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NEWS RELEASE

Commissioner Espinoza Appointed to Serve On New Telecommunications Task Force

SANTA FE – At the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) Summer Committee meetings, NARUC President Lisa Edgar of Florida announced the formation of a new telecommunications task force. The mission of the Telecommunication Act Modernization (TeAM) Task Force is to ensure that the states’ voice is heard and that NARUC is positioned to respond quickly to any effort to amend the laws governing the nation’s telecommunications sector.

This initiative has developed as a response to the transformative changes that are evident in the telecommunications sector. There is already significant momentum to revisit the many laws and regulations shaping this space to ensure that these policies accurately reflect the constantly evolving communications marketplace. From the states’ perspective, these legislative and administrative efforts should also consider ambiguities regarding the states’ roles in this sector.

“The level of legislative, regulatory and consumer activity in modern communications is unprecedented,” said President Edgar. “TeAM Task Force will be a prime vehicle for ensuring that NARUC and its members are actively engaged in these discussions. Privacy concerns, reliability and security of advanced communications networks, and consumer-oriented roles for state commissions are just a few of the relevant issues we will address.”

The TeAM Task Force is established for two years, from July 15, 2015, through July 15, 2017. During that period, one of the core activities will be focused on providing an updated negotiating framework for any pending federal rewrite of the federal telecommunications law.

Task Force Chair, Commissioner Ronald A. Brise of Florida, noted the convergence of disciplines that will be engaged. “One of our essential tasks will be working with other technical experts and stakeholder groups to help inform an array of legal, regulatory, public policy, economic, financial and social policy considerations,” he said.

“This initiative comes at an ideal time,” said Commissioner Chris Nelson of South Dakota, also a member of TeAM Task Force. “There are complex telecommunications issues that states and their citizens are dealing with every day, which require focused attention and interaction with key policymakers at the national level.”

Commissioners serving on TeAM Task Force include: Michael A. Caron (Connecticut); Upendra Chivukula (New Jersey); Johann A. Clendinen (Virgin Islands); Elliott F. Elam Jr. (South Carolina); Valerie Espinoza (New Mexico); Dan Lipschultz (Minnesota); Doug Little (Arizona); Phil Montgomery (Wisconsin); and Karen Charles Peterson (Massachusetts).

“I am honored to have been chosen to represent the western states in this critical endeavor that will enable New Mexicans to be heard at the national level,” Commissioner Valerie Espinoza stated. “I look forward to working with the distinguished members who were selected to serve on this task force. Together we can implement ideas and advocate change that has been long overdue.”

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 50 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.

About the NMPRC

The NMPRC regulates public utilities, telecommunications companies and motor carriers operating in the State of New Mexico. It also administers the State Fire Marshal’s Office, the New Mexico Firefighters Training Academy in Socorro, N.M., and the Pipeline Safety Bureau.

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