

Manke, Adam P

From: Jim Kibler <jkibler@aglresources.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2015 12:54 PM
To: Raum, Bree; Aston, Junior; Garrison, Shaun; Ransdell, Tim H; Massaro, Thomas J.; Esparza, Jose' L.; Hope, Doreen C.; Adams, Melissa E.; Clay, Kathryn; Mackay, Sean C; Nugen, Matthew D.; Beck, Elizabeth; Hearing, Jim; Edmonds, Bill; Baldwin, George M.; Richard Hyde; Cameron-Dukes, Donise A.; Sczudlo, Becky; Kiran L. Crout; Mark Skerjan; Adams, Melissa E; Traweek, Lori; Arnaout, Mariam; Ashley Duckman; Ranfone, Jim; Gardner, Gary; Cunningham, Allison; Lowe, George; VBarnes@grayglobaladvisors.com; Kristjansson, Sue; sheri.lauten@eversource.com; Hearing, Jim E.; Keck, Christine H.; McGill, Chris; Murphy, Rick; Rubin, Jake; Sames, Christina; Rogers, Kyle; O'Shea, Jennifer; Meyer, Richard; Matthews, Steve; Justin Gray
Subject: Chicago Tribune LTE - Furnace Rule

Energy policies need common sense

10:41 am, April 15, 2015

The Department of Energy is proposing new energy efficiency standards for natural gas furnaces that would increase customer costs, energy usage and emissions. We believe this is the exact opposite of what updated energy efficiency standards should do.

Nicor Gas supports common-sense energy policy. However, the DOE proposal would mandate the next-generation furnaces that generally work well in new homes. Unfortunately, they are not easily retrofitted into existing homes without a large expense, often \$2,000 to \$3,000.

The DOE proposal would swing the nation away from natural gas in favor of high-cost electric heating, which relies on grid energy from higher carbon-emitting and more expensive sources such as coal. DOE admits that its proposal will cost low-income customers more and that fewer of them would benefit from the proposal than customers at other income levels.

Fortunately the new rules are not set in stone. While the natural gas industry works with Congress to ensure that consumers can make their own choices about home heating, Nicor Gas encourages consumers to voice their views on this important issue with their elected officials.

— *Beth Reese, president, Nicor Gas, Naperville*

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Jim Kibler

Senior Vice President
External Affairs & Public Policy
404-584-3256 office
404-354-1097 mobile
404-584-4601 fax
jkibler@aglresources.com



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