

MINUTES
JOINT COMMITTEE ON ENERGY
Tuesday, September 15, 2026
3:00 PM
Room A, MAC
Little Rock, Arkansas

Committee members present: Senators Mark Johnson, Co-Chair, Matt McKee, Vice-Chair, Ronald Caldwell, Jimmy Hickey, Jr, Missy Irvin, Blake Johnson, Clint Penzo, Brad Simon; Representatives Rick Beck, Joey L. Carr, Dolly Henley, Jack Ladyman, Richard McGrew, Ron McNair, Chad Puryear, Randy Torres, and Steve Unger

Other members present: Senators Justin Boyd, and Matt Stone; Representatives Rebecca Burkes, Cindy Crawford, Les D. Eaves, Jon Eubanks, Steven Meeks, Jon Milligan, Jason Nazarenko, Aaron Pilkington, Marcus Richmond, and Joy Springer

Senator Johnson called the meeting to order.

Consideration of a Motion to Approve the August 6, 2026, Meeting Minutes [Exhibit B]

Senator McKee made a motion to approve the meeting minutes, seconded by Representative Beck and the motion carried.

Discussion of Data Center Development in Arkansas [Handouts 1-3 and Exhibits C2]

Rachel Wilson, Energy Market Development at Google, discussed the role of data centers in supporting Google services and noted Google is constructing a data center in West Memphis. She clarified that this is a \$4 Billion capital investment partnership with Entergy for full coverage of the utility's cost to serve – creating \$1.1 Billion in net benefits to customers.

Eric Foister, Superintendent, West Memphis School District, and Bob Atkins, General Manager, West Memphis Utilities, discussed the new Google data center development and shared a video highlighting its positive impact on education within the school district.

John Bethel, Director of Public Affairs, Entergy and David Palmer, Vice President of Regulatory Affairs, Entergy, highlighted the company's role in providing electricity to residential, industrial, and commercial customers, including data centers. They noted that serving large energy users helps offset utility fixed costs and supports continued investment in Arkansas's electric infrastructure.

Senator McKee made a motion to move the testimony of the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas, the Arkansas Public Service Commission, and Entergy to the next meeting of the Joint Energy Committee, seconded by Senator Irvin, and the motion carried.

Tad Bohannon, CEO, Central Arkansas Water (CAW), reported that CAW could potentially serve the proposed AVAIO and Google data center projects; however, no water service applications or development plans have been submitted.

Jean Block, CEO, Little Rock Water Reclamation Authority (LRWRA), provided an overview of LRWRA; the largest sewer system in Arkansas. She clarified that LRWRA has not participated in any data center projects outside its service area, including the AVAIO Data Center in Wrightsville.

With no other business, the meeting adjourned at 5:25p.m.