



N A R U C
National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners

For Immediate Release: **February 19, 2016**
Contact: Regina L. Davis, 202-898-9382, rdavis@naruc.org

Cybersecurity, Clean Power Plan Stay Headline NARUC's Winter Meetings

WASHINGTON—State utility regulators converged in the nation's capital this week, poring over issues at the forefront of energy, telecommunications, transportation and water concerns at the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners annual Winter Committee Meetings February 14-17.

General sessions, led by NARUC President Travis Kavulla of Montana, highlighted the growing concern over cybersecurity; particularly, keeping the grid safe from a cyber attack. A panel of experts on Monday provided perspectives on how state and federal governments, industry and state regulators can interact more effectively to find meaningful solutions. Related to the topic of grid security was a discussion with author and journalist Ted Koppel, author of *Lights Out: A Cyberattack, A Nation Unprepared, Surviving the Aftermath*, who outlined reasons why he believes the U.S. is not prepared for an attack on the utility grid. A realistic interactive exercise on Wednesday took participants through a ransomware cyber attack on utility systems.

Other high-profile speakers included Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Chair Norman C. Bay and Commissioner Ajit Pai from the Federal Communications Commission. Chairman Bay remarked on the Clean Power Plan, demand response and FERC's upcoming reliability technical conference in June. Commissioner Pai expressed views on broadband, 911 service and Lifeline. He noted that state commissioners have the ability and expertise to determine where fraud or abuse exists in Lifeline programs.

The recent Supreme Court decision staying the Clean Power Plan was covered from a legal perspective with NARUC's General Counsel, Brad Ramsay, who offered the implications of the decision, noting that the September 2016 deadline for states to submit initial plans is now on hold.

Other general sessions featured viewpoints on the matter of decarbonization, weighing matters of cost, transmission siting, short- vs. long-term solutions, rate impacts and overall feasibility.

An international perspective of energy was shared by Sean Jones, Deputy Coordinator of the United States Agency for International Development's Power Africa program. A key message point was that today, more than 140 years after the invention of the light bulb, most of the African continent is still in the dark after midnight. Jones pointed out that meaningful progress is being forged through the U.S.'s role as a facilitator and convener, mobilizing \$43 billion in

agreements for Power Africa. NARUC's International Programs partners with USAID on several initiatives such as Power Africa, engaging in collaborative activities to support energy goals.

The International Programs on Sunday awarded the Terry Barnich award to Rhode Island Commissioner Paul Roberti. The award is named in honor of former Chairman of the Illinois Commerce Commission (1989 to 1992) Terrence "Terry" Barnich, who was killed on Memorial Day, May 25, 2009, while working as the Deputy Director of the State Department office overseeing U.S. reconstruction projects in Iraq. Details on the award presentation are available at <http://bit.ly/1RaVAiH>.

In addition to the general sessions and panel discussions, the Board of Directors passed several resolutions:

- Resolution Supporting Advanced Electric Transmission Technology
- Resolution on Carbon Capture and Enhanced Oil Recovery
- Resolution Supporting EPA's WaterSense "Fix-a-Leak Week" in March
- Resolution on Reform of Lifeline Program
- Resolution in Support of IP Technology Transitions Which Preserve the Fundamental Features of Legacy Services
- Resolution Calling For Streamlined Access To Rights Of Way On Federal Lands To Accelerate Broadband Deployment
- Resolution on FCC Process Reform

The complete resolutions are available for review on NARUC's website at <http://bit.ly/1PUvV3r>.

NARUC's Summer Committee Meetings will be held July 24-27, 2016, in Nashville, Tennessee.

#

NARUC is a non-profit organization founded in 1889 whose members include the governmental agencies that are engaged in the regulation of utilities and carriers in the fifty States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. NARUC's member agencies regulate telecommunications, energy, and water utilities. NARUC represents the interests of State public utility commissions before the three branches of the Federal government.