



GRIDWISE ALLIANCE LAUNCHES GRID INVESTMENTS FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY INITIATIVE

Unprecedented nature of the pandemic will necessitate policy changes and public support for grid modernization plans at the state and federal level.

WASHINGTON, D.C., September 15, 2020 – Today, GridWise Alliance CEO Steve Hauser announced a new initiative to advocate for the inclusion of funding for grid investments in any stimulus package Congress may develop in response to the economic downturn and the global pandemic. GridWise Alliance and its members [support at least \\$25 billion in federal spending on grid modernization](#) to help the country meet clean energy goals, enhance resilience and security, and replace aging infrastructure.

Today, most states and most utilities are actively exploring options for modernizing their electric grids to replace aging infrastructure, facilitate the integration of renewable energy, increase reliability and resilience, and provide new services to consumers. The needs are significant. The Brattle Group, in a report for the Edison Electric Institute, estimated that the electric utility industry will need to spend about \$1.5 to \$2 trillion from 2010 to 2030 just to maintain the reliability of electric service. This does not include the additional billions that customers may spend on their own equipment and self-generation.

Before COVID-19, smart grid investments were projected to reach almost \$14 billion a year by 2024, and utilities were projected to spend more than \$100 billion on networking and communications equipment¹ over the next decade. The grid's owners and operators—now facing unprecedented financial challenges of low demand and unpaid bills—are likely to scale back those investments.

“The challenges brought about by COVID-19 have demonstrated the need for a more robust infrastructure for our country, especially during times of crisis. Understanding the resulting pandemic-driven economic downturn we’re living through, and the accelerative effect of government spending on the national economy, there is no better time to upgrade this Nation’s aging utility infrastructure, securing the many cascading public benefits that advanced grid technologies bring to utility service - improving public safety, enabling low carbon distributed and renewable generation, and enhancing reliability and resiliency.” Itron applauds the GridWise Alliance for launching its campaign to secure federal funding support for grid investments in any infrastructure stimulus package that moves through the U.S. Congress,” stated Itron President and CEO, Tom Deitrich.

Congress should include funding for grid modernization in any infrastructure package designed to stimulate the economy and create jobs. Smart grid funding of \$10 billion in the 2009 recovery bill created at least 80,000 jobs and accelerated the deployment of new technologies.² A recent report estimated that \$25 billion of federal investments in grid modernization would create 73,100 direct, indirect, and induced jobs each year for

¹ <https://www.utilitydive.com/news/networking-and-communications-for-smart-grids-and-utility-applications-a/545873/>

² <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/blog/2010/04/21/impact-american-recovery-and-reinvestment-act-clean-energy-transformation>

³ <https://e2.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/E2E4-Build-Back-Better-Faster-Stimulus-Projection-Report-July-2020.pdf>

five years.³ **If Congress makes a similar investment in the nation's grid in 2020 or early 2021, the electricity sector can be the engine to drive post-COVID-19 recovery.**

About GridWise Alliance

The GridWise Alliance (GWA) represents the broad and diverse stakeholders that design, build, and operate the electric grid. Since 2003, the GridWise Alliance has been at the forefront of educating key industry stakeholders on the critical need to modernize our nation's electricity system. For more information about the GridWise Alliance, visit: www.gridwise.org.

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