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Katten Hosts 2014 Women’s Energy Summit Bringing Together Top Women Business Leaders to Discuss Critical Water and Energy Issues

(CHICAGO) More than 100 top women business leaders in the energy and environment industry today convened for the inaugural Women’s Energy Summit to discuss pressing water and energy issues.

The day-long Summit, led by the Illinois Commerce Commission, was attended by regulators, industry leaders, government officials and community representatives, and was held at The Metropolitan Club, located on the 66th floor of the Willis Tower.

“This is an important opportunity for some of the female power players in the industry to come together and discuss crucial issues involving not only critical diversity issues but also substantive issues regarding the future of the utility industry and the intersection of energy and environmental regulations, as well as potential solutions,” said Shannon Broome, partner and head of Katten’s Air Quality and Climate Change practice, who was a Summit panelist.

Featured speakers included Susan Hedman, Region 5 Administrator with the US Environmental Protection Agency; Anne Pramaggiore, president and CEO of ComEd; Susan Story, president and CEO of the American Water Works Company, Inc.; and Christopher Crane, president and CEO of Exelon Corporation. The speakers and panelists addressed issues including safety, compliance, ethics and operational excellence; the water/energy nexus; the future of the utility model; and diversity, inclusion and advancement for women in the energy industry.

“It takes this type of leadership and initiative to move the needle when it comes to improving diversity and inclusion, especially in traditionally male-dominated fields such as engineering and other technical areas,” said Leslie Minier, Katten partner and chief diversity officer. “Discussions such as these are vital when it comes to improving advancement opportunities for women and minorities.”

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Other panelists at the Summit included:

- Hilda Pinnix-Ragland, vice president of corporate public affairs, Duke Energy (moderator)
- Julia Johnson, president of NetCommunications, LLC and former Florida public service commissioner
- Thomas Linnquist, managing director, utilities division, Russell Reynolds Associates
- Katrina McMurrian, executive director, Critical Consumer Issues Forum and former Florida public service commissioner
- Jodi Caro, vice president, general counsel and secretary of Integrys Energy Group (moderator)
- Cheryl Maletich, vice president distribution system operations, ComEd
- Lisa Sparrow, president and CEO, Utilities, Inc.
- Kellye Walker, senior vice president, secretary and general counsel, American Water Works Company
- Jeanne Witherspoon, chief, Illinois Attorney General Special Litigation Bureau
- Julie Brown, commissioner, Florida Public Service Commission (moderator)
- Maureen Borkowski, chairman, president and CEO, Ameren Transmission Company
- Elizabeth Reese, president, Nicor Gas
- Susan Satter, senior assistant attorney general, Illinois Attorney General Public Utilities Division
- Honorable Ann McCabe, commissioner, Illinois Commerce Commission (moderator)
- Donna Cooper, president, Pepco Region
- Kristin Munsch, senior attorney and policy director, Citizens Utility Board
- Emily Fisher, deputy general counsel, energy and climate, Edison Electric Institute

“The goal for the Summit was to create an environment where men and women could discuss pertinent issues, highlight accomplished women, uplift rising stars and break down barriers, whether perceived or real, for women in the energy industry,” said Sherina E. Maye, commissioner with the Illinois Commerce Commission.

The Women’s Energy Summit was co-sponsored by Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP, BMO Harris Bank, Loop Capital and the National Association of Water Companies.

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