



NARUC
National Association of Regulatory
Utility Commissioners

For Immediate Release

Contact: Regina L. Davis, 202-898-2200, rdavis@naruc.org

NARUC President Presley Announces New Task Force Members, Convenes Utility and Energy Dialogues at National Policy Summit

Resolutions, Federal Speakers and Awards also Highlighted at Utility Conference

WASHINGTON (February 12, 2020) — Utility regulators from across the country convened in Washington, D.C., at the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners Winter Policy Summit February 9-12 to address energy and utility priorities facing U.S. states.

NARUC President Brandon Presley of Mississippi led four days of committee meetings and general sessions focused on a range of utility issues across the electricity, water, gas and telecommunications spectrum. The approximately 1,500 attendees heard from a range of representatives from state regulatory commissions, consumer advocates, federal representatives and industry groups.

At the opening general session, Presley announced the names of state regulators tapped to serve on the new Broadband Expansion Task Force: Chris Nelson, chairman (S.D.); Crystal Rhoades, vice-chair (Nebr.); Tremaine Phillips (Mich.); Lea Marquez Peterson (Ariz.); Maida Coleman (Mo.); Todd Hiatt (Okla.); Sarah Hoffman (Vt.); Karen Charles Peterson (Mass.); Talina Mathews (Ky.); Charlotte Lane (W.Va.); and Paul Kjellander (Idaho).

“The availability of broadband service in underserved areas is of critical importance,” said Presley. “I am pleased to have assembled an excellent team of commissioners, each of whom bring exceptional perspectives and expertise to the issue. Broadband is the electricity of the future.”

The charter outlining the purpose and rationale for the task force is located online at bit.ly/broadbandtaskforce.

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Chairman Neil Chatterjee addressed state commissioners, detailing the need for PURPA reform, continued focus on cyber security and ways that the agency can engage collaboratively with state regulators. He also noted new changes coming to the FERC website. Chatterjee stressed that despite areas of contention with the states, there are many areas of collaboration between FERC and state regulators.

FERC Commissioner Bernard McNamee, who delivered comments to a packed audience, said that although he will not seek re-nomination, he will not leave the commission without a quorum.

Resolutions

The NARUC Board of Directors approved its first slate of resolutions for 2020.

- Resolution Recommending State Commissions Act to Adopt and Implement Distributed Energy Resource Standard IEEE 1547-2018: Recommends state commissions, consistent with the practices and procedures of that state, convene proceedings that engage stakeholders as soon as possible; utilize existing research and experience and make evidence-based decisions to adopt the current IEEE 1547; and align implementation of the standard with the availability of certified equipment.
- Resolution Supporting Legislation to Fully Refund Interstate Pipeline Customers: Supports federal legislation to reform the procedural and substantive provisions of the Natural Gas Act to allow for

meaningful and timely opportunities to achieve appropriate relief from unjust and unreasonable rates and to allow FERC the discretionary authority to order, when appropriate, full and complete refunds of unjust and unreasonable compensation, and to do so in a way that fairly benefits consumers.

- Resolution on the 5G Fund: Advocates for the Federal Communications Commission to require current and accurate mobile wireless data coverage mapping prior to awarding any dollars from the 5G Fund and that 5G Fund dollars be prioritized for areas that do not have mobile wireless data coverage meeting the 5mbps threshold.
- Resolution Supporting EPA's WaterSense "Fix-a-Leak Week" in March 2020: Encourages members to participate in the Environmental Protection Agency's "Fix-a-Leak Week" by using any materials EPA provides and issuing an appropriate press release noting the EPA initiative and its support for it.

The resolutions are available at bit.ly/2020WPSFinalRes. Honorary resolutions recognizing several members were also approved and are online at bit.ly/2020WPSHonoraryRes.

Awards

NARUC held a brief awards presentation on Tuesday named in honor of the late Ray Baum, staff director of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, who was a former commissioner at the Oregon Public Utility Commission. Joe Witmer, Pennsylvania Public Service Commission staff member and counsel to Chairman Gladys Brown Dutrieuille, received the Ray Baum Memorial Leadership Award, which was presented by Oregon Congressman Greg Walden, a friend and colleague to Baum. The event was attended by Baum's widow, Kristine, and their six children.

Several members were also recognized for their service on NARUC committees.

Future Meetings

NARUC will host two more meetings in 2020: the Summer Policy Summit in Boston, Mass., July 19-22, and the Annual Meeting and Education Conference in Seattle, Wash., November 8-11.

###

About NARUC

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.