

Resolution Supporting a National Consumer Outreach Program on the Transition to More Energy Efficient Lighting

WHEREAS, Congress, in the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (EISA 07), established efficiency standards for light bulbs as it has for many other appliances and equipment. Starting in 2012 (2011 in California) new light bulbs will have to use 25% to 30% less energy; *and*

WHEREAS, The Natural Resources Defense Council has stated that traditional incandescent light bulbs are based on a 125-year old technology which wastes up to 90% of the electricity it consumes as heat, and, that the transition to lamps that use 25% to 30% less energy, as required by EISA, will reduce CO2 emissions by approximately 100 million tons a year, the equivalent of the annual energy produced by 30 large power plants; *and*

WHEREAS, The Alliance to Save Energy estimates that lighting accounts for 22% of total U.S. electricity usage, and that eliminating incandescent light bulbs completely would save consumers \$18 billion per year; *and*

WHEREAS, Traditional incandescent light bulbs will not meet the new efficiency standards, but new lighting technology exists and new options are being brought to market to meet growing demand, including more efficient incandescents, halogen incandescents, compact fluorescents (CFL) and light-emitting diodes (LED); *and*

WHEREAS, To ease the move to more energy efficient lighting, EISA established a scheduled phase-in of the efficiency standards for light bulbs starting with the highest wattage bulbs. The transition schedule is as follows: 100 watt – January 2012; 75 watt – January 2013; 60 watt and 40 watt – January 2014; *and*

WHEREAS, The National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) has a long history of supporting appliance and equipment energy efficiency standards, including resolutions adopted in 1996, 1997, 1999, 2000, 2004, 2009, and 2010¹ because of the benefits energy efficiency standards provide to energy consumers, energy utility companies, and society as a whole; *and*

WHEREAS, Appliance and equipment efficiency standards are among the most cost-effective means of achieving energy efficiency, leading to reduced energy bills for residential and business consumers, emissions reductions, job growth, improved reliability, and reduced demand pressure on energy prices; *and*

¹ See NARUC *Resolution Supporting the Super-efficient Equipment and Appliance Deployment Initiative (SEAD)*, adopted July 21, 2010; *Resolution Supporting U.S. Department of Energy's Energy Efficiency Standards*, adopted February 18, 2009; *Resolution on Gas and Electric Energy Efficiency*, adopted July 14, 2004; *Resolution in Support of DOE's Efforts to Upgrade the Central Air Conditioning and Heat Pump Energy Efficiency Standards*, adopted July 26, 2000; *Resolution in Support of Appliance Efficiency Standards Internationally*, adopted February 24, 1999; *Resolution in Support of New Energy Efficiency Standards*, adopted November 12, 1997; and *Resolution on Appliance Energy Efficiency Standards*, adopted July 25, 1996.

WHEREAS, Many consumers are not aware of the efforts to phase out less energy-efficient incandescent light bulbs and may be confused by the unavailability of incandescent light bulbs, it is imperative that consumers are fully informed about the new lighting options and the potential long-term cost-savings of each; *and*

WHEREAS, Consumers may have questions regarding the disposal of CFL light bulbs which contain minimal amounts of mercury; *and*

WHEREAS, Within the next year, packaging on light bulbs will be designed to help consumers choose among the different types on the market – traditional incandescents, halogen and other efficient incandescents, compact fluorescents (CFL) and light-emitting diodes (LED); *and*

WHEREAS, For the first time, the label on the front of the package will compare light bulb brightness as measured in lumens, rather than watts along with the estimated yearly energy costs for the particular type of bulb; *and*

WHEREAS, The transition to new light bulbs coupled with the change in labeling from watts to lumens could increase consumer confusion and frustration; *and*

WHEREAS, In order to achieve a successful transition to more energy-efficient light bulbs, a national outreach effort is needed to bring awareness and information to consumers about new light bulbs efficiencies, labeling standards, and cost benefits; *now, therefore be it*

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, convened at its 2011 Winter Committee Meetings in Washington, D.C., supports efforts by the U.S. Department of Energy, other governmental bodies, manufacturers, retailers, utilities, and other entities to educate consumers on the transition to energy and cost-efficient light bulbs, new labels based on lumens instead of watts, and proper disposal of CFLs.

*Sponsored by the Committees on Consumer Affairs and Energy Resources and the Environment
Adopted by the NARUC Board of Directors February 16, 2011*