



N A R U C
National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners

January 19, 2017

Jeffrey Eisenach, PhD
Trump-Pence Transition Team on the FCC
Presidential Transition Headquarters
1800 F Street, NW, Room G117
Washington, DC 20270-0117

Re: NARUC Follow-up on the FCC and Telecommunications Policy

Dear Dr. Eisenach:

As the President of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC), I extend my sincere congratulations on winning a tough election. I would also like to thank you for being responsive to NARUC's outreach on telecommunications issues. Your active engagement on the transition team is critically important to our nation's future.

Looking towards the future, NARUC is well-positioned to help the Trump Administration accomplish its goals in the utility arena. Founded in 1889, NARUC is a non-profit organization dedicated to representing the state commissions that regulate our nation's utilities. NARUC's mission is to serve the public interest by improving the quality and effectiveness of public utility regulation. With over 200 state commissioners and an enormous number of commission staff operating in diverse circumstances throughout the United States, NARUC offers unparalleled access to an extensive pool of experts on a variety of utility matters, including telecommunications.

NARUC has a number of key priorities for the coming year, several of which align well with the objectives of the incoming Administration. In particular, there are two areas where federal telecommunications policy needs adjustment.

First, NARUC believes there should be an effort to decentralize telecommunications policy by returning more power to the states on important issues such as state broadband, universal service, and consumer protection programs. In the past, federal agencies have not always recognized the benefits of a *real* working partnership with the states. By way of example, it is undisputed that the states played a crucial role in reducing fraud and abuse in the federal lifeline program. Yet, despite this success, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has continually undermined state enforcement efforts by nationalizing tasks that Congress envisioned would be conducted at the state level. NARUC believes there needs to be greater recognition of the important role that states play in key telecommunications issues.

Second, NARUC advocates for widespread reform of the FCC. U.S. telecommunications policy is at an important inflection point. Cable, telephone, and wireless companies staunchly compete for the market share using the latest technology, which is constantly evolving. The FCC is in dire need of reform to keep pace with the changing industry. The question is how to accomplish these much needed reforms. NARUC has put a great deal of thought into this issue and specified the reforms it endorses in the following February 17, 2016, resolution: <http://pubs.naruc.org/pub/68FF1FD1-E137-1D13-544C-E371425672CF>.

In addition to these two priorities, NARUC believes the Administration should focus on generally improving the relationship between the states and the federal government on telecommunications issues. There are three steps President Trump can take immediately to assure the new Administration capitalizes on the numerous opportunities and benefits that a cooperative state and federal relationship can provide.

First, NARUC strongly encourages the Administration to consider appointing former or serving state commissioners to fill federal vacancies like those at the FCC and the Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration. State commissioners live at the bleeding edge of telecommunications policy formation. They are tested and have real-world experience. NARUC can help you identify suitable candidates.

Second, NARUC believes the FCC should be required to assess the impact of its actions on state authority and policies. Specifically, FCC orders should specify situations where states have the authority to enforce federal rules or to act independently on their own authority. Doing so will save taxpayer money by reducing the amount of litigation clarifying the state's role in telecommunications issues. Moreover, requiring the FCC to be clear about the division between state and federal authority will provide greater certainty for investors in the sector. In our view, if this Administration is serious about reducing the number of federal regulations, it needs to create a mindset at the FCC (and in all federal agencies) that accepts Congressional delegations of authority as establishing real limits on agency authority.

Third, we would be honored to have your Administration participate in NARUC meetings. NARUC members meet three times a year to exchange ideas, educate one another on the latest developments in the industry, and share regulatory best practices among states. I would encourage you to attend these triannual meetings as a way to get to know NARUC members and keep apprised of state utility issues. The next NARUC meeting will be held in Washington, D.C. on February 12-15, 2017. NARUC would be pleased to provide an opportunity for Administration representatives to speak at the February meeting and to address NARUC members on the incoming President's telecommunications agenda. I would also like to organize a meeting between Administration representatives and NARUC's Executive Committee while we are in town for the February meeting. NARUC staff will reach out to organize this meeting.

Attached to this letter is an appendix that contains the names and contact information for key NARUC Commissioners from every region of the nation, as well as NARUC's Washington-based advocacy staff. Please also feel free to reach out to any of these contacts, or to call me personally should you have any questions or concerns.

Again, congratulations to each of you for being chosen for the critical task of transitioning the nation's telecommunications policy. I look forward to working with you in 2017 and beyond.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert F. Powelson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, horizontal flourish at the end.

Robert F. Powelson
NARUC President

Attachment

List of NARUC's Executive Committee and Board of Directors
Washington Staff Contact Information
NARUC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President

The Honorable Robert Powelson - Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (717) 783-6190

First Vice President

The Honorable John Betkoski, III - Connecticut Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (860) 827-1553

Second Vice President

The Honorable Ellen Nowak - Wisconsin Public Service Commission (608) 266-5481

Treasurer

The Honorable David Ziegner - Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (317) 232-2701

The Honorable Travis Kavulla - Montana Public Service Commission
406) 444-6199

NARUC'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS (which includes the Executive Committee)

The Honorable Lorraine H. Akiba - Hawaii Public Utilities Commission (808) 586-2020

The Honorable Bob Anthony - Oklahoma Corporation Commission (405) 522-2261

The Honorable Ronald A. Brise - Florida Public Service Commission (800) 342-6036

The Honorable Margaret E. Curran - Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission (401) 941-4100

The Honorable David W. Danner, Chair, NARUC Committee on International Relations
Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (360) 664-1208

The Honorable Edward S. Finley, Jr., Chair, NARUC Committee on Electricity
North Carolina Utilities Commission (919) 733-6067

The Honorable Nikki M. Hall, Chair, NARUC Subcommittee on Supplier and Workforce Diversity
South Carolina Public Service Commission (803) 896-5100

The Honorable Asim Z. Haque - Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (614) 466-3101

The Honorable G. O'Neal Hamilton - South Carolina Public Service Commission (803) 896-5100

The Honorable Mary-Anna Holden, Chair, NARUC Committee on Water
New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (609) 633-9833

The Honorable John E. Howard, Chair, NARUC Subcommittee on Education and Research
South Carolina Public Service Commission (803) 896-5100

The Honorable W. Kevin Hughes - Maryland Public Service Commission (410) 767-8073

The Honorable Judith W. Jagdmann - Virginia State Corporation Commission (804) 371-9608

The Honorable Betty Ann Kane - Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia (202) 821-9129

The Honorable Nancy Lange, Chair, NARUC Committee on Energy Resources and the Environment
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (651) 201-2240

The Honorable Richard S. Mroz, Chair, NARUC Committee on Critical Infrastructure
New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (609) 777-3310

The Honorable Chris Nelson, Chair, NARUC Committee on Telecommunications
South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (605) 773-3201

The Honorable Carla Peterman - California Public Utilities Commission (415) 703-1407

The Honorable Brandon Presley - Mississippi Public Service Commission (662) 963-1471

The Honorable Robert R. Scott - New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission (603) 271-2290

The Honorable Brien J. Sheahan - Illinois Commerce Commission (312) 814-2850

The Honorable Bob Stump - Arizona Corporation Commission (602) 542-3935

The Honorable Mark Vannoy - Maine Public Utilities Commission (207) 287-3831

The Honorable Nick Wagner - Iowa Utilities Board (515) 725-7888

The Honorable Jolette A. Westbrook - Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities (617) 305-3738

The Honorable Stan Wise, Chair, NARUC Committee on Gas
Georgia Public Service Commission (404) 657-2341

The Honorable Audrey Zibelman - New York State Public Service Commission (518) 474-2523

NARUC's Washington Staff

(Anyone listed below can provide additional contact information for any of the Commissioners listed above.)

NARUC OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Greg R. White - NARUC's Executive Director (202) 898-2208 gwhite@naruc.org
Deborah L. Scott - Executive Assistant to the Executive Director (202) 898-2211 dscott@naruc.org

Mr. White joined the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners in December 2015. As the Executive Director, he is responsible for the overall management of the Association. He directs the programs and implements the policies of the Association and promotes the Association's interests in Washington. Greg supports the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee and directs the Senior Management Team.

NARUC POLICY DEPARTMENT

James Bradford Ramsay - NARUC's General Counsel (202) 898-2207 jramsay@naruc.org
Jody M. Farnsworth - Legal and Legislative Assistant (202) 898-1892 jfarnsworth@naruc.org

Mr. Ramsay is responsible for all Association related legal issues (Energy, Telecommunications, Water, Transportation, Consumer Affairs, Critical Infrastructure) and is in charge of all Policy department advocacy initiatives. He has been with NARUC since 1990. He has testified for NARUC's in the US House and Senate.

Jennifer Murphy – Assistant General Counsel (202) 898-1350 jmurphy@naruc.org

Ms. Murphy handles the Association's energy-related legal and policy work before federal agencies (e.g., FERC, DOE, EPA, NIST) and the federal courts. Jennifer supports the Electricity Committee, the Gas Committee, the Energy Resources and the Environment Committee, the Consumer Affairs (Energy) Committee, and the Subcommittee on Nuclear Issues.

Christopher Mele - Legislative Director, Energy (202) 898-2206 cmele@naruc.org

Mr. Mele directs the Association's policy advocacy, Congressional relations regarding energy regulatory policy. Chris supports the Consumer Affairs (Energy), Electricity, Energy Resources and the Environment and Gas Committees as well as the Washington Action Program.

Brian M. O'Hara - Legislative Director, Telecommunications (202) 898-2205 bohara@naruc.org

Mr. O'Hara directs the Association's policy advocacy, Congressional relations and media relations activities regarding telecommunications and water regulatory policy. Brian supports the Telecommunications, Consumer Affairs and Water Committees and the Washington Action Committee