



FERC Podcast Transcript
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Meet Commissioner Glick

Craig Cano: Welcome to Open Access. I'm Craig Cano. Today, we're sitting down with Commissioner Rich Glick, who joined FERC in November after having served as a policy advisor and counsel to the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. Before that, he was a renewable energy industry executive, senior policy advisor to former Energy Secretary Bill Richardson, and advisor to former Senator Dale Bumpers of Arkansas. Commissioner Glick, welcome to the podcast!

Commissioner Glick: Thank you, Craig.

Craig Cano: Commissioner, you've been here for about six weeks, and it's been a very busy time. How's the transition from Capitol Hill to FERC going?

Commissioner Glick: You're right, it's been an extremely busy six weeks. We've put together a great team of advisors and spent a significant amount of time trying to get up to speed on a wide variety of issues. I've read and voted on a large number of orders and participated in my first Commission meeting. It's hard to believe it's been just six weeks. But I've really enjoyed it. But of most value is getting to know the amazing and talented staff here at the Commission. They are not only brilliant, which most people already know, but they're also very dedicated public servants and they've been immensely helpful in getting me up to speed on these pending matters.

Craig Cano: We're back to a full, five-member Commission for the first time in a couple of years. How is it working with your fellow Commissioners?

Commissioner Glick: You know, Craig, I've really enjoyed getting to know the other four Commissioners. Each one brings a very diverse perspective to this Commission. For instance, Chairman McIntyre brings with him 30 years of experience in practicing before the Commission and a keen understanding of the statutes under which we operate. Commissioner LaFleur, she offers a wealth of knowledge about this agency and its practices, and she really digs down deep in to understanding the issues we deal with at the Commission. Commissioner Chatterjee, whom I knew a bit from Capitol Hill, he has great people skills and the ability to work with the entire ideological spectrum to reach a consensus-based solution on difficult issues, and I think that's going to come in very handy. Commissioner Powelson brings with him the very important perspective of a former state regulator as well as a deep understanding of energy markets.

Craig Cano: How do you see your role as Commissioner here at FERC? Do you have any specific issues or matters that you plan to focus on?

Commissioner Glick: So, Craig, well, in brief, I believe each Commissioner acts like an umpire in baseball calling balls and strikes. We need to weigh each matter pending before us within the requirements for a particular statute such as the Federal Power Act. And we make conclusions based on the record in each proceeding.

But with regard to the issues that I care mostly about I'm going to really focus on four, I think, here during my time at the Commission. First, I think the Commission needs to continue to eliminate the barriers that exist in markets to emerging technologies such as energy storage and renewable electric generation. These technologies weren't very prevalent during times when the '90s market rules were established and I think it's important that we go back and revisit some of those rules to determine whether they're acting as any barriers to the technologies.

Second, I'd like to work with my colleagues to improve the process pursuant to which the Commission considers applications for interstate natural gas pipelines. The Commission is being called upon to consider an increasing number of these applications for proposed pipelines. They can have significant impacts on consumers, communities and the environment, and I think we need to examine whether the Commission's current approach accurately assesses the public interest.

Third, I want to support the very important work done by the Office of Enforcement here at the Commission. We rely on competitive electric markets to establish just and reasonable rates, which is the right thing to do, I think. But it's incumbent on the Commission to continue to ensure that these markets are truly competitive, and not being manipulated.

My final area I'd like to focus on is, really, on cybersecurity. You can't open up the newspaper today or turn on the television without hearing about the threat of cyberattacks upon our critical infrastructure, especially our critical energy infrastructure. The Commission plays an important role in cybersecurity, protecting our bulk electric system. I want to work with my colleagues and try to stay a step ahead of the growing threat of cyberattacks.

Craig Cano: What do you see as the major challenges, or opportunities, that FERC faces in the coming years?

Commissioner Glick: Well, we have a number of challenges and opportunities but I would say that probably the most, one of the most pressing, is the fact that we're in the middle of a dramatic transformation in the way we produce, transport and consume energy and I think the transformation offers a lot of benefits, for instance, to our consumers, to our economy and to the environment. It's important that the Commission acts pursuant to our statutory responsibilities of course, and in a manner that doesn't block this transformation that's taking place, but also facilitates it to ensure the public interest is protected.

Craig Cano: The Commission just issued its much-anticipated order on grid resilience,

and you wrote a concurring statement to go along with that. In a nutshell, what's your view of the issue?

Commissioner Glick: Craig, I think it's hard to provide in a nutshell my view, I certainly have strong views as I think all the other Commissioners did as well. But speaking briefly about the grid resilience, I'm going to try to speak briefly about it, I want to first commend Chairman McIntyre for getting to work right on the issue when he joined the Commission and steering us toward a unanimous decision. That wasn't easy to do, and I think he did a superb job there. I think the Commission made the right decision in rejecting the Department of Energy's proposed rule. There simply wasn't any evidence in the record to demonstrate there were immediate threats to the resilience of the bulk power system, and certainly not to conclude we needed to subsidize uncompetitive generation that has its own resilience issues. I look forward to reviewing what the RTOs and ISOs submit on the subject. As I said in my concurring opinion, if the record demonstrates there's a problem, we should act. But if there's no threat that requires immediate action, the Commission should move on to the many other matters that are very important that are pending before us.

Craig Cano: Commissioner, thanks for joining us today. We hope to see you again soon on Open Access.

Commissioner Glick: Thanks, Craig. I'm glad to do it anytime.

Tamara Young-Allen: FERC is an independent regulatory agency that oversees the interstate transmission of electricity, natural gas and oil. FERC reviews proposals to construct and operate interstate natural gas pipelines and liquefied natural gas terminals, and oversees the licensing of nonfederal hydropower projects. FERC protects the reliability of the high-voltage interstate transmission system through mandatory reliability standards and it monitors interstate energy markets to ensure that everyone in those markets is playing by the rules. Unless otherwise noted, the views expressed in these podcasts are personal views and do not necessarily express the views of individual Commissioners or the Commission as a whole. This podcast is a production of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's Office of External Affairs, Leonard Tao, Director. We'll be updating our posts when we've got more news, so be sure to check out our website www.FERC.gov and follow us on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn to find out when our next podcast airs.