

## NEWS RELEASE

### International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers® AFL-CIO-CLC

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### **IBEW BACKS COMPROMISE ENERGY BILL, OPPOSES ANY EFFORT TO WEAKEN OVERSIGHT PROVISIONS**

WASHINGTON –The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), the largest union of utility workers in North America, today praised the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee's bipartisan effort to strengthen the Comprehensive Energy Bill.

"The comprehensive legislation has been a topic of intense debate for months, but the committee members came to a reasonable compromise that addressed many key concerns," said IBEW International President Edwin D. Hill.

Hill cited the IBEW's continuing concern that the bill's electricity title repeals the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 (PUHCA), a 70-year-old statute regulating the companies that own the nation's power providers. The IBEW believes that the principles contained in PUHCA still have relevance in today's utility industry. The IBEW supports the compromise bill's provisions giving the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) new authority over utility mergers and access to utility company records and accounts. "We are encouraged that the Senators saw that repeal of PUHCA needed to be coupled with a transfer of oversight authority in order to protect consumers and workers," said Hill, but he emphasized that these measures are the bare minimum needed to protect workers, investors and consumers and that the IBEW would strongly oppose any amendments that would weaken the new authority for FERC.

The IBEW praised the bill's inclusion of personnel and training measures critical to maintaining the quality and reliability of the nation's electrical system. The union also supports the language that encourages alternative energy sources, including \$1.8 billion to support clean coal power initiatives, and to foster investment in the nuclear power sector by extending the protections of the Price Anderson Act and creating the "Nuclear Power 2010 Program," a roadmap to deploy new nuclear power plants in the U.S. by 2010.

"The nation's security and prosperity depends on a cohesive energy policy," says Hill. "This bill, as it currently stands, opens the way for improvements to our utility system."

*Founded in 1891, the IBEW is an international labor organization with approximately 750,000 members in the United States, Canada, Puerto Rico, Guam and the Republic of Panama. IBEW members work in construction, utilities, manufacturing, telecommunications, broadcasting, railroads and government.*

