

Colorado PUC: An Overview

Doug Dean, Director



COLORADO

Department of
Regulatory Agencies

Public Utilities Commission

Value to the State

- PUC is 100% Cash Funded
 - Fixed utility fund
 - Transportation fund
- PUC saves Colorado consumers over \$7.50 for every \$1.00 spent to run the agency

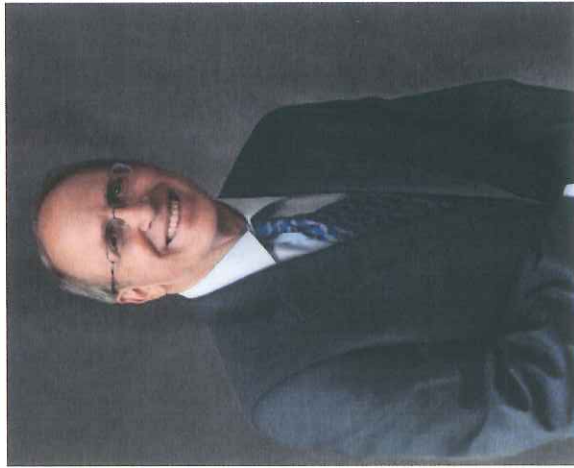
History

- Railway Commission established in 1885
- Public Utilities Act passed in 1913
 - Granted authority over all utilities
 - Foundation of PUC statutes today
 - Created “Public Utilities Commission”
- PUC added to Constitution – 1954
- PUC type 1 transfer to DORA - 1969

Commissioners

- Three commissioners
- Appointed by the Governor
- Confirmed by majority vote of State Senate
- Serve four-year terms – may be reappointed
- No more than two commissioners from one political party
- One commissioner appointed Chairman

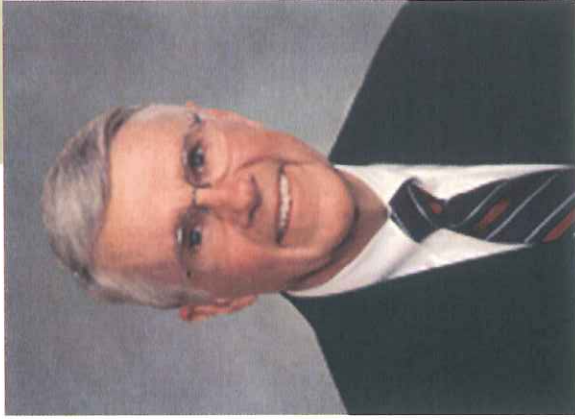
Commissioners



Joshua Epel (D)
Chairman
2011 - 2019



Pam Patton (D)
2012 - 2016



Glenn Vaad (R)
2014 - 2017



Our Mission



The Colorado Public Utilities Commission serves the public interest by effectively regulating utilities and facilities so that the people of Colorado receive safe, reliable, and reasonably-priced services consistent with the economic, environmental and social values of our state.

Director

- Appointed by Executive Director of DORA with approval of Commissioners
- Responsibilities:
 - Manage operations of the PUC to carry out public utilities law pursuant to C.R.S. 40-2-103
 - Implement Commission policies, procedures and decisions
 - Direct administrative functions and manage staff

Commission Responsibilities

- Quasi-Legislative – Creates rules
- Quasi-Judicial – Ensures due process for all parties
- In general, the PUC serves the public interest by balancing needs of consumers and utility service providers

Five Areas of Responsibility - Utilities

- Operating Authority – Determine benefit to consumers in granting right to do business
- Rates – Maintain just and reasonable utility rates for consumers
- Service – Ensure consumers have reliable and responsive utility service
- Safety – Minimize dangers for consumers related to regulated utility service
- Infrastructure – Ensure a constructive regulatory environment to recover capital

Responsibility for Non-Utility Motor Carriers

- Minimum safety standards for the benefit of providers, consumers, and the public
- Minimum insurance requirements
- Certain quality standards
- Determine rates collected by towing carriers for towing and storage of motor vehicles in absence of owner consent.

PUC Structure

The PUC is comprised of 95 FTE and is organized into 11 sections, each led by a section chief.

External Affairs

- Responds to consumer complaints and questions
 - Secured \$119,397 in refunds for consumers in FYE 2014
- Media inquiries and informational materials
 - Publishes Consumer FYI pamphlets to assist consumers in understanding utilities and regulation

Policy Advisors

- Advise the Commissioners and Administrative Law Judges on energy, water, and telecommunications matters
- Within the context of case records, provide expertise in financial analysis, economics, policy, and engineering
- Organize and manage proceedings on contested matters
- Facilitate Commissioners' open decisions meetings
- Craft written decisions after Commissioners' deliberations

Regulatory & Legal Affairs and Administrative Support

- Regulatory and Legal Affairs
 - Ensures that appropriate processes and procedures are followed by staff and Commissioners
 - Works with Attorney General's Office to ensure legal services dollars are maximized to greatest benefit of consumers
 - Oversees Commission Rulemaking process

Regulatory & Legal Affairs and Administrative Support (cont.)

- Administrative Support
 - Process all filings and decisions for all regulated industries
 - Administer all Commission agendas and minutes
 - Process all transportation stamps, fingerprints, and over-the-counter permits
 - Administer the Commission's electronic filing system

Research and Emerging Issues

- Researches topics likely to impact utility regulation in the near future
- Assists the Commission to anticipate the future and adjust regulatory practices accordingly
 - Presents “Commissioner Information Meetings” on a multitude of topics
- Administers special projects and rulemaking

Energy

- Staff expertise in electric, natural gas, steam and water facility design, engineering, procurement, construction and operation
- Responsibilities include review of investor-owned utility acquisitions, operations and reliability filings.
- Appears as a party in litigated energy cases and advises Commissioners in uncontested matters
- Limited oversight of electric cooperative RES compliance

Economics

- Economists and Financial Analysts function as litigants before the Commission, recommending just and reasonable rates, while balancing consumer rates with the financial health of the utility
- Conducts thorough audits of the natural gas, electric, steam and water investor-owned utilities
- Negotiates settlements with utilities which avoids costly litigation
- Provides expertise to other sections within the PUC performing economic analysis and investigating customer billing complaints

Telecommunications

- Expertise in financial analysis, economics, operations, planning & engineering
- Regulates telecommunications companies & 911 network providers for rates and service quality
 - Serve as advisors to Commissioners on all non-litigated matters
 - Appears as a party in most litigated cases
 - Negotiates settlements with utilities
- Administers state and federal subsidy programs for rural high cost support & low income consumers
- Serves as state telephone number administrator
- Oversees Colorado Relay Program for the deaf, deaf/blind, hard of hearing & speech impaired
- Does not generally, regulate information, wireless, or cable services

Transportation and Administration

- Transportation
 - Includes taxis, limos, shuttles, towing companies, household goods movers, transportation network companies and hazardous materials carriers
 - Jurisdiction limited to intrastate carriers
- Administration
 - Responsible for budget, purchasing, records, computer network, facilities and personnel
 - Oversees Colorado No-Call

Administrative Hearings

- Administrative Law Judges who:
 - Conduct Hearings in contested cases
 - Make Recommended Decisions
 - Assist in rulemaking functions
- Court Reporters who:
 - Record testimony during all Commission hearings and transcribes them as needed

Gas Pipeline Safety

- Safety jurisdiction over 57,277 miles of intrastate natural gas main, service, transmission, and gathering pipelines
- Includes 1,642,985 individual gas service lines
- Fining authority for safety violations
- Investigates pipeline incidents/releases

Rail/Transit Safety Section

- Safety oversight of railroad and light rail crossings
- Safety oversight of rail fixed guideway systems (e.g., RTD Light Rail)
- Establish certain railroad clearance safety standards and railroad peace officer minimum standards
- Does not regulate general safety or rates of railroads
- Must find 20% match funding for FTA Grant
- No highway-rail signalization safety funding appropriations since 2003

Recent Major Cases

- 2011 – Taxi Applications
- 2012-2014 Xcel Energy Electric Resource Plan
- 2013 – present Black Hills Electric Resource Plan
- 2014 – present Xcel Energy Electric Rate Case
- 2014 – Black Hills Electric Rate Case
- 2013 – present Telecom Competitive Areas
- 2014 – present Telecom Reform, HCSTM, Broadband Fund
- 2014 – present Transportation Network Companies (TNCs)
- 2014 – present Distributed Generation & Net Metering

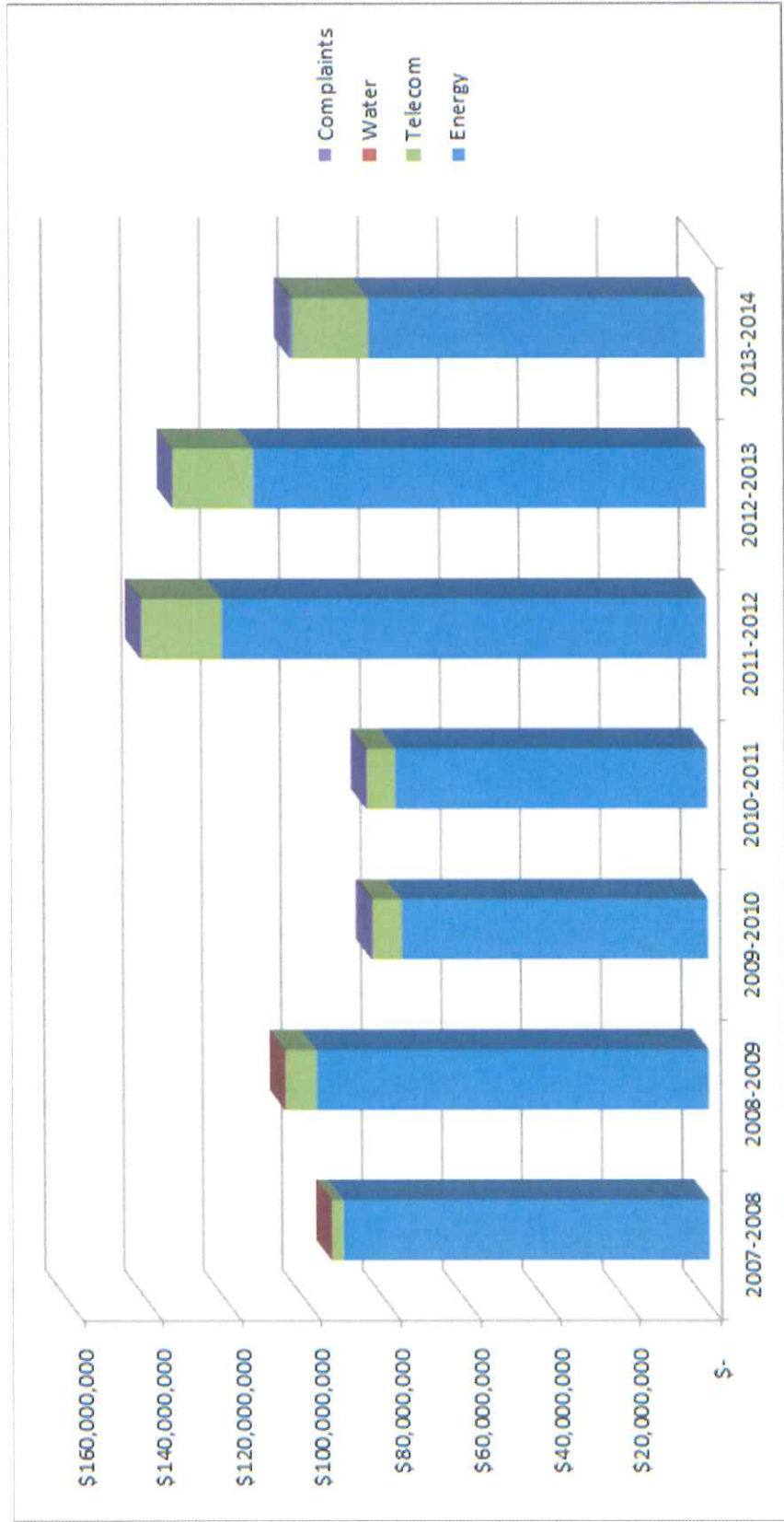
Recent Major Rulemakings

- Practice and Procedure - Clean-up and Update Rules
- Medical Exemption from Tiered Electricity Rates - SB13-282
- Renewable Energy Standards - SB13-252
- Transportation Network Carrier Regulations - SB14-125
- Data Access and Privacy for Gas and Electric
- 9-1-1 ALI Emergency Rules
- Future 2015 - Telecom Reform, HCMSM, 9-1-1
- Future 2015 - Employment Factors for Building Generation Facilities - SB13-1292

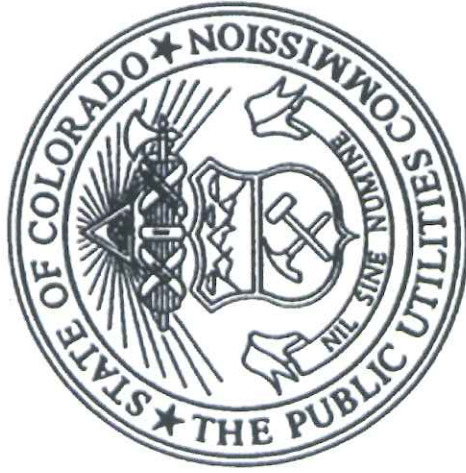
Challenges

- Number of parties in PUC cases has dramatically increased in recent years
- Budgetary challenges
 - Fixed Utilities Fund
 - Motor Carrier Fund
- 2012 workload statistics:
 - E-filings accepted 11,028 filings consisting of 16,240 documents
 - Issued 1,482 decisions
 - Opened 1,303 dockets
 - Processed 603 tariff filings

Rate Case Annual Customer Savings



Questions?



www.dora.colorado.gov/puc