



Contact: Stan Wise
Phone: 404-657-4574
Phone: 404-358-5664
www.psc.state.ga.us

Georgia Public Service Commission

244 Washington St S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30334
Phone: 404-656-4501
Toll free: 800-282-5813

For Immediate Release

2-09

From the Office of Commissioner Stan Wise NEWS RELEASE

Commissioner Stan Wise Urges Congress to Move Cautiously on Mandating Renewable Energy Portfolios *Says One Size Fits All Approach Would Harm Ratepayers*

Atlanta, February 26, 2009 – Stan Wise, Georgia Public Service Commissioner, testified today before the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee in Washington, D.C. that a one size fits all renewable energy policy would do more harm than good both to Georgia and Southeastern United States utility ratepayers. “I am concerned that a “one size fits all” federal Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) mandate fails to recognize that there are significant differences among the states and regions in terms of available and cost-effective renewable energy resources,” Wise said, “and that having such a standard in energy legislation will ultimately substantially increase consumers’ electricity bills.”

Wise warned that forcing southeastern utilities to comply with arbitrary renewable resource portfolio requirements will harm ratepayers in the region, “because of the limited amount of renewable resources, enormous amounts of money will flow from ratepayers in Georgia and the southeast to developers or utilities in other parts of the country or to Washington, D.C.”

He said if Congress decides to impose mandated renewable energy then it should take into account the following considerations:

- States should be allowed to develop renewable or clean energy standards that take into account the resources available in the state or region. This will ensure state to state equity while maximizing the benefits of expanding clean energy.
- Targets and timetables should be practical and allow state or regional variations depending on the resources available.
- The definition of qualifying resources that would count toward compliance with a federal standard should be expanded from the list in current proposals. In this regard:
- Existing hydro should count towards compliance the same as existing wind and solar.
- Nuclear generation should be included due to the fact that it emits no carbon.

- The definition of biomass should be expanded to include all recoverable wood material. This would include whole trees which are currently excluded from credit toward compliance.
- Energy efficiency should be included as a resource that would count toward compliance. This is a resource that is being expanded in Georgia and the southeast and its use should not be limited in any federal standard.
- Utilizing municipal solid waste for energy production should be included toward compliance. This is a renewable resource that is available across the country and its use will reduce other environmental impacts from its disposal.
- Finally if there are Alternative Compliance Payment provisions then payments under such a program should remain in the state where the utility ratepayer resides. This money should be available for energy investments and programs closest to and that will have the best chance of benefiting the ratepayer who will be paying the cost.

The subcommittee invited Commissioner Wise to testify at the hearing titled “Renewable Energy: Complimentary Policies for Climate Legislation.”

Commissioner Stan Wise has served on the Georgia Public Service Commission since 1995 and previously served as Commission Chairman in 1997, 1999 and 2006. He is a past President of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) and currently is a member of the NARUC Board of Directors. Commissioner Wise’s full biography is available on the Commission web site at <http://www.psc.state.ga.us/pscinfo/bios/wise.asp>

###