

Resolution on Establishing Additional PHMSA Pipeline Safety Training Facilities

WHEREAS, Domestic gas and oil production is increasing rapidly as a result of improved development technologies; *and*

WHEREAS, Numerous new pipelines have been recently built and many more are in the planning or construction phases in order to deliver this additional production to market; *and*

WHEREAS, Several significant pipeline accidents in recent years have prompted the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration's (PHMSA) Office of Pipeline Safety to promulgate additional pipeline safety rules, which require additional training for State pipeline safety personnel, thereby, straining existing federal training resources; *and*

WHEREAS, Many States have implemented programs to accelerate the replacement of cast iron and bare steel distribution pipelines, with a commensurate increase on the demands of State inspector responsibilities; *and*

WHEREAS, The States are responsible to oversee and enforce operators' compliance with federal pipeline safety regulations for approximately 80 percent of the pipelines in the United States, and rely on training provided by PHMSA in order to so; *and*

WHEREAS, Many States have hired, or anticipate hiring, new pipeline safety inspectors to keep up with the increased demand caused by new pipelines; *and*

WHEREAS, Training these new inspectors in a timely manner is necessary to ensure the safe delivery of natural gas to end-use customers, as well as to protect the safety and well-being of the general public; *and*

WHEREAS, PHMSA operates a single gas and hazardous material training facility for the entire nation, located in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; *and*

WHEREAS, PHMSA's **certification process for State inspectors requires extended training over a period ranging between** three to five years as a result of the State inspector having to attend up to 25 one-week courses as a necessary prerequisite to receiving full certification by PHMSA; *and*

WHEREAS, There is a steadily growing backlog for admission **to the State inspector training program** of one to two years; *and*

WHEREAS, It is essential for PHMSA to develop new training centers to meet the States' need for qualified safety inspectors; *and*

WHEREAS, The establishment of additional regional training facilities would minimize or eliminate costly air travel for many participating State and federal inspectors, thereby allowing scarce monetary resources to be more fully devoted to inspecting pipelines; *and*

WHEREAS, New regional facilities would be open to all regions of the country and allow for increased flexibility and course offerings; *now, therefore be it*

RESOLVED, That the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, convened at its 127th Annual Meeting in Austin, Texas, urges the United States Congress to direct PHMSA to establish additional, regionally-located pipeline safety training facilities and to authorize and appropriate all necessary funds for said facilities.

Sponsored by the Committee on Gas

Recommended by the NARUC Board of Directors November 10, 2015

Adopted by the NARUC Committee of the Whole November 11, 2015