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The Council of State Governments

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Getting Energy to Where It's Needed

Drafting Team Begins Work on Electric Transmission Line Siting Compact

LEXINGTON, Ky.—The process to make it easier for states to cooperate in siting electric transmission lines got underway in Washington, D.C., Oct. 6-7. A team of state legislators, federal agency representatives and other key stakeholders met for the first time to begin drafting an electric transmission line siting compact. The compact is intended to serve as a policy option designed to improve interstate transmission line siting

The Council of State Governments, through its National Center for Interstate Compacts, convened the panel, which is co-chaired by state Reps. Kim Koppelman of North Dakota and Tom Sloan of Kansas.

“This compact for the first time has the potential to allow states to work cooperatively and in conjunction with the federal government to ensure that energy can be moved from where it is produced to where it is needed,” Koppelman said. “I believe that once that compact is drafted, it will improve the siting process, allow renewable energy resources to more easily be brought to market and save consumers money.”

During the meeting, drafting team members drew heavily from the initial work conducted by the Advisory Group, also convened by CSG’s Compacts Center and chaired by Koppelman and Sloan. The drafters have developed a framework for a national transmission line siting compact designed to improve efficiencies during the siting process. Such an agreement, and its requirements, would be triggered on an ad hoc basis and pertain only to those states that are both members of the compact and affected by the proposed line.

“The work of the drafting team and the support from CSG represents a key step toward developing a coordinated, more robust national high voltage transmission line system. A transmission line siting compact has the potential to allow for cooperation between state legislators, regional transmission operators, the U.S. Department of Energy and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and would be vital in moving from transmission discussions to construction,” said Sloan.

The drafters hope to have compact language finalized and ready for consideration by state legislature starting in 2013. Tentative plans have been made for the Drafting Team to meet once more before the end of the year.

Koppelman is the past national chairman of The Council of State Governments and Sloan is vice chairman of the CSG Energy and Environment Committee.

Interstate compacts function, legally, as a contract between the states. More than 215 interstate compacts exist and most states belong to more than 20 different agreements.

CSG, through its National Center for Interstate Compacts and with guidance from the Advisory Committee and Drafting Team, is uniquely qualified to lead this effort toward greater efficiency in electricity transmission line siting cooperation with its more than 75 years of experience in forging interstate compacts.

For more information, visit The National Center for Interstate Compacts online <http://www.csg.org/NCIC>

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