

Government and Communications Report

[Mike Eggl](#), senior vice president of Communications & Administration, introduced the Government Report during the Nov. 8 session of the 2012 annual meeting. During his report Bruce Carlson, general manager of [Verendrye Electric Cooperative](#) and congressional delegates, Sen. John Hoeven (R-ND) and Sen. John Barrasso (R-WY), provided remarks. Also, U.S. Sen Kent Conrad (D-ND) received the [Cornerstone Award](#).

Mike Eggl 2012



Mike Eggl

Eggl opened the report by talking about the history and value of electricity. What it took to make a kilowatt-hour years ago and what it takes to do that today.

"If we run Antelope Valley Station for just one minute, I would have to work this hand generator for 85 years," Eggl said as he cranked the generator.

Eggl then talked about the value of co-ops being more than a kilowatt-hour producer.

"I would argue that the value of the co-op is just as much the commitment to community as it is providing electricity," he said.

Watch [Basin Electric's Corporate Social Responsibility video](#).

Congressional Delegation

U.S. Sen. John Hoeven



Sen. John Hoeven (R-ND)

U.S. Sen. John Hoeven was welcomed to Basin Electric's annual meeting with a standing ovation.

In his opening remarks, Hoeven reminisced about being a Verendrye Electric Cooperative member as a boy and attending the co-op meeting. The meetings were always phenomenal, he said. "It's a great meal, great fellowship. There's a real sense of comradery."

"The RECs throughout this state have been vital in the economic vitality of the heartland," he said

Hoeven addressed a few issues he's been working on in Washington, D.C. that affect Basin Electric and its members. Regarding energy policy, Hoeven said, the things we've done in North Dakota are things we need to do nationally. "We (North Dakota) are an energy powerhouse."

He's introduced three bills in the Senate regarding energy legislation. They include the Coal Ash Regulation bill, which classifies coal ash as a non-hazardous waste; the Empower States Act, which gives states the power to regulate hydraulic fracturing in their own states; and the Domestic Energy and Jobs Act, which streamlines the process for the development of energy on public and private lands. Get links to these bills on our [Legislation page](#).

Sen. Hoeven also spoke about the recent election in general. "The people in Congress reflect the make-up of the country. ... It takes all of us reaching out. ... You've got to give a little to get a little."

"Where do we go from here. I hope the election serves as a catalyst to help us bring people together and move forward."

U.S. Sen. John Barrasso



Sen. John Barrasso (R-WY)

U.S. Sen. John Barrasso joined Basin Electric's annual meeting via satellite from Wyoming. Sen. Barrasso addressed the crowd with remarks that echoed Hoeven's comments. He said the two senators work closely together and both serve on the Energy Committee.

In regard to the rules coming out of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Barrasso said, "One size fits all rules coming out of Washington, doesn't work for all."

He said because of the election and campaigning, the EPA has had their finger on the pause button over the last year, but added he believes in the early part of next year, the EPA will take their finger off the pause button and will start moving more regulations.

He highlighted that energy policy must include all forms of domestic energy fuels available. "We need to be able to make energy as clean as we can, as fast as we can" to ensure we have the electricity to serve the needs of this country.

Speaker

Bruce Carlson, general manager, Verendrye Electric Cooperative



Bruce Carlson

Bruce Carlson was peppered throughout Basin Electric's annual meeting this year, because as Mike Eggl said, he's got so much passion and is so engaged in cooperative history, philosophy and understanding. Carlson presented 21st Century cooperatives and an overview of what it's going to take for cooperatives to continue to be relevant into the future.

Carlson is one of 14 members of the 21st Century co-op committee created by the [National Rural Electric Cooperative Association](#) (NRECA). Their mission has been to define how we rededicate co-ops to recognize that as "cooperatives power communities, they also need to empower members."

Carlson said that 57 percent of cooperative managers nationwide will be retiring in the next five years. The time couldn't be more appropriate to educate and communicate among members what it means to be a cooperative. He said the group has been evaluating many points on this issue and will be presenting a final document to NRECA in December.