

prospectively upon Commission approval.

(g) *Scope.* This section does not go beyond the Commission's determination in the April 10, 1985, policy statement (Docket No. PL85-1-000) that take-or-pay buyout and buydown costs do not violate the pricing provision of the Natural Gas Policy Act of 1978 (NGPA). It is not intended to affect take-or-pay prepayments made by pipelines and included in account 165 and in their rate bases. Nor does it address the issue of whether take-or-pay prepayments to a producer for gas not taken and which cannot be made up violate the Title I pricing provisions of the NGPA. This policy statement applies only to buyout and buydown costs paid by pipelines that are transporting under part 284 of this chapter, under existing contracts, and is not intended to disturb in any way take-or-pay settlements previously entered into between pipelines and their producer suppliers.

[Order 500, 52 FR 30351, Aug. 14, 1987, as amended at 52 FR 35539, Sept. 22, 1987; Order 500-F, 53 FR 50924, Dec. 19, 1988; 54 FR 52394, Dec. 21, 1989; Order 581, 60 FR 53064, Oct. 11, 1995]

§ 2.105 Gas supply charges.

An interstate natural gas pipeline that transports under part 284 of this chapter may include in its tariff a charge, not related to facilities, for standing ready to supply gas to sales customers in accordance with the following principles:

(a) The pipeline may not recover take-or-pay or similar charges from suppliers by any other means.

(b) The pipeline must allow its sales customers to nominate levels of service freely within their firm sales entitlements or otherwise employ a mechanism for the renegotiation of levels of service at regular intervals.

(c) The pipeline must announce prior to nominations by the customers a firm price or pricing formula for the service, and hold that price or pricing formula firm during the interval arranged in paragraph (b) of this section.

(d) By nominating a new level of service lower than its current level, a customer has consented to any abandonment sought by the pipeline commensurate with the difference between

the current level of service and the nominated level.

[Order 500, 52 FR 30352, Aug. 14, 1987; 52 FR 35539, Sept. 22, 1987, and 54 FR 52394, Dec. 21, 1989]

RULES OF GENERAL APPLICABILITY

§ 2.201 [Reserved]

STATEMENT OF GENERAL POLICY AND INTERPRETATIONS UNDER THE NATURAL GAS POLICY ACT OF 1978

§ 2.300 Statement of policy concerning allegations of fraud, abuse, or similar grounds under section 601(c) of the NGPA.

Recognizing the potential for an increasing number of intervenor complaints predicated on the fraud, abuse, or similar grounds exception to guaranteed passthrough, the Commission sets forth the elements of a cognizable claim under section 601(c)(2) which it expects to apply in cases in which fraud, abuse, or similar grounds is raised. The provisions of this policy statement do not establish a binding norm but instead provide general guidance. In particular cases, both the underlying validity of the policy and its application to particular facts may be challenged and are subject to further consideration. The procedure prescribed conforms with the NGPA's general guarantee of passthrough by placing the burden of pleading the elements and proving the elements of a case on intervenors who would allege fraud, abuse, or similar grounds as a basis for denying passthrough of gas prices incurred by an interstate pipeline.

(a) In order for the issue of fraud, as that term is used in section 601(c) of the NGPA, to be considered in a proceeding, an intervenor or intervenors must file a complaint alleging that:

(1) The interstate pipeline, any first seller who sells natural gas to the interstate pipeline, or both acting together, have made a fraudulent misrepresentation or concealment; and

(2) Because of that fraudulent misrepresentation or concealment, the amount paid by the interstate pipeline to any first seller of natural gas was higher than it would have been absent the fraudulent conduct.