

July 23, 2021



**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

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Talking Utility Policy in the Shadow of the Rockies



For the first time since February 2020, the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners held an in-person event that brought thought leaders, regulators, industry, consumer advocates, and others together for 4 days of discussions on utility policy, technology, consumer interests and much more. I was excited to join nearly 600 people in Denver, Colorado, for the 2021 Summer Policy Summit held July 18 - 21. Members of the



Commission staff and various district staff also attended.

It was a packed agenda covering a range of issues from regional electricity transmission, to broadband funding, to cybersecurity concerns, to electric vehicle planning, to water infrastructure needs and so much more. My week started off with a dialogue regarding the actions that the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) is taking to maintain transmission system reliability and ensure adequate access to generation resources. That was followed by sessions on technological commercialization challenges, interregional transmission needs, natural gas decarbonization and cybersecurity risk reduction. I then participated in a meeting with fellow



Southeast Utility Commissioners to review the agenda for our Southeastern regional meeting to be held in October in Tennessee and conduct other business.

I was honored to be invited to moderate the NARUC Committee on Electricity's panel on Decarbonizing the Grid with Hydropower, Pumped Storage and Advanced Nuclear Power. Speakers included a former Commissioner of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, V.P. of the National Hydropower Association, and a Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Dept. of Energy. This session explored how these technologies can assist in meeting emission reduction targets while also valuing and enhancing power reliability and generation flexibility. I plan to discuss these topics in future newsletters.



Later, I participated in a roundtable panel with fellow Commissioners at the Committee on Energy Resources and the Environment to discuss how energy efficiency programs and clean energy technologies have fared during the COVID-19 pandemic. While Mississippi has seen an uptick in utility-scale renewable energy interest and 3 major utilities that operate in Mississippi have set aggressive carbon reduction goals, growth in energy efficiency programs and distributed generation installations have been static. Between the panels and sessions, it was meetings with other Commissioners, project developers, energy investors and non-governmental organization representatives.

I wrapped up my time in Denver participating in the Organization of MISO States (OMS) Board of Directors Meeting where we took action on certain comments to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and had discussions on how future transmission project costs could be recovered and options to address the transmission constraint between MISO South and MISO North/Central.

Other NARUC Actions

The Committee on Electricity has released its [Resource Adequacy Primer for State Regulators](#), which provides an overview of resource adequacy and why it is foundational to reliable electric service. Organized in three sections, the primer is intended to provide a basic explanation of resource adequacy practices throughout the United States.

NARUC submitted its [list of 10 nominees](#) to FERC to serve on the new Joint Federal-State Task Force on Electric Transmission. The task force will address important issues related to electric transmission that affect both state and federal authority and respective regulatory processes.

MS Farm Bureau Federation Summer Commodity Conference

Upon my return from Denver, CO, I visited with many good friends from around the state that were attending the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation's (MFBF) Summer Commodity Conference held at the Trade Mart Center at the Mississippi Fair Grounds. The Commodity Conference is a chance for producers of crops, livestock, forest products and more to receive up-to-date and timely information on issues impacting U.S. agriculture.

In addition to visiting with MFBF President Mike McCormick, I was excited to reconnect with long-time friend Andrew Walmsley who is now Director of Congressional Relations at the American Farm Bureau Federation in Washington, D.C. Andrew started his career at the Florida Farm Bureau while I was on staff at MFBF. He came to Mississippi to update MFBF members on federal climate legislation and policy actions that could have varying effects on land management decision-making.

Critical Consumer Issues Forum

The Critical Consumer Issues Forum (CCIF) will host an online release of its latest report on *Supporting Electricity Customers Through Times of Crisis: Being There When It Matters Most*. For the agenda, please [click here](#). After [registering](#), a confirmation email will be sent, which includes a Zoom link that can be added to calendars and a link to join the event. The event will take place on June 27 at 12:30 pm CT.

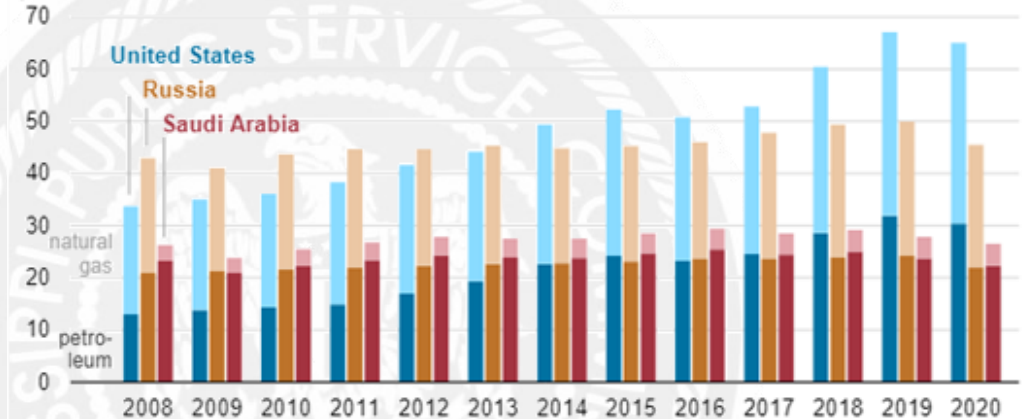




Other News

The U.S. Energy Information Administration has recently released a series of interesting statistics regarding U.S. production, exports and pricing of petroleum and natural gas resources. After record high production in 2019 and even accounting for the impacts of COVID-19, the United States produced more petroleum and natural gas than any other country during 2020. U.S. petroleum and natural gas output in 2020 totaled 66.9 quadrillion British thermal units (quads), which was more than both Russia's 45.5 quads and Saudi Arabia's 26.5 quads.

Estimated petroleum and natural gas production in selected countries (2008–2020)
quadrillion British thermal units



With the high levels of domestic production and despite extreme volatility in global markets, U.S. crude oil exports reached a record high in 2020. Through 2021, exports have remained just below those 2020 record levels driven by higher oil prices in the international market and efficient pipeline and port infrastructure in the Gulf Coast region.

Even with the high levels of natural production over the past several years, U.S. natural gas prices at the Henry Hub is at the highest price during any summer since April 2014. Prices averaged \$3.67/MMBtu through the first two weeks of July. More natural gas exports (reducing the supply available for domestic use), an increase in consumption for electric power generation (according to NOAA, [June 2021 was the hottest June on record](#)) and less injection into underground storage has contributed to the natural gas price increase.

Mississippi Lost Population per 2020 Census

Mississippi saw its first population decrease in 60 years, according to preliminary 2020 U.S. Census Bureau data. Mississippi has a population of 2,961,279 million people, marking a decrease of 6,018 since 2010. Mississippi was one of only three states to see a population decline in the 2020 census. In the 22 [counties in the Central District](#), all but two counties (Madison and Rankin) lost population. Washington County had the largest percentage decrease (16.17%) while Madison County had the largest increase (11.85%). Hinds County had the largest numerical loss of 17,319. Of the 20 counties in the Central District that lost population, the total loss was 58,802. The two counties that saw an increase in population gained 26,026. For the entire [Central District](#), it experienced an overall net loss of 32,776 citizens.



Last Week at the MPSC

The Commission issued a [Request for Proposals \(RFP\) for Legal Services](#) inviting qualified, Mississippi-based law firms to assist the Commission with various matters and potential representation on regional and federal entities. All proposals must be received by the Commission no later than August 2, 2021.

FROM THE DESK OF COMMISSIONER BRENT BAILEY CENTRAL DISTRICT OFFICE



- ✎ **Southern Renewable Energy Association (SREA)** filed an [Objection and Supplemental Response](#) to **Mississippi Power Company** regarding a data request in the Integrated Resource Plan docket.
- ✎ **The Public Utility Staff** filed [Comments](#) to **Mississippi Power Company's** Integrated Resource Plan.
- ✎ **The Public Utilities Staff** filed a [written request](#) for a copy of the complete closing package of all documents which were involved in the closing of the sale of the **Knollwood system** to **Great River Water**.
- ✎ **Great River Utility Operating Co., LLC** filed confidential amendments to its asset purchase agreements with an [amendment](#) filed under Docket No. 2021-AD-115 and an [amendment](#) under Docket number 2021-AD-116. **Great River Utility Operating Co., LLC** also filed [evidence](#) of closing for approved sale and transfers in docket numbers [2021-AD-115](#) and [2021-AD-116](#).
- ✎ **CenturyLink Communications, LLC d/b/a Lumen Technologies Group Mississippi** filed revised [tariff](#) pages.
- ✎ The **Commission** adopted a [Scheduling Order](#) regarding **Entergy Mississippi's** petition for a certificate of public convenience and necessity to acquire, construct, own, operate and maintain a substation and related transmission lines and other facilities in Desoto County.
- ✎ **Spire Mississippi** filed its [compliance tariff](#) and the **Commission** issued an [order](#) approving said compliance tariff. **Spire Energy** also filed its [Petition](#) to extend the Supplemental Growth Rider to support infrastructure expansion.
- ✎ **BCM One, Inc.** filed its [Notice of Consummation](#) of a transaction that resulted in a material change to the ownership and control.

LOOKING AHEAD:



On July 26 -27, I will be on the MS Gulf Coast for the 2021 MML Annual Conference. The Central District will have a booth and I will be presenting on a panel on Tuesday. For a copy of the agenda: [https://](https://www.mmlonline.com/media/2106/90th-annual-conference-agenda.pdf)

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Come join us at the Neshoba County Fair next week! We are excited to get back to Founders Square. I will kick off the Thursday morning, July 29 speeches at 9:30 a.m. So, grab some coffee or a mimosa and a fan, and come hear about what the PSC has done this last year.



Last week, our Consumer Complaint Specialists handled a total of **31** complaints in the Central District.

| | |
|--------------------|----|
| Electric Companies | 22 |
| Telecommunications | 5 |
| Water/Sewer | 3 |
| Natural Gas | 1 |

Last week, the Central District received a total of **321** complaints from consumers against potential telemarketers through our no call app, website and mail-ins.

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.