

SHIELD Act Stalled In Congress, Power Grid Remains Vulnerable

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The SHIELD Act is stalled in Congress because the Energy and Commerce Committee Chair has yet to schedule hearings on the legislation. Republican Arizona Representative Trent Franks sponsored the Secure High-Voltage Infrastructure for Electricity and Lethal Damage Act. The bill would install surge protectors at the site of about 300 electric transformers around the country.

If approved, the SHIELD Act is designed to help ensure continued electrical service for approximately 300 million households. The antiquated and overly taxed power grid is vulnerable to not just solar flares or an EMP attack, but also from high volume usage and typical seasonal storms. Representative Trent Franks had this to say about the SHIELD Act:

“It is critical that we protect our major transformers from cascading destruction. The SHIELD Act encourages industry to develop standards necessary to protect our electric infrastructure against both natural and man-made EMP events.”

Shirley & Banister Public Affairs Account Supervisor Kevin McVicker informed The Inquisitr that a Lloyd's of London study showed that it would cost approximately \$6 billion to repair the power grid. In reference to the estimated \$1 to \$2 trillion recovery price tag a National Academy of Sciences (NAS) report noted in reference to the SHIELD Act proposal, McVicker maintains that it would be far more costly to do nothing.

The NAS report states that the funding estimate based upon the first year of recovery took into consideration the societal and economic costs of a severe geomagnetic storm scenario. The recovery time from such a national disaster was estimated to take between four years to an entire decade. Several men who participated in the study reportedly feel that the recovery price tag was grossly underestimated.

McVicker had this to add about the results of the NAS SHIELD Act study:

“This part of the study is not publicly available, but they used a methodology that seriously low-balled costs, whereas estimates of hurricane damage, like Katrina, tend to get high-balled because states use these estimates to seek federal dollars for recovery assistance. Because the NAS study describes the Carrington Event, it is a common mistake in the press and even among some experts to assume that the estimated damage cited below is from a Carrington-class geomagnetic storm. In fact, the NAS study did not model the Carrington Event, but the 1921 Railroad Storm, on which we have better data. But the Railroad Storm was much smaller than Carrington, only about one-tenth as powerful, and effected only

North America. Carrington was a worldwide event and, if it recurred today, would cause much more damage.”

Miami lawyer, firearms trainer, and *Surviving Doomsday: A Guide for Surviving an Urban Disaster* author Richard Duarte told *The Inquisitr* that neither the government nor the private sector have the ability or the resources necessary to deal with a power grid failure on a national level. Duarte also had this to say about the impact a grid down situation would have on America:

“Our modern society has no idea what a national-level disaster looks like. The closest we have come in our lifetime were the events of September 11 and the chaos and confusion that followed the attacks. Aside from those horrible events, nothing has even come close. A grid-down situation would be a disaster on a national scale. Since everything we rely on is based on the assumption that there will always be an uninterrupted flow electrical power, a grid-down situation has the potential to devastate the US economy and wreak havoc among the population in just a few days.”