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**Reliant Energy Announces Close of Retail Sale to NRG Energy and
Successful Conclusion of Strategic Alternatives Process**
Changing Name to RRI Energy

HOUSTON – May 1, 2009 – Reliant Energy (NYSE: RRI) today announced the close of the sale of its Texas retail business to NRG Energy, Inc. In conjunction with the transaction’s close, the company will change its name to RRI Energy, Inc., effective May 2, 2009. The company also announced that its board of directors has successfully concluded its review of strategic alternatives.

The review of strategic alternatives led to the sale of the retail business, which achieved a number of important strategic objectives for the company:

- eliminated \$2 billion of current collateral obligations;
- removed capital requirements associated with contingent collateral requirements;
- enhanced the company’s balance sheet by reducing gross debt to \$3.1 billion and net debt to \$1.5 billion on a pro-forma basis;
- improved the company’s liquidity position, resulting in cash on hand of \$1.6 billion and total available liquidity of \$2.1 billion on a pro-forma basis;
- lowered the overall risk profile for the company going forward by eliminating retail business-related exposures; and
- created a well-capitalized, pure play wholesale generator with more than 14,000 megawatts of power generation assets.

Mark Jacobs, president and chief executive officer of RRI, said, “We have successfully concluded our strategic alternatives process, which resulted in the sale of our retail business. As a well-capitalized pure play merchant generator, we will be well positioned to manage through an uncertain economic climate and deliver value to our shareholders. Although RRI has a solid financial and asset foundation, we continue to believe that size and scale in our industry will be important long-term drivers of shareholder value.”

RRI sold its Texas retail business to NRG for \$287.5 million in cash plus estimated working capital of approximately \$65 million. The company estimates that the net proceeds from the sale after expenses will be approximately \$300 million, an estimated \$240 million of which the company expects to offer to its secured bondholders, pursuant to the terms of the bonds.

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Under the terms of the transaction with NRG Energy, the Reliant Energy name will transfer to NRG. The company's new name, RRI Energy, provides a sense of continuity for the company's stakeholders and draws upon recognition of the company's stock symbol on the New York Stock Exchange.

In addition to the sale of its Texas retail business to NRG Energy, the company successfully completed the sale of its Northeastern retail electric business late last year.

ABOUT RRI

Reliant Energy, Inc. (NYSE:RRI) based in Houston, to be renamed RRI Energy, Inc. on May 2, 2009, provides electricity to wholesale customers in the United States. The company is one of the largest independent power producers in the nation with more than 14,000 megawatts of power generation capacity across the United States. These strategically located generating assets use natural gas, fuel oil and coal. RRI will routinely post all important information on its Web site at <http://www.rrienergy.com>.

FORWARD LOOKING STATEMENTS

This news release contains "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended. Forward-looking statements are statements that contain projections, assumptions or estimates about the outcome of pending legal actions, our revenues, margins, capital structure and other financial items, our plans and objectives for future operations or about our future economic performance, transactions, dispositions, financings or offerings. In many cases you can identify forward-looking statements by terminology such as "estimate," "believe," "continue," "may," "plan(s)," "should," "will," "expect," "outlook," "commitment(s)," "efforts" and other similar words. However, the absence of these words does not mean that the statements are not forward-looking.

Actual results may differ materially from those expressed or implied by forward-looking statements as a result of many factors or events, including, but not limited to, legislative, regulatory and/or market developments, the outcome of pending lawsuits, governmental proceedings and investigations, the effects of competition, financial market conditions, access to capital, the timing and extent of changes in commodity prices and interest rates, weather conditions and other factors we discuss or refer to in the "Risk Factors" section of our filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Each forward-looking statement speaks only as of the date of the particular statement and we undertake no obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statement, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise.

The non-GAAP measures, pro-forma gross debt and net debt include \$443 million related to our REMA lease, and pro forma net debt excludes pro forma cash of \$1.6 billion. The comparable GAAP measure is debt, which on a pro-forma basis would total \$2.6 billion.