

For Immediate Release

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NARUC
National Association of Regulatory
Utility Commissioners

New NARUC Gas-Electric Working Group to Address Growing Grid-Related Challenges

WASHINGTON (November 22, 2023) — At its recent Annual Meeting and Education Conference, National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners President Julie Fedorchak announced the establishment of a new 15-month initiative to better harmonize the gas and electric industries to improve the reliability of both systems.

The electric industry is more reliant than ever on the gas industry to fuel electricity generation. However, the gas industry is largely designed and constructed to deliver gas for home heating and industrial processes, which means gas infrastructure and markets are misaligned from electric markets. This lack of coordination between these two systems presents reliability concerns, as demonstrated during recent winter storms (e.g., Uri and Elliott), where dependence on gas in both systems is high.

Gas-Electric Alignment for Reliability (GEAR) will convene a small group of state regulators and industry representatives to develop solutions to better align the gas and electric industries to maintain and improve the reliability of both energy systems on which our nation depends for power. GEAR will recommend actions to address specific problems identified by numerous reports, including: the North American Energy Standards Board Gas-Electric Harmonization Forum, the Reliability Alliance Report (developed by the Natural Gas Supply Association, the Interstate Natural Gas Association of America and Electric Power Supply Association), the North American Electric Reliability Council and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's analyses of Storms Uri and Elliott.

GEAR will provide an update of its work at the 2024 NARUC Annual Meeting and Education Conference and a set of recommendations at the 2025 Winter Policy Summit.

“The safety and reliability of the grid is job number one for regulators and the power sector,” said Fedorchak, a North Dakota Public Service Commission regulator. “GEAR will zero in on one of our biggest reliability risks, the miss-alignment of the gas and electric power systems. This regulator-led group will bring together key industry experts with the perspectives and experience needed to get to the root of these persistent problems and develop some solutions.”

Fedorchak has appointed Georgia Commissioner Tricia Pridemore as chair, New Hampshire Commissioner Carleton Simpson as vice chair and as at-large members Michigan Commissioner Daniel Scripps, Arizona Commissioner Lea Márquez Peterson, Texas Commissioner Jimmy Glotfelty and Minnesota Chair Katie Sieben.

In addition, the Working Group will be joined by individuals representing: (1) a gas utility, (2) an electric utility, (3) a Regional Transmission Organization or Independent System Operator, (4) an intrastate pipeline, (5) an interstate pipeline, (6) a producer and (7) a gas processor.

To learn more about GEAR, see the official charter at bit.ly/3Ram9fR.

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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.