

United States Senate

COMMITTEES:
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION
FINANCE
JOINT ECONOMIC
JUDICIARY
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

January 30, 2026

Teresa Broyles-Aplin
President & CEO
Nashville Electric Service
1214 Church Street
Nashville, TN 37246

Dear Mrs. Broyles-Aplin,

I am writing to express my concerns with the Nashville Electric Service's handling of Winter Storm Fern. As of this writing, six days after the storm, NES says that about 70,000 homes and businesses remain without power—a situation that is simply unacceptable.¹

NES has publicly stated, *"It's our job at NES to keep the power on, and we will not stop until every household in Nashville has power again."*² Yet the failure to adequately prepare for Winter Storm Fern is precisely the reason line crews are working overtime and citizens are clearing limbs and debris at great risk to their own safety to help friends and neighbors.

Many customers were falsely notified that their power had been restored due to failures in your automated notification system.³ After this issue was brought to the attention of NES, customers still were not provided with reliable information during an ongoing emergency, even as metro leaders requested a clear timeline for power restoration.⁴ Your continued inability to provide a clear message that includes a timeline for people to expect a restoration of service raises serious concerns about preparedness and management.

We are grateful to the brave linemen working around the clock in dangerous conditions to restore service to the region. This disruption they are working to correct reflects a failure of leadership and planning, one that could have been mitigated with thoughtful preparation ahead of the storm.

¹ Nashville Electric Service. (2026). *NES Storm Center: Winter storm outages and restoration status*. NES Power. <https://www.nespower.com/outages/storm-center/>

² Nashville Electric Service. (2026, January 29). Latest storm restoration. NES Power News. <https://nespowernews.com/latest-storm-restoration/>

³ Finley, J. (2026, January 27). Nashville Electric Service customers receive incorrect power restoration texts. WSMV. <https://www.wsmv.com/2026/01/27/nashville-electric-service-customers-receive-incorrect-power-restoration-texts/>

⁴ Wethington, C. (2026, January 30). *"People have died. People are dying." Nashville leaders push NES to release restoration timeline for all customers immediately*. WSMV. <https://www.wsmv.com/2026/01/30/people-have-died-people-are-dying-nashville-leaders-push-nes-release-restoration-timeline-all-customers-immediately/>

You owe your customers transparency, accountability, and a clear explanation of how this breakdown occurred and how you will prevent this from happening in the future.

In light of these concerns, I request responses to the following questions by Monday, February 2nd, 2026:

1. According to reporting by *The Tennessean*, experienced linemen offered to aid with storm recovery, but Nashville Electric Service declined the offer, stating it already had sufficient resources.⁵ Why did NES turn down that offer for additional personnel during a widespread outage of this magnitude?
2. Given the lessons learned from past devastating storms, such as Nashville's 1994 ice storm, why was NES not adequately prepared for Winter Storm Fern, despite ample warning and clear historical precedent?⁶
3. Forecasts warned days in advance that this would be a generational severe weather event. Why were recovery operations and service restoration plans not fully prepared and mobilized ahead of time?
4. Why has there been such inconsistency in power restoration updates, with many customers being told their power has been restored when it has not, particularly given NES's acknowledgment that it recently implemented a new outage notification and tracking system?
5. Residents in some areas have been told they may be without power for up to two weeks. How does NES consider that timeline acceptable, especially for residents who rely on electricity for life-sustaining medical equipment and other critical needs?
6. Due to extended outages, many residents had no choice but to seek temporary lodging. Will NES be reimbursing customers for expenses incurred during this period?

Sincerely,



Marsha Blackburn
United States Senator

⁵ The Tennessean. (2026, January 28). *Electrical workers union says Nashville Electric Service turned away linemen amid winter storm recovery*. *The Tennessean*. <https://www.tennessean.com/story/news/local/2026/01/28/electrical-workers-union-nashville-electric-service-ice-storm/88381925007/?gnt-cfr=1>

⁶ WKRN News 2. (2026, January day). *Tennessee battles winter storm damage, echoes 1994 ice storm destruction*. WKRN. <https://www.wkrn.com/news/tennessee-news/1994-ice-storm-tn-storm-damage-2026/>