

BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

STATE OF MISSOURI

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

Local Public Hearing

Thursday, February 9, 2023  
7:22 p.m. - 9:36 p.m.

St. Charles Community College Florissant Valley  
3400 Pershall Road  
St. Louis, MO 63135  
and WebEx

VOLUME 5  
Pages 1 - 92

In the Matter of Union Electric )  
Company d/b/a Ameren Missouri's )  
Tariffs to Adjust its Revenues ) File No.  
for Electric Service ) ER-2022-0337

JOHN CLARK, Presiding  
SENIOR REGULATORY LAW JUDGE

MAIDA J. COLEMAN, Commissioner  
JASON HOLSMAN, Commissioner  
GLEN KOLKMEYER, Commissioner

Stenographically Reported By:  
Beverly Jean Bentsch, RPR, CCR No. 640

Job No.: 139690

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8 On behalf of the Staff of the  
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21 BY: NATHAN WILLIAMS, ESQ.  
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23 On behalf of Consumers Council of Missouri:

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BY: JOHN B. COFFMAN, ESQ.  
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1 The following proceedings began at 7:22 p.m.:

2 JUDGE CLARK: Good evening. Let's go on the  
3 record. It is February 9, 2023, and the current time is  
4 7:22 p.m. We are at the St. Louis Community College  
5 Florissant Valley in St. Louis. The question and answer  
6 portion of the public hearing just ended. It went on a  
7 while. If you had questions for the parties in this  
8 case, I hope you were able to get those questions  
9 answered.

10 Now, the Missouri Public Service Commission  
11 has set aside this time this evening for a local public  
12 hearing in File No. ER-2022-0337, a general rate case  
13 which is captioned as In the Matter of Union Electric  
14 Company d/b/a Ameren Missouri's Tariffs to Adjust Its  
15 Revenues for Electric Service.

16 My name is John Clark, and I'm the Regulatory  
17 Law Judge overseeing this hearing tonight. Now, the  
18 Missouri Public Service Commission regulates the rates  
19 charged by investor-owned utilities in Missouri to  
20 ensure that those rates are just and reasonable. The  
21 Commission also regulates the quality of service and the  
22 safety of operations of Missouri investor-owned  
23 utilities.

24 The Commission is made up of five  
25 Commissioners: Chairman Scott Rupp and Commissioners

1 Maida Coleman, Jason Holsman and Glen Kolkmeier. One  
2 Commission seat is currently vacant. With me tonight  
3 next to me is Commissioner Maida Coleman and  
4 participating via WebEx are Commissioners Jason Holsman  
5 and Glen Kolkmeier.

6 Now, the Commission employs a staff of  
7 engineers, accountants, attorneys, financial analysts  
8 and other specialists in the field of utility  
9 regulation. Commissioner, would you like to make an  
10 opening comment?

11 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Sure. Thank you,  
12 Judge. I'd like to say thank you all for being here  
13 this evening. I know that it's been a late evening  
14 already with you being here since 6:00 p.m. We do  
15 appreciate you being here. We look forward to your  
16 comments that will, of course, go onto the record and  
17 give us an opportunity as Commissioners to look at what  
18 you've had to say and the evidence or the comments that  
19 you're making. I'd especially like to welcome the young  
20 people who are here today in the audience. Thank you  
21 for starting out very early in life, and we appreciate  
22 you all being here. Thank you very much.

23 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Commissioner. Now,  
24 as I indicated earlier, there was a Q&A portion. This  
25 is the formal portion of the hearing. This is an

1 official hearing of the -- local public hearing of the  
2 Missouri Public Service Commission, and it is being  
3 transcribed by a court reporter so that Commissioners  
4 can review it later and any Commissioners that aren't  
5 here tonight will have an opportunity to review it  
6 later.

7 I'm going to begin by asking the parties that  
8 are here this evening to enter their appearance for the  
9 record starting with Ameren Missouri.

10 MR. BANKS: Eric Kendall Banks on behalf of  
11 Union Electric d/b/a Ameren Missouri, 1824 Chouteau  
12 Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri 63103.

13 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Banks. And on  
14 behalf of the Commission Staff.

15 MR. VANDERGRIFF: I'm Eric Vandergriff  
16 representing the Commission Staff, PO Box 360, 200  
17 Madison Street, Jefferson City, Missouri 65102.

18 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Vandergriff. On  
19 behalf of the Office of the Public Counsel.

20 MR. WILLIAMS: Nathan Williams, Chief Deputy  
21 Public Counsel, PO Box 2230, Jefferson City, Missouri  
22 65102, appearing on behalf of the Office of the Public  
23 Counsel and the public.

24 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Williams. There  
25 are a number of intervenors in this case. I know at

1 least one is present tonight.

2 MR. COFFMAN: Yes, I'm appearing on behalf of  
3 the Consumers Council of Missouri, John B. Coffman, and  
4 my address is in the record.

5 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Coffman. Now,  
6 for those who would like to provide comments today, I'm  
7 going to call the names that are listed on the list in  
8 the order they appear. At that time if you'll come up  
9 to the microphone, I will ask you to state and spell  
10 your name for the court reporter and the official record  
11 and at that time I will place you under oath and you'll  
12 have an opportunity to offer your comments.

13 There's a lot of people here tonight. So I'm  
14 going to ask people to limit their comments to five  
15 minutes. It's my intention to end this local public  
16 hearing at 9:30 this evening. So I'm going to ask that  
17 people be concise and to the point in that regard.  
18 Also, after you've had an opportunity to offer your  
19 comments to the Commission, please stay at the podium  
20 for a minute. The Commissioners may have questions for  
21 you, I may have questions for you, or some of the  
22 attorneys that just introduced themselves tonight may  
23 have questions for you.

24 Now, if any of the attorneys have questions,  
25 please get my attention so that I can direct the witness

1 to answer your questions. And if the Commissioners have  
2 questions, just chime in at any time and go ahead and  
3 interrupt me, because I may not catch you otherwise.

4 Now, the Commission, and part of the reason  
5 that we could not be up here earlier during the Q&A  
6 portion is, the Commission will not be able to answer  
7 your questions tonight. That's because the  
8 Commissioners have to remain impartial until after the  
9 evidence is presented at the evidentiary hearing.

10 If you have further questions that weren't  
11 answered this evening, I would encourage you to contact  
12 Ameren Missouri, the Commission Staff, or the Office of  
13 the Public Counsel. I also have, and I'll give out at  
14 the end, a couple of phone numbers. One has been  
15 provided by Ameren Missouri. It is a customer service  
16 number for questions that arise out of this. Well, I  
17 think just for any questions you may have regarding  
18 Ameren Missouri service. The other is the Missouri  
19 Public Service Commission consumer services number.  
20 I'll give those out at the end of the hearing.

21 The last thing I would say is there are going  
22 to be a lot of people that are speaking this evening and  
23 offering comments to the Commission. Some people's  
24 comments may not agree with yours. Please be polite to  
25 the people that are speaking and give them the respect

1 that you would like them to give you if you were  
2 speaking. With that in mind, I'm going to call the  
3 first name.

4 MR. WILLIAMS: Judge.

5 JUDGE CLARK: Yes, go ahead.

6 MR. WILLIAMS: The only thing I would add is  
7 if something occurs to you after this proceeding is over  
8 and you want to provide input, feel free to submit  
9 comments to the Office of the Public Counsel or the  
10 Staff. You can do it through EFIS. There's information  
11 on the handouts as to how to do that. There's contact  
12 information for the Public Service Commission Staff and  
13 the Office of the Public Counsel. Thank you.

14 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Williams. I  
15 apologize. Please correct me if I mispronounce your  
16 name at any time. Myisha Johnson.

17 Ms. Johnson, would you state and spell your  
18 name for the record.

19 MS. JOHNSON: Myisha Johnson, M-y-i-s-h-a  
20 J-o-h-n-s-o-n.

21 JUDGE CLARK: Would you raise your right hand  
22 to be sworn. Do you swear or affirm that the testimony  
23 you are about to give at this local public hearing is  
24 the truth?

25 MS. JOHNSON: I do.



1 JUDGE CLARK: And what would you like to tell  
2 the Commission this evening?

3 MYISHA JOHNSON,  
4 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

5 MS. JOHNSON: First, thank you for allowing me  
6 to be here to speak with you all. I am a resident in  
7 the Third Ward. As you heard me earlier speak of in our  
8 ward many folks experience high rates when it comes to  
9 utilities. Some of the people are in subsidized  
10 housing, as well as Section 8, and when they're unable  
11 to pay their utility bills it often leads to them losing  
12 their voucher which leads their family to being part of  
13 the unhoused community.

14 We're starting to see a lot of this since  
15 COVID has started and it's not -- it's just not fair.  
16 Because we didn't put these rate hikes in place, we  
17 didn't ask for the inflation, we didn't ask for the  
18 illness that takes place in households, and it's become  
19 a barrier to keep up with the utilities as they continue  
20 to rise.

21 My question for you all is, what is the plan,  
22 because it's not helping right now. You need money just  
23 as well as we do, but we're struggling to survive right  
24 now. Many of us are. And the babies are starting to  
25 show up in spaces that we would never phantom for them

1 to be in.

2 What are we going to do? Is this the world  
3 that we're coming to, or are we going to stand up and  
4 say this is inhumane of continuing to put families at  
5 risk. I don't have anything else to say because it  
6 hurts my heart to see the experiences that families go  
7 through just as well as myself. Thank you.

8 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you, Ms. Johnson.  
9 Are you here speaking as a resident of the Third Ward or  
10 are you representing an organization?

11 MS. JOHNSON: I'm here as a resident.

12 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Okay. Thank you very  
13 much.

14 MS. JOHNSON: Thank you.

15 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you for your comments this  
16 evening, Ms. Johnson. Elyse Mack.

17 Would you please state and spell your name for  
18 the record.

19 MS. MACK: Elyse, E-l-y-s-e, Mack, M-a-c-k.

20 JUDGE CLARK: And would you raise your right  
21 hand to be sworn. Do you swear or affirm that the  
22 testimony you are about to give at this local public  
23 hearing is the truth?

24 MS. MACK: I do.

25 JUDGE CLARK: What would you like to tell the

1 Commission?

2 ELYSE MACK,

3 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

4 MS. MACK: Good evening, everyone, and thank  
5 you for the chance to testify. My name is Elyse Mack.  
6 I use she/her pronouns. I am a life-long St. Louisan  
7 and I am here as part of the River City Climate  
8 Collective. I and we, like the one person who has  
9 preceded me so far in the hearing, vehemently oppose the  
10 proposed rate increase. While it is empowering to hear  
11 that our community is so far united on this front, it is  
12 disheartening to know that this decision lies with four  
13 individuals who hold a lot of power, some of whom have  
14 direct ties to the fossil fuel industry and to not with  
15 the people.

16 Even more disheartening is knowing that the  
17 executives who are greedily clamoring for this rate  
18 increase make between \$4 and \$10 million every year. I  
19 fail to see why a company that dumps toxic coal ash into  
20 our water supply refuses to invest in excessively priced  
21 and genuinely sustainable alternative energy sources and  
22 made over a billion dollars in 2021, as well as \$2  
23 billion in 2022, needs an extra \$300 million right now.

24 Perhaps Ameren should have budgeted better.  
25 Perhaps they should cut executive pay or turn out the

1 lights when they leave the office. Perhaps they could  
2 stop lobbying Jeff City or Washington and let democracy  
3 function for the people and not for their special  
4 interests. Perhaps for their convenience the Public  
5 Service Commission could offer Ameren a budget billing  
6 option if, you know, a billion dollars isn't going to  
7 quite cut it for next year.

8           Maybe this would offer more peace of mind and  
9 an income level that stays the same even when the  
10 temperature outside doesn't, an issue mind you that is  
11 exacerbated by Ameren directly who runs the sixth most  
12 polluting coal plant in the entire country and as we  
13 learned during the question and answer session this rate  
14 increase isn't even pretending to support the expansion  
15 of renewable energy sources.

16           While Ameren was busy making \$2 billion last  
17 year, I was worried about my dad. That year his doctor,  
18 or in 2021 rather, his doctor prescribed him a CPAP  
19 machine so that he doesn't die suddenly in the middle of  
20 the night, but the machine requires electricity in order  
21 to function.

22           This rate increase directly threatens the  
23 lives of those who use electricity-dependent medical  
24 equipment like my dad and can't pay their exorbitant  
25 electric bills. Ameren's life threatening behavior

1 isn't limited to those who use medical equipment though.  
2 The corporation's continued reliance on fossil fuels  
3 like coal threatens us all. They're ensuring that the  
4 planet will get hotter and hotter creating more  
5 instability in the grid and possibly rolling blackouts  
6 which could easily kill someone like my dad and the many  
7 like him who rely on electricity to make it through the  
8 night.

9           On top of it all, they spend an obscene sum on  
10 lobbying to ensure that policies that might hold them  
11 accountable are never passed. We the people should not  
12 have to take \$12 a month out of our inflated grocery  
13 bills, out of our student loan payments, out of our  
14 child care budgets, out of car payments, out of our  
15 medical bills in order to support a dirty corporation  
16 that continues to profit off violating the Clean Air Act  
17 and making our collective futures even less livable.

18           I and River City Climate Collective call for  
19 Ameren and for the Public Service Commission to take on  
20 some personal responsibility from their seats of power  
21 and finally do right by our community. Stop this rate  
22 increase. Stop all utility rate increases and stop  
23 disconnecting people's life-saving power. Put the power  
24 in the hands of the people so that we can provide a more  
25 sustainable future for and with each other. Thank you

1 for your time.

2 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you for your comments. I  
3 have no questions. Grace Iverson. Would you please  
4 state and spell your name for the record.

5 MS. IVERSON: Grace Iverson, G-r-a-c-e  
6 I-v-e-r-s-o-n.

7 JUDGE CLARK: And would you raise your right  
8 hand to be sworn. Do you swear or affirm that the  
9 testimony you are about to give at this local public  
10 hearing is the truth?

11 MS. IVERSON: I do.

12 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you. If you've got a  
13 phone, and I've heard a few go off, if you wouldn't mind  
14 silencing them I'd appreciate it. What would you like  
15 to tell the Commission this evening, Ms. Iverson?

16 GRACE IVERSON,  
17 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

18 MS. IVERSON: First I'd like to thank the  
19 Commissioners for the opportunity to testify tonight.  
20 My name is Grace Iverson. I live in St. Louis. I'm  
21 also a member of the grassroots group River City Climate  
22 Collective. I'm here tonight to advocate both as part  
23 of that group and just as an individual against the  
24 proposed rate increase.

25 And I was thinking back. Having this rate

1 hearing during the winter makes the memories of the  
2 summer electric bill struggles a little bit further. In  
3 preparing for this hearing, I was thinking back to last  
4 June when I got a phone call from an elderly friend that  
5 I used to bring groceries to every week and she uses an  
6 oxygen tank. She struggles with managing medical  
7 conditions on a day-to-day basis. She's this awesome  
8 person. She's really tough. She's really incredible.  
9 She used to teach special ed in places where she didn't  
10 have a lot of support for that. She's been through a  
11 lot personally, but every time I saw her she had  
12 something funny or positive to say.

13 Last summer I got a phone call from her about  
14 her Ameren bills. She was afraid she was at risk of  
15 being disconnected and had been trying to sort it out  
16 and was at this point of just being really panicked. So  
17 of course, I wanted to help her and helped her raise  
18 money to cover her minimum payments with Ameren. But it  
19 leaves me thinking why are we scrambling to keep our  
20 elders' electricity on when Ameren executives, like  
21 Elyse mentioned, are taking home 4 to 10 million bucks a  
22 year, why are we scraping together five bucks here or  
23 ten bucks from this person to make sure that our friends  
24 can stay alive or even just stay comfortable in  
25 increasingly hotter summers.

1 Ameren will say they offer so many assistance  
2 programs, but there are so many stories that we have  
3 from our communities, and I'm sure people here have  
4 stories, that, you know, they aren't enough, they aren't  
5 accessible enough. I started to wonder why we should  
6 even need assistance programs when again Ameren is  
7 making a billion dollars in profits in 2021, and we're  
8 being asked to pay for our own destruction because  
9 Ameren has continued to burn coal and gas for decades  
10 knowing that it's contributing to climate change. They  
11 spent millions lobbying in Jeff City and D.C. against  
12 climate and environmental legislation undercutting the  
13 clean air and water protections that are supposed to be  
14 for us. They have some of the dirtiest coal plants in  
15 this country and a coal ash waste problem to go right  
16 along with it. We know that maintaining the electric  
17 grid and transitioning to clean energy does cost money,  
18 but we know that Ameren has forced us, the people, to  
19 pay over and over again for this corporate greed.

20 We've paid our bills. We've paid our fees.  
21 Sometimes we've paid our neighbors' bills. And we've  
22 paid for the Ameren fuel of climate change induced flood  
23 damage and other events like we saw this last summer.  
24 We've paid for health care costs from polluted air.  
25 We've probably paid for Ameren to lobby against us in



1 the legislature. It's a little hard to work out all the  
2 details. And we've paid for executives and shareholders  
3 to profit off of necessity that should be held in  
4 common. So not only do I personally and as part of  
5 River City Climate Collective call for no rate increase,  
6 again, we call for no more rate increases period, no  
7 more disconnections and for community-owned and  
8 controlled clean energy so we don't have to keep getting  
9 screwed over by a corporation. Thank you for your time.

10 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Ms. Iverson. I have  
11 no questions.

12 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you.

13 MS. IVERSON: Thank you.

14 JUDGE CLARK: Scott Will. Would you please  
15 state and spell your name.

16 MR. WILL: I'll do it all. My name is Scott  
17 Will, S-c-o-t-t W-i-l-l.

18 JUDGE CLARK: Do you swear or affirm that the  
19 testimony you are about to give at this local public  
20 hearing is the truth?

21 MR. WILL: I do.

22 SCOTT WILL,  
23 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

24 MR. WILL: Hello. I apologize for reading off  
25 my phone, but I want to make sure that I got everything

1 out that I have to say. My name is Scott, I'm a  
2 resident of St. Louis, and I'm an organizer with the  
3 Party for Socialism and Liberation. I take issue with  
4 Ameren requesting a rate hike in times like these. We  
5 all know things are getting more expensive, wages are  
6 low and the cost of living is high. So you'll have to  
7 forgive me if I'm not exactly thrilled that a company  
8 that made over \$900 million in net income last year  
9 comes asking for more. Considering the massive amounts  
10 of tax credits Ameren gets, it feels an awful lot like  
11 Ameren is double dipping into my pockets.

12 I pay those taxes that Ameren gets for  
13 building green energy and I also pay them for the  
14 privilege to be able to turn my own lights on. If  
15 Ameren is having budgetary issues, I believe there's  
16 some folks with laptops out front that could help them  
17 with that.

18 Also, I looked into this green energy project  
19 that Ameren wants to raise rates for. They're not  
20 building the dang solar farm; they're buying it. They  
21 said that this farm could provide energy for 40,000  
22 homes a year. Considering they disconnected over 53,000  
23 people last year, that seems a little backwards to me.  
24 How are you going to ask me to pay you 12 more dollars  
25 every month at a time like this. We're out here every

1 single day having prices raised on us just to line the  
2 pockets of some executive that doesn't even have the  
3 courage to come down here and face us themselves. I  
4 know you good folks here are representing Ameren, but  
5 how hard would it be for your board, your CEO, your COO  
6 to come down here and look us in the eye and hear what  
7 we have to say.

8 I have one more point I'd like to make. I  
9 take issue with the whole idea of this Public Service  
10 Commission. As near as I can tell, no utility in  
11 Missouri has ever been denied a rate increase. I was  
12 here a few months ago for a Spire increase. And you all  
13 listened to the public. The people tell you they  
14 couldn't afford those increases. You heard little old  
15 ladies, women that were pillars of their community tell  
16 you that they wouldn't be able to keep their heat on  
17 this winter. You saw them cry. You still raised the  
18 rates.

19 I mean, what is this. I looked on your  
20 website and I saw no place where a citizen of Missouri  
21 could request a rate decrease. I saw where we could  
22 leave comments, sure, but nowhere in this whole  
23 oversight committee is there a place for a citizen to  
24 file an appeal for a decrease to these outrageous rates.

25 If the Public Service Commission actually

1     cared about hearing what we had to say, they wouldn't  
2     have one meeting on a Thursday right after work. They'd  
3     have multiple meetings everyday so everyone in St.  
4     Louis had a chance to voice their opinion. They'd set  
5     up comment dropboxes at churches, libraries or schools.

6             Ameren gets to talk to the committee any time  
7     they want. They can send letters to them all the live  
8     long day. We only get this, an online meeting, and the  
9     chance to navigate a terrible website. I'm sick of it.

10            Ameren should be dissolved, their plant should  
11    be turned over to the people, the working class of St.  
12    Louis should have a real voice in how our utilities are  
13    run and why should a public good get to be run for  
14    profit. Why should the committee that should be here to  
15    hear us be allowed to operate like this. I don't think  
16    it should. This is basically a rubber stamp in a  
17    kangaroo court. Thank you.

18            JUDGE CLARK: I don't have any questions for  
19    you, but it appears one of our attorneys does.

20    Mr. Williams.

21            MR. WILLIAMS: Just one. I believe you  
22    referenced a solar facility that you said Ameren is not  
23    building but is buying. Do you know what facility that  
24    is?

25            MR. WILL: I believe it's on the piece of

1 paper, which I don't have in my hand. It's the one  
2 that's referenced in the rate increase. Huck Finn Solar  
3 Farm.

4 MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you.

5 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you for your comments.  
6 Jack Hampton. Would you please state and spell your  
7 name for the record.

8 MR. HAMPTON: Yes. Jack, J-a-c-k, Hampton,  
9 H-a-m-p-t-o-n.

10 JUDGE CLARK: And would you raise your right  
11 hand to be sworn. Do you swear or affirm that the  
12 testimony you are about to give at this local public  
13 hearing is the truth?

14 MR. HAMPTON: Yes.

15 JUDGE CLARK: What would you like to tell the  
16 Commission this evening?

17 JACK HAMPTON,  
18 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

19 MR. HAMPTON: Two billion in profits going to  
20 line the Ameren shareholders' pockets. Let's go over  
21 some facts real quick. Ameren's executives make more  
22 money in a year, one year, than most of us will ever see  
23 in our lifetimes. The upper end of that salary range is  
24 \$10 million for each of them every single year. I wish  
25 I could sit on my butt in an office all day for \$10

1 million. Instead, just like everyone else down here,  
2 I'm taking time out of an already exhausting day to tell  
3 you what you already know, that we can't afford yet  
4 another rate increase.

5           We're out here making \$15 an hour. Do you  
6 know what an Ameren executive makes in one hour? You're  
7 not going to like this. While they're working out how  
8 best to screw us over, an Ameren executive is making  
9 about \$5,000 not in a week, not in a day, in one hour.  
10 That is twice what I make in a month. Don't come to us  
11 demanding more of what you already know we don't have.  
12 Don't come to the people and say that you don't have the  
13 money for solar panels, that you don't have the money to  
14 close dirty coal plants, that you don't have the money  
15 to restore power to the families disconnected on winter  
16 nights or summer days. It is a lie and it's an insult.  
17 We know better.

18           The proposed rate increase is an inhumane  
19 scheme to rob the poor and give to the rich. That's the  
20 utility that Ameren oh so generously provides, something  
21 tantamount to a ponzi scheme. This necessity is already  
22 impossible to afford for so many. Next they'll be  
23 charging us for sunlight, for clean air to breathe. Oh,  
24 but wait, they already do that. Our rate has already  
25 increased and we're paying it whether we like it or not.

1           The price we pay is our polluted air from coal  
2 burning, fracking for the crude oil that powers Ameren's  
3 electrical grid, the corruption and pollution of our  
4 world for the sake of insatiable corporate greed.

5           Explain how they're investing in clean energy  
6 when the Rush Island coal plant is still open after  
7 years of empty promises. Explain how they're protecting  
8 the environment when solar energy costs more from Ameren  
9 than natural gas and coal. Explain how they're serving  
10 their customers when you disconnect them without warning  
11 or charge them \$75 for supposedly their non-functional  
12 HVAC unit taking up space heating in their house.  
13 Something that really happened, by the way.

14           Actually don't try to explain this. I'll do  
15 it for you. Ameren and the PSC are driven by greed and  
16 callousness towards the people they claim to protect and  
17 serve. We don't need these clowns. We have better  
18 options. Imagine if we had even the smallest amount of  
19 regulation on utility prices. We would keep people from  
20 homelessness. We'd be able to keep our lights on. If  
21 we controlled our own utilities as a community, we could  
22 keep people from having to choose between warmth and  
23 food, between shelter and clean air. Stopping this rate  
24 hike is nonnegotiable. You've got your money already.  
25 Now give us our world back. I'm not going to be taking

1 any questions. Thanks.

2 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you for your comments.  
3 Jenn DeRose. Would you please state and spell your name  
4 for the record.

5 MS. DeROSE: Yes. It's Jenn DeRose, J-e-n-n  
6 D-e-R-o-s-e.

7 JUDGE CLARK: Would you raise your right hand  
8 to be sworn. Do you swear or affirm that the testimony  
9 you are to give at this local public hearing is the  
10 truth?

11 MS. DeROSE: Yes.

12 JUDGE CLARK: Go ahead.

13 JENN DeROSE,  
14 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

15 MS. DeROSE: Thank you very much. So I'm Jenn  
16 DeRose. I'm the Missouri Beyond Coal Campaign  
17 representative for the Sierra Club. The comments I'm  
18 making tonight are sort of personal. They're very  
19 personal.

20 First I want to thank you, Commissioners, for  
21 showing up, especially you, Commissioner Coleman. Thank  
22 you so much for being here in person. I do appreciate  
23 it. And thank you to everyone who came out and spoke  
24 out and submitted comments online. I really appreciate  
25 the advocacy. We need it.



1 I'm here obviously to state my opposition to  
2 this rate hike. The reason being is because in my early  
3 twenties I was personally impacted by energy burden and  
4 it very nearly ruined my life. I was scraping by doing  
5 odd jobs, working at a local record store full time  
6 trying to making ends meet. I was trying to figure out  
7 how to go back to school. I moved into an apartment I  
8 thought I could afford with my then boyfriend, but  
9 unfortunately when the weather turned harsh so did my  
10 reality.

11 The energy bills I had to pay were crippling.  
12 I think Myisha was up here earlier talking about some  
13 hundreds of dollars. That is also what I experienced.  
14 A lot of other folks are experiencing this too. High  
15 energy burden is a major problem for residents in the  
16 City of St. Louis. So anyway, that was way beyond what  
17 I could afford. During that time it's not an  
18 exaggeration to say that I survived on beans and rice,  
19 which I'm vegetarian so I'm going to eat beans and rice  
20 anyway, but I didn't have anything fancy during that  
21 time. That's for sure. I had to do without medicine or  
22 seeing doctors or buying new shoes when I desperately  
23 needed a new pair. So my then boyfriend and I scraped  
24 up enough cash to put a deposit down on a different  
25 apartment, which we were assured had more reasonable

1 energy bills. It did not. And I was forced to move  
2 again.

3 The strain of these financial burdens  
4 contributed to the end of that relationship and it  
5 prevented me from going back to school, not  
6 exaggerating, for nearly eight years as I tried to catch  
7 up and prevent mounting debt. As you know, it is really  
8 expensive to be a poor person in this country. I'm  
9 lucky. I found resources to help me. I'm scrappy and  
10 resourceful and I'm lucky. I managed to survive and  
11 navigate the system without being disconnected. But  
12 again this is a factor of my luck and my privilege, not  
13 necessarily like that this is bestowed upon normal  
14 average people. Right. Most people aren't able to get  
15 out of the oppressive choke-hold of poverty.

16 It's unconscionable to raise rates at this  
17 time when simply staying alive is so expensive and while  
18 Ameren's net income was \$990 million in 2021. In the  
19 third quarter of 2022, net income attributable to common  
20 shareholders was 452 million up from 425 million in the  
21 third quarter of 2021. And Ameren said that this was  
22 due to -- due to the -- the profit increase was due to  
23 the previous rate increase which is like abhorrent.  
24 Again, I'm using the word again.

25 Lastly, it is really -- no, wait, I'm sorry.

1 I'm so nervous. It's abhorrent to raise rates while  
2 continuing to invest in dangerous polluting coal-fired  
3 power plants when renewables can lower and levelize  
4 costs because there's no fuel charge for the wind, for  
5 the sun. You pay for it once. There's some operation  
6 and maintenance and then it runs on air and sunshine.  
7 Plus the financial benefits of the Inflation Reduction  
8 Act should be able to shield vulnerable communities from  
9 these extra costs of increased transmission and  
10 increased renewables. Lastly, it's ridiculous that we,  
11 the ratepayers, have to pay for Ameren's lobbyists,  
12 litigation costs for their pollution and greed washing  
13 advertisements that claim their support for communities  
14 while they disconnect the poorest and most vulnerable  
15 among us.

16           Lastly, we are being asked to foot the bill  
17 for litigation fees from Ameren's illegal pollution at  
18 Rush Island. The Department of Justice is one of the  
19 plaintiffs in this case. So in a sense as taxpayers and  
20 ratepayers we're paying for both the prosecution and the  
21 defense while benefiting Ameren's shareholders. They're  
22 the only ones who I see benefiting in my view. I really  
23 appreciate you taking the time to come to St. Louis and  
24 listen to us. Again, I want to thank everyone for  
25 showing up today.

1 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you. I do have one  
2 question. You said that Ameren attributed the quarterly  
3 rise to 452 million to their previous rate case.

4 MS. DeROSE: Yes.

5 JUDGE CLARK: I was wondering where you were  
6 getting that information.

7 MS. DeROSE: That is a quote I took directly  
8 from their website, I believe. It might be from S&P. I  
9 can find you that information and give it to you if that  
10 would be acceptable. It's probably from S&P.

11 JUDGE CLARK: Standard & Poor's?

12 MS. DeROSE: Yes.

13 JUDGE CLARK: All right. Thank you.

14 MS. DeROSE: Thank you.

15 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you.

16 JUDGE CLARK: Sherron Jones.

17 MS. JONES: My name is Sherron Jones,  
18 S-h-e-r-r-o-n --

19 JUDGE CLARK: You can move the mike so that  
20 you're most comfortable.

21 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: We can hear you.

22 MS. JONES: Can I do this? Okay. Perfect.  
23 I'm sorry. Now I feel like I'm in church again. I'm  
24 sorry.

25 JUDGE CLARK: You've already said and spelled

1 your name. Do you swear or affirm that the testimony  
2 you're about to give at this local public hearing is the  
3 truth?

4 MS. JONES: Yes, it is.

5 JUDGE CLARK: What would you like to tell the  
6 Commission this evening?

7 SHERRON JONES,  
8 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

9 MS. JONES: First, good evening. Thank you  
10 for being here. We appreciate you all showing up in  
11 person. And I appreciate folks that I know and don't  
12 know in the audience for making comments. And my name  
13 again is Sherron Jones. I use she/her pronouns. I'm  
14 with Homes for All St. Louis. And I will be  
15 representing some of the renters and renter workers we  
16 work with at Homes for All St. Louis, as well as myself  
17 as a resident of the 15th Ward, which will be the 6th  
18 Ward, that's another story, and St. Louis City and as an  
19 Ameren customer.

20 So I wish that I had the passion and the  
21 eloquence that the young folks who spoke before me had,  
22 and I wish I had the ability that Myisha has to tear the  
23 heart out of someone when giving their story. But I  
24 don't have either one of those abilities.

25 What I do have though is a little bit of --

1 have folks in the community that we work with who have  
2 told me their stories and who have told me what they  
3 wish you all as the Public Service Commission to know  
4 about this rate case. I, and the folks that I represent  
5 as a part of Homes for All St. Louis, are opposed to  
6 this rate case for a number of reasons.

7 First, I should give you a little background  
8 information. Homes for All St. Louis, the folks that we  
9 help organize are mostly low-income, renters of color,  
10 especially black women. So I'm not just representing  
11 myself as a woman of color but other women of color who  
12 are also low income and who work long hard hours for a  
13 living.

14 So the renters I represent, they're already  
15 energy burdened. They already pay as much as 20 and 30  
16 percent of their monthly income on utility bills. Like  
17 Myisha said, some of the folks I know utility bills have  
18 gone from \$30 to \$50 to \$100, and these folks are  
19 struggling to get by as it is. So an increase of even  
20 \$5 is too much for them. They can't afford any more  
21 rate increases, like I just said. And not only that,  
22 they don't understand how companies that make exorbitant  
23 profits can disconnect folks.

24 These folks also want -- They've told me that  
25 they don't understand how a rate increase can pay for

1 litigation on a case. They don't understand that.  
2 Frankly, neither do I. And also I can tell you what  
3 they do want. They want better service, they don't want  
4 folks to be disconnected, especially if they can't  
5 afford it because if they can't afford the utility  
6 rates, turning them off isn't going to make them afford  
7 it even more. And they want clean energy. Folks who I  
8 represent understand that the energy that they're  
9 consuming is dirty and that the energy they're consuming  
10 is not renewable and the energy that they're consuming  
11 is a part of climate change that is literally destroying  
12 where we are living. And I want you all to understand  
13 that I feel the exact same way as these renters, as the  
14 other renters that I'm representing.

15 We don't want to see an increase of rates  
16 because we can't afford it. We're already energy  
17 burdened. Rents are going up. Wages aren't going up.  
18 And we're struggling as it is. So because I'm a  
19 solutions-based person, let me offer a solution to  
20 Ameren.

21 Instead of asking me and instead of asking  
22 other renters for an increase in rates, pay your  
23 executives just a little less, just a little, I'm not  
24 asking much. Go from 9 million to 8.5 million, you  
25 know, or offer actual programs that offer actual utility

1 assistance for folks and not blaming the customer when  
2 you ask them to wash their dishes at seven o'clock in  
3 the morning or use their dishwasher at seven o'clock in  
4 the morning.

5 So like I said, I am representing not just  
6 myself but other folks and we want you all to know we  
7 just can't afford it. And they can. So ask them to do  
8 it and not us. Thank you all so much.

9 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Ms. Jones.

10 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you.

11 JUDGE CLARK: Rachel Scholl. Would you please  
12 state and spell your name for the record.

13 MS. SCHOLL: My name is Rachel Scholl,  
14 R-a-c-h-e-l S-c-h-o-l-l.

15 JUDGE CLARK: Would you raise your right hand  
16 and be sworn. Do you swear or affirm that the testimony  
17 you're about to give at this local public hearing is the  
18 truth?

19 MS. SCHOLL: Yes, I do.

20 JUDGE CLARK: Please go ahead.

21 RACHEL SCHOLL,  
22 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

23 MS. SCHOLL: So I agree wholeheartedly with  
24 what I have heard with the other speakers. I'm also  
25 very much opposed to this rate increase proposal. I



1 grew up in Florissant, and I still live there. And as  
2 you can see, I have three members of my family. They  
3 have two younger siblings too. We have five kids all in  
4 all. My husband is also here supporting me with the two  
5 youngest outside. They were getting a little  
6 rambunctious. The kids, not him.

7           Like when I think about our society and I see  
8 all the problems, I just keep on looking at it more and  
9 more holistically. I was sitting here thinking about  
10 the movie The Matrix and how, you know, you have that  
11 scene where you see that humanity is like basically in a  
12 coma and they're all just human batteries plugged into  
13 this system. And that's such a disturbing image and  
14 it's so powerful. But that's the thing. It's like when  
15 you have a public utility and it's not owned by the  
16 public and it's for profit, who's the battery?

17           We are the batteries for Ameren instead of  
18 them being the batteries to us. This should be  
19 something that is owned by the public, used by the  
20 public, because I don't have a choice to choose another  
21 company. I have to pay my Ameren bill or else my  
22 electricity is going to get shut off and our family  
23 would potentially be kicked out or be on the street.

24           We have friends who are experiencing housing  
25 insecurity and homelessness, and we don't want to see

1 that happen to more families like us or us. So I just  
2 want to make sure that you guys see not just the next  
3 generation that is going to have to deal with the air  
4 pollution and every other mess that we're kind of just  
5 snowballing for them now that they are already at ten  
6 and eight years old concerned about and asking questions  
7 about.

8           They're not just the future. They're the  
9 present. They're those kids that have to listen to mom  
10 and dad having tense conversations saying we need to  
11 prioritize our budget. And it does create conflicts  
12 sometimes and it does create hardship. And that's just  
13 not something that the people whose names are on the  
14 bill are experiencing. It's our kids and it impacts  
15 families, whatever our families look like, chosen  
16 families, whoever, like the people in our lives that we  
17 lean on. We need more of that. We need to come  
18 together and keep on supporting each other exactly like  
19 the vibe in this room right now. I am so excited to see  
20 how many people came out. I'm excited to see more of  
21 this, because this is what our situation actually  
22 necessitates.

23           And if we don't come together, like we know  
24 how much is at stake. So I'm just grateful and I know  
25 that the harder things are the more the community is

1 going to have to make our voices heard and support each  
2 other.

3 We need our leaders to step up and to truly  
4 fight our battles that we elected you all to do. We are  
5 depending on you. Thank you.

6 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you for your time and your  
7 comments.

8 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Ms. Scholl, any of your  
9 children have anything to say?

10 KAYLAH SCHOLL: I don't really like that --

11 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Come over so I can hear  
12 you, please. Can I have your name, please.

13 KAYLAH SCHOLL: K-a-y-l-a-h.

14 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Kaylah?

15 KAYLAH SCHOLL: Kaylah.

16 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Kaylah. That's a  
17 pretty name. Thank you. And you wanted to say?

18 KAYLAH SCHOLL: I don't really like how you're  
19 just using a whole bunch of money and you don't even  
20 really need it. You're taking money from the poor.  
21 Like we have -- like my mom said that we have some  
22 friends that are actually homeless probably and they  
23 can't really pay any bill. Probably because they can't  
24 afford a house and all the electricity it needed. And I  
25 just don't like that. And it's also like some other

1 people said that there are some like you're making dirty  
2 air and why can't you just use like other stuff. I know  
3 that we need some stuff but we don't need that bill.

4 And it just doesn't feel right like you're  
5 getting all the money but we don't have like a whole lot  
6 of money. We're trying to get a house. And we can't  
7 afford to get a house partly because you're using all  
8 the energy bills. Like we need that money to buy a  
9 house. We have a house but it's getting a little bit  
10 too crowded because we have like five children.

11 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Do you want more  
12 brothers and sisters?

13 KAYLAH SCHOLL: No.

14 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Good answer. Thank  
15 you, Kaylah. As a matter of fact, I think now everybody  
16 else can leave because she's summed it up. Thank you.

17 MS. SCHOLL: Can I add one more thing? I  
18 forgot to mention that there are two people in our  
19 family that do have breathing issues and that is  
20 something where we are concerned about the air quality.  
21 It affects our family directly. And we also have family  
22 members who do, you know, lean on CPAP or other medical  
23 equipment. This is something that is really, you know,  
24 there's just so much to this and it's hard to even  
25 address all of those things. Thanks for listening.

1 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you very much.

2 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you. Suba Gunawardana. I  
3 apologize if I butchered that.

4 MS. GUNAWARDANA: Suba Gunawardana, S-u-b-a  
5 G-u-n-a-w-a-r-d-a-n-a.

6 JUDGE CLARK: Would you raise your right hand  
7 to be sworn. Do you swear or affirm that the testimony  
8 you're about to give at this local public hearing is the  
9 truth?

10 MS. GUNAWARDANA: I do.

11 JUDGE CLARK: What comments do you have for  
12 the Commission this evening?

13 SUBA GUNAWARDANA,  
14 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

15 MS. GUNAWARDANA: Good evening, yes. As a  
16 residential customer, I oppose this rate increase due to  
17 several reasons, four reasons specifically.

18 Number one, electric service from Ameren is  
19 already our most expensive utility. It costs us several  
20 more than the other utilities like Spire Gas and  
21 American Water. Even though it is the most expensive,  
22 it is also the least reliable considering the frequent,  
23 the number of outages, the duration and frequency of  
24 outages. Those are considerably more than the other  
25 utilities. So therefore even the rates that are

1 current, the current rates as they are, are not  
2 justifiable considering that it is not very efficient.  
3 The proposed rate increase, as far as I know, I don't  
4 see proper justification for such a large rate increase.  
5 I haven't seen a detailed reasoning where they have laid  
6 out in detail, for example, the costs to provide energy,  
7 taxes or subsidies, anything that can offset those. And  
8 particularly they have not specified in any meaningful  
9 manner any efforts that they have taken to avoid these  
10 increased costs to customers.

11           Number three, the proposal suggests that  
12 customers could avoid the monthly customer charge  
13 increase by enrolling in these different rate options  
14 such as the high rate savers plan. However, those rate  
15 options come with demand charge. The demand charge is  
16 not explained well on the website. From what they  
17 state, the highest usage between 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.  
18 will be charged at the higher kW rate. The way it seems  
19 to me any savings you make by enrolling in the high rate  
20 savers option would not only be completely wiped out but  
21 actually you might end up paying a larger bill due to  
22 the demand charge alone. So it doesn't look like that  
23 effort, those rate options would in any way cut the  
24 costs for consumers.

25           Number four, this proposed increase is a

1 hardship to all residential customers considering the  
2 ongoing inflation and the lasting effects of the  
3 pandemic. This is a hardship not just to those on a  
4 fixed income but to all customers who are not super  
5 wealthy, and as several people suggested before, the  
6 executives of Ameren could bear some of these costs  
7 rather than pushing everything onto the consumer and  
8 raising the rates repeatedly. So as everybody agrees,  
9 Ameren is already charging far too much to residential  
10 customers. Any additional increase would be  
11 unconscionable. Thank you.

12 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you for your comments. I  
13 have no questions. David Seely.

14 MR. SEELY: David Seely, D-a-v-i-d S-e-e-l-y.

15 JUDGE CLARK: I apologize. Do you swear or  
16 affirm that the testimony you're about to give at this  
17 local public hearing is the truth?

18 MR. SEELY: Yes, sir.

19 JUDGE CLARK: What would you like to tell the  
20 Commission?

21 DAVID SEELY,  
22 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

23 MR. SEELY: Thank you for having me. I'm a  
24 disabled veteran. Earlier one of the individuals at  
25 Ameren said that their rates here in Missouri was some

1 of the lowest rates in the area. I disagree with that.  
2 I'm an outsider. I'm originally from Texas. I've been  
3 stationed all over the country and many places in the  
4 world.

5 This is one of the most expensive places I've  
6 ever been in. Currently we have a house back down in  
7 Tennessee also. My brother is back down in Texas. The  
8 rates here are exorbitantly expensive. I mean, much,  
9 much more expensive than in Tennessee and Texas. And  
10 the outages that they have here, sometimes, you know,  
11 you can be without power for three days at a time. In  
12 Tennessee and even in Texas, you even have hurricanes  
13 down there, you don't even have outages like you have  
14 here. So I don't understand with the big city like this  
15 think I would probably be able to take care of  
16 everything with all that money they've got rolling in.  
17 You think that they'd be able to take care of the  
18 consumers and deal with the problems that go on here in  
19 the big city. I can understand in the small town.  
20 Sometimes you can't get out there, whatever. Here it  
21 just doesn't make sense to me.

22 Like when they do rate increases out there in  
23 Indiana, usually they tell you exactly what they did to  
24 mitigate those costs. And sometimes they don't even do  
25 a rate increase. They say we did this, this and this



1 and we're not going to do a rate increase because we  
2 mitigated it, you know, ourselves. Here it looks like  
3 Ameren just doesn't do anything really and passes it off  
4 onto the consumer. It doesn't seem like they're doing  
5 anything here compared to the rest of the country.

6 I think that the energy cost here is just  
7 exorbitant. Something needs to be done. I don't know  
8 whether it's passing it off to the public or anything,  
9 but I think like down in Texas they allow other  
10 companies to come in and they have choices of companies.  
11 It drives the rates down. You need more companies  
12 instead of having just one company dictate to you what  
13 the prices are. You need several companies just like  
14 you can go buy -- just like saying you only have one car  
15 company come in selling one car, type of car. You need  
16 more and more different kinds of companies to come in  
17 and drive the rates down. We'd be a lot better off with  
18 that. I can't think of anything else to say. I think  
19 we just need more better choices.

20 JUDGE CLARK: Both you and the previous person  
21 before you had mentioned excessive outages. How often  
22 would you say that you are out of power?

23 MR. SEELY: I wouldn't know. Several times a  
24 year I know we've been out of power. Sometimes we lose  
25 everything in the icebox because it's gone, you know.

1 You have to throw everything out. That's why we went  
2 ahead and got some solar panels and a little generator  
3 to try to hook the icebox up to just in case it went out  
4 so we wouldn't lose everything. It happens frequently.

5 JUDGE CLARK: When you say several times a  
6 year, do you mean three or more?

7 MR. SEELY: Yeah, three or more it goes out.  
8 Sometimes it doesn't go out for like three days at a  
9 time. You come home and lights are out, you know,  
10 they're just gone.

11 JUDGE CLARK: Would you say monthly or less  
12 often than monthly?

13 MR. SEELY: At least like, at least like --  
14 didn't it go out a little while ago? But I'm saying you  
15 come home sometimes and the lights went out. I don't  
16 know how long. We come home and everything is blinking  
17 and it's been off for a while. Yeah. You come home  
18 quite a bit, at least, as she said, at least twice a  
19 year. Sometimes you lose things in the icebox. Quite a  
20 bit, quite a bit.

21 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Seely. Wait just  
22 a second. I believe one of the attorneys has questions.  
23 Mr. Vandergriff.

24 MR. SEELY: Sorry, I don't hear very well.

25 MR. VANDERGRIFF: Thank you for your service.

1 Eric Vandergriff, Public Commission Staff.

2 MR. SEELY: Yes, sir.

3 MR. VANDERGRIFF: You said that you had  
4 service or you saw service in Tennessee and Texas. Was  
5 that also a public utility or was it city?

6 MR. SEELY: No, no, no, I was in the Navy, you  
7 know. I'm a veteran.

8 MR. VANDERGRIFF: So for those rates that you  
9 said were lower?

10 MR. SEELY: Oh, in Tennessee and Texas, yeah.

11 MR. VANDERGRIFF: So was it public utilities  
12 like here or was it --

13 MR. SEELY: Yeah, it's public utilities. Like  
14 we own a house in, I'm sorry, in Texas -- We have a  
15 house here in Missouri. We have one in Tennessee. And  
16 my brother still lives down in Texas. He's got an  
17 apartment down there in Texas still.

18 MR. VANDERGRIFF: Thank you.

19 MR. WILLIAMS: Sir --

20 JUDGE CLARK: Mr. Williams. Sir, if you could  
21 wait just a second, I believe there's some more  
22 questions.

23 MR. SEELY: I'm sorry.

24 JUDGE CLARK: You're fine.

25 MR. SEELY: Like I said, I don't hear very

1 well.

2 MR. WILLIAMS: Along the same lines I know you  
3 referenced rates. I want to make sure that you weren't  
4 talking about bills whenever you're talking about the  
5 differences in rates between Texas, Missouri and  
6 Tennessee.

7 MR. SEELY: It's all in -- The rates are much  
8 higher here than down there. And you all have a lot of  
9 tacked on little charges that we don't have those  
10 charges down there in Tennessee, do we? No.

11 MR. WILLIAMS: I'm just wanting to confirm  
12 you're talking about a kW per hour usage or some kind of  
13 usage based rate as opposed to bill totals; that's all.

14 MR. SEELY: It's both of them. The kW per  
15 hour is lower and those little hidden fees that you  
16 stick on them, you know, they don't see them in Texas or  
17 Tennessee. You know what I'm saying? Like the fuel  
18 charges and stuff. What is those little customer  
19 charges, little things like that. They have a couple of  
20 little things, one or two. Here you've all got three or  
21 four or five of them. I don't know what all they are.

22 MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you for assuring me that  
23 you meant what you said.

24 MR. SEELY: I'm sorry.

25 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you.

1 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you for your comments.

2 Chris Willcox.

3 MR. WILLCOX: It's Chris Willcox, C-h-r-i-s

4 W-i-l-l-c-o-x.

5 JUDGE CLARK: Do you swear or affirm that the  
6 testimony you're about to give at this local public  
7 hearing is the truth?

8 MR. WILLCOX: I do.

9 JUDGE CLARK: Please go ahead.

10 CHRIS WILLCOX,

11 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

12 MR. WILLCOX: Thank you for the opportunity to  
13 speak. My name is Chris Willcox. I am the Director of  
14 Policy and Advocacy at A Red Circle, which is a  
15 nonprofit that serves North St. Louis County.

16 If you're like me and you've spent any amount  
17 of time with poor and working people over the last three  
18 years, you know that making a living is becoming  
19 increasingly impossible. Help paying for rent and  
20 utilities has been the most consistent need presented as  
21 the cost of living continues to rise to crisis levels.

22 The government's main response has been to  
23 subsidize landlords and utility companies, including  
24 Ameren. Despite this, Ameren has been quick to  
25 disconnect people in North County, including many

1 families with infant children. As of the first of this  
2 month, the Emergency Rental Assistance Program is no  
3 longer available in Missouri, exactly one month after  
4 the state made it illegal to camp on state property.

5 Given the lack of bare-minimum services --

6 JUDGE CLARK: Can you say that again. I'm  
7 sorry. I just didn't catch it.

8 MR. WILLCOX: Yes. As of the first of this  
9 month, the Emergency Rental Assistance Program is no  
10 longer available in Missouri, and this is exactly one  
11 month after the state made it illegal to camp on state  
12 property.

13 And given the lack of bare-minimum services  
14 for people becoming unhoused, I'm not sure what anyone  
15 expects these families to do.

16 Two weeks ago, A Red Circle held its fourth  
17 and final rental assistance clinic to help families  
18 apply just before the final deadline. Over 60 families  
19 showed up to our little office, some with  
20 multiple-hundred-dollar Ameren bills that they couldn't  
21 pay, some because they had to put what little they had  
22 into rent to avoid eviction.

23 THE STENOGRAPHER: I'm sorry. Can you read  
24 slower, please.

25 MR. WILLCOX: Oh, sure. Two weeks ago, A Red

1 Circle held its fourth and final rental assistance  
2 clinic to help families apply just before the final  
3 deadline. Over 60 families showed up to our little  
4 office, some with multiple-hundred-dollar Ameren bills  
5 they couldn't pay, some because they had to put what  
6 little they had into rent to avoid eviction.  
7 Electricity disconnection could cause this to happen  
8 anyway, as many leases specify it as grounds for  
9 eviction, including for voucher users, no matter what  
10 the government deems they can afford. The bills are  
11 unsurprising, as low-income families disproportionately  
12 live in poorly weatherized homes with the highest energy  
13 costs. This month we've been inundated with requests  
14 from families who are at immediate risk of eviction and  
15 disconnection.

16           Especially galling is the fact that the  
17 cost-of-living crisis is driven by corporate profits.  
18 Rising profit margins account for more than half of  
19 price increases in data from the Kansas City Fed. This  
20 was also the case for eggs despite claims blaming the  
21 Avian flu. Now it seems Ameren wants in on the action  
22 despite its own billion-dollar profits, even after  
23 paying \$10 million in compensation to its chief  
24 executive.

25           Ameren entirely controls a vital service in a

1 modern society. It is worth asking if anyone should be  
2 allowed a single dollar in profit extracted from  
3 monopoly over a public service necessary for families to  
4 live. All the while, Ameren plans to increase its  
5 contribution to climate change by importing more coal,  
6 which creates additional particulate pollution,  
7 contributing to asthma. Asthma, as we know,  
8 disproportionately affects the same black and brown  
9 families paying the highest utility rates for living in  
10 poorly weatherized homes. These happen to be the same  
11 families most affected by a viral respiratory pandemic  
12 still very much ongoing.

13           Why is a hearing like this the closest thing  
14 these families have to energy democracy, begging a  
15 for-profit corporation not to squeeze them even harder  
16 to administer public goods? One way or another we're  
17 done working hours into the night like at our last  
18 clinic applying for government subsidies for landlords  
19 and utilities to maintain safe housing for the families  
20 at their mercy. At the very least, we cannot allow  
21 their rates to rise a cent more, because every person  
22 deserves a safe home and the things they need to  
23 survive. Thank you.

24           JUDGE CLARK: Thank you. John Cross.

25           MR. CROSS: My name is John Cross, J-o-h-n



1 C-r-o-s-s.

2 JUDGE CLARK: Do you swear or affirm that the  
3 testimony you are about to give at this local public  
4 hearing is the truth?

5 MR. CROSS: Yes.

6 JUDGE CLARK: What would you like to tell the  
7 Commission?

8 JOHN CROSS,  
9 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

10 MR. CROSS: Hi, Senator Maida Coleman.

11 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Good to see you, John.

12 MR. CROSS: Senator, I just want to say you've  
13 always been on the right side of history. So I hope you  
14 will agree with most of them here that we don't like  
15 this rate increase. So I hope you'll be on our side  
16 like you've always been.

17 What I would like to say is that this is a  
18 statement from Ameren that said we understand there's no  
19 good time to adjust electric rates and we're committed  
20 to do what we can to keep rates as low as possible by  
21 spending wisely and cutting costs. That's their  
22 statement. Well, I agree with you it's not a good time  
23 to raise the rates, because, you know, you're not  
24 looking at the big picture. Maybe you are. You know,  
25 the country, majority of the people are going through

1 bad times. Inflation has gone up. Prices have gone up.  
2 Now you come and ask for a rate increase just when you  
3 just confirm, your officials just confirm that you got a  
4 rate increase of \$220 million not less than a year ago.  
5 This doesn't make any sense at all. It's unconscionable  
6 that you're thinking of making these rates right now,  
7 rate increase.

8 I work -- I do a lot of volunteer work. I  
9 work with the veterans, the Missouri Veterans. I think  
10 Bill Wallace was at the hearing in St. Charles today,  
11 you know, making the same comments. My wife runs a free  
12 clinic, a health clinic. She takes care of kids between  
13 13 and 24. The majority of the kids that she takes care  
14 of live in places where they can't pay the bills, they  
15 can't pay the bills. So you know, one of the comments  
16 that were made by your executive was when somebody asked  
17 if you don't get this rate increase, what are you going  
18 to do. We'll have to make internal cuts. That's a very  
19 good suggestion. You can start by cutting your  
20 executive pay. If you go and find out, Warren Baxter  
21 made \$9 million in 2021. I mean, this is a public  
22 record. You can find the salaries. When is enough  
23 enough? You know, do you need another big house? This  
24 is unconscionable that we are asking for a rate increase  
25 from the most vulnerable people. It's really

1 unconscionable. Thank you.

2 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Cross.

3 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you.

4 JUDGE CLARK: Barbara Robinson. Would you  
5 please state and spell your name.

6 MS. ROBINSON: My name is Barbara Robinson,  
7 B-a-r-b-a-r-a R-o-b-i-n-s-o-n.

8 JUDGE CLARK: Do you swear or affirm that the  
9 testimony you're about to give at this local public  
10 hearing is the truth?

11 MS. ROBINSON: Yes, I do.

12 JUDGE CLARK: Go ahead.

13 BARBARA ROBINSON,  
14 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

15 MS. ROBINSON: I am a homeowner. I live in  
16 the City of St. Louis. I've been living in my home for  
17 30 years. I live with my husband which is on social  
18 security and my three great-grandchildren and two sons  
19 that live downstairs. The cost of living has gotten  
20 higher. Food prices has gotten higher, as well as the  
21 gas prices. I don't receive food stamps, because I work  
22 for St. Louis Public School as a substitute teacher.

23 This mean I have to pay for everything that I  
24 buy, as well as my utilities such as the sewer, the  
25 water bill, I pay my car note, my two electric bills and

1 my two gas bills, because I live upstairs and my two  
2 sons live downstairs. I am speaking to the Commissioner  
3 this would be a hardship for me and my family if the  
4 rate increases. I can't afford it.

5 I am on a CPAP at night. This will be a great  
6 hardship for me and my family, because I pay all the  
7 bills upstairs and down. So I just can't afford it.  
8 This hardship is really bad for me. So do you have any  
9 questions? Plus, I'm on a CPAP machine. Did I say  
10 that?

11 JUDGE CLARK: You didn't. Thank you for your  
12 comments. I don't have any questions.

13 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you, Ms.  
14 Robinson.

15 JUDGE CLARK: Sheila Davis.

16 MS. DAVIS: My name is Sheila Davis,  
17 S-h-e-i-l-a D-a-v-i-s.

18 JUDGE CLARK: Do you swear or affirm that the  
19 testimony you're about to give at this local public  
20 hearing is the truth?

21 MS. DAVIS: I do.

22 SHEILA DAVIS,  
23 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

24 MS. DAVIS: Good evening. My name is Sheila  
25 Davis. I'm a senior citizen and a resident of Fountain

1 Park. Living in the house that my grandmother bought in  
2 1940, it has been six generations of my family there. I  
3 need home repairs to restore my home, but my utility  
4 bills are so high I cannot afford it. Being on a tight  
5 budget, it is like energy versus basic needs.

6 I am 71 years old, a single homeowner, and  
7 still working a full-time job. Employed by the City of  
8 St. Louis for 18 years, I am afraid to retire because it  
9 will not be enough money to pay my bills. So it is all  
10 on me. Currently working hard in forming my community  
11 and trying to keep and maintain my property, it would  
12 hurt if I was or had an increase in utility rates. I  
13 may have to move out of my home that I have lived in  
14 most of my life. I grew up there.

15 Take into consideration of what an increase in  
16 utility rates would do. I love my home. I love my  
17 community and the people that live in it. On behalf of  
18 the Fountain Park and Lewis Place Steering Committee,  
19 this is my energy burden story.

20 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Ms. Davis.

21 MS. DAVIS: You're welcome.

22 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you, Ms. Davis.

23 JUDGE CLARK: Eileen Jamieson.

24 MS. JAMIESON: Hi. I'm Eileen Jamieson. It's  
25 E-i-l-e-e-n J-a-m-i-e-s-o-n. Thank you, Missouri Public

1 Service -- oh, yeah. Oh, sorry.

2 JUDGE CLARK: Do you swear or affirm that the  
3 testimony you're about to give at this local public  
4 hearing is the truth?

5 MS. JAMIESON: Yes.

6 EILEEN JAMIESON,  
7 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

8 MS. JAMIESON: Thank you so much for being  
9 here especially in person. I will also be reading from  
10 my phone. My apologies. But thank you for the  
11 opportunity to speak today on Ameren's proposed rate  
12 increase. It's important for community members to be  
13 involved in utility decisions that will impact our  
14 community and shared environment.

15 My name is Eileen Jamieson. I live in St.  
16 Louis and I recently just graduated from SLU, St. Louis  
17 University. And as someone that's originally from  
18 Texas, I have seen what happens when the people in  
19 charge don't care enough about the people they serve to  
20 ensure a reliable electricity supply.

21 While Missouri's electrical grid may not be  
22 compromised, its customers will be if Ameren continues  
23 to raise its prices, and I doubt this will be the only  
24 one in the coming years. This is what happens when a  
25 utility company is allowed to monopolize its sector.

1 The stakes are higher. But not for Ameren whose profits  
2 and investors are in no way suffering but for everyday  
3 Missourians who have no other option.

4 Year over year quarterly earnings comparisons  
5 were positively impacted by the new Ameren Missouri  
6 electric service rates effective February 28, 2022, and  
7 this is from Ameren's own press release released on  
8 November 3rd, 2022. Our only recourse is to entreat  
9 you, the MO PSC, to protect us and to the Missouri  
10 Public Commission I ask that you stay true to your  
11 mission statement that ensuring that Missourians receive  
12 safe and reliable utility services at just, reasonable  
13 and affordable rates.

14 To this end, we the people you are obligated  
15 to serve ask that you, one, not increase the rates  
16 during the pandemic and not increase the fixed monthly  
17 charge. Two, stop disconnections for late payments and  
18 invest corporate profits in debt forgiveness. Three,  
19 adopt realistic and expanded payment and billing plans  
20 while ending penalties and fees. Four, greatly increase  
21 funding for bill assistance and do more to help working  
22 families and people on fixed incomes achieve lower bills  
23 in the long term. Five, greatly increase weatherization  
24 and energy efficiency programs to help customers reduce  
25 bills, especially low-income customers. And six,

1 replace its dirty and expensive coal plants with clean  
2 energy. Thank you.

3 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you. I have no questions.

4 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you.

5 JUDGE CLARK: Bryce Robinson.

6 MR. ROBINSON: My name is Bryce Robinson,  
7 B-r-y-c-e R-o-b-i-n-s-o-n.

8 JUDGE CLARK: Do you swear or affirm that the  
9 testimony you're about to give at this local public  
10 hearing is the truth?

11 MR. ROBINSON: I do.

12 BRYCE ROBINSON,  
13 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

14 MR. ROBINSON: Thank you all for being here.  
15 According to the New York Times, in 2019 Missouri's  
16 energy mix was approximately 80 percent coal, 10 percent  
17 natural gas and 10 percent nuclear. This energy mix  
18 hasn't changed in the previous 20 years.

19 JUDGE CLARK: Would you give me those  
20 percentages again? I apologize.

21 MR. ROBINSON: 80 coal, 10 natural gas, 10  
22 percent nuclear, and these are 2019 numbers. And those  
23 numbers had not changed in the 20 years leading up to  
24 that. So let that soak in. That's two decades of no  
25 change.



1 I'm 36 years old, and I am fortunate to have  
2 an excellent dad. When I was a kid, I would ask my dad  
3 about renewable energy. He would always tell me what  
4 was gospel at the time, that solar was too expensive,  
5 wind farms were a fantasy and electric vehicles might as  
6 well belong to the Jetsons. A couple of weeks ago, I  
7 found out I'm going to be a dad myself. Now in 2023,  
8 other states have massive solar installations, acres and  
9 acres of wind farms, electric vehicles that can go 60  
10 miles an hour in three seconds flat. Personally,  
11 selfishly, I would love to buy an electric truck, but I  
12 can't do that in good conscience in this state because  
13 it would run on coal.

14 For the first time, in 2022 there was a  
15 profound breakthrough in energy production. We saw a  
16 fusion reactor make more power than was put into it. In  
17 the 1940's, North St. Louis waterways and soil were  
18 poisoned for generations by the Mallinckrodt Company and  
19 the federal government in pursuit of the Manhattan  
20 Project. It's time that the government make amends and  
21 build the first commercial fusion reactor right here in  
22 North County. I don't care what it costs. We already  
23 paid for the price in disease and cancer rates.

24 When I was a child, clean energy was out of  
25 reach, but now I'm going to have a child and that's no

1 longer the case. I demand better for my child and for  
2 the next generation. My child should not have to live  
3 in the past just because they were born in the state of  
4 Missouri.

5 I oppose this rate increase. I'd rather pay  
6 you to keep your coal and gas in the ground. Thank you.

7 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you. I have no questions.

8 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you.

9 JUDGE CLARK: Lucy Hannagan (phonetic  
10 spelling.) Lucy Hannagan. Dana Gray.

11 MS. GRAY: Hello. My name is Dana Gray  
12 spelled D-a-n-a G-r-a-y.

13 JUDGE CLARK: Do you swear or affirm that the  
14 testimony you are about to give this evening at this  
15 local public hearing is the truth?

16 MS. GRAY: Yes, I do.

17 DANA GRAY,  
18 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

19 MS. GRAY: Thank you all for being here  
20 tonight, especially Ms. Maida Coleman. I appreciate  
21 your public appearance tonight, especially after the  
22 last hearing when everyone was just on video and didn't  
23 have their faces shown. I felt like we were talking to  
24 no one. So I'm grateful for your presence.

25 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you.

1 MS. GRAY: I work for Tower Grove Community  
2 Development Corporation in South St. Louis and I'm here  
3 to represent the tenants that we offer housing to. Our  
4 organization provides housing targeted to households  
5 that make 30 to 80 percent of the area median income. I  
6 have collected comments from some of our tenants. I  
7 want to share some of those with you tonight.

8 Michelle, who is a renter, single household  
9 member in Shaw says my off-season bill has already gone  
10 up by \$30. With the Spire increase that recently  
11 occurred, my combined gas and electric bills are now  
12 upwards of \$250 during heavy use periods. That's up \$75  
13 from last year. Also, Ameren posted a 9.5 percent  
14 profit increase after the last rate increase. Why do  
15 they need another? Our income sure hasn't gone up that  
16 much.

17 David, who's head of a household and  
18 self-employed, says my small two-bedroom apartment costs  
19 nearly \$200 a month to heat and maintain at 67 degrees.  
20 This is outrageous. When will the greed end?

21 Eleanor, who's a renter in Shaw Neighborhood,  
22 says between the Ameren increase in 2021 and the Spire  
23 increase in November, cost of living has gone up  
24 significantly. Corporate greed on both parts is going  
25 to make it unsustainable for customers of these two

1 monopolies to continue to live without struggling more  
2 than they are already.

3 Sabrina, who lives in the Botanical Heights  
4 Neighborhood who's a renter and homemaker, says  
5 increases like these in addition to so many other basic  
6 living cost increases are putting many community members  
7 in danger of losing the ability to stay in housing.  
8 I have a militant budget to keep and this Ameren rate  
9 increase will absolutely cause added strain to our  
10 households.

11 Madalyn, who's self-employed and a renter, a  
12 single person, says my utilities have already been shut  
13 off in the past due to being unable to make the  
14 payments. The cost of living has increased quickly and  
15 dramatically and I will have to choose which necessities  
16 I can live without.

17 Another person who asked to remain anonymous  
18 who's single, self-employed describes herself as a gig  
19 worker and as a part-time employee says I feel like I'm  
20 already paying a high rate for such a small apartment to  
21 heat and cool. This would put me way over my budget.

22 Lucas, who is a disabled renter, says I live  
23 on social security and can already barely pay the  
24 increased bills. Ameren just raised rates a year ago  
25 and they want to do it again? I will have to choose

1 between electric and medicine if this goes through.

2 Another person who says they wish to remain  
3 anonymous lives in Tower Grove. They are a single  
4 person and has an eight-year-old daughter and has been  
5 sober for one year and they're an hourly worker. They  
6 say I believe this increase will put me even further  
7 into financial instability.

8 Zoey, who lives in Tower Grove and is a single  
9 person, works for hourly pay, says I barely make ends  
10 meet and with the increasing rates of food, gas and  
11 other essentials, the hike in the cost of living I don't  
12 see an increase in my wages to accommodate these. This  
13 increase of the electric utility will leave me unable to  
14 afford anything. Thank you.

15 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you. I have no questions.  
16 Mia Marsh.

17 MS. MARSH: Mia Marsh, M-i-a M-a-r-s-h.

18 JUDGE CLARK: Do you swear or affirm that the  
19 testimony you're about to give at this local public  
20 hearing is the truth?

21 MS. MARSH: Yes.

22 JUDGE CLARK: Please go ahead.

23 MIA MARSH,  
24 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

25 MS. MARSH: So I'm here as a citizen of the

1 St. Louis area.

2 THE STENOGRAPHER: I'm sorry. Can you speak  
3 up, please.

4 MS. MARSH: I'm here as a concerned citizen of  
5 the St. Louis area. I've been here all my life. I've  
6 lived in North City, in West City, and I'm now in North  
7 County. In all areas I have went to different hearings  
8 and talked since I came back to St. Louis. I came back  
9 in 2008 from Georgia.

10 The utility bills, the first meeting I went to  
11 was in I think 2010, when I bought a home in West St.  
12 Louis. I have an old brownstone three story in which I  
13 went to the meeting about clean energy and solar panels.  
14 When I got to the meeting and I asked about the solar  
15 panels, I was told you can't do a solar panel, not for  
16 the area you live in once I gave them my area. I asked  
17 why. I said solar panels are supposed to be a new clean  
18 energy. Everybody is going to a new clean energy. I  
19 want solar panels for my home. Couldn't get them. I  
20 called Ameren up. I tried to find out why it is that my  
21 area that I live in does not have an authorization for  
22 solar panels. They told me if I -- the area had to be  
23 voted on and it wasn't considered to be a popular thing.

24 The area I grew up in in North St. Louis,  
25 which is Walnut Park area, is not an area as well

1 considered for solar panels because I inquired about  
2 that area. Due to a lack of trees and shade, due to the  
3 amount of sun that they could get, that area was not  
4 considered an area for solar panels either.

5 No answer as to why other than a lack of sun.  
6 Isn't that amazing? How is the sun a lack of sunlight  
7 in an area that doesn't have trees? You can go today  
8 and it still does not have a lot of trees in that area.

9 The other issue I have is there are power  
10 outages. So the power outages come when there's a  
11 rainstorm, when there's a windstorm, when there is just  
12 a bad day. I don't know what the reasons are all the  
13 time. Power goes out. We've got to wait for Ameren to  
14 come out and turn the power back on. The left side of  
15 the street goes out more than the right side of the  
16 street. Why is the right side of the street always  
17 going out when the storm comes and the left side don't?  
18 Ameren. Oh, you're going to fix the terminals on the  
19 poles so that we can have power and the power don't go  
20 out anytime the wind blows past five miles an hour? No,  
21 that was not a fix for the communities.

22 I'm out here in North County now, and we don't  
23 have a lot of power outages because the power has moved  
24 underground. But the problem we have is we still have  
25 poles that bring the power to the source that's

1 underground. The poles are ran over. We got to call  
2 them to come out and fix the poles. The windstorm came.  
3 The box blew up. That's happened twice.

4 So if Ameren has been pushing cleaner energy  
5 and better power sources, and I'm a returnee since 2008,  
6 I don't see the improvement. It's not a part of where  
7 I'm from. It's not happening in the areas I'm in. I  
8 moved out here in North County. I called Ameren to  
9 inquire again about these solar panels trying to figure  
10 out how this works so that this person that's trying to  
11 sell me a solar panel can shut up.

12 Ameren has yet to explain to me how solar  
13 panels work. I want to know how is it that you all are  
14 asking for a rate hike from over ten years ago when  
15 you're supposed to have been pushing cleaner energy and  
16 we're still burning fossil fuels. We don't have a clear  
17 plan for these solar panel program where its citizens  
18 can take advantage of paying back Ameren versus us  
19 paying Ameren.

20 I feel like it's always someone in my pocket  
21 taking my money and giving me false stories. It's a  
22 false story. You pushed clean energy in 2008. It is  
23 2022 and you want a rate increase for the arrears.  
24 Isn't 2008 the arrears? I'm not seeing any  
25 improvements.



1           Solar panels are going up, true. But I  
2 haven't heard anybody say that Ameren is paying them.  
3 If somebody is being paid by Ameren, let me know,  
4 because everybody in this room needs to be on that  
5 program. Other states are doing solar panels. Georgia  
6 gets paid back. Texas is getting paid back. Arizona is  
7 getting paid back. Missouri, what are you doing?

8           Where is our improvement at for a dollar? \$12  
9 a year -- \$12 a month. 140 some dollars a year. It's a  
10 lot of money for a pipe dream. I don't do drugs. I  
11 rarely have a drink. Most of my friends can't afford  
12 the \$12 even budgeting all their money to function on a  
13 daily basis.

14           But we all got one clear question. If we're  
15 asking for money in arrears, where is my progress from  
16 2008? When are you going to show me that you deserve my  
17 dollar? I want to know. I need somebody to explain to  
18 me when Ameren is going to show and prove to me that you  
19 deserve my dollar. Thank you.

20           JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Ms. Marsh. Kimberly  
21 Finnegan.

22           MS. FINNEGAN: My name is Kimberly Finnegan,  
23 K-i-m-b-e-r-l-y F-i-n-n-e-g-a-n.

24           JUDGE CLARK: Would you raise your right hand  
25 to be sworn. Do you swear or affirm that the testimony

1 you're about to give at this local public hearing is the  
2 truth?

3 MS. FINNEGAN: I do.

4 KIMBERLY FINNEGAN,  
5 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

6 MS. FINNEGAN: As I said, my name is Kimberly  
7 Finnegan. I'm a licensed attorney and licensed social  
8 worker. I'm a life-long Missourian and a long-time  
9 Ameren customer. I'm here tonight on behalf of Legal  
10 Services of Eastern Missouri.

11 Legal Services of Eastern Missouri is a  
12 nonprofit legal aid organization that has offered free  
13 legal services to low-income Missourians for over 60  
14 years. We serve 21 Missouri counties and St.  
15 Louis City. Legal Services advances social justice  
16 through legal representation, education and supportive  
17 services. Our core values are action, justice and hope.  
18 We work with the community to improve lives, promote  
19 fairness and create opportunities for those in need. I  
20 work primarily with rural older adults and adults with  
21 disabilities.

22 According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics  
23 Consumer Price Index, as of December 2022, the  
24 year-over-year cost of electricity increased 13.7  
25 percent, the largest 12-month increase since April 2006,

1 16 years. As electricity prices rise, the risk of  
2 energy cost burdens grow causing an increasing number of  
3 Legal Services' clients to struggle to afford basic  
4 household expenses such as food and medication.

5 One of our senior clients stated I cannot  
6 stretch my social security any more. I cannot afford to  
7 pay more for higher utility costs. I hate the thought  
8 of not being able to pay my bills. It is very hard out  
9 here for me and a lot of people on fixed incomes. I do  
10 not know how people will be able to buy food, medicine  
11 and housing expenses. Right now I have to pick between  
12 getting medicine or food or whether to go see my doctor.  
13 We are driving people to desperation.

14 Ms. Gorwald (phonetic spelling), age 67.  
15 Unfortunately urban, rural and low-income communities  
16 disproportionately carry the burden of high energy costs  
17 with significant consequences. Black, American Indian  
18 and Hawaiian and Pacific Islander households are often  
19 more than twice as likely to forego food or medicine to  
20 pay their energy costs than their counterparts.  
21 Black and Hispanic children are 2.5 times and 1.5 times  
22 respectively more likely to live in energy insecure  
23 homes at risk of energy disconnection. Because of these  
24 disparities, a utility rate increase will result in a  
25 greater economic disadvantage for low-income Missourians

1 and harm our clients.

2 Access to power is fundamental to the  
3 functioning of daily life. Light technology and  
4 adjustments to climate conditions within one's home are  
5 necessities that are often the first to go when clients  
6 cannot afford their bills. This hinders safe  
7 communities access to life saving devices for those with  
8 critical medical need, access to educational technology  
9 for young students and the ability of seniors to live  
10 comfortably in their homes.

11 Mr. Matlock (phonetic spelling), age 70, says  
12 if these utility bills keep going up, I do not know how  
13 we will be able to continue to live in our home down the  
14 street from the church where we volunteer and the food  
15 pantry that we visit regularly. We love living in our  
16 community, but we do not have a lot of extra money to  
17 spend. These types of price increases hurt seniors and  
18 folks like us the most.

19 Despite the uncomfortable truths about energy  
20 insecurity, access to electricity and power is often  
21 treated as a privilege rather than a right and the cost  
22 to access these resources continues to rise. Our  
23 clients and similarly situated consumers continue to  
24 struggle to afford their current electricity bills.

25 Mr. Johnson, age 70, said the utility bills in

1 my apartment are already too high and I don't have  
2 enough to go around. I have two utilities, and the  
3 combined bills sometimes range from 100 to 250 a month.  
4 That is a large part of my social security. I have to  
5 go months without paying one bill or the other.

6 Ms. Graves said people are drowning in  
7 expenses as the cost of living and inflation continue to  
8 increase. Food prices are increasing. Medical expenses  
9 and medication prices are increasing. Costs are  
10 steadily increasing but earnings have not. As the gap  
11 between income and the cost of basic necessities  
12 continues to widen for low-income Missourians, the  
13 inability to pay electricity leads to increased shutoffs  
14 endangering the safety, comfort and livelihood of  
15 impacted communities, and this compounds other problems  
16 such as limited access to affordable health care, the  
17 affordable housing crisis and family and community  
18 disruptions, all of which can be traced back to lack of  
19 access to affordable utilities.

20 Legal Services of Eastern Missouri advocates  
21 with and for clients who are often underrepresented by  
22 the infrastructure systems designed to benefit everyone.  
23 In my role, I spend many hours helping clients to access  
24 assistance programs, including Ameren's programs, and  
25 navigating these programs is an all-consuming endeavor.

1 My clients cannot access many resources that are web  
2 based. I serve clients who are low literate, have low  
3 technology abilities and have disabilities to sight and  
4 hearing that prevent them from navigating these systems.

5 We at Legal Services emphasize the necessity  
6 of access to electricity is a fundamental human right.  
7 Denying the Ameren rate increase will sustain the  
8 health, livelihoods and futures of low-income  
9 Missourians and communities of color.

10 Legal Services urges this Commission to reject  
11 the request for a utility rate increase and thereby  
12 encourage increased access to critical utility services.  
13 The full statements of the clients that I have cited  
14 here tonight and my supporting research that speaks  
15 directly to how the proposed rate increase will be  
16 detrimental to families and communities have been  
17 submitted electronically to the PSC and the OPC. Thank  
18 you.

19 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you for your comments, Ms.  
20 Finnegan. Did you have a question, Mr. Williams?

21 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes, I do. It's just how is  
22 that submission done? Were they presented as comments  
23 or provided as an email?

24 MS. FINNEGAN: Provided as an email.

25 MR. WILLIAMS: And are you desirous of those

1 being part of the record in this hearing?

2 MS. FINNEGAN: Yes, sir.

3 JUDGE CLARK: I'm sorry, Mr. Williams. I  
4 didn't catch that.

5 MR. WILLIAMS: I asked her if she was desirous  
6 of those documents that she sent to us to be made part  
7 of the record and she responded yes.

8 JUDGE CLARK: Would you like those to be a  
9 hearing exhibit?

10 MS. FINNEGAN: Yes, sir.

11 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. I'm going to do this the  
12 way it was handled earlier. If you submitted those to  
13 OPC, if OPC will forward those on to me. I will send  
14 out -- I will issue an order giving ten days for  
15 objections for parties to make objections to the  
16 admission of that onto the hearing record before ruling  
17 on whether or not it can be an exhibit. I will for the  
18 record right now until they've been ruled on it will be  
19 marked as Local Public Hearing Exhibit 1 for this  
20 hearing.

21 MS. FINNEGAN: Thank you.

22 JUDGE CLARK: We've had a number of comments.  
23 We've got a few people that are left. It's just past  
24 nine o'clock. As I indicated earlier, I'm going to  
25 terminate this hearing at 9:30. So I'm going to ask

1 that as I call the remaining names that you try and be  
2 concise with your comments. Thank you so much.

3 The next person is Kathryn Cryts.

4 MS. CRYTS: Kathryn, K-a-t-h-r-y-n, Cryts,  
5 C-r-y-t-s.

6 JUDGE CLARK: Do you swear or affirm that the  
7 testimony you're about to give at this local public  
8 hearing is the truth?

9 MS. CRYTS: Yes.

10 KATHRYN CRYTS,  
11 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

12 MS. CRYTS: It's no secret that this rate  
13 increase can and will negatively affect so many people  
14 as you heard from so many in this room. Ameren is  
15 trying to pull from empty cups when they already have  
16 record profits.

17 My parents are some of those people. They are  
18 retired and on a fixed income and continue to add more  
19 to their debts as they struggle to make ends meet. This  
20 fee increase to their Ameren bill would only cause them  
21 to go more into debt and go through more financial  
22 hardships as Ameren continues to take from us all.

23 Ameren is a monopoly in the area, and there's  
24 nowhere else to turn for electricity. Even if we own  
25 our electricity we can't escape Ameren's high fees. I'm



1 someone who's going through the process of buying my own  
2 solar panels, and it's frustrating to know that I would  
3 still have to pay such high fees to own my own  
4 electricity.

5           The thing is, while Ameren continues to ask to  
6 take more from our communities, it does nothing to help  
7 us. Ameren continues to uphold their coal plants no  
8 matter how harmful we have found coal plants to be. I  
9 recently heard someone say who lives near coal plants, I  
10 didn't know it wasn't normal for most people that you  
11 know to have asthma.

12           Additionally, toxic air pollution such as that  
13 from coal plants is linked to cancer. Every time we  
14 turn our lights on, we can be reminded that our utility  
15 company has a hand in the loss of people's lives or  
16 causes of their sickness from the pollution that Ameren  
17 is responsible for. We have little recourse for holding  
18 them responsible and are asked instead to pay them more.

19           Pay them more for what? They are not serving  
20 our best interests for our communities. They are  
21 incentivized to make as much money as possible and that  
22 is all. It's not fair for Ameren to ask us for more  
23 money only to continue to hurt us and to not take into  
24 account our best interests. We cannot continue to let  
25 them take advantage of our communities. Please vote no

1 on the proposed rate increase. Thank you.

2 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Ms. Cryts.

3 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you.

4 JUDGE CLARK: Jeanette Oxford.

5 MS. OXFORD: Jeanette Mott Oxford,  
6 J-e-a-n-e-t-t-e Mott, M-o-t-t, no hyphen, Oxford,  
7 O-x-f-o-r-d.

8 JUDGE CLARK: Do you swear or affirm that the  
9 testimony you're about to give at this local public  
10 hearing is the truth?

11 MS. OXFORD: I do.

12 JEANETTE MOTT OXFORD,  
13 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

14 MS. OXFORD: Thank you for the opportunity to  
15 be here at this local hearing. Thank you for having a  
16 local hearing. It's really important that the Public  
17 Service Commission do that. I'm testifying tonight as  
18 the public policy and advocacy manager at Paraquad,  
19 Paraquad, Incorporated.

20 Paraquad is one of the oldest and largest  
21 independent living centers in the country. Our mission  
22 is to champion equity and independence for people with  
23 disabilities through services, partnerships, education  
24 and advocacy, and to accomplish that mission the voices  
25 of people with disabilities must be heard and valued in

1 local, state and federal government proceedings.

2           Paraquad is here tonight to express our  
3 concern about an 11.64 rate hike requested by Ameren,  
4 because we know that many households who participate at  
5 Paraquad are already struggling to pay their utility  
6 bills. And the recent inflation experienced by  
7 consumers makes this an especially difficult time to see  
8 an increase in a cost of a basic human need.

9           How do we know that the people that  
10 participate with Paraquad would be disproportionately  
11 impacted by this rate increase? In our interactions  
12 with people with disabilities, they name two things as  
13 their biggest needs right now. One is healthy,  
14 affordable, accessible housing, and housing includes  
15 having utilities that are connected and then  
16 transportation. Many people with disabilities don't  
17 have transportation that they can use that's reliable  
18 anyway.

19           Paraquad serves many people with disabilities  
20 in the St. Louis area, but Ameren Missouri's service  
21 area being much larger would also have many more people  
22 with disabilities. And I looked up some statistics  
23 about people with disabilities as a class in the 2021  
24 Annual Report on People With Disabilities in America to  
25 give you a sense that there's proof that people with

1 disabilities would be disproportionately impacted by  
2 this rate hike. When we look at the area of the gap in  
3 employment, there's a gap of 37.4 percentage points  
4 meaning that 38.4 percent of people with disabilities  
5 are employed versus 75.8 percent of people without  
6 disabilities who are 18 to 64 years of age.

7           Households with disabilities have a median  
8 earning of \$8,548 less a year than people who don't have  
9 disabilities. And then people with disabilities have a  
10 poverty rate that is twice as high as people without  
11 disabilities, 25.2 percent versus 11.1 percent.

12 It's also important to realize that when we talk about  
13 the poverty rate it's not a very accurate measure. It's  
14 based only on the cost of food. It's an outdated  
15 statistic that was cooked up in the '50s and '60s and  
16 it's no longer a very accurate way to measure what it  
17 costs to live.

18           The 2023 Poverty Guidelines say a family of  
19 four can make it on \$30,000 a year of income. Well,  
20 you're poor if you make less than that. But there's an  
21 MIT living wage calculation for Missouri and for every  
22 state in the nation. It's also got it for every county  
23 in Missouri. It says that a family of four in Missouri  
24 would have to have an annual income of \$77,792 for a  
25 family of four if that's two adults and two children

1 with one employed adult. If both of the adults are  
2 working, they actually have to make more like \$95,000  
3 because even though working makes money, working costs  
4 you. You have expenses for working as well. More  
5 transportation, more clothing, et cetera.

6 Because of the vulnerability of people living  
7 with disabilities, we ask that the Public Service  
8 Commission look this case over very carefully. And if  
9 any increase is given, it must be thoroughly justified.

10 We also hope that there will be utility assistance  
11 provided some way through this rate case to help people  
12 with disabilities and seniors on fixed incomes and  
13 others that are really struggling to make it and that  
14 the income guidelines for those programs be based on the  
15 reality of what things cost instead of the poverty level  
16 which is not a reliable measure. In general, programs  
17 like that ought to go up to at least 300 percent of the  
18 poverty level in order to account what it really costs  
19 to live.

20 We welcome any questions that you have. I ask  
21 that my written and signed copy of these remarks be  
22 entered into the record if you all would allow that.

23 JUDGE CLARK: Yes. Would you give them to the  
24 gentlemen here to look at. Actually I will come and get  
25 them.

1 MR. WILLIAMS: I certainly have no objection  
2 to the exhibit, but I do have a couple of questions.

3 JUDGE CLARK: Let's do the exhibit first.  
4 Then I'll give you an opportunity to ask your questions,  
5 Mr. Williams.

6 Mr. Banks, do you have any objections to  
7 admitting that onto the record?

8 MR. BANKS: No objection, Your Honor.

9 JUDGE CLARK: And Staff, any objections?

10 MR. VANDERGRIFF: No objections, Your Honor.

11 JUDGE CLARK: Mr. Williams, you've already  
12 indicated that Public Counsel has no objections. With  
13 that in mind, I will go ahead and admit Paraquad's, I'm  
14 going to call it letter, onto the hearing record as  
15 Local Public Hearing Exhibit 2. Thank you.

16 MS. OXFORD: Thank you.

17 (LOCAL PUBLIC HEARING EXHIBIT 2 WAS RECEIVED  
18 INTO EVIDENCE.)

19 JUDGE CLARK: Go ahead and ask your question,  
20 Mr. Williams.

21 MR. WILLIAMS: I was going to ask how to spell  
22 Paraquad. Is it the spelling that's shown on that  
23 exhibit?

24 MS. OXFORD: Yes, P-a-r-a-q-u-a-d.

25 MR. WILLIAMS: And what is Paraquad's mission?

1 MS. OXFORD: Parquad is an independent living  
2 center. They're independent living centers that are all  
3 over the country that serve every county in Missouri.  
4 We try to make sure that people with disabilities are  
5 able to live independently; that they receive the  
6 support needed to do that.

7 MR. WILLIAMS: So it's more targeted to  
8 individuals with disabilities?

9 MS. OXFORD: That's correct.

10 MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you.

11 MS. OXFORD: Uh-huh.

12 JUDGE CLARK: I have no questions. Thank you  
13 very much. Alex Kelly.

14 MS. KELLY: Hi, I'm Alex Kelly, A-l-e-x  
15 K-e-l-l-y.

16 JUDGE CLARK: Do you swear or affirm that the  
17 testimony you are about to give at this local public  
18 hearing is the truth?

19 MS. KELLY: Yes, I do.

20 ALEX KELLY,  
21 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

22 MS. KELLY: I just wanted to say that I think  
23 that the people who are shareholders in Ameren UE are  
24 regular people and that they don't need a pay hike all  
25 the time and that if you gave Ameren a raise that it

1 needed to cover inflationary expenses and then wrote a  
2 letter to people who buy electricity and tell them that  
3 you gave them a break during high inflationary times  
4 that they would appreciate it so much they might quit  
5 Spire and all go to you completely.

6 I think that goodwill would be way more of a  
7 dividend than any small increase that you could take at  
8 this time because people have been through a lot.  
9 That's all.

10 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you. Christopher Haynes  
11 (phonetic spelling.) Robert Hannon.

12 MR. HANNON: Robert Hannon, R-o-b-e-r-t  
13 H-a-n-n-o-n.

14 JUDGE CLARK: Do you swear or affirm that the  
15 testimony you are about to give at this local public  
16 hearing is the truth?

17 MR. HANNON: Yes.

18 JUDGE CLARK: Go ahead.

19 ROBERT HANNON,  
20 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

21 MR. HANNON: Rather than repeating all that I  
22 had commented about earlier in this meeting, let me  
23 state a few things that I understand the idea of the  
24 electric company making a profit. But rather than being  
25 profitable at this incredible amount when cost of



1 living, expenses, just the cost of gasoline, food, the  
2 pandemic, is impacting people much. It's hurting people  
3 considerably, including myself.

4 I'm a retired federal employee and I have no  
5 option to change my income. I'm at the mandate of the  
6 federal government, including expenses. Whether I pay  
7 my electric bill or not depends entirely on how much use  
8 I make of it. As I have stated earlier a few hours ago,  
9 I have reduced my electric bill considerably by what I  
10 have done and much less than what Ameren has done for  
11 me.

12 Ameren has incorporated smart machines, smart  
13 meters, ability to look at your electrical usage online,  
14 and so on, and so on. However, trying to slow down or  
15 stop your electric usage is not always practical. You  
16 can't do things at two o'clock in the afternoon because  
17 it's too expensive. Maybe not at two o'clock in the  
18 morning because it's cheaper. As proof of what I have  
19 done on my behalf, I brought and displayed beforehand  
20 pages, this incorporates the entire expenses of what I  
21 have paid to Ameren for electric bill in one year.

22 It shows every number what I paid for and I  
23 have savings incorporated because of things I have done  
24 less so for Ameren. Ameren does not in my opinion  
25 deserve this incredible increase or profit margin as

1 they wish to do. If you're going to take this profit,  
2 if it's granted to them, they should be forced to put  
3 their money back into the infrastructure, not to replace  
4 old equipment, old parts, old things.

5 Your smart meter did no benefit to me,  
6 literally no benefit. Looking online at the computers  
7 at your website, no benefit to me. I have changed light  
8 bulbs. I have cut down usage. I have done a lot of  
9 things to take my bills and bring them down so low.  
10 People are amazed at how I can live on these small  
11 numbers because I have done changes. Not because of  
12 Ameren but because it's in my benefit.

13 Ameren needs to face up that instead of giving  
14 everybody a smart meter they should be looking for the  
15 future taking their millions, billions, trillions,  
16 whatever, putting it into solar farms. One farm, not  
17 adequate. One wind turbine, not adequate. If Ameren is  
18 expected to stay in existence and run the electricity,  
19 in my opinion they need to look better into the future  
20 at the concept of what other countries and states are  
21 doing.

22 Europe is far ahead in the use of wind  
23 turbines solar. Even in California, a state that has  
24 the highest utility rates of all, what have they done?  
25 Forced solar usage. Do we have that option here? No.

1 I hope not. But I would like to have the ability to  
2 decide and say I'd like to put up solar on my roof, I'd  
3 like to put a little turbine to help incorporate to  
4 reduce my electric bill.

5 Currently I cannot. My area where I live up  
6 the road does not allow that. Is that something Ameren  
7 is working against? Do they support changing  
8 legislative rules for their benefit? Yes. For the  
9 benefit of the consumer, I don't see it happening.

10 There's only one person I have heard tonight  
11 who spoke of the usage of solar. One. How many have  
12 spoke here already? How many have said anything about  
13 anything other than the exorbitant profit that Ameren  
14 has done beforehand that's expected for their new  
15 proposal. Where is your comments about what you are  
16 going to do for the consumer other than well, we'll just  
17 give you a smart meter. We'll give you a thermostat in  
18 your house.

19 Your thermostat is a one-time item. Your  
20 smart meter sitting outside is a one-time item. My  
21 electric bill every month that I am mandated to pay is a  
22 12-month a year requirement. This outweighs your smart  
23 meter. It outweighs a thermostat. It outweighs many of  
24 the programs that Ameren seems to be focused on. So you  
25 replace a copper wire. So you fix a pole. Well, the

1 consumers such as myself are paying for that. You're  
2 not getting free copper wire. You're not getting free  
3 fuel. You're charging it to the consumer, everything.  
4 And then you say well, we'll just impose a profit.  
5 We'll submit it to the committee, let them look at the  
6 numbers and let them decide. Do the numbers reflect on  
7 how people are struggling, how difficult it is to pay  
8 these utilities? This is one of several of my  
9 utilities. I am required to pay all of them.

10 Ameren can shop around for copper, for  
11 different fuel, to relocate wires and do a lot of  
12 things. Where are you explaining this to the people?  
13 Where? On your website with a high electric rate?  
14 Because your wire fell off your electric tower 300 miles  
15 away, wonderful, do you stop charging people for  
16 electric because your wire fell down? Should you not be  
17 putting money into rebuilding the structure at a better  
18 rate at a better incentive than saying well, I'm going  
19 to take that money, the Commission has approved it and  
20 I'm going to make Ameren profitable.

21 At whose expense? I cannot do any more for  
22 these numbers. I cannot take those numbers and make  
23 them smaller. I have looked and looked. I have looked  
24 at your website. I have a smart meter. Do they  
25 effectively help me? Essentially no. Did I pay for it

1 in some way or form? Yes. Did every customer who uses  
2 Ameren electric pay for it? Yes. How can you have a  
3 profit? Where did the money come from? Because you  
4 charged for sunlight? No. It's because you're a  
5 monopoly of holding one company accountable to all the  
6 electric in its region has put profit. Why are the  
7 wires falling down? The only time you're fixing is when  
8 there's a major storm and you have to cut trees, you  
9 have to pull up the wiring, and so on.

10 As I commented earlier, last year I lost my  
11 electric. My end result is rather than throwing out  
12 every drop of food in my house, I went and got myself a  
13 generator. I paid for it. I run it on gasoline. I  
14 paid for it. I paid for the food that was in my  
15 refrigerator. And I kept myself going because Ameren  
16 could care less. Ameren did not help me with a  
17 generator, with gasoline, with anything. You know what  
18 it was? Well, it wasn't our problem, the weather blew  
19 the wire down.

20 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. Mr. Hannon, I'm going to  
21 cut you off here so that I can give some others an  
22 opportunity to speak.

23 MR. HANNON: Yes. Any questions?

24 JUDGE CLARK: I don't have any today. Thank  
25 you for your comments.

1 MR. HANNON: Thank you, sir.

2 JUDGE CLARK: Brian Vandenberg.

3 MR. VANDENBERG: Brian, B-r-i-a-n, Vandenberg,  
4 V-a-n-d-e-n-b-e-r-g.

5 JUDGE CLARK: Do you swear or affirm that the  
6 testimony you're about to give at this local public  
7 hearing is the truth?

8 MR. VANDENBERG: Yes.

9 JUDGE CLARK: Go ahead.

10 BRIAN VANDENBERG,  
11 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

12 MR. VANDENBERG: So my problem is with  
13 priorities. I think the timing of this meeting is  
14 ironic because today in the Post-Dispatch they reported  
15 that St. Charles, five of their seven wells have been  
16 polluted and are not fit for drinking.

17 They've also identified as the source for that  
18 pollution Ameren. St. Charles now is importing water  
19 from the City of St. Louis because of pollution caused  
20 by Ameren. I think it's also ironic that we pay for  
21 their lawyers and their legislators to prevent them from  
22 being held accountable to the pollution that's  
23 happening. Their rate increase has absolutely nothing  
24 for renewable energy, it has absolutely nothing for  
25 dealing with the pollution that they are creating. They

1 now have among the worst record in terms of pollution in  
2 coal plants and they are killing people. They are  
3 hiring lobbyists, as I mentioned, to oppose them, to  
4 oppose complying with the EPA, and the people that are  
5 being hired as lobbyists and lawyers are being paid for  
6 by Ameren.

7           So this rate increase continues a business  
8 model where profit over killing -- results in killing,  
9 excuse me. So I also see a problem with the priorities  
10 here of the Missouri Public Service Commission, and the  
11 priorities have not been on renewable energy and  
12 preventing people and people getting poisoned and  
13 killing.

14           Missouri is one of the most backward states in  
15 terms of instituting both legislatively and also by  
16 Ameren itself in moving forward in renewable energy so  
17 it's not just simply because things are cheaper. It's  
18 also because the current programs are poisoning and  
19 killing people. So what's at stake here is more than  
20 profit.

21           Furthermore, I will admit I have absolutely no  
22 confidence in anything happening from this meeting. I  
23 see this as a form of public ritual. The ritual is  
24 this: A rate increase is proposed, it's larger than  
25 they really want. Knowing that the Public Service

1 Commission will cut that rate, everybody looks like they  
2 were accommodating, and the public once again continues  
3 the business model, as I mentioned, that is wired in to  
4 continuing the current process.

5 So as I said, I have no confidence that  
6 anything I say or the suffering and the other comments  
7 that you've heard here is going to have a dent. I'd  
8 like to believe you can prove me wrong. I don't believe  
9 it.

10 Here's what I also think. That when people  
11 have nothing to lose and they have nowhere to go and  
12 they head for the streets, you're going to have power  
13 outages. They're not going to be caused by the weather.  
14 And then maybe somebody will listen. I hope I'm wrong,  
15 but this is very disturbing to me on so many levels I  
16 can't even tell you. Thank you.

17 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you. Bob Pickard  
18 (phonetic spelling.)

19 It is 9:30. That was the last name I had on  
20 my list to speak. At that time is there anybody left  
21 who did not get a chance to sign up who would like to  
22 make a comment to the Commission? Okay. I see no  
23 hands.

24 If you go back to your homes today or you talk  
25 to friends and they wanted to -- they indicate that they



1 wanted to leave comments or you realize there was  
2 something you forgot to say, I'm going to give you a  
3 couple of avenues by which you can make further comments  
4 to the PSC. You can do that by contacting the e-mail  
5 address pscinfo, PSC stands for Public Service  
6 Commission, pscinfo@psc.mo.gov, by contacting the Office  
7 of the Public Counsel. They've been very gracious about  
8 seeing that comments that are made with them get filed  
9 with us or by going to the PSC's web page there is a  
10 link you can click on that will allow you to make  
11 comments on this case. And you may need to know the  
12 case number for that, which is ER-2022-0337.

13 I would like to thank everybody for showing up  
14 tonight. I would like to thank everybody for their  
15 comments. While some of these were very hard to hear, I  
16 think it's important that the Commission gets to hear  
17 them. I also would like to thank -- It's very clear  
18 that a lot of people put a lot of work into their  
19 comments tonight. So we do genuinely appreciate and  
20 consider your comments, and this is our opportunity to  
21 hear them. We get a chance to hear from the company and  
22 the other parties at the evidentiary hearing. These  
23 local public hearings are our opportunity to hear from  
24 the public. We do very much value that.

25 With that in mind, I did indicate that I would

1 give a couple numbers at the end. Ameren Missouri's  
2 customer service number is 1-800-321-2477 and the  
3 Missouri Public Service Commission's consumer services  
4 number is 1-800-392-4211.

5           There was an individual earlier who did not  
6 want to answer any questions who indicated that people  
7 had been getting disconnected without notice. If that's  
8 happening, certainly you can call the Public Service  
9 Commission consumer services number and they will put  
10 you in touch with people to make the appropriate  
11 complaint.

12           With that in mind, I hope everyone gets home  
13 safely tonight. I will adjourn this hearing and we will  
14 go off the record.

15           (Therefore, the proceedings concluded at 9:36  
16 p.m.)

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(Local Public Hearing Exhibit 1 is to be submitted later to the Public Service Commission and Local Public Hearing Exhibit 2 was retained by Judge Clark.)

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## CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

STATE OF MISSOURI )  
COUNTY OF COLE )

I, Beverly Jean Bentsch, RPR, CCR No. 640, do hereby certify that I was authorized to and did stenographically report the foregoing Public Service Commission Local Public hearing; that all of the witnesses were sworn in by me; and that the transcript, pages 1 through 90, is a true record of my stenographic notes.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not a relative, employee, attorney, or counsel of any of the parties, nor am I a relative or counsel connected with the action, nor am I financially interested in the action.

Dated this 12th day of March, 2023.

  
Beverly Jean Bentsch, RPR, CCR No. 640

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