

January 20, 2021



**FROM THE DESK OF  
COMMISSIONER  
BRENT BAILEY  
CENTRAL DISTRICT OFFICE**



*The Central District is pleased to bring you the latest information concerning utility rates, project developments, Public Service Commission actions and other news you can use. I hope you will find this information to be a useful resource to learn about the Public Service Commission, consumer issues and the continuous work we are doing for the citizens in the Central District and across the state of Mississippi. Thank you again for allowing me to serve you in this capacity.*

*Brent Bailey*

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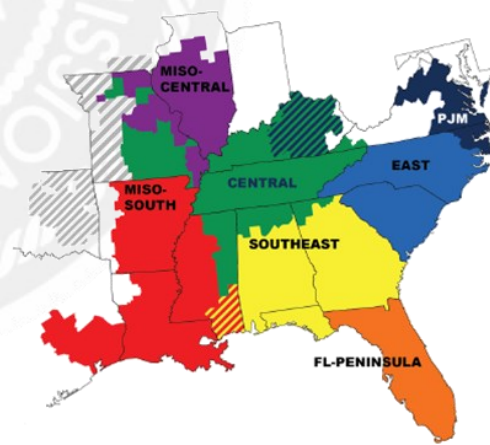
## ***Maintaining Grid Reliability and Security The Role of NERC and SERC***

The electricity industry is undergoing significant change that is unprecedented for its transformational nature and rapid pace. New variable resources and the retirement of conventional generation are fundamentally changing how the grid is planned and operated. Managing reliability risks during the transition is the central challenge.

The [North American Electric Reliability Corporation \(NERC\)](#) was formed on June 1, 1968, as the National Electric Reliability Council, and was the direct result of the 1965 northeast blackout affecting 30 million people. NERC is a not-for-profit international regulatory authority whose mission is to assure the effective and efficient reduction of risks to the reliability and security of the grid. NERC develops and enforces Reliability Standards; annually assesses seasonal and long-term reliability; monitors the bulk power system through system awareness; and educates, trains, and certifies industry personnel. NERC is the Electric Reliability Organization (ERO) for North America, subject to oversight by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and governmental authorities in Canada. NERC's jurisdiction includes users, owners, and operators of the bulk power system, which serves nearly 400 million people.

[SERC](#) is specifically responsible for the reliability and security of the electric grid across the southeastern and central regions of the United States. This area covers approximately 630,000 square miles and serves a population of more than 91 million. It includes all or portions of Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Missouri, Iowa, Illinois, Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. SERC is based in Charlotte, NC and is one of six regional entities delegated to perform certain regulatory functions in support of NERC. SERC is the largest of the six regions with 25% of the load, 25% of transmission miles and 30% of generation covered by NERC.

SERC conducts independent assessments of the overall reliability, performance, and adequacy of the Bulk Electric Systems in the SERC Region and reports the results in support of the NERC obligation to perform similar analysis of the interconnected North American bulk power systems. SERC works with state agencies such as the MPSC to collaborate and share information on resource adequacy, fuel assurance, reliability standards and more. I look forward to further engaging SERC personnel on ways to enhance reliability, reduce risks and promote technical standards.





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## Legislation Tracker

Monday, January 18 was the deadline for filing bills at the Mississippi Legislature. The Commission will be watching numerous bills that could impact customers, certain utilities or the MPSC. Last week, I highlighted several pieces of legislation. This week we spotlight the following:

**HB 112:** The Telecommunications Fraud Prevention and Utility Infrastructure Protection Act; Provides the MPSC with authority to employ law enforcement agents to investigate violations of the MS Telephone Solicitation Act, etc.

**HB 505:** The Mississippi Broadband Accessibility Act; Establishes a grant program for the purpose of promoting and deploying internet access to unserved areas.

**SB 2291:** Requires the MPSC to study the funding and expenditures of emergency communications districts in Mississippi.

**SB 2559:** Authorizes the MPSC to enter into contracts and agreements with federal agencies for the collection of data and mapping of broadband availability.

*Please note that identification of a bill in this newsletter does not indicate support or opposition to a measure. Each bill is simply identified as an example of legislation that has been assigned to Energy, Public Utilities or other committees with oversight of these matters.*



## Other News

### Net Metering Docket Opened; Accepting Motions to Intervene

The new Net Metering docket is now open and inviting interveners. The Commission adopted the [Net Metering and Interconnection Rules](#) five years ago, which contained a mandatory reopener provision. At the [January 12 Docket Meeting](#), the Commission moved to establish a new docket to review the efficacy of the rules and will proceed with a thorough and comprehensive fact gathering process. This reopening signals utility customers, stakeholders, all utilities over which the Commission has jurisdiction, and other interested parties to intervene in this docket. Any parties who wish to file written comments must first file a motion to intervene within 20 days of the date of the [Order Establishing Docket](#) or before February 2, 2021. A schedule for accepting comments will be announced in a future order.

You can electronically submit a motion to [efile.psc@psc.state.ms.us](mailto:efile.psc@psc.state.ms.us) or mail your motion via USPS to:

**Katherine Collier**  
Executive Secretary  
MS Public Service Commission  
P.O. Box 1174  
Jackson, MS 39215-1174



Please include docket title and number (Order Establishing Docket to Review the Efficacy and Fairness of the Net Metering and Interconnection Rules; Docket No. 2021-AD-19) in the subject line. I look forward to robust participation from stakeholders and a thorough discussion on this key policy item.



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## Utility Bill Payment Assistance

As we march into 2021 under the continued threat of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting economic impacts, we know that some residential and small business customers continue to suffer financial hardship. To assist consumers with access to bill payment programs or other options, the MPSC created the Utility Bill Payment Assistance information page at <https://www.psc.ms.gov/ubpa>. Rate-regulated utilities provide the latest customer/payment assistance and contact information. It is critical that customers have the latest information and knowledge of programs that are being offered to avoid utility service disconnections and unmanageable bill totals.

## Broadband 101 Webinar

On January 21st, from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. CST, [Next Century Cities](#) will host a webinar for county and municipality officials and staff. Broadband mapping, funding opportunities, and examples of local initiatives designed to improve broadband access and increase adoption rates are among the discussion topics. The conversation will also include a review of COVID-19's impact on local broadband initiatives and how the Emergency Broadband Benefit can help support recovery efforts. [Register for the Webinar Here.](#)

### Broadband 101

With Corian Zacher and Lukas Pietrzak  
Thursday, January 21, 4:00pm EST



## Policies to Help Rural Residents Save Money with Energy Efficiency

State and national leaders have long recognized that a significant gap exists between urban and rural areas when the issue is high-speed internet connectivity capability. Thankfully, those leaders are advancing programs and funding streams that aim to close that internet access gap. These leaders must also recognize the [importance of creating policies](#) that deliver equitable energy efficiency programs for rural constituents, who stand to benefit from comfortable homes, lower bills, and the other advantages of energy efficiency. Some states are leveraging this potential, but countless untapped opportunities remain. By implementing the applicable energy efficiency policies highlighted in ACEEE's new report, [Supporting Rural Communities with State Energy Efficiency Policy](#), state leaders will help advance clean energy benefits, job creation, and savings for those that make up America's rural communities.

Energy burden is the percentage of annual household income spent on energy bills. Efficiency can save rural residents up to \$400 on their utility bills annually and alleviate up to 25% of a household's energy burden.

## Last week at the MPSC

- ☞ The following stakeholders have filed to intervene in Docket 2021-AD-19 to "**Review the Efficacy and Fairness of the Net Metering and Interconnection Rules**": [Mississippi Power Co.](#); [Flora Real Estate & Development, LLC](#);
- ☞ **Spire Mississippi** filed its [Compliance Tariffs](#) in accordance with the Commission's Jan. 12, 2021 Order. The tariffs outline rates, adjustments and policies for residential, general and industrial service customers.



# FROM THE DESK OF COMMISSIONER BRENT BAILEY CENTRAL DISTRICT OFFICE



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- ✎ **Atmos Energy Corporation** filed a [Construction Notice](#) for the replacement of main and service pipes in the **Belhaven Neighborhood area in Jackson, MS**. The project consists of the installation of approximately 2,391 feet of 2 inch HDPE, 2,993 feet of 4 inch HDPE, and 1,048 feet of 6 inch HDPE. The project estimate is \$1,474,875.48 and should be completed by September 2021.
- ✎ **Atmos Energy** filed its monthly [Meter Estimation Report](#) indicating that 1,397 customers (out of 268,000) received a third estimated bill due to the impacts of COVID-19 in certain areas.
- ✎ **Atmos Energy** submitted its [compliance filing](#) showing all “Sharing the Warmth” customer donations and subsequent charitable donations of customers and Atmos Energy for 2020.
- ✎ **CenterPoint Energy MS** [filed a requested change](#) to its existing Supplemental Growth Rider (SGR). The only substantive change between the [Current Rider SG](#) and the [Revised Rider](#) is the language in Section 5.1 extending the pilot program until March 1, 2026.
- ✎ **Spire Mississippi** filed its [update Rate Schedule](#) to conform with the January 12 Order Approving Rates.
- ✎ The Monthly Purchased Gas Adjustment Audit Reports for the months of August and September were prepared by the MPUS and submitted to the MPSC for: [Atmos Energy](#); [CenterPoint Energy](#); [Spire Mississippi](#).
- ✎ The Commission approved **Mississippi Power Co.’s** request to extend the effective dates of the [Small Business Redevelopment Rider \(for one year\)](#) and the [Large Business Development Rider \(for two years\)](#).
- ✎ **BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc. a/k/a AT&T Mississippi** received approval by the Commission to execute amended Interconnection Agreements with the following: [CLECs](#); [QuantumShift Communications, Inc.](#); [Callis Communications, Inc.](#); [Matrix Telecom, LLC](#); and [CenturyLink Communications, LLC](#). The Agreement provides for new competitors in the local exchange market, which will likely bring new services, lower prices and other benefits to the public at large and to local telephone service customers in particular.
- ✎ **Fulton Telephone Company, Inc.** and **Centurylink Communications, LLC** received [approval](#) by the Commission to execute an amended Interconnection Agreement.
- ✎ The Commission approved the various Notices of Intent of Deregulation based on proper process, no objection and a full review by the MPUS for the following: [BPM, Inc. dba Noxapater Telephone Company](#); [Sledge Telephone Company](#); [Decatur Telephone Company](#); [Smithville Telephone Company](#); [Bruce Telephone Company](#); [Fulton Telephone Company](#); [Mound Bayou Telephone Company](#).
- ✎ The Commission [granted](#) **Central Electric Power Association’s** [Motion to Intervene](#) in the **Pearl River Solar Park LLC** Petition for CPCN matter.
- ✎ In the matter of the **City of Clinton’s** Formal Billing and Services Complaint against **Entergy MS LLC**, the Commissioner [DENIED](#) Entergy MS’s Motion for Protective Order of Non-Disclosure.



Last week, our Consumer Complaint Specialists handled a total of **20** complaints in the Central District.

Electric Companies	9
Telecommunications	7
Water/Sewer	2
Natural Gas	1

Last week, the Central District received a total of **243** complaints from consumers against potential telemarketers through our no call app, website and mail-ins. The top three general issues reported by consumers are related to auto warranties, financial/loans/consolidated debt, and insurance.

*We encourage consumers to file telemarketing complaints with the Federal Trade Commission at <http://www.donotcall.gov/> in addition to filing complaints with the Mississippi Public Service Commission.*