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**NAESB Members Ratify Model Business Practices on Billing
And Payment for Retail Gas and Electric Transactions**

HOUSTON – Model business practices on the crucial issue of billing and payment for retail natural gas and electricity transactions have been ratified by the NAESB membership. This is the second set of retail model business practices approved by NAESB.

The model business practices were developed jointly by the retail natural gas and retail electricity quadrants and were unanimously approved by the Executive Committees of the two quadrants in December.

The model business practices cover a variety of steps and interactions between suppliers and customers, including calculating billable charges, printing and distributing bills, posting payments, remittance, and transferring the data necessary to accurately bill and process payments from customers for energy, transmission/transportation and distribution.

There are three billing options: dual billing, consolidated billing and single retail supplier billing.

The model business practices are intended to be applied within the context of regulatory requirements and agreements between the parties documented in a billing services agreement.

“These model business practices on billing and payment follow on the heels of the approval of a comprehensive set of practices on retail creditworthiness,” said NAESB Board Chairman Leonard Haynes, executive vice president and chief marketing officer, Southern Company. “The retail energy market will benefit greatly from the hard work and creativity of these NAESB volunteers.”

Board Vice Chair Mark Maassel, president of the Indiana Energy Group of NiSource Inc., who represents the retail gas quadrant, said, “The retail electric and gas quadrants have shown that they know what the energy market needs to function efficiently. These model business practices on billing and payment will undoubtedly gain widespread acceptance.”

NAESB, formed in January 2002, is an independent and voluntary North American organization that develops and promotes the use of business practices and electronic communications standards for the wholesale and retail natural gas and electricity industries. NAESB is the successor to and is modeled after the Gas Industry Standards Board, which was established in 1994 and now constitutes the wholesale gas quadrant of NAESB. NAESB’s members include over 400 companies and organizations that participate actively in the retail and wholesale natural gas and electricity markets.

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