

NEWS RELEASE

Office of Commissioner Brandon Presley MISSISSIPPI PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION NORTHERN DISTRICT

Presley Tapped to Lead National Effort on Rural Gas Expansion

Jackson, MS (April 17, 2017) – Public Service Commission Chairman Brandon Presley has been chosen to lead a national task force to develop best practices and recommendations regarding the expansion of natural gas service to rural and underserved areas of America.

National Association of Regulatory Utilities Commission (NARUC) President Robert F. Powelson of Pennsylvania appointed Presley as co-chair of the task force which will begin work in the coming months. Chairman Presley has long advocated for natural gas expansion in Mississippi, crafting policies and incentives on the state level to attract infrastructure in rural areas.

“I have seen first-hand how expanding natural gas service can lower the cost of living for Mississippians. It is an honor to help lead this effort to look at ways to grow America’s energy infrastructure and make our nation more energy independent. I thank NARUC President Powelson for this honor,” said Chairman Presley.

Many rural communities, which comprise residential, industrial and commercial customers, lack access to low-cost natural gas because of infrastructure issues—local distribution lines and gas utility services are unavailable. These communities must rely on bottled propane, heating oil and other more expensive fuels. The Natural Gas Access and Expansion Task Force will analyze the potential demand for the service extension and expansion of natural gas infrastructure and identify alternative or unconventional approaches to reaching these unserved and underserved areas.

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During the eight-month term of the task force, the group's main focus will be to prepare an analytical report that will:

- study current access, expansion and service extension policies for underserved and unserved areas;
- examine the need for access and expansion including case studies and review of the barriers and obstacles to such access;
- recommend potential mechanisms to address the benefits and opportunities for access and expansion and identifies alternative or unconventional approaches to reaching unserved and underserved areas; and
- compile a national "best practices" collection on natural gas access and expansion to underserved and unserved areas.



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