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**APGA Supports Executive Order to Promote Energy Independence and Economic Growth**

Washington, D.C. (March 29, 2017) – The American Public Gas Association (APGA) commends the Trump Administration for its Executive Order signed by President Trump yesterday to promote energy independence and economic growth. APGA has consistently argued that the abundant supplies of U.S. natural gas can play a critical role in increasing our energy independence, providing affordable energy to all Americans, and enhancing our economic growth. APGA strongly supports this action. The President’s Executive Order will help ensure that U.S. consumers, and the economy as a whole, fully benefit from our abundant and affordable natural gas reserves.

“We loudly applaud President Trump for taking action that will eliminate a long-term trend of federal overreach,” said Bert Kalisch, APGA president and CEO. “This executive order is an attempt to restore a common sense approach that balances economic freedom and environmental protection. We believe this directive will allow American companies to compete and workers to thrive.”

APGA has long-maintained that natural gas is a foundational fuel for America through the 21st Century. However, over the last several years, APGA has seen an increasing amount of rules or policies that either discourage the direct-use of natural gas or promote fuel switching away from natural gas. In many cases, this fuel switching leads to higher costs to consumers, greater emissions, and less efficient use of America’s primary energy resources.

In recognition of the challenges that the direct-use of natural gas has faced, APGA has been engaged with Spire Inc. and others through a Direct-Use Task Group to communicate the benefits that the direct-use of natural gas provides while working to preserve and enhance the opportunity of American consumers to take full advantage of those benefits.

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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.