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From the Office of Commissioner Stan Wise
News Release

Commissioner Stan Wise Completes Eventful Year As President of National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners

Atlanta, November 18, 2004 – Commissioner Stan Wise says it has been an eventful year during his 15-month tenure at the head of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC). Wise recently turned over the NARUC Presidency to Marilyn Showalter, Chairman of the Washington State Utilities and Transportation Commission, during NARUC'S Annual Convention in Nashville, Tennessee.

Wise said, "High on the agenda has been new telecommunications technologies, such as Voice Over internet Protocol, new rounds of court battles on telecommunications issues, and rising natural gas prices." Wise noted the recent Federal Communications Commission ruling that states commissions have limited jurisdiction over the fast growing internet-based telephone service. Wise is concerned that the FCC failed to address whether VoIP providers must pay fees into the Universal Service Fund for bringing telephone service to rural areas and emergency 911 services.

He noted that a federal court ruling this year also limited state commission's authority to set prices charged by the Baby Bells for competitors' access to their networks. "We're now waiting for the FCC to issue a new set of rules on this issue," Wise said.

In response to soaring natural gas prices, Wise says regulators at the convention approved a resolution urging Congress to expand the boundaries off the West Coast for natural gas exploration.

The National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissions (NARUC) members include the governmental agencies that are engaged in the regulation of utilities and carriers in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. NARUC's member agencies regulate telecommunications, energy, and water utilities.

Commissioner Wise is serving in his second six-year term on the Georgia Public Service Commission having been re-elected in November 2000.

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