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## **ESCC STATEMENT ON HURRICANE ZETA, ICE STORM RESPONSE & THE 2020 ELECTION**

**WASHINGTON (November 2, 2020)** – Today, the CEO-led Electricity Subsector Coordinating Council (ESCC)—which serves as the principal liaison between the federal government and the electric power industry on efforts to prepare for, and respond to, national-level disasters or threats to critical infrastructure—issued the following statement:

“Over the past week, extreme weather events have impacted electricity customers in many states across the country. First, an historic ice storm hit parts of the Texas Panhandle and Oklahoma, leaving approximately 457,000 customers without power at the storm’s peak last Wednesday. Separately, Hurricane Zeta’s destructive winds ripped across parts of Louisiana, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, the Carolinas, and Virginia, leaving nearly 3.1 million customers without power at the peak last Thursday.

“Investor-owned electric companies, public power utilities, and electric cooperatives in the path of these storms prepositioned crews, resources, and equipment to respond to power outages quickly, as soon as it was safe to do so. More than 23,000 workers from at least 29 states and Canada are working around the clock to restore power to every customer who is able to receive it. This workforce is focused on rebuilding damaged infrastructure, including poles, wires, substations, and major lines, and includes company personnel, contractors, and mutual assistance workers.

“As of 12:00 p.m. EST, nearly 95 percent of customers have been restored following Hurricane Zeta and more than two-thirds (or 67 percent) of customers have been restored in Texas and Oklahoma.

“Power restoration follows a detailed process. In addition to the normal restoration prioritization process, impacted entities are working with their state and local election officials to understand their needs and to support the timely recovery of designated voting locations and other election infrastructure in advance of Election Day.

“Strong industry-government coordination and cross-sector collaboration are essential. Over the past week, the ESCC has convened calls with impacted investor-owned electric companies, public power utilities, electric cooperatives, and senior officials from the Departments of Energy and Homeland Security to receive an update on the ongoing storm and wildfire response; to discuss any outstanding equipment and workforce needs; and to encourage coordination in support of federal, state and local officials ahead of Tuesday’s election.

“The ESCC understands our industry’s role in supporting the communities we are privileged to serve. We are focused on restoring power to customers impacted by last week’s storms, are monitoring weather forecasts for additional threats, and are preparing for Election Day just as we do for other major events.”

## **About the Electricity Subsector Coordinating Council**

*The ESCC includes CEOs and executives from electric companies, public power utilities, and electric cooperatives, as well as their trade association leaders, who represent all segments of the industry.*

*Through the ESCC, the industry works closely with its government counterparts, including senior administration officials from the White House, cabinet agencies, federal law enforcement, and national security organizations. Canadian electric company executives also are represented on the ESCC due to the international make-up of the North American energy grid.*

*The ESCC coordinates efforts to prepare for, and respond to, national-level incidents or threats to critical infrastructure. Protecting the energy grid from threats that could impact national security and public safety is a responsibility shared by both the government and the electric power sector. The ESCC facilitates and supports policy- and public affairs-related activities and initiatives designed to enhance the reliability and resilience of the energy grid. These activities include all hazards, steady-state preparation, and emergency preparedness, response, and recovery for the nation's electricity sector.*

*More information is available at: <http://www.electricitysubsector.org/>*

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