

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI**

In the Matter of the Cause of the February 2021)
Cold Weather Event and its Impact on Investor) Case No. AO-2021-0264
Owned Utilities)

MOTION FOR PROTECTIVE ORDER

COME NOW The Empire District Electric Company, The Empire District Gas Company, and Liberty Utilities (Midstates Natural Gas) Corp. (collectively, “Liberty”), and for their Motion for Protective Order, respectfully state as follows to the Missouri Public Service Commission (“Commission”):

1. On February 22, 2021, the Staff of the Commission (“Staff”) filed its Notice of Opening File, initiating this docket.

2. Certain materials produced in the course of discovery or otherwise in this matter will be designated as Confidential in accordance with Commission Rule 20 CSR 4240-2.135(2)(A). There is also a need for certain materials produced in the course of discovery or otherwise in this matter to be designated as Highly Confidential in accordance with Commission Rule 20 CSR 4240-2.135(4).

3. Missouri Supreme Court Rule 56.01(c) provides that protective orders may be issued “to protect a party or person from annoyance, embarrassment, oppression, or undue burden or expense including . . . that a trade secret or other confidential research, development, or commercial information not be disclosed or be disclosed only in a designated way.” *See also* In the Matter of the Application of Grain Belt Express Clean Line LLC, Commission File No. EA-2014-0207, 2014 Mo.PSC Lexis 858, Opinion issued September 24, 2014.

4. Due to the nature of certain material regarding critical infrastructure, commodity prices, competitive strategies, and planned purchases, the “confidential” designation under

Commission Rule 2.135 may not provide adequate protection. Due to security reasons and to prevent harm to Liberty and prevent the creation of a competitive advantage over Liberty and non-party competitors, Liberty requests a protective order as follows:

a. Certain materials and information divulged by Liberty shall be considered to be “Highly Confidential” if so designated at the time of disclosure. Any such designation shall be made in good faith.

b. With regard to entities and individuals other than the Staff of the Commission and the Office of the Public Counsel:

i. Disclosure of materials or information so designated shall be made only to attorneys and/or to such outside experts/consultants who have executed a Commission Nondisclosure Agreement. No Highly Confidential information shall be provided directly or indirectly to any non-attorney other than to a designated outside expert/consultant who has executed a Commission Nondisclosure Agreement and filed it herein.

ii. Persons afforded access to materials or information designated “Highly Confidential” shall neither use nor disclose such materials or information for purposes of business or competition or any other purpose other than in regard to the case referenced above and shall keep the materials and information secure and confidential and in accordance with the purposes and intent of the protective order.

iii. All material and information designated as “Highly Confidential” in the possession of any entity or person, as well as any notes pertaining to such information, shall be returned to Liberty or destroyed upon the conclusion of the referenced case.

c. If a party disagrees with the “Highly Confidential” designation of any information, the party shall follow the informal discovery dispute resolution procedures set forth in Commission Rule 20 CSR 4240-2.090(8). If the party exhausts these dispute resolution procedures, the party may file a motion challenging the designation.

WHEREFORE, Liberty requests an order of the Commission, pursuant to Commission Rule 20 CSR 4240-2.135(4), granting a protective order as set forth above. Liberty requests such other and further relief as is just and proper under the circumstances.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Diana C. Carter

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that the above document was filed in EFIS on this 30th day of March, 2021, with notice of the same sent to all counsel of record.

/s/ Diana C. Carter