



Dear Northwest Congressional Delegation,

On behalf of Northwest States, we write to express our strong support for legislation that provides the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) the authority to offer competitive compensation for its Administrator. We appreciate the bipartisan efforts underway to modernize BPA's hiring and compensation tools, including recently introduced proposals to ensure BPA can recruit and retain leaders capable of meeting the region's rapidly evolving energy challenges.

For almost nine decades, BPA has been central to the Pacific Northwest's shared prosperity. It markets clean and affordable hydropower, owns and operates roughly three-quarters of the high voltage transmission network in the region, and plays a critical role in grid reliability, economic development, and environmental stewardship. Today, BPA's leadership is more important than ever, as the region confronts a generational transformation in how electricity is generated, stored, transmitted, and delivered. Legislative action to strengthen BPA's ability to attract top tier leadership is essential to ensuring that this federal agency continues to serve the Northwest effectively.

The position of BPA Administrator is uniquely complex. The Administrator oversees an enterprise that blends the responsibilities of a federal agency with the day-to-day functions of a large utility. This includes navigating highly technical engineering challenges, integrating new and variable clean energy resources and the region's existing and potential nuclear generators, overseeing extensive transmission upgrades and expansion, conducting rigorous federal environmental reviews, and engaging with Tribal, state, and local governments and communities. The Administrator must also navigate significant political, financial, and operational challenges while maintaining reliable and affordable electricity service for millions of people across our states. The scope and difficulty of this job place is consistent with executive roles at major investor-owned and public utilities, positions that routinely command compensation far above the limits allowed under current federal pay structures.

Recent analyses underscore that BPA is at a growing competitive disadvantage. Senior executives at utilities across the West frequently earn two to four times the salary available to BPA's top officials, and sometimes far more. Our states have heard that these constraints are already contributing to delays in transmission interconnection reforms, transmission development, other activities essential to grid reliability, and the energy development to meet growing loads.

As an agency that recovers its costs through rates rather than appropriations, BPA is well positioned to implement competitive compensation responsibly. Many customers—who ultimately fund BPA —have expressed support for compensation reform as a necessary step to ensure operational excellence and long-term system reliability. Any adjustments to the Administrator's salary must remain reasonable and not overburden Northwest ratepayers, especially at a time of rising concerns about energy affordability.

Congress has granted similar hiring and compensation flexibility to other federal entities that operate in specialized or commercially competitive environments, including the Tennessee Valley Authority and federal financial regulators. Extending comparable authority to BPA is both reasonable and overdue.

Our states share a strong interest in ensuring that BPA evolves to meet the region's needs of today and tomorrow. From integrating new resources to meet state and federal goals, to strengthening grid resilience in the face of extreme weather and fire risk, to supporting rural and Tribal communities, BPA's leadership must meet the moment. Providing the agency with the ability to compensate the Administrator and top officials at a level that attracts and retains the highest caliber of leadership at the agency is essential to that mission.

We respectfully urge Congress to enact legislation that grants BPA modern, flexible compensation authority for the Administrator position and, as appropriate, other critical leadership roles. This change will help ensure BPA remains a stable, innovative, and effective partner to our states and to the millions of residents and businesses that rely on its services every day.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter and for your continued commitment to the Pacific Northwest.

Sincerely,



Janine Benner, Director
Oregon Department of Energy



Jennifer Grove, Energy Division
Director
Washington State Department
of Commerce



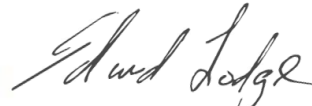
Cally Younger, Administrator
Idaho Governor's Office of
Energy and Mineral Resources



Letha Tawney, Chair
Oregon Public Utility
Commission



Brian Rybarik, Chair
Washington Utilities and
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Edward Lodge, President
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Karin Power, Commissioner
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Commission



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Washington Utilities and
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John Hammond, Commissioner
Idaho Public Utilities
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Les Perkins, Commissioner
Oregon Public Utility
Commission



Milt Doumit, Commissioner
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Dayn Hardie, Commissioner
Idaho Public Utilities
Commission



Jeff Welborn, Commissioner*
Montana Public Service
Commission

**President Welborn signs this letter in his individual capacity as a Commissioner of the Montana Public Service Commission. The views expressed herein are his own and should not be construed as representing the official position of the Montana Public Service Commission.*