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**APGA Releases Statement on DOE’s Grid Study**

*Washington, D.C. (August 24, 2017)* – The American Public Gas Association (APGA) commends the Department of Energy (DOE) for its efforts to ensure the reliability, resiliency and affordability of the electricity grid and we strongly support Secretary Perry’s efforts to enhance our energy reliability and security. Clearly, natural gas has played, and will play, an important role in achieving these goals for the U.S. electricity system.

Natural gas is distributed directly to over 73.5 million homes and businesses for a wide variety of uses, such as cooking, water and home heating. In doing so, the direct consumption of natural gas provides consumers about 38 percent more Btu’s than does electricity. Additionally, this is accomplished for only about 15 percent of what electric costs. This conservatively saves gas utility customers about $479 billion per year.

In addition to these benefits, the direct consumption of natural gas offers improved energy reliability, comfort and reduced levels of overall pollutants. Natural gas direct-use in American homes, offices, stores and factories is an energy of consumer choice, an alternative to using electricity that delivers many significant benefits – economic, environmental, health and comfort, energy conservation and national security.

The direct consumption of natural gas also alleviates undue burdens upon an overtaxed electrical infrastructure. As consumers’ electric bills continue to increase, they have seen their gas bill remain level or even decrease.

Given these benefits, it is APGA’s view that greater access to natural gas service would provide relief for our congested electrical infrastructure and improve the diversity and reliability of our energy network, while offering resiliency and lowering homeowners’ and businesses’ energy costs. Natural gas appliances free up critical capacity and increase flexibility for the electric grid all while reducing emissions and costs.

Interestingly, the message of the DOE study is that market forces, combined with environmental regulation, have led to changes in the electrical mix. When allowed to compete in an open market, natural gas service is the clear choice of consumers, while reducing overall emissions.

A fundamental component of a reliable energy network is to utilize diverse primary fuel sources and delivery mechanisms. The natural gas infrastructure in the U.S. is unmatched in safely and efficiently delivering reliable, low cost energy to the American people. By providing more U.S. homes and businesses direct access to natural gas, the direct-use of natural gas can and will play a central role in improving the reliability and affordability of the energy network.

APGA President Bert Kalisch said “The DOE study reaffirms what we’ve long argued, America needs a reliable, resilient and affordable energy system that minimizes consumer costs. That can best be achieved by allowing consumers choice. We are confident consumers will choose direct consumption of natural gas when it is in their best interest. APGA looks forward to working with the Department of Energy and other stakeholders towards enhancing our energy security.”

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*APGA is the national association of municipally and publicly-owned local distribution systems. There are about 1000 public gas systems serving more than 5 million customers. These public gas utilities are not-for-profit retail distribution entities that are owned by, and accountable to, the citizens they serve. They include municipal gas distribution systems, public utility districts, county districts, and other public agencies that have natural gas distribution facilities.*