

Senate confirms Federal Energy Regulatory Commission nominees

August 3, 2017

The Senate confirmed two new members for the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) on August 3. Neil Chatterjee, former aide to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY), and Robert Powelson from the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission have joined Commissioner Cheryl LaFleur, bringing the number of empty FERC seats down to two.

Chatterjee was Senator McConnell's energy policy advisor before his FERC nomination, and was integral to shaping the Senator's energy-related legislation. Prior to working with Senator McConnell, Chatterjee worked in Government Relations for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association and as an aide to former Representative Deborah Pryce (R-OH-15). Chatterjee will serve as the new FERC Chairman.

Powelson served on the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission from 2008-2017, acting as Chairman from 2011-2015. In 2011, Powelson served on Pennsylvania's Marcellus Shale Advisory Commission, developing a comprehensive proposal for the energy development of the Marcellus Shale. Powelson is also a past president and former member of the Board of Directors for the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners.

The three commissioners will work in tandem to regulate interstate energy transmission and review proposals for interstate energy development and permitting, as well as enforce FERC regulatory requirements. Chatterjee and Powelson's confirmations give the commission a voting quorum, allowing it to issue major decisions.

President Trump has also nominated Richard Glick, senior Democratic Senate Aide to the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, and Kevin McIntyre, an energy lawyer at the firm Jones Day, to fill the remaining two spots on the commission. Their confirmation hearings are set for September 7.

Sources: E&E News, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
