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May 17, 2026

Via email (AskCR@hq.doe.gov)

The Honorable Chris Wright
Secretary of Energy
United States Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585-1000

Re: Request for Emergency Order Under Federal Power Act, Section 202(c)

Dear Secretary Wright:

In response to your letter of January 22, 2026,¹ PJM Interconnection, L.L.C. (“PJM”) respectfully requests that you issue an order under section 202(c) of the Federal Power Act authorizing PJM in collaboration with its Transmission Owners and Electric Distribution Companies to direct the deployment of customer-owned backup generation facilities if needed to avoid or mitigate an Energy Emergency Alert (“EEA”) level 3 during the current atypically hot mid-May weather conditions, accompanied by temperatures in the nineties currently affecting some of the states within PJM’s region. Such conditions could arise from, among other things, capacity deficiencies resulting from transmission constraints (*i.e.*, imports into BGE/PEPCO/Dominion area). PJM has recalled generator and transmission outages to the extent possible, and has a generator maintenance outage recall in place in an effort to bring units into operational status to address potential capacity emergencies. Notwithstanding these efforts, PJM projects having less than 5,800 MW of reserves during the May 18, 2026 peak. PJM is unable to meet the day ahead scheduling reserve requirement and has already issued a Max Gen/Load Management Alert/EEA1. The Order should expressly allow the Transmission Owners and Electric Distribution Companies to disconnect data centers from utility source power to automatically transfer data centers to back up generation.

PJM is the regional transmission organization designated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to manage the real-time operation and future planning of the bulk power system that serves more than 67 million customers in all or part of 13 states and the District of Columbia. Under the framework established by the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (“NERC”), PJM also serves as the Reliability Coordinator, Transmission Operator, and Balancing Authority for its region and is, therefore, responsible for overseeing the dispatch

¹ Letter from Secretary of Energy Chris Wright to Reliability Coordinators and Balancing Authorities (Jan. 22, 2026), <https://www.energy.gov/documents/leveraging-backup-generation-facilities-during-energy-emergencies>.

of generation to meet system demand at all times within the limits of the transmission system. In these roles, PJM also directs actions that may be needed to avoid and mitigate emergency conditions that may arise from time to time.

Beginning tomorrow, Monday, May 18, 2026, and extending over the next several days, a period of unseasonably hot mid-May weather is coming to much of the eastern United States, including in much of PJM's region. This weather is expected to last through at least Wednesday, May 20, 2026. PJM's forecasts indicate a projected demand of approximately 135,000 MW during Monday's and Tuesday's evening peaks. PJM projects peak demands and extreme heat for several straight days, specifically for Maryland and Virginia, presenting stress conditions while generators and transmission take planned maintenance outages prior to the anticipated summer conditions. Indeed, for May 18, 2026, PJM is projected 40,400 MW in generation outages for May 18, 2026. The projected level of generation outages coupled with the forecasted demand raises a significant risk of emergency conditions that could jeopardize electric reliability and public safety.

Allowing PJM in collaboration with Transmission Owners and Electric Distribution Companies to direct data center customers with backup generation facilities to rely on power generated by those facilities rather than grid power under conditions of energy scarcity could help the RTO avoid residential load shed at EEA level 3. PJM notes that you previously issued an order permitting other regions, including PJM, to dispatch such generation under similar circumstances.²

PJM requests that you issue an order, effective tomorrow, May 18, 2026, authorizing PJM in collaboration with its Transmission Owners and Electric Distribution Companies to direct data center customers, whether specifically identified by the Department as having backup generation facilities or otherwise available, pursuant to a Section 202(c) Order to use those backup generation facilities instead of grid power during an RTO wide or local³ EEA event or Interconnection Reliability Operation Limit ("IROL") events. The Order should expressly allow the Transmission Owners and Electric Distribution Companies to disconnect the data centers from utility source power to automatically transfer them to back up generation. PJM in collaboration with the Transmission Owners and Electric Distribution Companies would be authorized to issue such direction only after PJM has already deployed all available reliability tools—except for frequency responsive services and voltage reduction action—but before any firm load interruption.

PJM further requests that consistent with the provisions of Section 202(c) of the Federal Power Act, your order allow such use of backup generation notwithstanding any applicable

² See, e.g., Amended Order No. 202-26-01A (Jan. 25, 2026); Order No. 202-26-06 (Jan. 26, 2026); Order No. 202-26-07 (Jan. 26, 2026).

³ For example, Emergency Procedures issued only for the BGE/PEPCO/Dominion area.

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environmental limitations under federal, state, or local law or regulation. PJM requests that such order be entered by noon on May 18, 2026, and remain effective through 11:59 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on May 20, 2026.

PJM appreciates your consideration of this request. Please do not hesitate to contact me or my staff if you require any additional information to act on this request.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Michael E. Bryson

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Cc:

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