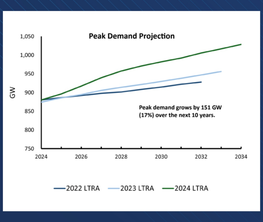
Power Struggle:
The U.S. Energy Emergency

The U.S. is experiencing an electricity supply crisis. Explosive growth in AI-driven data center demand, onshoring of manufacturing and broad electrification are outpacing the ability to build new generation. The grid is flashing red, operating on the slimmest of margins. While long-term solutions are years away, the coal fleet offers an immediately available, fuel-secure, and underutilized source of firm generation capacity.

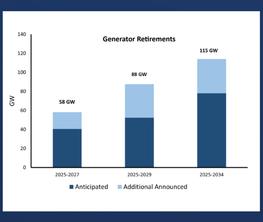
Soaring electricity demand... *colliding with rapid power plant retirements*



Grid operators, reliability regulators and federal agencies all warn that the accelerating retirement of dispatchable generation—particularly coal—is pushing the grid toward instability.

128 GW

of new electricity demand in the next five years.

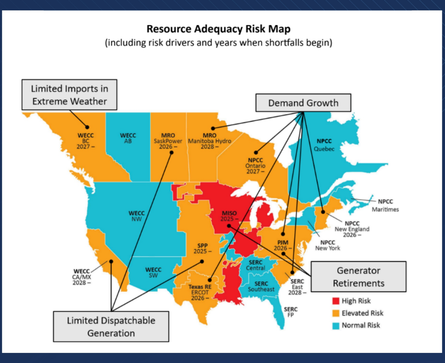


80 MILLION HOMES

equivalent power demand addition to the grid.

A grid operating on the margins

The North American Electricity Reliability Corp. – in charge of the nation's grid reliability – warns more than half of the nation is at risk of blackouts over the next decade.



2030

date by which the nation's largest power market anticipates it will be short of power.

Markets are signaling shortages

800%

One-year increase in capacity payments—a premium paid to ensure power plants are available when needed—to generators in the nation's largest electricity market.

One year increase in capacity payments to generators in the MISO region. Prices for the upcoming summer season jumped to $666.50 per megawatt-day up from $30 last year:

2,100%

Federal action

In early 2025, President Donald J. Trump issued a series of Executive Orders reinforcing coal's role as a key national energy asset and activating emergency powers to preserve fuel-secure, dispatchable generation.

The EOs—important first steps—included:

- **Declaration of a national energy emergency.**
- **Creation of a national reserve margin methodology.**
- **Prohibition on the retirement or fuel conversion of essential generating units.**

Aligning policy with our emergency reality

To ensure reliable, resilient power supply in a high-demand environment, policymakers must:

- **Halt the premature retirement of coal-fired generation.**
- **Prioritize dispatchable resources in interconnection and capacity markets.**
- **Increase utilization rates for existing coal-fired plants.**
- **Reform permitting to streamline coal plant upgrades and mine operations.**
- **Include coal generation in AI-related federal energy resilience planning.**
- **Recognize coal as a strategic reserve resource in federal reliability and grid planning policy.**

For more information, visit:

nma.org and countoncoal.org