Dr Neil Hudson MP
Penrith and The Border

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

To whom it may concern

I am writing to outline my support for Electricity North West's application in the Storm Arwen Uncertainty Mechanism. In the aftermath of Storm Arwen in November 2021, my constituency of Penrith and The Border witnessed substantial damage. Therefore, I welcome initiatives that aim to allocate additional funding to enhance the resilience of critical electricity infrastructure across the North West.

Given the predominantly rural character of my constituency, our communities are more vulnerable to severe weather incidents, often resulting in prolonged power outages due to damage to overhead lines. The frequency of disruptive weather events has noticeably increased in this region and is expected to persist. Consequently, proactive measures are crucial to ensure the future-proofing of the network, especially with our growing reliance on electricity for power.

While Electricity North West's engineers do an amazing job when it comes to restoring power, it is important to recognise their limitations, particularly when reaching remote areas becomes challenging due to road damage, as we have recently been reminded of with Storm Isha and Jocelyn.

Targeted initiatives, such as remote supply restoration capabilities, could help mitigate the disruptions experienced by some of my constituents. The cumulative impact of power outages should also be taken into account, as essential services like water, drainage, and broadband are all affected.

For many people in rural constituencies such as Penrith and The Border, loss of power can also have a detrimental affect on mental health. The worry of the arrival of extreme weather events, and the following trauma of the events can have a lasting effect.

The issue of storms and power outages are not going away, and we must learn from Storm Arwen to support and protect our communities.
I fully endorse Electricity Norths West's application and I hope you give it your full consideration.

Dr Neil Hudson MP

Penrith and The Border

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