

July 22, 2020



**FROM THE DESK OF
COMMISSIONER
BRENT BAILEY
CENTRAL DISTRICT OFFICE**



The Central District is pleased to bring you the latest information concerning utility rates, project developments, Public Service Commission actions and other news you can use. I hope you will find this information to be a useful resource to learn about the Public Service Commission, consumer issues and the continuous work we are doing for the citizens in the Central District and across the state of Mississippi. Thank you again for allowing me to serve you in this capacity.

Brent Bailey

.....



NARUC — The Voice of State Public Service Commissions

The National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) was founded in 1889 to serve the public interest by seeking to improve the quality and effectiveness of public utility regulation. It is a non-profit organization dedicated to representing the state public service commissions who regulate the utilities that provide essential services such as energy, telecommunications, power, water, and transportation. NARUC's members include all 50 states, the District of Columbia and U.S. territories. In addition, the Association extends membership to federal agencies, Canadian provinces and international agencies.

NARUC's members have an obligation to ensure the establishment and continuity of utility services and to ensure that such services are provided at rates and conditions that are fair, reasonable and nondiscriminatory for all consumers. Members operate under [governing policies and procedures](#) as well as a [code of ethics](#).

NARUC provides a range of services to its members. From legal expertise, to technical assistance, to communications support, to access to federal officials, industry experts and consumer groups. The Advocacy Program tracks congressional bills, testifies before federal courts and agencies, provides updates on regulatory activities, and more. The Education Program helps new commissioners learn their challenging jobs in an expedited manner and the Center for Partnerships and Innovation provides issue-specific white papers and webinars on areas such as energy efficiency, solar or natural gas. Recent examples include [Smart Grid Interoperability](#) and [Electric Vehicles: Key Trends, Issues and Considerations for State Regulators](#). NARUC also created the [National Regulatory Research Institute](#) (NRRI) to produce and disseminate high-quality research to support and improve public interest decision making.

DID YOU KNOW

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSIONERS ARE
POPULARLY ELECTED IN 11 STATES.
COMMISSIONERS ARE APPOINTED IN
THE OTHER 39 STATES. THERE ARE A
TOTAL OF 201 SEATS ON PUBLIC
SERVICE COMMISSIONS ACROSS THE
COUNTRY.**



Continued...

An important component of NARUC's operational structure is the functionality of the [eight standing committees](#). These committees propose resolutions that, if approved, set NARUC policy on Congressional, Federal, and Industry matters. The committees are populated by state public service commissioners and hold educational sessions and panel discussions on relevant issues in order to best serve NARUC members. My committee requests are still pending at NARUC leadership.

Were it not for the COVID-19 pandemic, I and other Commissioners and staff of the Mississippi Public Service Commission would likely be in Boston, MA this week for the NARUC [Summer Policy Summit](#). These meetings are where members gather to set policy, share best practices, and discuss crucial industry issues.

This year, the meeting has gone virtual. From July 20-22, commissioners, state and federal staff, utility representatives, trade association leaders and other stakeholders came together in virtual meeting rooms to examine and discuss a range of issues, many in the context of COVID-19. Sessions have explored:

- *Broadband service gaps and the roles state commissions can play to deliver universal coverage;*
- *Challenges and opportunities to expand supplier and workforce diversity;*
- *The outlook for rate-payer funded energy efficiency and clean energy programs;*
- *How consumers and utilities will rely on communications networks in the future;*
- *The role of natural gas as electric utilities pledge significant carbon reductions;*
- *How the electrification of transportation could change demand across the grid and impact rates;*
- *Regulatory, resilience and leadership lessons learned during the COVID-19 crisis and more...*

While I could participate remotely and virtually in this Summer Policy Summit, the pandemic has caused the cancellation of the NARUC New Commissioner Orientation, Critical Issues Forum and other opportunities to engage with commissioners and industry leaders from around the country to exchange information and experiences on key issues that state utility regulators face on a daily basis.

NARUC also has affiliated independent regional associations comprised of commissioner members. The Southeastern Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (SEARUC) is a non-profit corporation whose purpose shall be the advancement and education of commission regulation through the study and discussions of subjects concerning the operation and supervision of public utilities to protect the interests of the people with respect to regulation in the Southeastern States. SEARUC also promotes cooperation among the commissions of the 11 Southeastern states and the territory of Puerto Rico. Unfortunately, COVID-19 caused the cancellation of SEARUC's Annual Education Conference. With any luck, we can participate in in-person meetings and conferences by 2021 and continue to build those key relationships needed for professional growth.





Continued...

LAST WEEK *at the* MPSC

- ✎ 20 entities filed applications totaling \$74,764,109 under the Mississippi Electric Cooperatives Broadband COVID-19 Grant Program for funding to support immediate expansion of broadband internet access in unserved and underserved areas of Mississippi. The Public Utilities Staff will next evaluate the applications for compliance with program criteria and rules. Applicants must match any grant dollars with an equal contribution of non-grant monies for the proposed project(s). Successful applicants will be notified on July 28.
- ✎ Purchased Gas Adjustment Audits (for the period October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019) were performed by Carr, Riggs & Ingram LLC and submitted to the MPSC on behalf of [Atmos Energy](#), [CenterPoint Energy Resources](#), and [Spire Mississippi](#). The audits evaluate monthly allowable purchased gas costs and over or under recovery of those costs on a monthly and cumulative basis.
- ✎ Entergy Mississippi, LLC filed its [variance report](#) for June 2020 in accordance with its Energy Cost Recovery Rider Schedule ECR-4 and the Power Management Rider Schedule PMR-12. The report indicated a \$61.6 million over recovery due primarily to a combination of a reduction in natural gas demand for fuel and sustained historically low natural gas prices. Entergy is currently returning part of this over recovery in the form of bill credits through September 2020.
- ✎ Lingo Telecom of the South filed a [petition](#) to cease operations in Mississippi and to transfer its customers to Matrix Telecom.
- ✎ Mississippi Power Company filed its [compliance tariffs](#) for Performance Evaluation Plan (Rate Schedule PEP-6) and Ad Valorem Tax Adjustment Clause (Rate Schedule ATA-2). Rate is effective January 1, 2021.
- ✎ The Town of Flora provided [supplemental information](#) in support of its petition for initial certificate to operate and maintain a sewer system in Madison County. The subject area is the Andover Subdivision and is located more than one mile beyond the city limits of Flora.
- ✎ The [Southern Renewable Energy Association](#), [Flora Real Estate Development](#) and [Sierra Club](#) filed its comments and recommendations in response to Entergy Mississippi's initial Stakeholder Workshop pursuant to the development of EML's Integrated Resource Plan.
- ✎ Orders providing Notice of Telephonic Hearing were issued for [Cane Creek Solar LLC](#) and [Moonshot Solar LLC](#). The hearing will take place at 10 am on August 4, 2020.
- ✎ **Save the Date:** The [Notice of Remote Public Meeting](#) has been posted for the August 4, 2020 Docket Meeting of the MPSC. The meeting will be telephonically at 10:00 am.



Last week, our Consumer Complaint Specialists handled a total of **18** complaints in the Central District.

Electric Companies	9
Telecommunications	9

Last week, the Central District received a total of **140** complaints from consumers against potential telemarketers through our no call app, website and mail-ins. The top three general issues reported by consumers are related to auto warranties, insurance, and health products/prescription drugs.

We encourage consumers to file telemarketing complaints with the Federal Trade Commission at <http://www.donotcall.gov/> in addition to filing complaints with the Mississippi Public Service Commission.