

Ameren Hearing, St. Charles Co. Gov't Offices

– Helen H. Host, PT, PhD - Saint Louis area Sierra Club Volunteer

I'm a clinician, a researcher, a wife and mother; I've been working in healthcare for 30+ yrs in the St. Louis Region.

I'm here today because I am hopeful that the Public Services Commission will not approve Ameren's proposed rate increase. It is short-sighted for our state and burdensome to customers especially those in lower socioeconomic brackets. We are just on the rebound from a time of economic duress; the Covid pandemic disproportionately affected those of color & lower socioeconomic standing most and now Ameren is asking us all to pay more. This is despite Ameren increasing its income in 2021 by almost 120 million from the previous year. Ameren is a monopoly utility and one of the largest polluters in our state; their detrimental effects of burning coal also disproportionately effect those who are most vulnerable in our community. That is what makes this rate increase especially onerous; we're asking folks who are already suffering from the effects of living in an area where burning coal is making them suffer, health-wise, to pay more for this utility even in a time where financially they cannot afford the increase. There is social disparity when it comes to where people live and how they are able to adapt to the pollution resulting from Ameren's use of coal; people under socioeconomic stress cannot just simply move to a different area.

Sadly, all of us in this region are exposed to the effects of Ameren's continued burning of coal to produce energy. Each individual's health and wellness, is closely linked to their environment.

- **Burning fossil fuels is making us sick in 2 ways: from the immediate impact of direct air pollutants and from the long-term impact of greenhouse gas emissions that warm the climate.** Ameren needs to come up with long-term plan and accelerate their transition to cleaner energy sources. We're # 2 in the nation after TX in burning coal for energy production; we're not a coal producing state. In 2021 alone, Ameren spent nearly \$500 million to import coal from other states. We need to move to cheaper, cleaner energy like wind & solar. An added bonus would be job creation for our communities which would additionally boost the economy. Our state's utilities, including Ameren, could also take advantage of the benefits in the Inflation Reduction Act passed last session in the US Congress – it makes it cheaper for us to retire coal and move to wind, solar, improved storage and other clean energy options. It's hard but rewarding work that could be done by Ameren, our Public Utilities Commissions, our state legislators and the Governor; it would benefit all of us.
- **From the US Energy Information Administration, 2021 data:** coal still accounts for >70% of in-state generation in 4 states: WV 91%, **MO 75%**, WY 74%, KY 71% (we're in the bottom of the bottom; we're #2 in generating energy from dirty coal....this is awful & something that we should all be disgusted by)
- **Many of our neighboring Midwest states have transitioned to cleaner energy & it costs less**

- For both IA & KS wind is the primary energy source for in-state electricity generation after overtaking coal in 2019. In IA, 58% of their total electricity came from wind; in KS, 43%. Perhaps most importantly, in 2021 the cost of electricity in IA is less than the cost in MO – IA 9.13 c/kwh vs. MO 9.85 c/kwh
- Instead of raising rates, Ameren needs to retire their coal plants & transition to cleaner energy generation – now is the time! It is not the time to raise rates.
- We live in the show me state – we’ve been shown – now is the time.....no more waiting!
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- Clean technologies pay for themselves over time through higher efficiency and lower fuel costs (sunshine & wind are free!)
- By slowing climate change and lessening extreme weather disasters, they also yield trillions of dollars in avoided climate damages
- Those benefits are long-term, but there are immediate benefits through cleaner air yielding longer, healthier lives.
- Cleaner air (from meeting America’s Paris targets) would avoid 4.5 million premature deaths, 1.4 million hospitalizations and emergency room visits, 300 million lost workdays, 1.7 million incidences of dementia, and 440 million tons of crop losses over the next 50 years (in the US)
- Air quality benefits would be realized almost immediately & domestically; near-term national **gains are larger than implementation costs**
- Have **original paper + table to share**; give MO specific data + national data
 - <https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate2935>
- Health impacts of **air pollution (including coal burning)** include heart attacks, asthma, cancer, and unhealthy births and lead to tens of thousands of deaths in the US each year.
- Transitioning to a clean energy economy will make us healthier and save money immediately.
- **Switching to 100% clean renewable energy is one of the best things we can do to let every Missouri resident breathe clean air, and to stop the toll of dirty energy on our health...so Let’s roll up our sleeves, put in the work and make this happen...stop kicking this can down the road!**
- **Instead of raising rates, Ameren needs to retire their coal plants & transition to cleaner energy generation – now is the time! It is not the time to raise rates.**

State Name	Premature Deaths Avoided annually in 2030	Premature deaths avoided 2015-2030	Asthma attacks in children under 18 avoided annually in 2030	Lost Work days avoided annually in 2030	Dollars saved from health benefits annually in 2030
United States	25,097	295,000	29,000	15,000,000	\$331,000,000,000
Alabama	639	7,515	739	382,113	\$8,431,951,656
Arizona	254	2,989	294	151,968	\$3,353,419,302
Arkansas	375	4,413	434	224,413	\$4,952,050,442
California	1,808	21,254	2,089	1,080,694	\$23,847,313,939
Colorado	226	2,662	262	135,358	\$2,986,898,723
Connecticut	188	2,207	217	112,198	\$2,475,827,387
Delaware	105	1,230	121	62,566	\$1,380,617,999
Florida	718	8,434	829	428,840	\$9,463,062,806
Georgia	1,148	13,496	1,327	686,215	\$15,142,483,162
Idaho	52	615	60	31,259	\$689,781,442
Illinois	1,622	19,068	1,875	969,572	\$21,395,226,641
Indiana	783	9,202	905	467,904	\$10,325,091,775
Iowa	328	3,850	378	195,766	\$4,319,904,657
Kansas	272	3,191	314	162,278	\$3,580,928,477
Kentucky	653	7,671	754	390,068	\$8,607,496,417
Louisiana	451	5,299	521	269,449	\$5,945,836,898
Maine	49	574	56	29,161	\$643,488,271
Maryland	508	5,971	587	303,601	\$6,699,452,799
Massachusetts	285	3,355	330	170,580	\$3,764,122,822
Michigan	969	11,390	1,120	579,134	\$12,779,553,082
Minnesota	462	5,432	534	276,203	\$6,094,871,894
Mississippi	326	3,835	377	195,001	\$4,303,022,817
Missouri	735	8,644	850	439,502	\$9,698,353,455
Montana	30	352	35	17,895	\$394,876,795
New York	1,484	17,445	1,715	887,044	\$19,574,098,122
North Carolina	949	11,155	1,097	567,216	\$12,516,565,664
North Dakota	40	476	47	24,200	\$534,020,088
Ohio	1,468	17,255	1,696	877,385	\$19,360,964,888
Oklahoma	353	4,151	408	211,079	\$4,657,805,241
Oregon	54	633	62	32,185	\$710,224,296

Researchers at Duke University and NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies have modeled the health benefits from reduced pollution from reducing emissions US emissions at a pace consistent with limiting global warming to 2 degrees C. Emissions reductions from the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act (HR763) would be consistent with this 2 degree C warming limit and so we can safely use figures from this study as modeling the near-term health benefits from enacting HR763.

Source: <https://www.nature.com/articles/nclimate2935>