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American Gas Association Statement about the State of the Union Address

“The direct use of natural gas is helping to meet our national goals of boosting our economy, improving our environment and increasing our energy security.”

Washington, D.C. – American Gas Association (AGA) President and CEO Dave McCurdy issued the following statement regarding President Obama’s State of the Union address:

“President Obama is taking aggressive action at home and abroad to reverse the effects of climate change. The United States has a credible leadership role on this issue, in part, because of the country’s abundant supply of natural gas and the adoption of aggressive fuel economy standards that have led to significant and continued declining emissions. Natural gas is part of the solution to climate change and will help the United States make progress toward ambitious emissions reduction targets.

“Americans want natural gas to heat their homes, warm their water and cook their food because it is comfortable, efficient and affordable. Households with natural gas versus all-electric appliances save an average of \$840 per year. In fact, low domestic natural gas prices have led to savings of almost \$69 billion for residential natural gas customers over the past four years. In addition, households with natural gas versus all-electric appliances produce 37 percent lower greenhouse gas emissions.”

The American Gas Association has released a report entitled “[Dispatching Direct Use: Achieving Greenhouse Gas Reductions with Natural Gas in Homes and Businesses](#).” This document serves as a resource to companies, policymakers and other stakeholders in advancing direct use of natural gas in homes and businesses as an emissions reductions tool. Here are some facts from this report:

- The average size of American homes has grown since the 1970s and more customers than ever enjoy the comforts and benefits of clean natural gas, yet residential natural gas usage has steadily decreased.

- Even as 30 million more customers have connected to natural gas, residential carbon dioxide emissions from natural gas direct use have remained relatively flat for 45 years.
- The average home in America uses 50 percent less natural gas than it did 40 years ago due in part to installation of tighter-fitting windows and doors, better insulation, utility sponsored energy efficiency programs and increasingly more efficient natural gas appliances.
- Ratepayer funded natural gas efficiency programs have grown significantly during the last decade, both by count and by expenditure. The U.S. has approximately 121 natural gas utility rate-payer funded efficiency programs in 39 states.
- Natural gas utilities budgeted more than \$1.4 billion for efficiency programs in 2014, projecting a 25 percent increase in spending.
- Through these efficiency investments, utilities helped customers save 136 trillion Btu's of energy and offset 7.1 million metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions in 2012.

The report looks at gas utility activities already in place that encourage customers to switch to natural gas, a transition that can help increase energy savings and emissions reductions. It also contains considerations for policymakers and stakeholders that may wish to use direct use as an emissions reduction tool or compliance option under the EPA Clean Power Plan.

“The direct use of natural gas is helping to meet our national goals of boosting our economy, improving our environment and increasing our energy security,” McCurdy said.

[Dave McCurdy](#) represented the Fourth Congressional District of Oklahoma in the United States Congress from 1981 until 1995.

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About the [American Gas Association](#)

The American Gas Association, founded in 1918, represents more than 200 local energy companies that deliver clean natural gas throughout the United States. There are more than 72 million residential, commercial and industrial natural gas customers in the U.S., of which 95 percent — just under 69 million customers — receive their gas from AGA members. Today, natural gas meets more than one-fourth of the United States' energy needs.