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From the Office of Commissioner Doug Everett  
**News Release**

40-05

### **Commissioner Doug Everett Says Hiring of Consultant in Savannah Fuel Procurement Investigation Will Cost Taxpayers**

Atlanta, September 20, 2005 – Commissioner Doug Everett said today’s Commission vote to hire a consultant to provide consulting assistance to the staff in an investigation of Savannah Electric and Power Company’s fuel procurement practices will cost the taxpayers of Georgia \$65,363. “I am disappointed the Commission failed to hire J.D. Heaton, a consultant we used during the recent Georgia Power fuel case, at no cost to the taxpayers. No one had any derogatory comments about Mr. Heaton’s work.” Everett said instead the Commission voted 3-2 to award the consulting contract to Hayet Power System Consulting at a cost of \$65,363. Everett noted that Heaton had offered his services at no cost to the Commission with Savannah Electric funding the entire cost of the audit.

Commissioner Stan Wise joined Everett in voting no against the Hayet contract and concurs with his colleague’s comments in this news release.

Everett noted J.D. Heaton is an experienced consultant who would have built on the knowledge gained from conducting the recently completed Georgia Power Fuel Case. Everett noted that since the Commission’s budgeted allotment for hiring consultants in rate cases during the fiscal year which ends June 30, 2006 is just over \$98,000, hiring this consultant will leave little for any other rate cases. With the price of fuel reaching record highs, Everett notes there is a chance Georgia Power may file another request for an increase in their fuel cost recovery allowance in this fiscal year. “I am afraid the Commission will not have enough funds to adequately fund consultants to assist us in that rate proceeding,” Everett said, “and using Mr. Heaton would stretch the Commission’s limited funds for the remainder of the fiscal year.”

Commissioner Everett, an Albany native, is serving his first six-year term on the Commission having been elected in November 2002. He served as Commission Chairman in 2004.

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