FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CCIF Releases New Report Providing Consumer-Focused Principles

Nashville, TN (**July 26, 2016**) – The Critical Consumer Issues Forum (CCIF) today released a new report, "Consumer Solutions: Meeting Consumer Needs on all Levels," focused on meeting consumers' diverse energy expectations while addressing challenging but important regulatory and public policy issues. The report was released at the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) 2016 Summer Committee Meetings in Nashville, Tennessee. CCIF is a collaborative that includes members of NARUC, the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates (NASUCA), and the Edison Electric Institute (EEI).

The principles were developed through a series of dialogues among state commissioners, consumer advocates and energy companies. In addition to these major stakeholders, commercial customers participated in discussions to share their priority issues and related regulatory challenges and opportunities.

As reflected in this new report, these discussions shed light on specific energy needs of commercial customers and underlying corporate objectives regarding sustainability, efficiency, cost, etc. Although they had little or no prior interaction with regulators and consumer advocates, commercial customers engaged in candid and productive dialogue with CCIF participants about challenges that must be considered in the process of addressing their needs. These principles take this valuable input into account to set the stage for sustainable progress in the energy space as well as widespread consumer access and satisfaction.

This year's report places a special emphasis on flexibility, while reinforcing and building upon earlier principles in the areas of system planning and integration of consumer resources, and consumer protection and education. Energy companies are advised to evaluate new cost-effective technologies and to pursue opportunities to meet consumer needs. Additionally, state legislators and commissioners are encouraged to consider increasing flexibility for energy companies to pursue these opportunities in order to better serve consumers, both in front of and behind the meter, provided that non-participating customers are protected.

While offering guidance and assistance, the CCIF principles are not intended to represent or override any individual or collective policies or positions of NARUC, NASUCA, EEI, or other participating organizations. Leaders from each of the major participating organizations commented on the significance of the latest CCIF initiative.

"Consumers more than ever are making clear that they have unique needs and preferences for energy services. Regulators and everyone in the industry has a responsibility to listen to them," said NARUC President and Montana Public Service Commissioner, Travis Kavulla. "I'm happy to say there is broad consensus that the industry should accommodate customer preferences, even

while ensuring that other customers have the choice to receive, and utilities the obligation to provide, a more basic service at just and reasonable rates."

"The CCIF principles take into account feedback from consumers and other major stakeholders in the energy industry in order to provide guidance regarding the difficult task of meeting more customized customer needs while avoiding potential cost shifts to other consumers. In addition, the report addresses the continued importance of consumer education and protection and reinforces the overarching goal of reliable and affordable access to energy resources," said NASUCA President and Montana Consumer Counsel, Bob Nelson.

"The electric power industry is undergoing a major transformation and we are working on innovative solutions to meet the evolving needs and expectations of our customers," said David Owens, EEI executive vice president of business operations and regulatory affairs. "The CCIF principles represent an important collaborative effort aimed at driving the innovation and change needed to unlock the energy grid's full potential in order to deliver value to all of our customers."

Launched in 2010, CCIF engages state commissioners, consumer advocates, and electric companies to develop mutually agreeable solutions to energy challenges.

For a copy of the new CCIF principles, please visit www.CCIForum.com.

Contact:

Katrina McMurrian, Executive Director
Critical Consumer Issues Forum (CCIF)
Phone: 615.905.1375
katrina@CCIForum.com

— CCIF —