

ELCON *PRESS RELEASE*

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*****PRESS ADVISORY – PRESS BRIEFING AT 10 AM, MONDAY, DECEMBER 1*****

At 10:00 am on Monday, December 1, the Electricity Consumers Resource Council (ELCON) will hold a press briefing to release a new Policy Brief entitled “Utility Energy Efficiency Programs: Too Cheap to Meter?” The briefing will be in ELCON’s office, 1333 H Street, NW, West Tower 8th Floor.

Energy Efficiency (EE) issues are now on the front burner. The incoming Obama Administration has repeatedly spoken of energy efficiency as a primary tool for achieving energy independence, and several congressional leaders have advocated EE as well. The Edison Electric Institute and the Natural Resources Defense Council recently issued a joint statement, which was then discussed at the recent NARUC Convention, advocating the supposed benefits of utility-administered energy efficiency programs – and guaranteeing that utilities be “kept whole” as power sales volumes decline.

But the impact on consumers is often overlooked. Industrial electricity users are strong supporters of energy efficiency investments. They have to be to reduce manufacturing costs and stay competitive in domestic and international markets. Every time they retool their factories, they must factor in all cost-effective opportunities.

The thrust of ELCON’s Policy Brief is that claims of increased energy efficiency resulting in net reductions in electricity consumption are similar to claims made about nuclear energy in the 1970s – nuclear energy, too cheap to meter – with results that routinely fall short of expectations. Rather, ELCON’s position is that, in order to be effective, energy efficiency programs should produce measured and evaluated net savings in energy use and carbon emissions. Consensus-drive national standards and protocols must be developed to identify and quantify those reductions.

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ELCON, established in 1976, is the national association of large industrial users of electricity from virtually every manufacturing sector. ELCON members seek a reliable supply of electricity at competitive prices and have long supported federal and state efforts to achieve that objective. More information about ELCON is available at ELCON’s website, www.elcon.org.