

***Resolution Supporting the Gathering of Data for Electric and Natural Gas Distribution  
Companies by Individual State Utility Commissions or Energy Offices***

**WHEREAS**, The National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) recognizes the importance of gathering comparable aggregate residential billing and arrearage data to quantify the extent of customer indebtedness to utilities and the financial impact of customer indebtedness on utilities; to support State and federal low-income assistance programs, such as LIHEAP; and to evaluate the impact on customer affordability of essential electric and natural gas service; *and*

**WHEREAS**, The lack of wide-ranging billing and arrearage data has made it more difficult for many consumer groups, legislative offices and commissions to quantify the magnitude of the problem of non-payment for consumers; *and*

**WHEREAS**, The wide-ranging data compiled would be of great assistance to formulate State and national policies to assure affordable electric and natural gas service for residential customers, and to support programs which are necessary to the health, safety and welfare of American households; *and*

**WHEREAS**, The data compiled would provide State and federal policymakers with the tools needed to evaluate and ensure that federal energy assistance funds, such as LIHEAP, are adequate to meet utility-related emergencies due to increases in energy prices and/or weather related emergencies; *and*

**WHEREAS**, Based on survey data compiled by the NRRI/NARUC Staff Subcommittee on Consumer Affairs in 2002 and 2004, although there are at least eighteen States that are known to collect and report such data, it is necessary to have more comparable and inclusive data for the entire nation; *and*

**WHEREAS**, The compilation of comparable, periodic billing and arrearage data for residential customers over time would be very beneficial to State and federal policymakers to evaluate the impact of market conditions, higher energy prices, and weather conditions; evaluate the need for additional targeted financial assistance and energy management programs, as well as the need for review of State commission policies and practices to protect seniors and low-income customers; *and*

**WHEREAS**, NARUC recognizes that the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates (NASUCA), National Energy Assistance Directors Association (NEADA), Consumers Union, Consumer Federation of America, National Consumer Law Center (NCLC), National Low Income Energy Consortium (NLIEC), and the AARP (formerly the American Association of Retired Persons) support this resolution; *now therefore be it*

**RESOLVED**, That the Board of Directors of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC), convened in its February 2006 Winter Meetings in Washington, D.C., urges each individual State to gather relevant utility billing and arrearage data from all electric and gas utilities within its State commission jurisdiction and encourages other providers

of electric and gas to work cooperatively with their State commission to provide necessary aggregate data; *and be it further*

**RESOLVED**, That NARUC directs the Staff Subcommittee on Consumer Affairs to form a collaborative workgroup with all interested stakeholders to design a survey template and a data dictionary of terms, and to urge each State to use and distribute the data dictionary and survey to all the utility companies within its State; *and be it further*

**RESOLVED**, That NARUC urges each State commission or energy office to generate a list of commission or energy office contacts for this project; *and be it further*

**RESOLVED**, That NARUC urges each State commission or energy office to direct utility companies to forward all questions about the project to its Commission contact, who in turn, will then forward the questions to the Staff Subcommittee on Consumer Affairs or its designee in order to ensure the consistency of data collection; *and be it further*

**RESOLVED**, That NARUC urges each State commission or energy office to aggregate the company level data into appropriate industry summary level data and submit it to the Staff Subcommittee on Consumer Affairs or its designee for analysis; and urges each State commission or energy office contact to document all variations and exceptions in the data and submit it for analysis; *and be it further*

**RESOLVED**, That affected stakeholders be allowed an opportunity to review the data analysis and derived conclusions prior to publication in order to provide clarification and ensure consistency.

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*Sponsored by the Consumer Affairs Committee*

*Adopted by the NARUC Board of Directors February 15, 2006*

