

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-4320

February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Mr. Bill Magness  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
The Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT)  
7620 Metro Center Drive  
Austin, TX 78744

Ms. DeAnn T. Walker  
Chairman  
Public Utility Commission of Texas  
William B. Travis Building  
Congress Avenue  
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Mr. Magness and Ms. Walker,

We write to express grave concern over the lack of power and heat for millions of Texas families in the middle of dangerous winter storm with record low temperatures.

The Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) is responsible for scheduling power and ensuring a reliable source of energy through the Texas electrical network. ERCOT has declared a statewide power generation shortfall emergency and directed energy providers to reduce the burden on the Texas Power Grid through controlled outages.

We understand that the demand for power continues to exceed supply and the importance of stabilizing the statewide grid, but controlled outages are supposed to be limited to 10 to 15 minutes before being rotated to a different neighborhood. More than 4 million Texas families are without power, many for over 24 hours and counting. As while Texans were freezing in the dark last night, many downtown skylines continued to shine bright. To better understand these issues, we request prompt answers to the following questions:

1. How are you enforcing the equitable distribution of “controlled” power outages?
2. How are energy providers in your network managing these outages?
3. Why did ERCOT wait until midnight on Sunday (2/14) to announce power outages?
4. What are you doing to decrease the duration and frequency of outages across Texas?
5. What is your plan if the statewide grid does not stabilize in the next 24 hours?

Texans deserve immediate answers, accountability, and their power restored as soon as possible. Thank you for your urgent concern and immediate attention to this matter. I expect your response no later than tomorrow, February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

Sincerely,

JOAQUIN CASTRO  
20TH DISTRICT, TEXAS

HOUSE PERMANENT SELECT  
COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
AND LABOR

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Member of Congress



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Sylvia Garcia  
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Vicente Gonzalez  
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