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From the Office of Commissioner Angela Speir
News Release

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Commissioner Speir Issues Statement On Atlanta Gas Light Decision

Atlanta, June 10, 2005 – Commissioner Angela Elizabeth Speir says the vote today by a majority of the Georgia Public Service Commission to approve a settlement of the Atlanta Gas Light Company rate case falls short of protecting the Company's ratepayers. Speir says, "The Commission originally cut rates by \$21.9 million in its April 29, 2005 order. The proposed settlement is only \$5 million a year, less than a quarter of the original order."

While the settlement freezes rates for five years, it freezes them at higher rates than in the original Commission order. "Rate stability certainly can be a good thing but you have to balance the value of rate stability against what you are giving up in order to get that rate stability. Most consumers, I believe, would rather have lower rates that fluctuate than unreasonably high rates that are stable," Speir added. In addition there is no mechanism to share over-earnings with consumers which deprives them of the opportunity to benefit if there are excess earnings."

The settlement allows the Pipe Replacement Program (PRP) to increase automatically even if the Company is grossly over-earning. By extending the PRP from 10 to 15 years, the settlement ignores our Pipeline Safety Staff recommendations to keep the PRP at 10 years amid strong concerns about safety issues.

Commissioner Speir is serving as the Commission Chairman this year. She was first elected to the Commission in 2002.

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