Resolution Endorsing EPA Landfill Methane Outreach Program

WHEREAS, President Clinton stated on October 19, 1993, when he released the U.S. Climate Change Action Plan, that, "In concert with all other nations, we simply must halt global warming. It is a threat to our health, to our ecology and to our economy"; and

WHEREAS, Methane is a very potent greenhouse gas, about twenty times more effective at trapping radiation in the atmosphere than carbon dioxide over a 100 year time frame; and

WHEREAS, Landfills are the largest anthropogenic source of methane emissions in the United States, contributing the equivalent of 48 to 72 million metric tons of carbon to the atmosphere each year, and therefore constituting a major source of greenhouse gas emissions; and

WHEREAS, Landfill methane is being generated and emitted from waste that has been deposited in landfills over the past 30 years and will continue to be generated and emitted from waste deposited in landfills for years to come; and

WHEREAS, The technology and its application for production of electricity from landfill gas have been well demonstrated at the approximately 115 existing landfill energy recovery projects in the United States (and many in other countries), and are constantly improving; and

WHEREAS, Generation of energy from landfill gas is cost competitive at hundreds of additional landfills across the country, and will improve U.S. technology and create jobs; and

WHEREAS, The U.S. Climate Change Action Plan directs the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to expand its Landfill Outreach Program "to capture the methane that would otherwise be emitted and use it to produce electricity . . ."; and

WHEREAS, The 1993 National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) report, Investing in the Future, A Regulator's Guide to Renewables, states that, "State utility regulatory policy is critically important to renewable energy development [and] The full value of renewable resource investments is not presently recognized in many resource planning and acquisition processes"; and

WHEREAS, The NARUC stated in its 1990 Resolution Regarding Renewable Energy that "Measured and prudent preparations for foreseeable risks are far more efficient and less disruptive than actions and reactions taken in response to crisis"; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Executive Committee of the NARUC, convened at its 1994 Winter Meetings in Washington, D.C., endorses the EPA Landfill Methane Outreach Program; and be it further
RESOLVED, That the NARUC encourages and supports its member Commissions' and utilities' active participation in the EPA's Landfill Methane Outreach Program as part of prudent preparations and planning for foreseeable risks from global climate change; and be it further

RESOLVED, That regulators should focus their regulatory attention on the landfill gas resources in their States to determine the role that energy from landfill gas can play as an energy resource for utilities and their customers.

Sponsored by the Committee on Energy Conservation
Adopted March 2, 1994