power grid instead electricity is generated and transmitted through three regional grids then delivered to homes and businesses by one of several thousand local utilities Each state technically regulates its own electricity system in practice some have much more authority to do so than others Since Two thousand Nineteen the cost of the poles and wires in the local distribution system has ballooned in some states In particular California and the southeast have had to invest billions in their distribution grid Utilities are spending less on creating electricity and more on moving it around Billions of dollars Spending by electric utilities Generation Transmission Distribution Note Only includes investor-owned utilities Natural disasters have driven the worst of these costs After the California power grid ignited several deadly fires in the last decade the state undertook a costly process to lay underground lines install weather stations and build automatic shut-off equipment to prevent future blazes The South meanwhile has had to rebuild parts of its grid after extreme storms destroyed large swaths of it These disaster-exposed states had to rebuild the last-mile distribution system that delivers power to homes and businesses That increased their system costs which drove up the cost of electricity and pushed their residents to use less power overall But every state will have to rebuild swaths of its grid soon Much of American distribution equipment is decades old and would be nearing the end of its life around now anyway We will also need to upgrade and expand the transmission system which sends electricity over long distances from power plants to towns and cities Of course sometimes the cost of generating electricity can go up too and will help spike power bills Burning natural gas a fossil fuel is the primary way that America generates electricity After the Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine liquefied natural gas prices surged around the world New England which relies more on liquefied natural gas imported by ship than other parts of the country saw its power costs increase too These convulsions could happen again soon with liquefied natural gas prices rising as a consequence of the war in Iran If natural gas moved by pipeline were to get more expensive thanks perhaps to booming exports outstripping the American available supply much of the country could see its electricity prices spike The East Coast and the South are vulnerable to shifts in the price of natural gas Risk from natural gas price fluctuations Great Plains states generally relies on coal and renewable energy not natural gas East Coast states have increasingly shifted to using natural gas Electricity inflation in other words can happen in many ways Sometimes the system needs to be rebuilt Sometimes fuel costs rise And sometimes electricity demand simply exceeds supply forcing more money to chase less electricity In some parts of the country such as the Mid-Atlantic and the upper Midwest data center growth has driven projected supply shortfalls and helped to drive up electricity prices These price increases have in turn helped fuel a backlash to data centers At the local level self-organized pushback has helped cancel or stall dozens of data center projects nationwide Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont and Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York have proposed a national pause on all data center construction in part to stem growing electricity demand The concern around these data centers is understandable But at least when thinking about the power system we need to walk a fine line We should welcome the growth of electricity demand but seek to slow electricity inflation Although it sounds counterintuitive when a big new electricity customer shows up on the grid it can sometimes help keep power costs down for everyone else because it buys so much power that it can cover much more of the system costs keeping a lid on rising power rates There is a way out of our electricity crisis Politicians should begin by recognizing that fighting and blocking individual data centers while prudent in some cases will not solve the deeper problems There is no question that data centers are pushing up American electricity use But over the past year data centers have become far less dependent on utilities and the power grid That is because many new data centers are now constructing huge on-site natural gas power plants and grid-scale battery installations which will allow them to wait out the years that

it might take for them to get approval to connect to the grid proper The data center buildout in other words is happening somewhat independent of the grid itself Additionally data center developers are flocking to Sun Belt states where it is harder for Democratic politicians and local residents to block a project We should not want a system of two parallel power systems a fossil- fuel-intensive grid used by data centers and an aging one used by everyone else Since we cannot solve the grid crisis by blocking the data center buildout we should focus on harnessing that buildout to improve the power grid overall Some of the richest and most innovative companies of our economy are willing to invest in new power plants and improve the grid infrastructure That is a generational opportunity To seize it our leaders need a strategy First leaders should treat the grid as the critical infrastructure it is on par with the interstate highway system as an essential platform for growth One priority should be reforming the companies and organizations that govern many of American power markets and are often woefully unfit for the task Right now the grid is planned either by local utilities themselves or by regional grid authorities that are often dominated by utility interests Often that means they take too long to hook up new power plants and underinvest in large-scale transmission projects that would cut electricity costs for consumers but that would also undercut their monopoly power It can also keep independent companies from making big investments in the power system future which could increase the existing infrastructure flexibility The government should take a renewed interest in ensuring that these utilities cannot dominate planning the future of the grid This may involve reforming regional grids and making their decisions more transparent to the public Enforcing traditional antitrust rules may also relieve some pressure A for-profit utility should not be allowed to own both a power plant and the infrastructure that delivers fuel to that power plant Next recognize that we will simply need more electricity to meet our needs Congress must pass permitting reform this year to make it easier for governments and companies to build new solar farms wind farms and power lines It needs to yank authority from the president to block energy projects that have already been approved and end the Trump de facto block on all new renewables States and the federal government should also work together to escape the scarcity trap that ensnares our grid Right now any investment in the grid is borne mainly by electricity customers through their power bills If your utility builds a big new power plant that generates an excess of cheap clean electricity then your bills will go up not down in the short term as you pay off that investment even if wholesale power gets cheaper The government can help by stepping up and covering some of these costs directly As for data centers we can adopt some immediate tactics to keep them from overwhelming the grid while using their size and scale to help build the infrastructure we need for the long term Tech companies should be made to finance long-term improvements to the grid by contributing to a national grid modernization fund This fund could then build new large-scale power lines or buy next-generation power equipment in bulk It could also build batteries at the neighborhood level set up programs that pay households to be more flexible with their power use and make targeted improvements so that our existing wires and equipment can handle more power Lastly the government should establish a new federal grid authority that can build a long-distance high-voltage transmission grid across the country to move electricity to the places that need it from the places that produce it This new institution should be empowered to overcome local and utility opposition to procure the cheapest power for the greatest number of Americans This grid authority might already be possible to form through executive authority alone although Congress could also authorize such an effort It could also partly be funded by the new grid fund This project would help keep power costs low for every American reducing strains in those rural and exurban areas suffering from the biggest data center expansions while allowing the whole American economy to benefit from the true blessing of solar wind and battery power