



AMERICAN PUBLIC GAS ASSOCIATION

February 9, 2009

Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Harkin:

On behalf of the American Public Gas Association (APGA), I express our strong support for President Obama's nomination of Gary Gensler to serve as Chairman of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC).

APGA is the national association for publicly-owned natural gas distribution systems. There are approximately 1,000 public gas systems in 36 states and over 700 of these systems are APGA members. Publicly-owned gas systems are not-for-profit, retail distribution entities 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.

Over the last several years, APGA has expressed its members' concerns about an increasing lack of confidence in the natural gas marketplace. We have also expressed strong support for actions to be taken to ensure that consumers do not bear additional cost burdens as a result of speculative investment.

In statements to Congress, Mr. Gensler pledges to protect consumers through strong oversight and taking measures that guard against the excessive speculation we have seen in the recent past. If confirmed, he also commits to work to increase transparency in the marketplace. APGA applauds Mr. Gensler's recognition that the CFTC, which has experienced a 20% reduction in staff despite the fact that the markets have grown exponentially, needs additional resources to protect consumers. APGA has maintained that it is critical that the "cop on the beat" has the necessary manpower and tools to perform its job.

Given his background in both the industry and the Treasury Department, APGA is confident that Mr. Gensler will bring the necessary experience and perspective to the position. Mr. Gensler has an understanding of the marketplace that he will use to act in the best interests of American consumers and markets.

Given the critical role energy markets play and the need for stronger oversight at the CFTC, it is our hope that the Committee will move quickly to approve Mr. Gensler's nomination and that Committee members on both sides of the aisle will support him by helping to ensure a confirmation vote in the full Senate.

Sincerely,

Bert Kalisch
President & CEO