

In the Matter of:

UNION ELECTRIC COMPANY d/b/a AMEREN MISSOURI'S TARIFFS TO ADJUST, etc.

ER-2021-0240; GR-2021-0241, VOL. VII

October 07, 2021



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TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

Local Public Hearing

October 7, 2021

via WebEx

Volume 7

In the Matter of Union) File No. ER-2021-0240
Electric Company d/b/a)
Ameren Missouri's Tariffs)
to Adjust its Revenues for)
Electric Service)

In the Matter of Union) File No. GR-2021-0241
Electric Company d/b/a)
Ameren Missouri's Tariffs)
to Adjust its Revenues for)
Natural Gas Service)

CHARLES HATCHER, Presiding
REGULATORY LAW JUDGE

RYAN A. SILVEY, Chairman,
JASON R. HOLSMAN,
GLEN KOLKMEYER,
COMMISSIONERS

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A P P E A R A N C E S

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1 JUDGE HATCHER: Let's go ahead and go on
2 the record. First, I would ask everyone to please
3 mute themselves unless they are speaking. That will
4 cut down on the noise level and prevent any audio
5 feedback.

6 Today is October 7th, 2021. The Missouri
7 Public Service Commission has set this time for a
8 local public hearing to give members of the public a
9 chance to comment about Ameren Missouri's general rate
10 increase application, and that is File Number
11 ER-2021-0240.

12 The Missouri Public Service Commission
13 regulates the rates charged by public utility
14 companies in Missouri to ensure that those rates are
15 just and reasonable. The Commission also regulates
16 the quality of service and safety of the operations of
17 public utilities.

18 The Commission is made up of five
19 Commissioners. The Commissioners are appointed by the
20 Governor to fixed terms and confirmed by the Senate.
21 The Commissioners employ a staff of engineers,
22 accountants, attorneys, financial analysts and other
23 specialists in the field of utility regulation.

24 My name is Charles Hatcher. I'm the
25 Regulatory Law Judge and will preside over this

1 hearing. With me today are Chairman Silvey and
2 Commissioners Holsman and Commissioner Kolkmeier.

3 This is an official hearing of the
4 Missouri Public Service Commission and the statements
5 and testimony of witnesses will be recorded by the
6 court reporter and are given under oath. The
7 Commission has not made any decisions in this case and
8 cannot answer any questions today as they do have to
9 remain impartial until after all of the evidence has
10 been presented.

11 Commissioners, do you wish to make any
12 opening remarks?

13 CHAIRMAN SILVEY: Thank you, Judge. This
14 is Chairman Silvey. I would just like to thank
15 everyone for participating today. This is one of the
16 opportunities we have to hear directly from the
17 customers who will be impacted in these cases so I
18 appreciate you taking the time out to share your
19 thoughts with us. So thank you for that.

20 Judge, I will be turning my camera off to
21 save bandwidth, because I know that we've had issues
22 with lagging in past hearings and I see there's a lot
23 of people so -- but I will be here. Thank you.

24 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, Chairman.
25 That is -- that is correct for those of you just

1 coming on. We have had some technical difficulties,
2 so we do that ask that anybody that is using their
3 video please go ahead and turn that off if you don't
4 need to. But when you do speak, it's a little bit
5 easier for the court reporter if you turn your video
6 back on.

7 Any other Commissioners wish to make
8 opening comments? And it is *6 to unmute if you're
9 calling in on a phone line.

10 COMMISSIONER KOLKMEYER: Thank you,
11 Judge. This is Commissioner Kolkmeier. I just want
12 to echo the Chairman's remarks and thank everyone for
13 participating and giving us their testimony here
14 today.

15 COMMISSIONER HOLSMAN: Judge, this is
16 Commissioner Holsman. Can you hear me?

17 JUDGE HATCHER: Yes, sir. Go ahead,
18 Commissioner.

19 COMMISSIONER HOLSMAN: Okay. Just wanted
20 to thank everybody and also just remind everybody that
21 testimony matters. We're here listening to your
22 positions on -- on these rate cases and we do take
23 into consideration and we thank you for taking the
24 time to share your thoughts with us today.

25 JUDGE HATCHER: Absolutely. Thank you,

1 Commissioners.

2 Let's go ahead and start with entries of
3 appearance for the record. We'll start off with
4 Ameren Missouri. If counsel would like to go ahead
5 and introduce themselves.

6 MR. LOWERY: Thank you, Judge. Appearing
7 on behalf of Ameren Missouri, James B. Lowery, 3406
8 Whitney Court, Columbia, Missouri 65203.

9 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you. And for
10 Commission Staff?

11 MR. KEEVIL: Yes, Judge. Appearing on
12 behalf of Staff of the Missouri Public Service
13 Commission, Jeff Keevil, Post Office Box 360,
14 Jefferson City, Missouri 65102.

15 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, Mr. Keevil.
16 And for Office of the Public Counsel.

17 MR. POSTON: Yeah, good afternoon. Marc
18 Poston appearing on behalf of the Office of Public
19 Counsel.

20 JUDGE HATCHER: We do have six
21 intervenors in this case. I am just going to name
22 those in a list and after I name that list, I'll ask
23 if any counsel would like to introduce themselves.
24 Midwest Energy Consumers Group, Consumers Council of
25 Missouri, Missouri Industrial Energy Consumers, Sierra

1 Club, Renew Missouri, Legal Services of Eastern
2 Missouri, and Natural Resources Defense Council.
3 Again, these are intervenors, these are parties to the
4 case. Are any counsel for those parties present and
5 would like to introduce themselves for the record?

6 For the record, Paul Barrs with Legal
7 Services of Eastern Missouri. Thank you, Judge
8 Hatcher.

9 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, Mr. Barrs.

10 Okay. We will now go ahead and start the
11 hearing. The process I'm going to use is to call the
12 names I have listed on my sign-up sheet in the order
13 that they appear. I have four names. And after I
14 call those four names, I will ask if there's anybody
15 in the -- anyone else listening who would like to make
16 comments who did not give their name.

17 So if you do want to make comments and
18 you didn't sign up, fear not. We will ask that you
19 make your comments just at the end of our list. Let's
20 go ahead and start with the first name. And when I
21 call your name, please go ahead and unmute. And if
22 you're a call-in on a telephone, that will be *6. If
23 you're calling in using your computer, it will be a
24 key there on the app. I will ask you to introduce --
25 state your name and then spell your name for the court

1 reporter.

2 The first name on my list is Charles
3 Buchanan. Is there a Mr. Buchanan here? All right.
4 Only one of the names signed up and specified that
5 they were signing up for the noon hearing today.
6 Shirley Ferguson. Is there a Shirley Ferguson?
7 Again, it's *6 to unmute if you called in on your
8 telephone. Okay. Shuron Jones?

9 MS. FERGUSON: This is Shirley Ferguson,
10 Your Honor.

11 JUDGE HATCHER: Oh, yes, Ms. Ferguson.

12 MS. FERGUSON: Yes, sir.

13 JUDGE HATCHER: All right. What I'm
14 going to do is ask you to spell your name -- last name
15 for the court reporter, if you could do that,
16 Ms. Ferguson.

17 MS. FERGUSON: Yes, sir. My name is
18 Shirley, S-h-i-r-l-e-y, and my last name is Ferguson,
19 with an F. F-e-r-g-u-s-o-n.

20 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, ma'am. If you
21 would raise your right hand, I'm going to swear you
22 in.

23 (Witness sworn.)

24 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you. Ms. Ferguson,
25 if you go ahead and please tell the Commission your

1 testimony.

2 MS. FERGUSON: Yes, sir. Well, first of
3 all, I am a senior citizen and my testimony in terms
4 of the rate increase, I would say that at this
5 particular time it is not good. Because we, as senior
6 citizens, are struggling with the rise of the cost of
7 living, but yet our income is not rising.

8 Now, my personal testimony today is with
9 an issue that I am going through presently with Ameren
10 Electric. I was on a payment plan, but due to a
11 medical emergency recently, I was unable to pay the
12 full amount of the 121 dollars that was required. I
13 did pay 88 dollars, which left a 33 dollars shortage
14 of the amount that was required.

15 A couple of days later, I received a
16 disconnect notice in the amount of \$161.79 with a
17 subject to disconnect after October the 12th, 2021.
18 Now, I had paid what I could and it was more than
19 one-half of my obligation. If I could have met my
20 obligation, I certainly would have.

21 I received -- yesterday I received a new
22 monthly statement showing the amount due as \$286.79 by
23 October the 26th, 2021.

24 I do not understand what's going on with
25 this billing. I'm not saying I do not owe the money.

1 It is looking as if consideration for my trying to pay
2 is being ignored. With all that transpiring with this
3 issue with Ameren, it has increased my financial
4 hardship even more. No consideration was given that I
5 sent more than 50 percent of what the required amount
6 of 121 dollars was. At this point they're putting me
7 in a position for an additional hardship.

8 Now, Ameren is saying that they're
9 committed to their customers, but at this point in
10 time with what they are attempting to put me through
11 on my personal level with what's transpiring now, I
12 find that very hard to believe. And sir, that's the
13 end of my testimony.

14 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, Ms. Ferguson.
15 I appreciate your comments. Can I ask if you would
16 please grab a pen or pencil? I would like to give
17 you --

18 MS. FERGUSON: I do.

19 JUDGE HATCHER: Excellent. I'd like to
20 give you first an 800 number. And this is Ameren's
21 800 customer service number. Ameren provided this
22 before the hearing just in case there were any
23 customers who did have specific questions about their
24 bill.

25 MS. FERGUSON: Yes, sir.

1 JUDGE HATCHER: That's going to be the
2 first number I give you.

3 MS. FERGUSON: Okay.

4 JUDGE HATCHER: It's 1.800.

5 MS. FERGUSON: Okay.

6 JUDGE HATCHER: 321.

7 MS. FERGUSON: Okay.

8 JUDGE HATCHER: 2477.

9 MS. FERGUSON: 2477?

10 JUDGE HATCHER: Right next to that one,
11 Ameren

12 MS. FERGUSON: Yes, sir. I have that
13 Number. It's 1.800.321.2477.

14 JUDGE HATCHER: Yes, ma'am. Let me give
15 you one more 800 number. 800.

16 MS. FERGUSON: Okay.

17 JUDGE HATCHER: 392.4211. This is the
18 Public Service Commission Consumer Services' number.
19 So if you aren't able to work things out with Ameren,
20 or if you are, you're still free to call the Public
21 Service Commission'S Consumer Services' number and
22 they might be able to offer you some assistance as
23 well.

24 MS. FERGUSON: Well, thank you. I
25 appreciate that.

1 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you. Are there any
2 Commissioner questions for Ms. Ferguson?

3 COMMISSIONER KOLKMEYER: No questions,
4 Judge.

5 JUDGE HATCHER: All right. Thank you,
6 Commissioner Kolkmeier.

7 MS. NELSON: Excuse me.

8 JUDGE HATCHER: Yes, ma'am.

9 MS. NELSON: May I have phone number --
10 the second phone number, please? It was 800.392 for
11 the Public Service Commission consumer advocacy.

12 JUDGE HATCHER: 800.392.4211. And if I
13 could get you state your name real quickly for the
14 record.

15 MS. NELSON: Peggy -- Peggy
16 Nelson, N-e-l-s-o-n. Yeah, I didn't get the number.
17 I wanted to make sure I had that. I'm sorry.

18 JUDGE HATCHER: Not a problem. I
19 appreciate that. And I'll repeat those numbers at the
20 end of the hearing as well.

21 Let's move onto our witness list. I'll
22 call again Shuron Jones. And Joanna Lowery? Okay.
23 To unmute, it is *6 if you're on a phone. And if
24 you're on the WebEx app, the mute and unmute button is
25 one of the controls within the app.

1 Now, as promised, I will turn this to any
2 public comment for anyone who would like to make a
3 statement to the Commissioners about Ameren's rate
4 case that did not sign up.

5 MS. NELSON: I would like to add
6 comments.

7 JUDGE HATCHER: Yes. Ms. Nelson. I
8 already have your name. Let me go ahead and swear you
9 in real quick

10 MS. NELSON: Okay.

11 (Witness sworn.)

12 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, ma'am. Please
13 go ahead and give your statements to the
14 Commissioners.

15 MS. NELSON: Well, we're coming out of
16 Covid where a lot of people were out of work and we're
17 all trying to recover. I know that electric is very
18 important, that we have it connected in all of our
19 homes. Like this -- Ms. Ferguson, she's a senior,
20 probably disabled and to have financial problems, all
21 kinds of incidentals happen as you're trying to pay
22 your bills and you can't always meet your obligations.

23 But that just adds more stress that would
24 lead to sickness is what it sounds like happened to
25 her, like she became ill from stress or something.

1 And the fees that keep accumulating should be waived.
2 I would like to ask that they be waived to ease the
3 burden of more stress.

4 Also, disabled people, handicapped people
5 and seniors on a fixed income, I think they should be
6 allowed to pay by ability and have a different rate --
7 like different rates or tiers of what they should pay,
8 like insurance companies have. Pardon me. Like
9 insurance for your drug costs. They have one, two and
10 three tiers and then you have cat-- are we still
11 together? Hello? Oh, shoot.

12 JUDGE HATCHER: Yes.

13 MS. NELSON: Oh, I thought my phone hung
14 up. Okay. But if you could introduce a type of tier
15 payment plan so somebody like Ms. Ferguson could
16 pay -- catch up. The prices of food have escalated
17 higher because we have this impending famine. And
18 it's just really getting harder and harder to pay for
19 everything.

20 To up our prices for electric is going to
21 have to offset something else. And I, for one, am
22 having a hard time figuring how much cheaper I can
23 live or -- and I'm just constantly re-figuring my
24 budget and trying to rearrange everything. It's
25 getting more and more difficult.

1 I have had problems -- my bill with
2 Ameren is paid, but I have had problems getting the
3 money to them if I use the mail. So I have to use
4 auto pay over the phone every month. And some of them
5 charge money for that. And if you would relieve us
6 from these extra fees and extra charges, that would
7 give us a little bit of leeway to get the bill paid
8 for our usage.

9 And to be displaced your home and have to
10 move, that's usually -- are you still there because my
11 phone is making noises? Hello? Hello?

12 JUDGE HATCHER: Yes. I'm sorry. I had
13 myself muted. Go ahead.

14 MS. NELSON: Oh, okay. I didn't know if
15 it had hung up on me again or what. But to be
16 displaced from where you're currently living and try
17 to go some place else and share housing with someone,
18 usually that's an 800 dollars expense. That's
19 pricey.

20 And to try to do it yourself, you're
21 subjecting yourself to -- especially a senior citizen
22 is usually weaker or has realized that they have a
23 limited ability at that point in their -- their life
24 span. They're not going to be able to lift as heavily
25 of things that they used to when they were younger.

1 They're not going to be able to hold up as long during
2 the day. And realizing their limitations may not have
3 been done -- overdo it and they have injuries and have
4 to recover just from -- physically from moving.

5 So I guess these should be handled on an
6 individual basis, but it sounds like we really need --
7 need some guidelines to help people who are consumers
8 that want to pay you, they're trying to pay you, but
9 additional fees and stressing them more with charging
10 extra is just going to make it even worse.

11 So but I -- you know, I like my service
12 with Ameren. Yes, we do have outages. I live in a
13 house that was built in 1940 and our trees are really
14 old. They're 80 years old and they're starting to
15 crumble, especially when we have a dry spell. The
16 branches bring down power lines and then we swelter in
17 the heat. And in the wintertime, the extra burden of
18 ice on the branches does the same thing.

19 So -- but I don't know. I don't know
20 what we're going to do next. But we need to -- more
21 of a breakdown about how to help these people pay
22 their bills. There are churches that will help if
23 you're belonging to a church and -- just like we have
24 food pantries, but I would imagine they're pretty
25 stressed. I don't know how they could offset it in

1 different ways.

2 But I would like to ask you to have --
3 the Public Service Commission have a more efficient
4 way of helping us pay our bill for our usage and waive
5 some of those late fees and things that just make it
6 worse and harder to pay. So that's all I had to say.
7 Thank you.

8 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, Ms. Nelson. I
9 appreciate your testimony. Are there any questions
10 from the Commissioners for Ms. Nelson?

11 CHAIRMAN SILVEY: No questions, Judge.

12 JUDGE HATCHER: All right. Are there any
13 other persons who are in attendance who would like to
14 give their testimony to the Commissioners? We are
15 within a minute or two of closing the hearing if
16 there's anyone else.

17 MS. HILL: I would like to give -- or
18 have a comment. My name's Virginia Hill.

19 JUDGE HATCHER: Yes. Ms. Hill, let me
20 swear you in.

21 (Witness sworn.)

22 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, ma'am. Please
23 go ahead and give your comments to the Commissioners.

24 MS. HILL: Okay. We know that electric
25 is a necessity. It's not a luxury. It's something we

1 have to have and we don't have choices of different
2 companies we can go to for this service. So we're
3 pretty much -- you have to do whatever happens with
4 these rates.

5 But I feel that with all these federal
6 packages that have been -- like the infrastructure
7 package and different things that the government has
8 been giving to companies to help them get through
9 Covid, I can just imagine what Ameren or the electric
10 companies have been given. I'm sure it's
11 astronomical. I just can't believe that we need to
12 impose this rate hike right now.

13 I have a seven-year-old house with extra
14 insulation and is only 1,250 square foot. And in the
15 winter, my electric bill is 300 to 350 a month and I
16 set my heat on 70 degrees. So I'm not keeping my
17 house extra warm or anything. So I think that's
18 really already astronomically high for just a small
19 house like that. I can't imagine what people with
20 large houses must have to pay.

21 So I find it hard to believe that they're
22 really in a situation right now to need this rate
23 increase, which will definitely devastate the
24 consumers even more with all the other things that
25 have been going up.

1 And I just feel like companies, when they
2 want to start new things with their business, that
3 part of that should be expenses that they incur, not
4 put over to the customers all the time to keep
5 increasing the rates. Like I said, we don't have a
6 choice so I feel like this is the only way we can say
7 what we really feel. And that's it.

8 JUDGE HATCHER: Ms. Hill, thank you very
9 much for your comments and testimony. Are there any
10 questions from the Commissioners for Ms. Hill?

11 CHAIRMAN SILVEY: No questions, Judge.
12 And thank you for your testimony.

13 MS. HILL: You're welcome.

14 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

15 I'll ask one last call for any other
16 persons who would like to offer their testimony again.
17 Again, we will be ending the hearing in just a moment.

18 MS. MEYER: I would like to testify,
19 please.

20 JUDGE HATCHER: Yes, ma'am. Please
21 identify yourself.

22 MS. MEYER: Sandra Meyer, M-e-y-e-r.

23 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, ma'am. And
24 let me swear you in.

25 (Witness sworn.)

1 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, Ms. Meyer.

2 Please go ahead and give us your testimony.

3 MS. MEYER: Earlier on the comment
4 section I asked a question regarding the net income of
5 Ameren Missouri and the Ameren representatives were
6 unable to answer that. Since then, I have looked it
7 up. I cannot find just Ameren Missouri, but Ameren
8 Corporation net income for 2020 shows it was
9 871 million dollars. That's net income. I suggest
10 that they take the 300 million that they want to
11 increase our rates by out of that net income.

12 I also would like to ask how they --
13 well, I can't ask a question -- make the comment that
14 it takes -- how they can justify adding temporary
15 employees into their request for rate increases. And
16 that's my comments. Thank you.

17 JUDGE HATCHER: Ms. Meyer, I appreciate
18 your comments. Do any Commissioners have any
19 questions for Ms. Meyer?

20 CHAIRMAN SILVEY: No questions, Judge.

21 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

22 All right. Again, last call. Anyone
23 else who would like to offer their comments?

24 MS. FRIEDERICH: Yes. My name's Kathy.
25 And I'm in St. Louis County, judge.

1 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you. Can I get
2 your last name, Kathy?

3 MS. FRIEDERICH: Pardon?

4 JUDGE HATCHER: I'm sorry. Can I get
5 your last name, ma'am?

6 MS. FRIEDERICH: Yeah, I'm sorry. It's
7 Kathy Friederich, F-r-i-e-d-e-r-i-c-h.

8 JUDGE HATCHER: And let me swear you in
9 real quick, Ms. Friederich.

10 MS. FRIEDERICH: Okay. Thank you.

11 (Witness sworn.)

12 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, ma'am. Please
13 go ahead.

14 MS. FRIEDERICH: I just wanted to mention
15 The Post Dispatch did do several articles on the
16 increases that Ameren has gotten over a prolonged
17 period of time in the millions of dollars. And I
18 think that -- as I mentioned in the question and
19 answer segment, Judge -- we need to look at the assets
20 and where they're drawing any incomes and take it and
21 address -- or take a look at where the money is being
22 spent and if it's being spent properly. That's my
23 comment.

24 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you,
25 Ms. Friederich. Are there any --

1 MS. FRIEDERICH: You're welcome.

2 JUDGE HATCHER: -- questions from the
3 Commissioners by Ms. Friederich?

4 Okay. Hearing none, I'll issue my last
5 call once again. Any persons who would like to give
6 their comments to the Commission?

7 MR. TUTTERROW: Yes. This -- my name is
8 Jesse Tutterrow, T-u-t-t-e-r-r-o-w.

9 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you. Let me swear
10 you in.

11 (Witness sworn.)

12 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you. And please go
13 ahead with your testimony.

14 MR. TUTTERROW: I have several comments
15 to present. First, I want to thank the Public Service
16 Commission for having this hearing and allowing us to
17 express our views. Ameren is a government-imposed
18 monopoly. I cannot buy electricity from anyone but
19 Ameren. Wal-Mart, Amer-- Amazon, no one will sell me
20 electricity except Ameren. And I cannot live in the
21 City of St. Louis without electricity. Therefore,
22 they are a government-imposed no monopoly.

23 I wonder why they spend all their money
24 doing public service announcements talking about clean
25 energy and Ameren Missouri doing this and videos

1 showing installing solar panels when they don't have
2 to convince us to buy electricity from them. We have
3 no choice. Perhaps they should take that money that
4 they're using for commercials and use it instead for
5 improving the infrastructure.

6 For instance, the electrical failure we
7 suffered the second Thursday in August -- I believe it
8 was August the 12th -- took my electricity out from
9 about 7:00 p.m. to 1:38 the following morning. Since
10 that time, I've called Ameren asking them please tell
11 me specifically, exactly what took out my electricity.
12 And they can't do it. "It's a storm" is the basic
13 answer I can get. And yet the neighbors across my
14 street had electricity.

15 It seems like the electric poles running
16 through the alley, every other alley lost electricity.
17 They couldn't tell me why other than that's the way
18 the system is set up.

19 I suggest that the Public Service
20 Commission, before approving this rate increase,
21 require them to be able to provide a specific
22 explanation as to why a customer lost electricity. If
23 it happens to be something of the nature, well, a tree
24 branch fell on the power line -- and certainly the
25 next morning they were all showing these trees

1 intertwined with power lines throughout the area --
2 the question then becomes Ameren is already collecting
3 money and budgeting it for tree trimming.

4 If they have this money for tree
5 trimming, why aren't the trees being trimmed so that
6 they don't interrupt the power lines? Or certainly
7 not the number the alarmist news media shows the
8 following day from a storm.

9 I also suggest that on these long-term
10 outages of six, twelve hours or longer -- people are
11 going to have to suffer. I'm old, I'm retired, I have
12 several medical issues. I can't stay in a house in
13 August with electric -- no electricity. That night it
14 happened, I slept in the bathtub full of cold water.
15 The next day the heat would have made it -- that
16 apartment -- my house totally unbearable.

17 Perhaps since Ameren is responsible for
18 its power license, since Ameren is responsible for
19 tree trimming, perhaps the Public Service Commission
20 should talk to Ameren about providing some kind of
21 compensation for people with documented medical
22 problems so that they can go to a motel. I'm not
23 suggesting a five-star hotel. But just a Super 8 or a
24 Motel 6, something cheap, but something with air
25 conditioning.

1 And finally, I use Bank of America and I
2 maintain a modest amount as an emergency fund. And
3 they pay me .1 percent return on my investment or
4 dividend or interest. Ameren wants 9.9 percent. A
5 hundred times more than what Bank of America is paying
6 me? That sounds excessive.

7 Even the low thing -- I forget which
8 party suggested 9.0, again seems excessive. If I'm
9 getting .1 percent and Ameren wants 90 times that much
10 as far as their return on investment -- let's be
11 realistic. I suggest maybe a 5 or 6 percent is more
12 than sufficient.

13 If they want to give their investors more
14 money, let the C -- C-level executives take a slight
15 pay cut. If they need more employees, let the C-level
16 executives take a pay cut to hire temporary employees.
17 Let's not ask me, who retired early to care for a
18 dying mother, who's on a fixed income with no increase
19 whatsoever in cost of living or anything, to pay more
20 money to Ameren when I can't afford it.

21 And the answer is not some public program
22 to give money to people who fall below some magical
23 level that has been arbitrarily drawn. The answer is
24 to decrease everyone's rates and to make it affordable
25 to everyone.

1 And finally, they sent me out a letter or
2 sent me out a note with a bill saying they were
3 installing smart meters. I called Ameren up on
4 August the 19th, which is a Thursday, at 3:48 p.m. and
5 talked to someone named Aram, A-r-a-m. I asked him
6 specifically if that new meter was one of those meters
7 where they could reach into my house and control my
8 thermostat or smart appliances and he categorically
9 said no.

10 And yet since then, I've seen
11 advertisements and information from Ameren by this --
12 you get this new thermostat for free so that they can
13 do exactly that. Either Ameren's employee, Aram, was
14 not properly trained or else he lied to me.

15 I ask before this rate increase is
16 improv-- is approved in any form, that the Public
17 Service Commission have a discussion with Ameren
18 specifically about this information or misinformation
19 that has been given out to me and others.

20 JUDGE HATCHER: Okay. Thank you,
21 Mr. Tutterrow. Before I ask for Commissioner
22 questions, I did want to reply on two of your points.
23 Mr. Tutterrow, you had asked about medical issues. I
24 just wanted to make you aware that it's my belief that
25 Ameren does have a list for electric outages that they

1 try and, I guess, address first when there is an
2 outage. You may call Ameren's customer service number
3 to find out a little bit more about that. They do
4 have an existing program though.

5 Secondly, your last comment, you said
6 that -- you were talking about smart meters and you
7 questioned if that would allow the utility to reach
8 into any smart-connected devices in your home. And
9 you contrasted that with an advertisement that you
10 said you saw about a thermostat also called a smart
11 thermostat.

12 I did want to point out that that is two
13 different things that are going on there. The smart
14 meters allow Ameren to read the meter from a distance,
15 and it does allow for some potential control, but only
16 of the meter itself.

17 The second program is a thermostat
18 program where Ameren is offering these thermostats I
19 believe they are free or at a low cost. And in
20 exchange for that thermostat, the customer would sign
21 up for a program that would allow Ameren to control
22 your thermostat. And I believe that does -- that
23 program does have notification requirements and more
24 details. And again, you could call Ameren's 800
25 number to find out a little bit more about that.

1 Are there any Commissioner questions for
2 Mr. Tutterrow? Okay.

3 COMMISSIONER KOLKMEYER: Judge, this is
4 Commissioner Kolkmeier. No -- no questions.

5 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, Commissioner.
6 I'll call once again for any witnesses who would like
7 to offer their testimony today. Ma'am, I think your
8 microphone is muted.

9 UNIDENTIFIED: Hello?

10 MS. APPELBAUM: Is that better?

11 JUDGE HATCHER: Oh, I'm sorry. I --
12 Ms. Appelbaum is who I see on our screen, but I did
13 hear our two other witnesses. So our two other
14 witnesses, if you'd hold on for just a moment, I'll
15 get to you right after this. Ms. Appelbaum?

16 MS. APPELBAUM: Right. It's
17 A-p-p-e-l-b-a-u-m.

18 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, ma'am. Let me
19 swear you in.

20 MS. APPELBAUM: Okay.

21 (Witness sworn.)

22 MS. APPELBAUM: Thank you.

23 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you. Please go
24 ahead with your comments.

25 MS. APPELBAUM: Okay. I'm a senior

1 citizen and I'm also a widow. I've lived in my home
2 for 20 years. And like some of the other people that
3 have called in today, on a fixed income and trying to
4 control my costs as much as I can.

5 Last fall my furnace stopped working so I
6 had to get a new air conditioning and a new furnace.
7 I've invested in storm doors and attic insulation. So
8 as a result, this last month I was able to decrease my
9 energy cost by 13 percent.

10 But your proposed rate increase of
11 13 percent is going to wipe out my cost savings. And
12 so I'm not being rewarded for investing in myself by
13 lowering my energy costs. And I think, you know,
14 maybe that's something that Ameren should look at,
15 rewarding people by the way of some type of an energy
16 credit on their bill whenever they are able to save
17 money and conserve the energy costs.

18 And secondly, with the cost of real
19 estate going up, food, new automobiles, even used
20 automobiles are unrealistically high, 25 percent over
21 what their normal rate is. Insurance has gone up.
22 And gasoline, we just have a new gasoline tax in this
23 state. So everything's going up.

24 But Social Security, you know, they say
25 might go up 6 percent. But that's not going to be

1 enough to cover a 13 percent rate increase by Ameren.
2 So I -- I want to plead my case and all the seniors'
3 cases who are on a fixed income. I'm not disabled,
4 but as I've heard today, many people are. And so I
5 feel very strongly that we need to give those people
6 something to help sustain them, especially during this
7 pandemic.

8 And whether that be freezing their rates,
9 maybe we need to look at something like that if you're
10 over a certain age, maybe cap what the rate increases
11 would be in the future, make them more reasonable,
12 maybe, you know, 1 to 3 percent, something like that,
13 and/or a credit on your bill for conserving your
14 energy costs.

15 And I thank you very much for allowing me
16 to give testimony today and the opportunity to present
17 my case, as well as, you know, just the general
18 consumer who, like Jesse said, there's nowhere else we
19 can go and get a better rate. And you know, people
20 from St. Louis are rate shoppers and we always like
21 trying to get the best deal. But as a public utility,
22 I think you're committed to giving us that best deal.
23 Thank you so much.

24 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, Ms. Appelbaum.
25 I appreciate your testimony and being here today. Are

1 there any questions from the Commissioners for
2 Ms. Appelbaum?

3 CHAIRMAN SILVEY: No questions, Judge.
4 Thank you.

5 COMMISSIONER HOLSMAN: No questions,
6 Judge.

7 MS. APPELBAUM: Okay. Thank you so much.

8 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, Ms. Appelbaum.
9 We had two other witnesses. If someone would like to
10 speak up, you'll be first.

11 Comments?

12 JUDGE HATCHER: Yes. Who is this?

13 MR. BURGDORF: Name is Randy or Randall,
14 R-a-n-d-a-l-l, Burgdorf, B-u-r-g-d-o-r-f.

15 JUDGE HATCHER: All right. Mr. Burgdorf,
16 let me swear you in.

17 (Witness sworn.)

18 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you. Please go
19 ahead with your comments.

20 MR. BURGDORF: Okay. I was just looking
21 over, you know, my Ameren bill. And Ameren's asking,
22 you know, that we go -- the local public hearing
23 notice thing and they're wanting to increase
24 customers' bills by approximately 11.97 percent.

25 And I'm looking at my electric bill and

1 little frustrating is that right at this point I'm
2 paying right at about 13 percent over the electric
3 charge for things such as an electric customer charge,
4 a renewable energy charge, fuel adjustment charge,
5 energy efficiency investment charge. And the sales
6 tax is not included in that.

7 But we're already paying for a fuel
8 adjustment, which has not gone down since they
9 implemented it years ago when the fuel prices were
10 astronomical. Fuel prices have gone down. That
11 charge is still there.

12 And then we're paying for an
13 investment -- energy investment charge and already
14 paying -- you know, I've got a 228 dollar worth of
15 electric and then another 10 dollars just in invest--
16 efficiency investment charge. So I'm already paying
17 for things that are not directly related to
18 electricity. And I feel that another almost 12 percent
19 increase over that is kind of asking for -- asking for
20 a lot.

21 And I don't -- and some of it is I don't
22 agree with the wind farm that they're wanting to build
23 and build it out of our pockets and not their profits.
24 I think the upper end, the CEOs and everything, are
25 making a ton of money and their investment should come

1 out of the company and not make the customers pay for
2 investments in the building. We should be paying for
3 the electricity.

4 So it's -- I think unwarranted, you know,
5 another 12 percent increase over -- you know, in my
6 case it will be a 13 percent over the electric charge
7 that I'm paying. So that's my comment. I just
8 would -- I think it's unwarranted. Thank you.

9 JUDGE HATCHER: Mr. Burgdorf, thank you
10 also for your testimony and for being here today. Are
11 there any Commissioner questions for Mr. Burgdorf?
12 Hearing none, I believe we have one other witness who
13 was wanting to give some comments if they would speak
14 up, please.

15 MS. LESINSKI: Yes. This is Teresa.

16 JUDGE HATCHER: Yes. Teresa, if I could
17 have your last name, please?

18 MS. LESINSKI: L-e-s-i-n-s-k-i.

19 JUDGE HATCHER: All right. And I will
20 swear you in now.

21 (Witness sworn.)

22 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you. And please go
23 ahead with your comments to the Commission.

24 MS. LESINSKI: Well, I've been listening
25 to everything and I have the same problem with

1 everybody about, you know, the electric bill going on.
2 But when I got the letter for the -- the local public
3 hearing, I did see the word Rush Island Coal Plant on
4 the letter. And I actually live right down the street
5 from the Rush Island Coal Plant.

6 Your Honor, I've been here living on this
7 road for 30 years. It's just a little back road. And
8 I mean I've had all -- I have all the problems that
9 everybody has, but then my problem comes from the Rush
10 Island plant, wanting to know if it's going to close,
11 or what's going to happen with the plant.

12 So again, with everything going on with
13 everybody, you know, what's going on in the world
14 and -- again, you know, the lady was talking about the
15 real estate and stuff like that. My question was if
16 the Rush Island was going to close because we live on
17 this little back road. And now in the meantime, all
18 day long, day in, day out, the -- there's the
19 18-wheelers that go up and down this road.

20 So my question was if Rush Island's going
21 to stay there -- if they stayed, why didn't they put
22 in their own little road? Because if you Google
23 Johnson Road, it's just a little old horse and buggy
24 back road with a lot of hairpin turns. And so then on
25 the way home or on the way out, we're actually for our

1 lives to live on this road. We've got 18-wheelers
2 that are going so fast.

3 And like our anxiety is through the roof.
4 We have senior citizens. Everybody's retired on this
5 road. They're home all day long. And I know this is
6 like another twist in what everything is going on, but
7 our thing is we're just trying to stay alive. I mean
8 we're almost feeling like save the bats -- I got the
9 article -- the newspaper right here in front of me,
10 but I'm like I'm trying to save us and the people that
11 live on Johnson Road that encounter these 18-wheelers.

12 Now, in the meantime, I watched how they
13 blew up the plant over on the Illinois side and they
14 were talking about the toxic. Well, in the meantime
15 in the winter when our road gets, you know -- because
16 they have to keep the road clear because they have all
17 these 18-wheelers that go down it. They put the
18 cinders all over the road.

19 And they've been doing -- like I said,
20 I've been here for 30 years. They've been cindering
21 this road for the last winters that I could tell you
22 how far. And then when they come and plow the road,
23 all them cinders are in my yard. I've got cinders,
24 cinders like you wouldn't even imagine.

25 And so then I find it -- comes out that

1 these cinders are toxic in the blood stream. You
2 know, my family, my husband being in and out of the
3 hospital for years not realizing what has been wrong
4 and trying to reach out and talk to people about the
5 cinders and the coal plant and stuff like that.

6 But in the meantime, I called and talked
7 to a Marc Post [sic] to pull this to his attention and
8 now they're actually bringing the truck drivers and
9 bringing the cinders out of the Rush Island and -- and
10 selling the cinders. But then in the meantime, they
11 go around the hairpin turn, they spill the cinders
12 onto the road.

13 So I mean I've already had tragic [sic]
14 in my family and I just want to live out, you know,
15 sixty. And I got a disability [sic] son that lives
16 here and there's nowhere to go. So if we're home all
17 day long, that's all we hear is these 18-wheelers
18 going by all day long. And we can't really escape
19 from it. I mean I would really love somebody to give
20 me money to go stay in a hotel all day long, you know,
21 while they're running up and down, but it doesn't work
22 like that.

23 You know, they did come out and trim the
24 trees. I appreciate that. You know, they came down
25 to 61 into Jefferson County. I mean they trimmed our

1 trees where they -- I mean they literally whacked the
2 trees. We don't have that problem because they
3 just -- basically there's no trees left around the
4 lines to fall.

5 Our whole thing is -- is the truck
6 drivers. And like I stopped the truckers one day and
7 asked them why you guys go so fast and they said they
8 get paid by the load. So in the meantime, they're
9 flying in here, flying out of here and it's all day
10 long and it's nonstop. It's just -- no matter -- like
11 I said, there's no matter where I go, it just doesn't
12 stop.

13 We've even contacted the police. They
14 said call the county, call the Commissioners. I call
15 up there, they say we don't know why you're calling
16 here. And like the police said, they could sit down
17 here on our road all day long, but they have to catch
18 them.

19 And so in the meantime, we're stuck.
20 We're just stuck, you know. You come home, you got
21 anxiety. You leave, you got anxiety. You're living
22 here, you got anxiety. And basically right now I do
23 have anxiety. So I mean yeah, it's just, you know --
24 I don't know where to go with this. I don't know --
25 like I said, I don't know if I should stay here for

1 the next ten years. Is Rush Island going to close?

2 I mean it's not just me. It's all the
3 old people that live on our road and they're all
4 retired. So to retire to sit happy down here and have
5 these truckers fly by, it's -- it's -- it's a hard
6 life. It really is. I don't know. I just wanted to
7 put that out there, you know.

8 They said they didn't hear about this,
9 but I talked to a Marc Post [sic] and he talked to me
10 for a little bit and said he'd get back with me, but I
11 never heard back from him once I got this letter. So
12 I just wanted to put that out there, you know.

13 They're putting the cinders on the road.
14 They're in -- in my yard. I mow it, it kicks the dust
15 up, I'm breathing that, it's going in my system. You
16 know, that's probably why half the time I have been
17 feeling sick. You know, I got a disability [sic] son
18 that lives here with me. He tries to play outside and
19 the trucks go by. You smell the fumes.

20 So I mean I just want to know where Rush
21 Island stands because I don't know if I can stay here
22 for another ten years. So I just wanted to put that
23 out there, Judge. I just know that when people go
24 home, they get to go home and have a nice peaceful
25 dinner and have a nice night with their family or

1 whatever. We don't get that on Johnson Road. We just
2 don't.

3 JUDGE HATCHER: Ms. Lesinski, I can hear
4 the frustration in your voice.

5 MS. LESINSKI: I'm --

6 JUDGE HATCHER: I do appreciate you -- go
7 ahead.

8 MS. LESINSKI: I appreciate you -- yeah,
9 I had to get up and take some aspirins earlier just to
10 listen to what everybody's going through. But us on
11 Johnson Road, Rush Island has destroyed our every day
12 life. It really has. I've been here for 30 years,
13 sir. And I like to have peace. I wake up at 5:30 in
14 the morning listening to these trucks fly by our house
15 and all I can hear is the gears in my head and the
16 motor in my heart. And I wish -- I just want
17 everybody to just know what we're going through.

18 I understand about what -- you know,
19 we've had the Covid and we had to be in here, you
20 know, trying to take cover when we caught the Covid
21 and there was nowhere to go. And so I feel like
22 you're just -- you're trapped. And I just wanted --
23 you know, I just wanted to put that out there.

24 I just have a lot on me and -- and I have
25 been dealing with this, you know and -- you know, I

1 just had to just -- just frustrate -- just -- just put
2 that out there. That's all I was trying to do today,
3 sir.

4 JUDGE HATCHER: No, I appreciate you
5 taking the time out of your day to come and provide
6 our testimony. And like I said, I do hear the
7 frustration in your voice.

8 MS. LESINSKI: Yes, sir.

9 JUDGE HATCHER: Let's go ahead and I'll
10 ask for any questions from Commissioners for
11 Ms. Lesinski?

12 CHAIRMAN SILVEY: No questions, Judge.

13 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
14 We'll move on.

15 Again, I will repeat the 800 numbers both
16 for the Public Service Commission Consumer Services
17 and for Ameren, their customer service number. For
18 the PSC, it's 800.392.4211. And for Ameren, it is
19 800.321.2477.

20 I'll issue one last call. Are there any
21 other persons on the line who would like to testify
22 today? This will be the last call.

23 MR. TUTTERROW: Your Honor, this is Jesse
24 Tutterrow. I already testified. I wonder if I could
25 add one additional point?

1 JUDGE HATCHER: If it's brief, please go
2 ahead.

3 MR. TUTTERROW: Currently I'm set up with
4 auto pay. Ameren takes the money out of my checking
5 account every month. The problem is, is checking
6 accounts are not a guaranteed anti--fraud device or
7 entity, which means that if Ameren had a data breach,
8 which would provide enough information to a hacker to
9 get my name and bank account and routing number, they
10 could empty my bank accounts out with no effort. My
11 understanding is these bank accounts are not protected
12 from fraud or hacking, thieving, whatever.

13 I looked into using credit card to pay
14 since credit cards have a zero fraud limit on them.
15 The problem is, is Ameren wants to charge a excessive
16 amount.

17 I suggest to the Public Service
18 Commission that they impose a requirement on Ameren
19 that they either provide free credit card charge -- no
20 charge for credit card use in auto pay or that if
21 Ameren has a data breach, Ameren is liable for any and
22 all costs I have to recover my identity, to recover
23 the money that was in my bank account or to replace
24 the money that was in the bank account that was lost
25 because of Ameren's data breach.

1 JUDGE HATCHER: Okay. Thank you,
2 Mr. Tutterrow.

3 I would like to thank all of our
4 participants today for their testimony. If anyone
5 does have additional comments or you know of someone
6 else who would like to comment, but they couldn't be
7 present today, you or they may make written comments
8 by going to the PSC's web page. And that's PSC.mo.go
9 and the Submit Comments link is in the upper
10 right-hand corner. Make sure and reference the case
11 number, and that is ER-2021-0240.

12 Are there any closing comments from our
13 Commissioners?

14 CHAIRMAN SILVEY: Judge, I just want to
15 take this opportunity again to thank those who
16 testified. I appreciate your participation in the
17 process.

18 And then for the court reporter, this is
19 Chairman Silvey. Thanks.

20 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you.

21 COMMISSIONER HOLSMAN: Judge.

22 JUDGE HATCHER: Yes, Commissioner.

23 COMMISSIONER HOLSMAN: Commissioner
24 Holsman here. I just would like to say that while
25 this proceeding is a rate case hearing and our

1 objective is to get testimony back on the rate case
2 itself, I would encourage anybody who had particular
3 circumstances or issues that they brought in front of
4 the Commission today to utilize those lines that are
5 there for them both through Ameren and through the PSC
6 to take their grievances to the source that could
7 potentially provide them some relief.

8 So that's why -- I'm glad you restated
9 those numbers and I encourage them to exercise them,
10 because that's what they are there for. And I thank
11 you and I think everybody who testified.

12 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, Commissioner.

13 COMMISSIONER KOLKMEYER: Yes, Judge.

14 This is Commissioner Kolkmeier.

15 JUDGE HATCHER: Go ahead.

16 COMMISSIONER KOLKMEYER: Yes. I want to
17 echo the statements from the previous two
18 Commissioners, our Chairman and -- Chairman and
19 Commissioner Holsman. I want to thank everyone for
20 their comments and their time here today.

21 Judge, I want to thank you for giving
22 these customers resources -- the phone numbers and the
23 resources they need to hopefully solve some of the
24 issues that we have. So just want to thank everybody.
25 So thank you, Judge.

1 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, Commissioner.

2 Once again, I'm just going to repeat
3 those numbers one more time. The PSC is 800.392.4211
4 and Ameren is 800.321.2477.

5 With that, this hearing is now adjourned.
6 We are off the record.

7 (WHEREUPON, the local public hearing was
8 adjourned.)

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

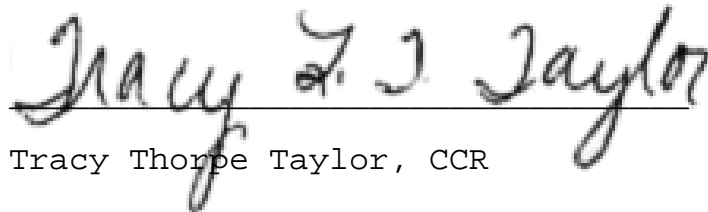
I, Tracy Thorpe Taylor, CCR No. 939, within the State of Missouri, do hereby certify that the witness whose testimony appears in the foregoing deposition was duly sworn by me; that the testimony of said witness was taken by me to the best of my ability and thereafter reduced to typewriting under my direction; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which this deposition was taken, and further, that I am not a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties thereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of the action.

Tracy Thorpe Taylor, CCR

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

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Tracy Thorpe Taylor, CCR

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