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14
15
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STATE OF MISSOURI
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
Volume IX
Local Public Hearing
January 19, 2017
Union RXI High School
Union, Missouri

In The Matter of Union Electric Company)
d/b/a Ameren Missouri's Tariffs To Increase)File No.
Its Revenues For Electric Service)ER-2016-0179

MORRIS WOODRUFF, Presiding
CHIEF REGULATORY LAW JUDGE

STEPHEN M. STOLL,
COMMISSIONER

REPORTED BY:
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1 (Hearing commenced at 7:00 p.m.)

2 P R O C E E D I N G S

3 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Good evening, everyone. Once
4 again, my name is Morris Woodruff. I'm the presiding
5 officer here, a Regulatory Law Judge for the Public Service
6 Commission. And to my left, we have one of five
7 commissioners, Commissioner Stephen Stoll.

8 COMMISSIONER STOLL: I wanted to just briefly
9 bring greetings from the Commission. Obviously I'm the
10 only one here this evening. We had an earlier local public
11 hearing and three of us attended that one. But because of
12 scheduling, I'm the only one here this evening. But I
13 wanted to reassure you that those who aren't here will be
14 looking at reading the transcript. We have a court
15 reporter here that will be recording every word. And those
16 will be ready for review in just a couple days, so they
17 will be looking at those.

18 I also wanted to mention a couple things.
19 This is the beginning of the process in this rate case. We
20 start with the local public hearings, and then beginning
21 the last few days in February we begin what are called
22 evidentiary hearings in Jefferson City. You could even --
23 you can attend those, but you would probably be more likely
24 to look at them online. You can go to the website
25 psc.mo.gov and you'll see how you can actually watch the

1 hearings online. And it might be good to do that if you
2 have the opportunity. They will -- they are scheduled for
3 several weeks, and you'll kind of get a flavor for how we
4 make our decisions. We don't take any of this lightly.

5 I mentioned the court reporter. I mentioned
6 the transcript. And lastly, I look forward to and my
7 fellow commissioners look forward to reading and hearing
8 your comments this evening. So thanks for coming out on
9 this foggy night, and I look forward to hearing your
10 comments.

11 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Thank you, Commissioner. The
12 process is that we have a -- I have a sign-up sheet here
13 that was out in the lobby when you came in, so I'll call
14 that in the order that they were signed. And after those
15 people have a chance to speak, if there's anyone else out
16 there who wants to come forward and testify we'll give you
17 an opportunity to do that also.

18 You may have noticed the screen up here. We
19 try to -- we ask people to try and limit their comments to
20 about five minutes just so that they can respect everyone
21 else that wants to get their chance to testify as well. So
22 this will be counting down. It will actually ding when you
23 get to five minutes. Don't feel like -- I'm not going to
24 shut off the microphone or anything. When you get to five
25 minutes, if you want to finish your thoughts, we'll welcome

1 that. But try to keep that in mind, about five minutes.

2 I'll call you up here and ask you to come up
3 to the podium, and I'll swear you in to tell the truth, the
4 whole truth and nothing but the truth, and then I'll give
5 you a chance to tell the Commission whatever it is that you
6 want to tell us.

7 So with that, we will call the first witness,
8 which is -- oh, I'm sorry, there is one more thing we have
9 to do. Thanks, Commissioner, for reminding me. We need to
10 take entries of appearance from the attorneys who are
11 representing the parties. For Ameren?

12 MS. GRUBBS: Thank you, your Honor. I'm
13 Jermaine Grubbs. I'm here tonight be behalf of Union
14 Electric Company doing business as Ameren Missouri. Thank
15 you.

16 JUDGE WOODRUFF: And for the Staff?

17 MS. MYERS: I'm Jamie Myers for the Staff of
18 the Public Service Commission.

19 JUDGE WOODRUFF: And Public Counsel?

20 MS. SHEMWELL: Good evening, Lera Shemwell
21 representing Office of Public Counsel and the public.

22 JUDGE WOODRUFF: And there are other parties
23 in the case that are not represented here tonight.

24 All right. I'll call the first person, which
25 is Patricia Schuba. There you are.

1 MS. SCHUBA: I didn't think I was the first
2 person speaking.

3 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Actually, the first person
4 that signed the list included a notation that she wanted to
5 be the last person to speak.

6 MS. SCHUBA: No, I didn't.

7 JUDGE WOODRUFF: No, you weren't the first on
8 the list. You are the first person that didn't request to
9 be the last person.

10 MS. SCHUBA: Oh, okay.

11 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Let's put it that way. All
12 right. Let me -- first of all, tell us your name and spell
13 your last name.

14 MS. SCHUBA: It's Patricia Schuba,
15 S-c-h-u-b-a.

16 PATRICIA SCHUBA,
17 of lawful age, having been first duly sworn or affirmed to
18 testify the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
19 truth in the case aforesaid, deposes as follows:

20 JUDGE WOODRUFF: What would you like to tell
21 us?

22 MS. SCHUBA: First I'd like to say thank you
23 for being here tonight and allowing us to have a meeting in
24 Union. That wasn't always the case. And we appreciate it
25 because we live next to the largest power plant in the

1 state. It happens to be an Ameren plant. So it's good
2 that you're here.

3 I wanted to say, in looking at the rate case,
4 from the perspective of somebody close to the power plant
5 and sort of absorbing local factors of pollution that we
6 would prefer that the Public Service Commission supports
7 the move for clean energy. And I was very happy to hear
8 tonight them talking about it and talking about making the
9 transition to clean energy, funding that, closing large
10 power plants. I think that's in the interest of all of us.

11 So I would ask that the Public Service
12 Commission be very critical of the cost increases they are
13 asking for and make sure they support that transition,
14 because that's where everyone's looking is forward five,
15 ten, fifteen, twenty years to where we'll have clean
16 energy. And that cannot come too quickly. So if we
17 continue to support the building of the Labadie landfill
18 for the deposition of coal waste, we're just supporting the
19 further life of these plants to burn dirty energy, which
20 liberates the things that we heard about earlier about
21 arsenic, lead, mercury into the environment.

22 Even with all of the changes that they've
23 made, we'll have even less mercury being liberated into the
24 environment. The last time the filed that information with
25 the EPA it was well over 800 pounds per year. And that's

1 in the air, coming down over water bodies or coming in
2 contact with people in the area immediately around the
3 power plant, which is a nonattainment area for SO2.
4 There's 23,000 people who live there. And a lot of them
5 are children, elderly and people who are sick.

6 So as a Missouri Public Service Commission, if
7 you could keep a special eye toward that in looking at this
8 specific case that we're now on the brink of looking
9 forward to renewable or cleaner energy, that we make sure
10 we're supporting that, not the extension of a life with
11 dirty coal plants. Thank you very much.

12 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Thank you. Any questions?

13 COMMISSIONER STOLL: No questions. Thank you
14 for your testimony.

15 MS. SCHUBA: Thank you. And thank you for
16 always listening to the public. We appreciate it.

17 COMMISSIONER STOLL: You're welcome.

18 MS. SCHUBA: Thank you.

19 COMMISSIONER STOLL: Can the folks in the back
20 hear? We might need a mic check just in case. Can
21 everybody hear okay? Oh, good. Okay, never mind. I think
22 they said it's -- they can hear fine.

23 JUDGE WOODRUFF: You need to make sure
24 you're -- when people are speaking, you need to be very
25 close to the mic, I think.

1 Okay, next name is Joe -- is it Bachant? It's
2 sometimes hard to decipher signatures. Sounds like I
3 butchered your name. What is your name, sir?

4 MR. BACHANT: Joseph Bachant.

5 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Bachant, okay.

6 JOSEPH BACHANT,
7 of lawful age, having been first duly sworn or affirmed to
8 testify the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
9 truth in the case aforesaid, deposes as follows:

10 JUDGE WOODRUFF: What would you like to tell
11 us?

12 MR. BACHANT: First of all, my background is
13 serving 32 years for the Missouri Department of
14 Conservation in terms of environmental matters. And we've
15 kicked around the term mitigation tonight, but mitigation
16 is just part of the overall process that I'd like to advise
17 you about.

18 First of all is avoidance. If there is going
19 to be environmental impacts, try to make the implication or
20 the consequences less. That's mitigation. And then last
21 of all, if you have problems that have been occurring, then
22 it's important to try to compensate. It is in the public
23 interest at least to try to leave something as good as when
24 you found it.

25 Tonight I recognize there is quite a

1 difference between what the commission is seeking as far as
2 a rate increase and what the company is asking for. It
3 occurs to me that I'd like to suggest that given that
4 middle, there's probably a middle ground which is in the
5 best public interest, and I would say under the rubric in
6 your statutes of public safety.

7 There is, after all, quite a bit of
8 environmental damage that has occurred that the previous
9 speaker referred to a little bit. I could go on if I had
10 the time about all the ecological impacts that we're
11 starting to see from the use of fossil fuels over the
12 years. I believe that any sort of continued use of fossil
13 fuels has some sort of a mitigation procedure to that that
14 would help to offset some of the problems that occur as far
15 as impacts. And further on down the line, as we see these
16 lands put aside and put to rest, there could be some sort
17 of means in terms of further sequestration, if you will, of
18 some of the atmospheric greenhouse gases.

19 I think that there are opportunities for both
20 a win and a win for both the company and the public in this
21 situation. If you would take those very brief comments
22 into consideration. I thank you for your attention
23 tonight.

24 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Thank you, sir. Any
25 questions?

1 COMMISSIONER STOLL: No questions. Thank you
2 for your testimony.

3 MR. BACHANT: Thank you, sir.

4 COMMISSIONER STOLL: Appreciate it.

5 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Next name is Sue Nichols.

6 MS. NICHOLS: Good evening.

7 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Your name is Sue Nichols?

8 MS. NICHOLS: I am.

9 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Spell your last name for the
10 court reporter.

11 MS. NICHOLS: N-i-c-h-o-l-s.

12 SUE NICHOLS,
13 of lawful age, having been first duly sworn or affirmed to
14 testify the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
15 truth in the case aforesaid, deposes as follows:

16 JUDGE WOODRUFF: What would you like to tell
17 us?

18 MS. NICHOLS: Well, I'm concerned about the
19 elderly and those on fixed income. And I happen to be one
20 of those. I know Ameren has said that they have several
21 means of offering lower rates, i.e., budget billing and
22 organizations that will aid in helping pay for bills. But
23 that really doesn't help anyone, nor does it solve the
24 problem for all. And I just want to know what -- what
25 about these people that are on a fixed budget that are at

1 the cusp of welfare who do not qualify for any help?

2 I recently moved to the town of Owensville and
3 there was and increase in the electricity. And I knew that
4 when I moved from the co-op. So I immediately put fans in.
5 Luckily I had shade trees. And I also opened windows. I
6 did not use air-conditioning. And I do not have children,
7 i.e., the age. And I did fine, but some of these people do
8 not do as well as I am. And they are not as healthy as I
9 am. The same for the winter, I keep my thermostat at
10 63 degrees. Now, that might be country living. But what
11 I'm worried about is these older people that cannot do what
12 I do.

13 I don't think they offer -- if these people
14 get their electric raised, how can they take care of
15 themselves? I have an elderly woman that I took care of.
16 She's 90 years old. She finally could not afford to pay
17 her electric. She moved in with her sister and they split
18 the bill. That's not living. There's something wrong with
19 this. It needs to be amended. So I come as a worried
20 energy user who lives on a fixed income who wants to help
21 others that are on a fixed income. That's all.

22 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Thank you very much, ma'am.
23 Any questions?

24 COMMISSIONER STOLL: No questions. But thank
25 you, ma'am. Appreciate your testimony.

1 JUDGE WOODRUFF: All right. Rosalyn Pursley?
2 Good evening. If you could spell your last name for the
3 court reporter.

4 MS. PURSLEY: Might have to spell the first
5 one too.

6 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Well, do that too.

7 MS. PURSLEY: My name is Rosalyn Pursley,
8 R-o-s-a-l-y-n, Pursley, P-u-r-s-l-e-y.

9 JUDGE WOODRUFF: And I mispronounced your
10 first name, so I apologize. If you'd please raise your
11 right hand.

12 ROSALYN PURSLEY,
13 of lawful age, having been first duly sworn or affirmed to
14 testify the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
15 truth in the case aforesaid, deposes as follows:

16 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Thank you. What would you
17 like to tell us?

18 MS. PURSLEY: It's a credit to Ameren Missouri
19 that I have heard no complaints about their reliable,
20 dependable service this evening. I, too, am grateful for
21 their excellent service, and I thank you.

22 However, I feel I don't pay only for the
23 kilowatt-hours used. I pay for dependability. If the
24 electric goes off, I can call Ameren Missouri, where I will
25 be assured they know the situation and they are already on

1 the way. They are there to repair it. I never have to
2 call a second time because they are a reliable company and
3 have given us excellent service at our home for over 50
4 years.

5 The monthly statement is clear and concise. I
6 know what I am billed per kilowatt and I can also readily
7 see that the reason my bill may be slightly higher than the
8 previous month is because last December was two degrees
9 colder than the previous year. And January, to date, was
10 8 degrees colder than last January.

11 I am satisfied with Ameren Missouri's
12 performance and I support their decision to update the
13 infrastructure to benefit the consumers and the rate
14 structure as necessary to continue the excellent service we
15 receive today.

16 Until I have a power outage on Friday evening
17 at 7:00 p.m. and get a recorded message, "Thank you for
18 your call. Our offices are closed. Please call during
19 regular business hours Monday through Friday, 8:00 to
20 4:30." And until then, I am a very satisfied customer.
21 Thank you.

22 COMMISSIONER STOLL: No questions. Thank you
23 for your testimony.

24 JUDGE WOODRUFF: I just have a quick question
25 out of curiosity. Are you an Ameren natural gas customer

1 also?

2 MS. PURSLEY: Natural gas, no.

3 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Just electric?

4 MS. PURSLEY: No, we live in the country.

5 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Okay. Thank you.

6 MS. PURSLEY: Thank you.

7 JUDGE WOODRUFF: Is there anyone else in the
8 audience who didn't sign the sheet who wants to come
9 forward and testify? I don't see any hands going up.

10 All right then. Thank you all for coming and
11 we will be adjourned. And please drive safely out in the
12 fog.

13 (Hearing adjourned at 7:17 p.m.)

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1	INDEX	
2	WITNESS NAME	PAGE
3	Patricia Schuba	6
4	Joseph Bachant	9
5	Sue Nichols	11
6	Rosalyn Pursley	13
7		
8		
9	NO EXHIBITS MARKED	
10		
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		
21		
22		
23		
24		
25		

1 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER
2 STATE OF MISSOURI)
) ss.
3 CITY OF ST. LOUIS)
4 I, Julie A. Bulard, CCR No. 835, do hereby
5 certify that the witnesses whose testimony appears in the
6 foregoing deposition was duly sworn by me; that the
7 testimony of said witnesses was taken by me to the best of
8 my ability and thereafter reduced to typewriting under my
9 direction; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor
10 employed by any of the parties to the action in which this
11 deposition was taken, and further that I am not a relative
12 or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the
13 parties thereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in
14 the outcome of the action.

15 *Julie A. Bulard*
16
17 Certified Court Reporter
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS 1/19/2017

<p align="center">A</p> <p>ability 17:8 absorbing 7:5 action 17:10,14 adjourned 15:11,13 advise 9:16 affirmed 6:17 9:7 11:13 13:13 afford 12:16 aforesaid 6:19 9:9 11:15 13:15 age 6:17 9:7 11:13 12:7 13:13 aid 11:22 air 8:1 air-conditioning 12:6 allowing 6:23 amended 12:19 Ameren 1:12 2:4,5 5:11,14 7:1 11:20 13:18,24 14:11 14:25 apologize 13:10 appearance 5:10 APPEARAN... 2:1 appears 17:5 appreciate 6:24 8:16 11:4 12:25 area 8:2,3 arsenic 7:21 aside 10:16 asking 7:13 10:2 assured 13:25 atmospheric 10:18 attend 3:23 attended 3:11 attention 10:22</p>	<p>attorney 17:12 attorneys 2:3 5:10 audience 15:8 Avenue 2:6 avoidance 9:18</p> <hr/> <p align="center">B</p> <p>Bachant 9:1,4,4 9:5,6,12 11:3 16:4 back 8:19 background 9:12 beginning 3:19 3:20 behalf 5:13 believe 10:12 benefit 14:13 best 10:5 17:7 bill 12:18 14:7 billed 14:6 billing 11:21 bills 11:22 bit 10:7,9 bodies 8:1 brief 10:21 briefly 3:8 bring 3:9 brink 8:8 budget 11:21,25 building 7:17 Bulard 1:20 17:4 burn 7:19 business 5:14 14:19 butchered 9:3</p> <hr/> <p align="center">C</p> <p>C 3:2 call 4:13 5:2,7 5:24 13:24 14:2,18,18 called 3:21 care 12:14,15 case 3:19 5:23</p>	<p>6:19,24 7:3 8:8 8:20 9:9 11:15 13:15 CCR 1:20 17:4 CERTIFICA... 17:1 Certified 17:17 certify 17:5 chance 4:15,21 5:5 changes 7:22 check 8:20 CHIEF 1:15 children 8:5 12:6 Chouteau 2:6 City 2:11,16 3:22 17:3 clean 7:7,9,15 cleaner 8:9 clear 14:5 close 7:4 8:25 closed 14:18 closing 7:9 co-op 12:4 coal 7:18 8:11 colder 14:9,10 come 4:16 5:2 7:16 12:19 15:8 coming 4:8 8:1,1 15:10 commenced 3:1 comments 4:8 4:10,19 10:21 commission 1:2 2:9,10 3:6,9 5:5,18 7:6,12 8:6 10:1 Commissioner 1:17 3:7,8 4:11 5:9 8:13,17,19 11:1,4 12:24 14:22 commissioners 3:7 4:7 company 1:12</p>	<p>2:4 5:14 10:2 10:20 14:2 compensate 9:22 complaints 13:19 concerned 11:18 concise 14:5 consequences 9:20 Conservation 9:14 consideration 10:22 consumers 14:13 contact 8:2 continue 7:17 14:14 continued 10:12 cost 7:12 counsel 2:14,15 5:19,21 17:9 17:12 counting 4:22 country 12:10 15:4 couple 3:16,18 court 3:14 4:5 11:10 13:3 17:17 credit 13:18 critical 7:12 curiosity 14:25 cusps 12:1 customer 14:20 14:25</p> <hr/> <p align="center">D</p> <p>D 3:2 d/b/a 1:12 2:4 damage 10:8 date 14:9 days 3:16,21 December 14:8 decipher 9:2 decision 14:12</p>	<p>decisions 4:4 degrees 12:10 14:8,10 Department 9:13 dependability 13:23 dependable 13:20 deposes 6:19 9:9 11:15 13:15 deposition 7:18 17:6,11 difference 10:1 ding 4:22 direction 17:9 dirty 7:19 8:11 doing 5:14 drive 15:11 duly 6:17 9:7 11:13 13:13 17:6</p> <hr/> <p align="center">E</p> <p>E 3:2,2 earlier 3:10 7:20 ecological 10:10 elderly 8:5 11:19 12:15 electric 1:12,13 2:4 5:14 12:14 12:17 13:24 15:3 electricity 12:3 Eleventh 1:21 employed 17:10 17:12 employee 17:12 energy 7:7,9,16 7:19 8:9 12:20 entries 5:10 environment 7:21,24 environmental 9:14,19 10:8 EPA 7:25 ER-2016-0179</p>
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TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS 1/19/2017

<p>1:13 evening 3:3,10 3:12 4:8 5:20 11:6 13:2,20 14:16 everybody 8:21 everyone's 7:14 evidentiary 3:22 excellent 13:21 14:3,14 EXHIBITS 16:9 extension 8:10 eye 8:7</p> <hr/> <p align="center">F</p> <hr/> <p>factors 7:5 fans 12:4 far 10:1,14 February 3:21 feel 4:23 13:22 fellow 4:7 fifteen 7:15 File 1:12 filed 7:24 finally 12:16 financially 17:13 fine 8:22 12:7 finish 4:25 first 5:7,24 6:1,3 6:7,8,12,17,22 9:7,12,18 11:13 13:4,10 13:13 five 3:6 4:20,23 4:24 5:1 7:14 fixed 11:19,25 12:20,21 flavor 4:3 fog 15:12 foggy 4:9 folks 8:19 follows 6:19 9:9 11:15 13:15 foregoing 17:6 forward 4:6,7,9 4:16 7:14 8:9</p>	<p>15:9 fossil 10:11,12 found 9:24 Friday 14:16,19 fuels 10:11,13 funding 7:9 further 7:19 10:15,17 17:11</p> <hr/> <p align="center">G</p> <hr/> <p>G 3:2 gas 14:25 15:2 gases 10:18 give 4:16 5:4 given 10:3 14:3 go 3:24 10:9 goes 13:24 going 4:23 9:18 15:9 good 3:3 4:1 5:20 7:1 8:21 9:23 11:6 13:2 grateful 13:20 greenhouse 10:18 greetings 3:9 ground 10:4 Grubbs 2:5 5:12 5:13</p> <hr/> <p align="center">H</p> <hr/> <p>hand 13:11 hands 15:9 happen 11:19 happens 7:1 happy 7:7 hard 9:2 healthy 12:8 hear 7:7 8:20,21 8:22 heard 7:20 13:19 hearing 1:6 3:1 3:11 4:7,9 15:13 hearings 3:20,22 4:1</p>	<p>help 10:14 11:23 12:1,20 helping 11:22 High 1:8 higher 14:7 home 14:3 Honor 5:12 hours 14:19</p> <hr/> <p align="center">I</p> <hr/> <p>i.e 11:21 12:7 immediately 8:2 12:4 impacts 9:19 10:10,15 implication 9:19 important 9:22 included 6:4 income 11:19 12:20,21 increase 1:12 10:2 12:3 increases 7:12 INDEX 16:1 information 7:24 infrastructure 14:13 interest 7:10 9:23 10:5 interested 17:13 IX 1:5</p> <hr/> <p align="center">J</p> <hr/> <p>Jamie 2:10 5:17 January 1:7 14:9,10 Jefferson 2:11 2:16 3:22 Jermaine 2:5 5:13 Joe 9:1 Joseph 9:4,6 16:4 Judge 1:15 3:3,5 4:11 5:16,19 5:22 6:3,7,11</p>	<p>6:20 8:12,23 9:5,10 10:24 11:5,7,9,16 12:22 13:1,6,9 13:16 14:24 15:3,5,7 Julie 1:20 17:4</p> <hr/> <p align="center">K</p> <hr/> <p>keep 5:1 8:7 12:9 kicked 9:15 kilowatt 14:6 kilowatt-hours 13:23 kind 4:3 knew 12:3 know 11:20,24 13:25 14:6</p> <hr/> <p align="center">L</p> <hr/> <p>Labadie 7:17 landfill 7:17 lands 10:16 large 7:9 largest 6:25 lastly 4:6 Law 1:15 3:5 lawful 6:17 9:7 11:13 13:13 lead 7:21 leave 9:23 left 3:6 Lera 2:15 5:20 Let's 6:11 liberated 7:23 liberates 7:20 life 7:19 8:10 lightly 4:4 limit 4:19 line 10:15 list 6:4,8 listening 8:16 Litigation 1:20 little 10:9 live 6:25 8:4 15:4</p>	<p>lives 12:20 living 12:10,18 lobby 4:13 local 1:6 3:10,20 7:5 look 3:24 4:6,7,9 looking 3:14,17 7:3,14 8:7,8 lot 8:4 Louis 1:21 2:6 17:3 lower 11:21 Luckily 12:5</p> <hr/> <p align="center">M</p> <hr/> <p>M 1:16 ma'am 12:22,25 Madison 2:11 2:16 making 7:8 MARKED 16:9 Matter 1:12 matters 9:14 means 10:17 11:21 meeting 6:23 mention 3:18 mentioned 4:5,5 mercury 7:21,23 message 14:17 mic 8:20,25 microphone 4:24 middle 10:4,4 Midwest 1:20 mind 5:1 8:21 minutes 4:20,23 4:25 5:1 mispronounced 13:9 Missouri 1:1,9 1:21 2:4 5:14 8:6 9:13 13:18 13:24 17:2 Missouri's 1:12 14:11 mitigation 9:15</p>
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MIDWEST LITIGATION SERVICES

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS 1/19/2017

<p>MO 2:6,11,16 Monday 14:19 month 14:8 monthly 14:5 Morris 1:15 3:4 move 7:7 moved 12:2,4,17 Myers 2:10 5:17 5:17</p> <hr/> <p align="center">N</p> <hr/> <p>N 3:2 N-i-c-h-o-l-s 11:11 name 3:4 6:12 6:13 9:1,3,3 11:5,7,9 13:2,7 13:10 16:2 natural 14:25 15:2 necessary 14:14 need 5:9 8:20,23 8:24 needs 12:19 neither 17:9 never 8:21 14:1 Nichols 11:5,6,7 11:8,11,12,18 16:5 night 4:9 nonattainment 8:3 North 1:21 notation 6:4 noticed 4:18</p> <hr/> <p align="center">O</p> <hr/> <p>O 3:2 Obviously 3:9 occur 10:14 occurred 10:8 occurring 9:21 occurs 10:3 offer 12:13 offering 11:21 Office 2:14,15 5:21</p>	<p>officer 3:5 offices 14:18 offset 10:14 oh 5:8 6:10 8:21 okay 6:10 8:21 8:21 9:1,5 15:5 old 12:16 older 12:11 Once 3:3 online 3:24 4:1 opened 12:5 opportunities 10:19 opportunity 4:2 4:17 order 4:14 organizations 11:22 outage 14:16 outcome 17:14 overall 9:16 Owensville 12:2</p> <hr/> <p align="center">P</p> <hr/> <p>P 3:2 P-u-r-s-l-e-y 13:8 p.m 3:1 14:17 15:13 PAGE 16:2 part 9:16 parties 5:11,22 17:10,13 Patricia 5:25 6:14,16 16:3 pay 11:22 12:16 13:22,23 people 4:15,19 8:2,4,5,24 11:25 12:7,11 12:13 performance 14:12 person 5:24 6:2 6:3,5,8,9 perspective 7:4 plant 6:25 7:1,4</p>	<p>8:3 plants 7:10,19 8:11 please 13:10 14:18 15:11 podium 5:3 pollution 7:5 pounds 7:25 power 6:25 7:4 7:10 8:3 14:16 prefer 7:6 presiding 1:15 3:4 previous 10:8 14:8,9 probably 3:23 10:4 problem 11:24 problems 9:21 10:14 procedure 10:13 PROCEEDIN... 1:4 process 3:19 4:12 9:16 psc.mo.gov 3:25 public 1:2,6 2:9 2:10,14,14,15 3:5,10,20 5:18 5:19,21,21 7:6 7:11 8:6,16 9:22 10:5,6,20 Pursley 13:1,4,7 13:7,8,12,18 15:2,4,6 16:6 put 6:11 10:16 10:16 12:4</p> <hr/> <p align="center">Q</p> <hr/> <p>qualify 12:1 question 14:24 questions 8:12 8:13 10:25 11:1 12:23,24 14:22 quick 14:24 quickly 7:16</p>	<p>quite 9:25 10:7</p> <hr/> <p align="center">R</p> <hr/> <p>R 3:2 R-o-s-a-l-y-n 13:8 raise 13:10 raised 12:14 rate 3:19 7:3 10:2 14:13 rates 11:21 readily 14:6 reading 3:14 4:7 ready 3:16 really 11:23 reason 14:7 reassure 3:13 receive 14:15 recognize 9:25 recorded 14:17 recording 3:15 reduced 17:8 referred 10:9 regular 14:19 Regulatory 1:15 3:5 related 17:9 relative 17:11 reliable 13:19 14:2 reminding 5:9 renewable 8:9 repair 14:1 REPORTED 1:19 reporter 3:15 4:5 11:10 13:3 17:1,17 represented 5:23 representing 5:11,21 request 6:8 respect 4:20 rest 10:16 Revenues 1:13 review 3:16</p>	<p>right 5:24 6:12 13:1,11 15:10 Rosalyn 13:1,7 13:12 16:6 rubric 10:5 RXI 1:8</p> <hr/> <p align="center">S</p> <hr/> <p>S 2:10 3:2 S-c-h-u-b-a 6:15 safely 15:11 safety 10:6 satisfied 14:11 14:20 scheduled 4:2 scheduling 3:12 School 1:8 Schuba 5:25 6:1 6:6,10,14,14 6:16,22 8:15 8:18 16:3 screen 4:18 second 14:2 see 3:25 10:11 10:15 14:7 15:9 seeking 10:1 sequestration 10:17 service 1:2,13 2:9,10 3:5 5:18 7:6,11 8:6 13:20,21 14:3 14:14 Services 1:20 2:5 serving 9:13 shade 12:5 sheet 4:12 15:8 Shemwell 2:15 5:20,20 shut 4:24 sick 8:5 sign 15:8 sign-up 4:12 signatures 9:2 signed 4:14 6:4</p>
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TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS 1/19/2017

<p>sir 9:3 10:24 11:3 sister 12:17 situation 10:21 13:25 slightly 14:7 SO2 8:3 solve 11:23 somebody 7:4 sorry 5:8 sort 7:5 10:12 10:13,16 Sounds 9:2 speak 4:15 6:5 speaker 10:9 speaking 6:2 8:24 special 8:7 specific 8:8 spell 6:12 11:9 13:2,4 split 12:17 ss 17:2 St 1:21 2:6 17:3 Staff 2:9 5:16,17 start 3:20 starting 10:11 state 1:1 7:1 17:2 statement 14:5 statutes 10:6 Stephen 1:16 3:7 Stoll 1:16 3:7,8 8:13,17,19 11:1,4 12:24 14:22 Street 1:21 2:11 2:16 structure 14:14 Sue 11:5,7,12 16:5 suggest 10:3 support 7:13,17 14:12 supporting 7:18 8:10</p>	<p>supports 7:6 sure 7:13 8:9,23 swear 5:3 sworn 6:17 9:7 11:13 13:13 17:6</p> <hr/> <p align="center">T</p> <hr/> <p>take 4:4 5:10 10:21 12:14 taken 17:7,11 talking 7:8,8 Tariffs 1:12 tell 5:3,5,6 6:12 6:20 9:10 11:16 13:17 ten 7:15 term 9:15 terms 9:14 10:17 testify 4:16,21 6:18 9:8 11:14 13:14 15:9 testimony 8:14 11:2 12:25 14:23 17:5,7 thank 4:11 5:12 5:14 6:22 8:11 8:12,13,15,15 8:18 10:22,24 11:1,3 12:22 12:24 13:16,21 14:17,21,22 15:5,6,10 thanks 4:8 5:9 thereto 17:13 thermostat 12:9 thing 5:8 things 3:18 7:20 think 6:1 7:10 8:21,25 10:19 12:13 thoughts 4:25 three 3:11 time 7:24 10:10 14:2 today 14:15</p>	<p>tonight 5:13,23 6:23 7:8 9:15 9:25 10:23 town 12:2 transcript 1:4 3:14 4:6 transition 7:9,13 trees 12:5 truth 5:3,4,4 6:18,18,19 9:8 9:8,9 11:14,14 11:15 13:14,14 13:15 try 4:19,19 5:1 9:19,22,23 twenty 7:15 two 14:8 typewriting 17:8</p> <hr/> <p align="center">U</p> <hr/> <p>Union 1:8,9,12 2:4 5:13 6:24 update 14:12 use 10:11,12 12:6 user 12:20</p> <hr/> <p align="center">V</p> <hr/> <p>Volume 1:5</p> <hr/> <p align="center">W</p> <hr/> <p>want 4:25 5:6 11:24 wanted 3:8,13 3:18 6:4 7:3 wants 4:16,21 12:20 15:8 wasn't 6:24 waste 7:18 watch 3:25 water 8:1 way 6:11 14:1 we'll 4:16,25 7:15,23 we're 7:18 8:8 8:10 10:10</p>	<p>we've 9:14 website 3:24 weeks 4:3 welcome 4:25 8:17 welfare 12:1 weren't 6:7 win 10:20,20 windows 12:5 winter 12:9 witness 5:7 16:2 witnesses 17:5,7 woman 12:15 Woodruff 1:15 3:3,4 4:11 5:16 5:19,22 6:3,7 6:11,20 8:12 8:23 9:5,10 10:24 11:5,7,9 11:16 12:22 13:1,6,9,16 14:24 15:3,5,7 word 3:15 worried 12:11 12:19 wrong 12:18</p> <hr/> <p align="center">X</p> <hr/> <p align="center">Y</p> <hr/> <p>year 7:25 14:9 years 7:15 9:13 10:12 12:16 14:4</p> <hr/> <p align="center">Z</p> <hr/> <p align="center">0</p> <hr/> <p align="center">1</p> <hr/> <p>11 16:5 13 16:6 19 1:7 1901 2:6</p> <hr/> <p align="center">2</p> <hr/> <p>200 2:11,16 2017 1:7</p>	<p>23,000 8:4</p> <hr/> <p align="center">3</p> <hr/> <p>314 2:7 314-644-2191 1:22 32 9:13</p> <hr/> <p align="center">4</p> <hr/> <p>4:30 14:20</p> <hr/> <p align="center">5</p> <hr/> <p>50 14:3 526-6036 2:12 554-2041 2:7 573 2:12,17</p> <hr/> <p align="center">6</p> <hr/> <p>6 16:3 63 12:10 63101 1:21 63166-6149 2:6 65102 2:16</p> <hr/> <p align="center">7</p> <hr/> <p>7:00 3:1 14:17 7:17 15:13 711 1:21 751-5565 2:17</p> <hr/> <p align="center">8</p> <hr/> <p>8 14:10 8:00 14:19 800 7:25 835 17:4</p> <hr/> <p align="center">9</p> <hr/> <p>9 16:4 90 12:16</p>
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