

# Governor's Press Conference re: WAPA

December 1, 2007

This is Holland Redfield.

Unfortunately, as we predicted a month ago in our editorial on the WAPA crisis and the PSC's June and August denials of the LEAC fuel escalator, we, the consumer, are going to experience the largest single rate increase in the history of the utility.

Talk about sticker shock, we're talking about a whopping 22.3% increase in your December WAPA bill. Clearly, this could have been avoided if the PSC had had the courage to deal with this issue back in June and August of this year.

If your average light bill was \$200.00, you will now be paying a \$244.60. This annualized increase is \$535.20. If your WAPA bill was \$400.00, take a big gulp because your new bill will be \$489.20 which annualizes to a difference of \$1,070.40. If your WAPA bill had been \$500.00, hang on to your socks, you will now be paying \$611.50 which annualizes to a total bill of \$7,338.00.

The social and political fall-out of these increases cannot be measured and can only be speculated on; we have never been here before. We are talking about lifestyle altering choices which we, as consumers, will have to make. That's choices between food, medicine, gas for your car, tuition for your children or being able to pay your mortgage or rent.

At the Governor's press conference on November 30<sup>th</sup>, you could sense, just by the inflection in his voice, his anger and frustration with the present situation.

We support his position that the adversarial position that the PSC has taken towards WAPA has been counterproductive and destructive and has left the utility and the consumer in a untenable situation.

We also recognize that because of the government owing WAPA about \$18 million that this has had a severe impact on WAPA's cashflow and its ability to perform routine maintenance or maintain an inventory of spare parts, much less invest in upgrades or efficiencies to save consumers money.

We call on the administration and the Legislature to come up with the money and pay WAPA what they are owed just like any consumer has to every month.

We call on the Governor to bring the stakeholders together to sit down and hammer out some solutions and to set a time-certain for the implementation of those solutions. The initiative should have the priority of the space race back in the 60's which put a man on the moon.

We call on the Energy Office to roll up its sleeves and to set up an Energy Smart program to educate our consumers on how to save money on their utility bills. That program should be built around public service announcements in the print & electronic media as well as educational programs and adult education seminars in our public and private schools.

And, don't forget to out the lights when you leave the room.