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STATE OF MISSOURI
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF:)
Every Metro, Inc., d/b/a)
Every Missouri,) ER-2022-0129
Request for Authority to)
Implement a General Rate)
Increase for Electric)
Service.)

WEBEX VIDEOCONFERENCE
LOCAL PUBLIC HEARING

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
Taken before Judge Charles Hatcher
August 8, 2022

Reported by Debra L. Burriss, CSR, CCR
MO Lic. No. 789 * IL Lic. No. 084-004545

DEBRA L. BURRIS, CSR, CCR
Court reporting services
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STATE OF MISSOURI
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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IN THE MATTER OF:)
Evergy Metro, Inc., d/b/a)
Evergy Missouri,) ER-2022-0129
Request for Authority to)
Implement a General Rate)
Increase for Electric)
Service.)

It is hereby stipulated and agreed that the record of proceedings of the WebEx Videoconference public hearing was taken on the 8th day of August, A.D., 2022, between the hours of six o'clock and ten o'clock via WebEx Videoconference, before Debra L. Burriss, Certified Shorthand Reporter, in a certain cause now pending in the State of Missouri, in the matter of Evergy Metro, Inc., d/b/a Evergy Missouri, regarding a request for Authority to Implement a General Rate Increase for Electric Service.

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APPEARANCES

Hearing Officer:

Judge Charles Hatcher

Public Service Commission Staff:

Debbie Quick

Karen Lyons

MO Office of Public Counsel:

John Clizer

Evergy Missouri:

Darrin Ives

Roger Steiner

Missouri Public Service Commissioners:

Chairman Ryan Silvey

Commissioner Scott Rupp

Commissioner Jason Holsman

Commissioner Maida Coleman

Commissioner Glen Kolkmeyer

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IT IS HEREBY STIPULATED AND AGREED by
that this record or proceedings may be taken
in shorthand by Debra L. Burris, a Certified
Shorthand Reporter, and afterwards transcribed
into typewriting.

* * * * *

JUDGE HATCHER: First I would ask
that everyone please mute themselves unless
they are speaking. That will cut down on the
noise level and prevents audio feedback. I do
want to thank everyone for spending some of
their evening tonight with us. Today is
August 8th, 2022. The Missouri Public Service
Commission has set this time for a local
public hearing to give members of the public a
chance to comment about Evergy Missouri
Metro's electric general rate increase
application. And that is file number
ER-2022-0129.

The Missouri Public Service
Commission regulates the rates charged by
public utility companies in Missouri to ensure
that those rates are just and reasonable. The
Commission also regulates the quality of

1 service and safety of the operations of public
2 utilities.

3 The Commission is made up of five
4 Commissioners. The Commissioners are
5 appointed by the Governor to fixed terms, and
6 confirmed by the Senate. The Commissioners
7 employ a staff of engineers, accountants,
8 attorneys, financial analysts, and other
9 specialists in the field of utility
10 regulation. My name is Charles Hatcher, I'm a
11 Regulatory Law Judge and will preside over
12 this hearing.

13 With me tonight are Chairman Ryan
14 Silvey, Commissioners Scott Rupp, Jason
15 Holsman, Maida Coleman and Glen Kolkmeyer.
16 This is an official hearing of the Missouri
17 Public Service Commission, and the statements
18 and testimony of witnesses will be recorded by
19 the court reporter and are given under oath.
20 The Commission has not made any decisions in
21 this case, and therefore the Commissioners nor
22 I can answer any questions, as the
23 Commissioners need to remain impartial until
24 all of the evidence is presented.

25 Let's start with entries of

1 appearance for Evergy Missouri Metro, please
2 go ahead.

3 MR. STEINER: Yes, good evening,
4 this is Roger Steiner on behalf of Evergy. My
5 address is 1200 Main Street, Kansas City,
6 Missouri 64105.

7 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, sir.
8 And next for the Commission Staff. So *6 to
9 unmute if you've called in.

10 CHAIRMAN SILVEY: Good evening,
11 Judge, Commissioner Silvey is here.

12 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you,
13 Chairman. And we'll come back to staff.
14 Office of the Public Counsel?

15 MR. CLIZER: Good evening, Your
16 Honor, John Clizer on behalf of the Missouri
17 Office of Public Counsel. My business
18 information has been previously provided with
19 the court reporter. Thank you.

20 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you. I
21 appreciate your brevity. As we did last time
22 -- oh, yes, go ahead.

23 MS. MERS: I apologize, Judge
24 Hatcher. This is Nicole Mers for Commission
25 Staff. I apologize for the mixup, and my

1 information has been provided to the court
2 reporter previously.

3 JUDGE HATCHER: Not a problem. We
4 understand. As I did last time, I will invite
5 any of the interveners whose counsel are
6 present, if they would like to identify
7 themselves for the record, please do so now.

8 Okay. And our process is going to
9 be to call the names that are listed on the
10 signup sheet in the order that they appear.
11 We have two names preregistered to testify at
12 tonight's hearing. What I ask is that when I
13 do call your name, please go ahead and unmute.
14 I will then place you under oath and ask you
15 to state and spell your name and then give
16 your comments to the Commission.

17 For anyone who's called in, again
18 it's *6, to unmute. And we will be going slow
19 through this, and I will also make sure and
20 ask that anyone who is on our WebEx call who
21 did not preregister, but who would like to
22 testify, I will invite those people to testify
23 at the end. Let's go ahead and get to our
24 list. William Davies. If William Davies is
25 here, if he could speak up?

1 MR. DAVIES: Good afternoon, Your
2 Honor. Can you hear me?

3 JUDGE HATCHER: Yes, I can. Thank
4 you, sir. Let me swear you in. Do you
5 solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony
6 you are about to give is the truth, the whole
7 truth and nothing but the truth?

8 MR. DAVIES: I do.

9 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, Mr.
10 Davies. Please go ahead with your testimony.

11 MR. DAVIES: Thank you, again,
12 Judge Hatcher, Your Honor, Chair Silvey,
13 members of the Commission, and Office of
14 Public Counsel. Thank you for your time and
15 the opportunity to comment this evening. My
16 name is William Davies. I live at 6717 Locust
17 Street in Kansas City, Missouri 64131.

18 I am here this evening to comment
19 on behalf of myself, my family, my wife and I
20 live in Kansas City, just to encourage that
21 the Public Service Commission take a hard look
22 when approving rate cases, rate increases,
23 particularly given the tumultuous
24 circumstances our communities in Missouri and
25 across the country face today, and ensure that

1 any rate increase and any customer dollars are
2 put towards customer goals.

3 As was stated -- as has been stated
4 in the past in previous rate cases, it's,
5 folks are experiencing a lot of hardship now
6 both now financially and health wise as we
7 experience the impacts of climate change and
8 airborne pollution and water pollution caused
9 by continued reliance of fossil fuels.

10 In my community in the City of
11 Kansas City the city has worked over the last
12 couple of years to undertake an update to its
13 climate protection plan, a climate protection
14 and resiliency plan to ensure that we are
15 being thoughtful in our considerations for
16 policymaking and development as it relates
17 particularly to energy production, how we set
18 up transportation, how we build commercial and
19 residential buildings, how we're taking -- how
20 we can go about ensuring that we're putting
21 the health and well-being of residents, Everygy
22 customers, above all else, particularly given
23 the varying consequences of the climate
24 crises.

25 We talk about, you know, acting now

1 to prevent a harder future, but we're seeing
2 these impacts now. I have colleagues in
3 St. Louis who are sick today because they were
4 moving out of an office that's flooded due to
5 the terrible flooding that we've seen in
6 St. Louis. I have friends and neighbors here
7 in Kansas City who have been, you know working
8 -- you know there was an election in Missouri
9 recently -- but who are still kind of feeling
10 a little out of it and sick, some more sick,
11 as a result of exposure to very intense heat
12 that we've seen.

13 So these are -- we talk about -- I
14 remember in high school and even college and
15 before that talking about, you know, we need
16 to act to prevent future harms. We're seeing
17 these harms happen now in our state, in our
18 cities. And they're hitting the most
19 vulnerable in our communities first, and
20 they're hitting them the hardest.

21 And Evergy, while being an
22 investor-owned utility, it's a public utility.
23 It's accountable to the people of Missouri.
24 And we need to ensure that the peoples' needs,
25 our communities' needs, our goals, including

1 transitioning away from fossil fuels, are put
2 first.

3 And So when considering any rate
4 increases I would ask and implore that the PSC
5 to ensure that Evergy is using customers'
6 dollars to invest in things like greater
7 energy efficiency, renewable energy that's
8 shown to be affordable, cleaner, better for
9 customers and for the planet so that we're
10 ensuring that we're leaving this place --
11 we're ensuring that folks can thrive now, but
12 also ensuring that we can allow our children
13 and children's children to thrive.

14 I just hope you will all take that
15 into consideration. I appreciate the
16 opportunity to comment, and thank you for your
17 service. And that concludes my comments this
18 evening.

19 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, Mr.
20 Davies. Are there any questions from the
21 Commissioners for Mr. Davies? Thank you, Mr.
22 Davies. We'll next call Emily Zahner. The
23 spelling I have is Z-a-h-n-e-r.

24 MS. ZAHNER: That's me.

25 JUDGE HATCHER: Emily, thank you,

1 ma'am.

2 MS. ZAHNER: Can you hear me okay?

3 JUDGE HATCHER: Yes. I will go
4 ahead and swear you in and then we'll take
5 your testimony. Do you solemnly swear or
6 affirm that the testimony you're about to give
7 is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
8 the truth?

9 MS. ZAHNER: I do.

10 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you. And Ms.
11 Zahner, please go ahead and give us your
12 testimony.

13 MS. ZAHNER: First I'd like to
14 thank you all for the opportunity to testify.
15 My name's Emily. I'm a member of the Kansas
16 City community, and I'm therefore impacted by
17 the decisions made regarding price rates and
18 allocation to clean energy, or more
19 unfortunately, the alternative.

20 I'm here to discuss how Evergy's
21 proposed rate increases will impact vulnerable
22 populations, and how it fails to address the
23 climate crisis, affordable and reliable
24 energy.

25 Evergy spends millions of dollars a

1 year on coal and coal plants. And last year
2 Evergy scaled back its plans in Kansas City to
3 add solar power by 2024. All fossil fuel and
4 nonrenewable energy sources such as coal are
5 unpredictable and inconsistent with their
6 pricing. These costs are then passed down to
7 customers who are increasingly unable to pay
8 these energy bills.

9 This rate will disproportionately
10 affect those most vulnerable and under the
11 poverty line. We rely on Evergy as a monopoly
12 utility to be using the best of its resources
13 and technologies to run its business. And
14 instead it's using dollars to invest in
15 harmful resources to human health and the
16 environment, such as coal imports.

17 According to Energy Innovations'
18 report, 80 percent of coal plants in the
19 United States are more expensive to operate
20 than building and operating wind and solar
21 facilities. Climate change is worsened by the
22 burning of coal, creating a vicious cycle of
23 heating and drought that can be catastrophic
24 for grid reliability.

25 Renewables including wind and solar

1 are continuing to become more affordable,
2 reliable and predictable without the negative
3 environmental consequences caused by coal. It
4 should be invested heavily in demand programs
5 such as energy efficiency and solar and wind.
6 With these investments we will get benefits
7 for reliable, affordable and predictable
8 energy that's better for our health and the
9 health of future generations.

10 Please disallow continued
11 investment in harmful and outdated
12 technologies that require investment in health
13 and wellbeing of our communities. Thank you
14 again for allowing me to speak.

15 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you. I
16 appreciate that, Ms. Zahner. Were there any
17 Commissioner questions for Ms. Emily Zahner?
18 All right. Emily's done. We'll go ahead and
19 ask if there's anyone else who is on the WebEx
20 call this evening who would like to testify
21 that did not preregister? Please go ahead and
22 speak up.

23 MR. FELDMAN: Judge Hatcher, this
24 is Bill Feldman from Kansas City. I think I
25 fall into that category.

1 JUDGE HATCHER: Excellent, Mr.
2 Feldman. Let me swear you in. Do you
3 solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony
4 you are about to give is the truth, the whole
5 truth, and nothing but the truth?

6 MR. FELDMAN: I do, Judge.

7 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you. And Mr.
8 Feldman, if you would please state and spell
9 your name for the record?

10 MR. FELDMAN: Sure. It's william
11 Feldman. It's F, as in Frank, -e-l-d-m-a-n.

12 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, sir.
13 And please go ahead and give us your
14 testimony.

15 MR. FELDMAN: You know, I'm just an
16 average guy. I'm retired, and I don't have
17 anything climate-change-wise to say. I
18 believe in fossil fuels. I think you still
19 need electricity to get to wherever you're
20 going to charge your car and windmills and all
21 that kind of stuff. That costs a lot to put
22 together, and you've got to bury the
23 propellers. I mean, they're an environmental
24 hazard as far as I'm concerned. I don't want
25 to get this into a political debate, but I for

1 one have a got totally different idea when it
2 comes to green energy and so forth. And I
3 know that a lot of precious metal has got to
4 be mined and strip mined probably as big as
5 this city to sustain some of this stuff.
6 Anyway that's all I'm going to say
7 politically.

8 But in terms of the rate increase,
9 you know, 130 bucks a year probably isn't a
10 lot for a lot of people, but as someone here
11 commented before, much better than I did, the
12 economic conditions we're facing for all
13 living expenses, all day-to-day living
14 expenses, it's a pretty poor time to come for
15 an increase in rates. I do understand that
16 like utilities, everything's up for them as
17 well. So I understand obviously costs have
18 gone up, and I don't see any end in sight to
19 it right now, the costs that we're going to
20 incur -- incur. But, you know, it's a, it's
21 putting a burden on everyone.

22 More specifically -- and someone
23 asked me earlier to say what I had said before
24 on the informal part of this -- is that Evergy
25 did a good job putting these power poles and

1 lines in. And I asked about Facebook and
2 Meta, and if they were paying for a good
3 portion of this, and they said they were going
4 to be paying it in their rates. But the
5 contractor -- I think I'm talking about
6 contractor workforce -- I'm retired, and, you
7 know, I probably didn't have anything better
8 to do but watch these guys work, and they work
9 hard, they work in all kinds of conditions,
10 but what I saw, you know, a quarter or a half
11 of them didn't work while the other half did.
12 And that was kind of disconcerting to me.

13 You know, being on your phone and
14 doing whatever, or walking, you know, as slow
15 as molasses as you could be to carry a board
16 from one place to the next -- you know, it's
17 just -- I understand unions and contracts, and
18 you can't always say there's only going to be
19 this many people on a project, or whatever,
20 but to an average guy looking at somebody --
21 and I know it's everywhere, but -- and it's,
22 and you're hard pressed to even find people to
23 work -- and I don't understand that, frankly,
24 from -- I'm too old school I guess -- but I
25 don't know what's happened to everybody that

1 used to work, but it seems like everybody's
2 looking for folks.

3 But when I looked at the work
4 ethic -- I'll say it that way -- there has to
5 be a huge cost overrun in wages and benefits
6 for contractors, or however it's paid, by
7 Evergy. And so I feel a little bit sorry for
8 Evergy I guess because they've got to go
9 through that, but just from my standpoint,
10 just an average guy living in Kansas City,
11 seeing what you've got to pay day-to-day, and
12 then another 130 bucks a year for electricity
13 alone, and then to see some of the stuff that
14 goes on, it's just kind of mind boggling.

15 Obviously I probably don't have all
16 the information -- I'm sure I don't -- but
17 that's just one person's perspective. And I
18 appreciate it, Judge, for you being here, and
19 the Commissioners, and taking the time to
20 listen to me. That's it.

21 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, Mr.
22 Feldman. I appreciate the comments, and we
23 certainly appreciate you taking the time out
24 of your evening as well. One more call. Is
25 there anyone else on our WebEx who would like

1 to testify this evening? And a reminder, if
2 you have called in on the telephone, in order
3 to unmute you press *6. Okay. Last call.
4 Any further witnesses to testify this evening?

5 MR. STEPHENS: Hello. My name is
6 Adam Stevens.

7 JUDGE HATCHER: Yes, Mr. Stevens.
8 Let me swear you in, and then we will take
9 your testimony. Do you solemnly swear or
10 affirm that the testimony you're about to give
11 is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
12 the truth?

13 MR. STEPHENS: I do.

14 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you. And
15 please state and spell your last name.

16 MR. STEPHENS: Stephens,
17 S-t-e-p-h-e-n-s.

18 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, Mr.
19 Stevens. And please go ahead with your
20 testimony.

21 MR. STEPHENS: All right. As a
22 resident of Lee's Summit and a family of five
23 I just would especially encourage Everygy to
24 consider the younger parts of my family
25 instead of the older. In 2021, according to

1 the EIA 74 percent of Missouri's electricity
2 came from coal, which is the second highest of
3 any state. And I know they've made some great
4 progress, and I think they do a great job with
5 their consumer relations and try to encourage
6 adoption of energy efficient appliances, but
7 it seems as though as innovative and amazing
8 of a state that we live in, we could do better
9 than that on our score.

10 As far as for our rate increase,
11 obviously it's something that all families
12 kind of have to share that burden, but if we
13 do have to make that rate increase, I would
14 just encourage Evergy to put it towards more
15 long-term kind of future-innovative,
16 future-ready services, and less towards the
17 outdated coal-fired power plants that have
18 powered them, you know, likely been there to
19 power us in the past, but to accelerate that
20 transition away. Thank you for your time.

21 JUDGE HATCHER: Thank you, Mr.
22 Stephens. Thank you for your comments. Are
23 there any Commissioner questions for Mr.
24 Stevens? Okay. Are there any other
25 witnesses, anyone who would like to testify

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this evening? This will be our last call.
Anyone who would like to testify, just speak
up.

Okay. I would like to thank all of
our participants tonight. I would also like
to thank the Commissioners and all the
attorneys for their evening hours. If you do
have any additional comments or someone you
know would like to make a comment but they
couldn't be present tonight, anyone can make
written comments by going to the PFC's web
page. That's PFC.mo.gov. If you do have any
questions for the Office of the Public
Counsel, those can be sent to
Mopco@opc.mo.gov. Again, I would like to
thank everyone. The hearing is now adjourned
and we are off the record.

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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, DEBRA L. BURRIS, a Certified Court Reporter in and for the States of Missouri and Illinois, do hereby certify that, pursuant to agreement of counsel, the witnesses named above came before Judge Hatcher and were duly sworn to testify to the truth and nothing but the truth; that the said examination was thereafter caused to be transcribed into typewriting; that this is a true and accurate transcription of the testimony given by the witnesses as aforesaid.

BY THE AUTHORITY BESTOWED UPON ME, I have hereunto set my hand on this _____ DAY OF _____, 2022.

DEBRA L. BURRIS, MO CCR #789,
IL CSR #084.004545

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