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NARUC
National Association of Regulatory
Utility Commissioners

National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners Set to 'Bridge the Divide' under New Leadership *NARUC Board Adopts a Series of New Resolutions*

WASHINGTON (November 22, 2019)—The National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners concluded its 131st Annual Meeting and Education Conference in San Antonio, Texas, with new leadership elected and a set of new resolutions approved by the board.

Mississippi Public Service Commission Chairman Brandon Presley was installed as the new president, who announced NARUC's focus during his term. The theme, *Bridging the Divide*, is aimed at closing the gap in access to utility services, particularly high-speed Internet access, between urban/suburban areas and rural communities. Presley also announced a taskforce focused on rural broadband disparities.

Along with Presley, other officers elected were First Vice President Paul Kjellander of the Idaho Public Utilities Commission and Second Vice President Judith Jagdmann of the Virginia State Corporation Commission. All officers assumed their positions at the close of the meeting.

Presley succeeds, Iowa Utilities Board Member Nick Wagner, who presided over the meeting, which featured general sessions covering topics such as a debate on energy resource options, a discussion with Federal Energy Regulatory Commissioner Richard Glick and challenges and opportunities presented by artificial intelligence applications in the energy sector. Guest speaker Russell Gold, *Washington Post* reporter and author of *Superpower*, challenged regulators to "think outside of the box" to meet the challenges of an inflexible, outdated energy system.

Wagner announced a new collaborative with federal partners, such as the Department of Energy, to address the regulatory challenges to comprehensive implementation of cybersecurity measures at the bulk power and distribution-level electric systems. Also, a [national survey](#) on the priority issues for utility commissioners was announced.

Resolutions

Several new resolutions were approved by the NARUC Board of Directors, which included:

- ***Resolution on Best Practices in Data Collection and Reporting For Utility Services Delinquencies in Payments and Disconnections of Service***
- ***Resolution on FCC Proposal to Allow Unlicensed Operations in the 6 GHz Spectrum Band***
- ***Resolution to Regarding the Introduction of Automated Speech Recognition Only IP Captioned Telephone Service***

See the [substantive](#) resolutions at bit.ly/NARUCAnnualResolutions19.

Terry Barnich Award

The Terry Barnich Award, which recognizes state commissioners and staff who promote international cooperation among utility regulators and the development of professional regulation, was given to Andrew O. Melnykovich, communication director for the Kentucky Public Service Commission. The award is named in honor of former Chairman of the Illinois Commerce Commission Terrence "Terry" Barnich. He was killed on Memorial Day, May 25, 2009, while working as the deputy director of the State Department office overseeing U.S. reconstruction projects in Iraq. The Terry Barnich Award is the highest honor bestowed by NARUC's Committee on International Relations. More details on this year's award is available at naruc.org/barnichaward.

Next Meeting

The NARUC Winter Policy Summit will be held in Washington, D.C., February 9-12, 2020, at the Renaissance Washington Hotel.

Related

[Mississippi PSC Chair Brandon Presley Elected to Lead U.S. Utility Commissioners](#)
[NARUC Releases National Survey Results Pointing to an Evolving Energy Industry](#)
[Andrew O. Melnykovich Honored with NARUC's Barnich Award for International Work](#)

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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.