



**NARUC**  
National Association of Regulatory  
Utility Commissioners

For Immediate Release

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## **Mississippi PSC Chair Brandon Presley Elected to Lead U.S. Utility Commissioners**

### *Announces Creation of New Taskforce on Rural Broadband Service*

San Antonio (November 19, 2019) — Members of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners have elected Mississippi Public Service Commission Chair Brandon Presley as the Association's next president. The election was part of NARUC's 131<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting and Education Conference in San Antonio, Texas, November 17-20.

NARUC is a national advocacy and education association that represents the interests of utility regulators in U.S. states and territories.

During his installation speech, he spelled out a yearlong theme: *Bridging the Divide*, aimed at ensuring that all undeserved communities—including rural areas such as those in many parts of Mississippi—benefit from modern utility services. He also noted a goal of identifying and closing other gaps (resources, training, technology, etc.) that impede regulators and industry alike from best representing the public interest. He also announced his plan to assemble a taskforce looking at rural broadband service across the nation.

In his installation remarks, Presley said that “many challenges exist for the least, the last and the left out” and he expressed a dislike for the term ‘ratepayer.’ “They’re a customer—a person. We’ve got to keep that in the forefront of our minds.”

Further elaborating on his theme, he observed the “growing gulf between connectivity in urban areas and suburban areas and rural areas in this country to what is the electricity of the 21<sup>st</sup> century: high-speed Internet service. I hope in the next year, we can be progressive, we can be alert and on the lookout for opportunities to make real, impacting decisions and policies that translate back to the people.

He pointed out the important end-users of utility services who should not be overlooked, such as the family farmers, small business owners, industries and working families who rely on decisions made by regulators. “There’s no greater satisfaction in life than knowing that you left something better than you found it,” he concluded.

The installation speech was preceded by Monday’s election of NARUC officers, which included nominations from North Carolina ToNola Brown-Bland and Connecticut Commissioner and former NARUC President John (“Jack”) Betkoski. These remarks are often filled with humor, bits of trivia and insights into the personality of the new leadership.

Presley, who was appointed to NARUC’s Executive Committee earlier this year, was elected to the Mississippi PSC for the Northern District of Mississippi in 2007 and was re-elected in 2011, 2015 and 2019. Before joining the PSC, he served as the mayor of Nettleton from 2001 to 2007, at the age of 23, one of the youngest individuals to hold that post. He also serves on the NARUC Board of Directors and is a member of the Committee on Consumers and the Public Interest and the International Relations Committee. He is a former member of the board of directors of the National Regulatory Research Institute and serves on the advisory committee for the New Mexico’s State University Center for Public Utilities, as well as the advisory committee for Midcontinent Independent System Operator. He is a graduate of Harvard University’s Kennedy School program for State and Local Government Executives.

Presley will officially succeed Iowa Utilities Board Member Nick Wagner, at the close of the meeting on November 20 and will preside over NARUC's next meeting, the Winter Policy Summit, February 9-12, 2020, in Washington, D.C.

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***NARUC is a non-profit organization founded in 1889 whose members include the governmental agencies that are engaged in the regulation of utilities and carriers in the fifty States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. NARUC's member agencies regulate telecommunications, energy, and water utilities. NARUC represents the interests of state public utility commissions before the three branches of the federal government.***