

***Resolution on Natural Gas Pipeline Siting Review,
Member Information Sharing and Tool Kit Initiative***

WHEREAS, NARUC as a quasi-governmental, non-profit organization founded in 1889 has a membership that includes the public utility commissions serving all States and territories; *and*

WHEREAS, NARUC's mission is to serve the public interest by improving the quality and effectiveness of public utility regulation; NARUC members regulate the retail rates and services of electric, gas, water, and telephone utilities; NARUC members are obligated under the laws of our respective States to assure the establishment and maintenance of such utility services as may be required by the public convenience and necessity and to ensure that such services are provided under rates and subject to terms and conditions of service that are just, reasonable, and non-discriminatory; *and*

WHEREAS, For the nation's State economic utility regulators, ensuring safe, reliable, and affordable utility service are our highest priorities; this has been our responsibility for more than 126 years; with the changes confronting the gas and electric sectors, this mission will only grow in importance in the future; *and*

WHEREAS, NARUC and the Committee on Gas are focused on ensuring that our members are engaged on issues that confront them in their State regulatory roles, including those related to natural gas; *and*

WHEREAS, NARUC and the Committee on Gas recognize a topic of interest to our members is the expedited consideration of much-needed natural gas pipelines by reforming and modernizing the siting and review processes; *and*

WHEREAS, NARUC and the Committee on Gas recognize the important and continually evolving role the Federal Regulatory Energy Commission (FERC) has on our nation's natural gas pipelines as FERC sets the rates, terms, and conditions for the operation of transportation and storage of natural gas in interstate commerce and specifically issues certificates of public convenience and necessity for interstate pipelines and storage facilities; *and*

WHEREAS, Under Section 7 of the Natural Gas Act, FERC has the delegated responsibility to review applications for the construction and operation of natural gas pipelines. In the extensive application review process, FERC must find that a proposed interstate natural gas pipeline is needed (and, therefore, in the public interest) before a pipeline sponsor can obtain a certificate of public convenience and necessity; the process for reviewing and approving new interstate natural gas pipelines has evolved over decades and has become more contentious, complex, and protracted; *and*

WHEREAS, NARUC and the Committee on Gas recognize the multitude of complex and often competing and overlapping interests among different federal, State, and local agencies and other interested stakeholders; *and*

WHEREAS, NARUC and the Committee on Gas recognize the important role State economic utility regulators play in ensuring safe, reliable, and affordable energy systems; moreover, as State regulators, we have an obligation to ensure that we are appropriately responding to the growing demand for natural gas; this role may require us to decide whether it is appropriate for us to comment on FERC processes to ensure that FERC continues to properly and timely respond to proposals to expand and construct needed pipelines and related facilities; *and*

WHEREAS, NARUC and the Committee recognize the FERC is engaged in ways to improve its stakeholder processes to expedite the certification of natural gas pipelines for example, having FERC staff actively participate in the pre-filing process to engage stakeholders in the identification and resolution of stakeholder concerns prior to filing a certificate application with FERC; *and*

WHEREAS, NARUC and the Committee on Gas recognize the desire for our members to have the latest information on current pipeline siting processes and potential options and avenues for lessening the uncertainty on the current pipeline approval and permitting process; *and*

WHEREAS, NARUC and the Committee on Gas recognize the need for both continued constructive information sharing dialogue on issues around pipeline siting review and potential necessary tools available for State regulators to explore these issues; *and*

WHEREAS, NARUC and the Committee on Gas are cognizant that NARUC may examine these issues concerning natural gas pipeline siting in many different arenas including, but not limited to, the NARUC-Department of Energy Natural Gas Infrastructure Modernization Partnership (NARUC-DOE NGIMP); *and*

WHEREAS, NARUC and the Committee on Gas recognize that such dialogue and examination may include, among other things, whether there is an opportunity, if deemed feasible, for improved coordination and timing of federal agencies approval and review processes; *and*

WHEREAS, In the establishment of the NARUC-DOE NGIMP, NARUC recognizes that creating and maintaining a safe natural gas pipeline infrastructure is a national imperative. It is of uppermost concern to our State Commissions and to NARUC to help advance our shared interests in natural gas infrastructure modernization; *and*

WHEREAS, NARUC and the Committee on Gas recognize that expansion and modernization of our pipeline infrastructure is particularly important right now; *and*

WHEREAS, NARUC and the Committee on Gas recognize that its members benefit from fully understanding the process for reviewing and approving new interstate natural gas pipelines which helps to ensure that the public understands as well; *and now, therefore be it*

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, convened at its 2017 Winter Committee Meetings in Washington, D.C., strongly encourages the continued collaborative efforts among all stakeholders, but specifically seeks to ensure continued member education and initiatives on issues relating to the appropriateness of expedited review of natural gas pipeline siting; *and be it further*

RESOLVED, That such formal initiatives may take the form of a comprehensive work product similar to a toolkit for information sharing and training; *and be it further*

RESOLVED, That such a formal collaborative under the auspices of NARUC will pertain to examining issues related to natural gas pipeline siting review and shall consist of representatives from NARUC's Executive Committee, Committee on Gas, and other related working partnerships, such as the NARUC-DOE NGIMP; *and be it further*

RESOLVED, That such a goal for the undertaking on this comprehensive work product is to provide another substantive benefit to NARUC members to help understand the processes for reviewing and approving new interstate natural gas pipelines and looking at ways to improve and enhance the processes.

Sponsored by the Committee on Gas

Adopted by the NARUC Board of Directors on February 15, 2017