



NEWS RELEASE
GEORGIA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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PSC Approves Plan To Aid Low-Income Elderly With Natural Gas Bills

ATLANTA – The Georgia Public Service Commission (PSC or the Commission) today approved, by a 4-1 vote with Commissioner Stan Wise dissenting, a two-part plan that would provide \$10 million to help low-income senior citizens pay for their natural gas service. The Commission adopted a proposal introduced by Commissioner Robert Baker that would provide an initial \$2 million grant to assist low-income seniors who have had their natural gas service disconnected or are subject to disconnection. Assistance will be provided on a dollar for dollar matching fund program with no limit on the amount any one consumer may receive. The proposal seeks a third-party agency that would receive the money and disburse it to eligible recipients.

In addition, the Commission adopted an amendment to the Baker proposed offered by Commissioner David Burgess that provides a \$50 monthly credit over a five month period on natural gas bills of senior citizens who qualify as low-income with their gas marketers. The credit begins with the November 2001 billing cycle and ends with the March 2002 billing cycle.

Senior citizens who are age 65 or over with an annual total household income of \$12,000 or less are eligible for both forms of this assistance.

The \$10 million for the grants and credits will come from the Universal Service Fund pursuant to legislation passed by the 2001 General Assembly that requires the Commission to use the fund primarily to assist low-income consumers.

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