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For Immediate Release

Maryland PSC Schedules Two Public Hearings for Columbia Gas Rate Increase Application

(BALTIMORE, MD-July 6, 2017) – The Maryland Public Service Commission will hold two public hearings on the application of Columbia Gas of Maryland for a $5.2 million increase in its gas rates. The first hearing will be held **Wednesday, July 19, 2017** at **7 p.m.** at the Hagerstown Community College (Career Programs Building, Room 131), 11400 Robinwood Drive in **Hagerstown (Washington County), Maryland.** The second hearing will be held **Thursday, July 20, 2017** at **7 p.m.** at the Cumberland Ramada (Crown South Room), 100 South George Street in **Cumberland (Allegany County), Maryland**. Members of the public who wish to comment on the matter are welcome to attend the proceedings before Public Utility Law Judge Ryan C. McLean.

Columbia Gas of Maryland, a subsidiary of NiSource, Inc., provides gas distribution service to approximately 33,000 customers in western Maryland. The company's existing base rates were approved in October of 2016 by Commission Order No. 87851 in Case No. 9417. According to its application, the need for the rate increase arises principally from Columbia's continued increased investment in the replacement of pipeline infrastructure, increased operation and maintenance expenses, and the company's need for an opportunity to earn a fair and reasonable return on its investment in utility facilities.

Under the rates as proposed in Columbia's supplemental filing, the total bill for a residential customer who purchases seven dekatherms (Dth) of gas from Columbia per month would increase from $84.24 per month to $96.86 per month, or by 14.98%. The total bill for a small commercial or industrial customer purchasing 24 Dth of gas from Columbia per month would increase from $284.31 per month to $317.14 per month, or by 11.55%.

The case filings are available in the electronic docket file (Case No. 9447), which may be viewed or downloaded at www.psc.state.md.us.

(more)

Members of the public may also submit written comments by **July 26, 2017** to:
David J. Collins, Executive Secretary
Maryland Public Service Commission
William Donald Schaefer Tower
6 St. Paul Street, 16th Floor
Baltimore, MD 21202

Those submitting written comments should be sure to reference the case number--9447.

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About the Public Service Commission:

The Maryland Public Service Commission regulates electric and gas utilities, telephone companies (land lines), certain water and sewer companies, passenger motor vehicle carriers for hire (sedans, limousines, buses, Uber, Lyft), taxicab companies (in Baltimore City and County, Cumberland and Hagerstown) and bay pilot rates.

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