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## America's Electric Cooperatives PAC

### Key Message

NRECA has recently announced an exciting new change for its political action committee, ACRE®. After careful consideration and research, they are transitioning ACRE to a new name and visual identity that align more closely to the people and organizations it represents: America's Electric Cooperatives PAC.

Though the name “ACRE” was effective when it was first established, today's policymakers, do not make the connection between ACRE contributions and the electric co-ops that support the PAC. As NRECA continues its advocacy efforts on behalf of the membership, it is critical that all advocacy programs strongly connect back to the political identity of America's electric cooperatives.

By aligning the PAC closely with electric co-ops and NRECA, this change will provide significant value to NRECA members and PAC donors as part of our work advocating for the interests of electric co-ops.

### Expanding Messages

#### 1. Changing Course

While the name “ACRE” was effective with policymakers when it was first established, it's connection to electric co-ops is no longer clear to today's policymakers. Now, as NRECA works to strengthen and unify its advocacy efforts, it's time to crystallize the connection between NRECA's PAC and the electric co-op members and employees who fund it.

- NRECA established the Action Committee for Rural Electrification 56 years ago as its political action committee supporting candidates who speak for the interests of electric co-ops and their consumer-members. The name of the PAC was then, as it is now, commonly referred to by the acronym, “ACRE.”
- In the early days of ACRE, when acronyms were less prevalent than they are today, the connection between ACRE and its mission was understood by policymakers.
- However, today, while ACRE has become one of the leading PACs in the country based on fundraising, its fundamental relationship to electric co-ops is no longer obvious to policymakers.
- As NRECA works to maximize our advocacy efforts, it is time to bring clarity to the identity of NRECA's PAC and closely align it with the rest of our advocacy programs.

## **2. Research-Driven Process.**

Research with key stakeholders confirmed the disconnect between ACRE and its donors, supporting the decision to rename and rebrand the PAC.

- The decision to evaluate the ACRE brand was based on a disconnect policymakers had between ACRE and electric cooperatives that contribute to the PAC.
- To best understand this experience, NRECA conducted research with D.C. policymakers and PAC donors to assess their attitudes towards the ACRE brand.
- The research revealed that both internal and external stakeholders were in agreement that the PAC's identity should be more strongly connected to electric co-ops and NRECA.

## **3. Clarity & Credit.**

With the new name and logo, NRECA's PAC will be explicitly connected to electric cooperatives, giving clear recognition to the PAC's contributors while leveraging the brand value and recognition of NRECA with policymakers.

- To enhance brand recognition, the new name uses NRECA's brand tagline and no longer shortens the PAC identity to an acronym.
- The name now capitalizes on the PAC's relationship to NRECA and its members—an organization held in high regard in Washington and known to represent electric cooperatives.
- The name acknowledges electric cooperative members contributing to the PAC.
- The name, paired with a look and feel that complements NRECA's brand, provides a strong connection to other elements of NRECA's advocacy to effectively position America's electric cooperatives.

## **4. Maximizing Impact.**

America's Electric Cooperatives PAC will enable NRECA to more fully advance co-op priorities in Washington by bringing its advocacy efforts together under a well-known and highly respected identity.

- NRECA is committed to continuously strengthening its advocacy efforts on behalf of its members.
- Electric cooperatives will realize stronger reputational impact on federal policymakers given NRECA's PAC is now intricately associated with the power of the NRECA brand and its members.
- This shift is an opportunity to energize current donors and expand outreach to potential new donors through a PAC communications strategy in 2023.