

# Thomas Burgess

Visiting Fellow



## Full Bio

Thomas Burgess is a seasoned energy industry advisor, consultant, and lecturer specializing in electric grid reliability, transmission policy, and utility regulation. With over 40 years of experience spanning engineering, law, and executive leadership, he has played a significant role in shaping the reliability and strategic direction of the North American electric power system.

Burgess most recently served as Vice President and Director of Reliability Assessment and Performance Analysis at the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) from 2013 to 2016 where he oversaw initiatives critical to maintaining and improving the reliability of the bulk power system across North America. He led the development of advanced analytical capabilities, established a reliability center of excellence, and advised on emerging risks and strategic priorities. His work contributed to strengthening industry coordination, regulatory credibility, and proactive reliability planning both domestically and internationally.

Prior to NERC, Burgess spent nearly four decades at FirstEnergy Corporation, where he held a wide range of leadership roles. He retired as Executive Director of Integrated System Planning and Development, responsible for long-term strategic planning across transmission and generation assets. His work focused on optimizing financial performance, regulatory strategy, and infrastructure investment during a period of significant industry transition from regulated to competitive markets. Throughout his career, he also led efforts in FERC policy and compliance, transmission asset development, regulatory affairs, and system planning.

Burgess has been deeply involved in industry governance and policy development, contributing to the formation of the Electric Reliability Organization under the Energy Policy Act of 2005 as well as served on numerous influential committees and boards, including the Edison Electric Institute, PJM Interconnection, and the North American Energy Standards Board. He has also participated in international efforts through organizations such as CIGRE.

In addition to his professional work, Burgess is an active educator and speaker. He delivers annual lectures on energy law at Case Western Reserve University School of Law and has taught specialized courses on transmission systems and energy policy. His speaking engagements span major industry conferences and academic institutions, where he addresses topics including grid reliability, regulatory frameworks, and the evolving energy landscape.

Burgess holds a Juris Doctor and a Master of Science in Electrical Engineering from the University of Akron, and a Bachelor of Science in Electric Power Engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. He is a licensed attorney and professional engineer in Ohio.