Matter of the Request of The Empire District Electric Company

Evidentiary Hearing

February 07, 2022

PHIPPS REPORTING

Raising the Bar!

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             BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
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                      STATE OF MISSOURI
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                  TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
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                 Evidentiary Hearing, Hybrid
 7
                       February 7, 2022
                   Jefferson City, Missouri
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                            Volume 6
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    In the Matter of the Request ) File No. ER-2021-0312
13
    of The Empire District Electric)
14
    Company d/b/a Liberty for )
    Authority to File Tariffs )
15
    Increasing Rates for Electric
    Service Provided to Customers )
16
   in its Missouri Service Area
17
                     JOHN T. CLARK, Presiding
18
                          SENIOR REGULATORY LAW JUDGE
                     RYAN A. SILVEY, Chairman,
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                     MAIDA J. COLEMAN,
                     JASON R. HOLSMAN,
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                     GLEN KOLKMEYER,
                         COMMISSIONERS
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   REPORTED BY:
    Tracy Taylor, CCR No. 939
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Page 18 1 APPEARANCES 2. DEAN COOPER Brydon, Swearengen & England, PC 3 312 East Capitol Avenue Jefferson City, Missouri 65102-0456 dcooper@brydonlaw.com 4 FOR: Liberty (Empire) 5 DIANA C. CARTER 6 428 E. Capitol Avenue, Suite 303 Jefferson City, Missouri 65101 7 Diana.Carter@LibertyUtilities.com FOR: Liberty (Empire) 8 DAVID WOODSMALL 9 308 E. High Street, Suite 204 Jefferson City, Missouri 65101 10 david.woodsmall@woodsmalllaw.com Midwest Energy Consumers Group FOR: 11 FOR: The Empire District Electric Company SERP Retirees, LLC 12 TERRY M. JARRETT 13 514 E. High Street, Suite 22 Jefferson City, Missouri 65101 14 terry@healylawoffices.com FOR: Empire District Retired Members & Spouses 15 Association, LLC 16 NATHAN WILLIAMS Department of Commerce & Insurance 17 200 Madison Street, Suite 650 PO Box 2230 18 Jefferson City, Missouri 65102 opcservice@opc.mo.gov Office of the Public Counsel 19 FOR: 20 KEVIN A. THOMPSON NICOLE MERS 21 Department of Economic Development 200 Madison Street, Suite 800 PO Box 360 22 Jefferson City, Missouri 65102-0360 23 staffcounselservice@psc.mo.gov Staff of the Missouri Public Service Commission FOR: 2.4 25

Page 19 JUDGE CLARK: It is 9:00 a.m. 1 Okay. 2 Let's go on the record. Good morning. Today's February 7th. The current time is 9:00 a.m. 3 proceeding is being held in Room 310 of the Governor 4 5 Office Building, as well as electronically via WebEx. The Commission has set aside this time 6 7 for a hearing in the matter of the request of the Empire District Electric Company, doing business as 8 Liberty, for authority to file tariffs increasing 9 10 rates for electric service provided to customers in its Missouri service area. And this is File Number 11 12 ER-2021-0312. 13 My name's John Clark. I'm the Regulatory Law Judge presiding over this hearing today. We also 14 15 have some Commissioners present. Currently I see that we have been joined by Commissioner Holsman and 16 Commissioner Coleman. Other Commissioners and the 17 18 Chairman may drop in and drop out to hear particular 19 testimony and particular evidence. 20 CHAIR SILVEY: Good morning, Judge. 21 is Chairman Silvey. 2.2 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Chairman. 23 apologize for not seeing you. And the Chairman is 24 with us as well. 25 I'm going to remind everybody to mute

- 1 their mics when they're not speaking because,
- 2 otherwise, it creates a lot of noise. And if you're
- 3 participating via WebEx, I'm going to ask that you
- 4 mute yourself. If you're participating via phone, I'm
- 5 going to ask that you mute yourself until such time as
- 6 you need to speak.
- Now, because of the ongoing pandemic
- 8 situation, we're going to do the best we can in this
- 9 case to socially distance in this room. Masks are not
- 10 required, but they are encouraged.
- I'm going to say I also received word
- 12 that Commissioner Kolkmeyer will be joining us
- 13 momentarily.
- 14 At this time I'm going to ask counsel for
- 15 the parties to enter their appearance for the record.
- 16 On behalf of Liberty Utilities?
- MS. CARTER: Diana Carter for the Empire
- 18 District Electric Company. And also Dean Cooper of
- 19 Brydon, Swearengen and England.
- JUDGE CLARK: Do you want me to call you
- 21 Empire District Electric Company or Liberty or do you
- 22 care?
- MS. CARTER: We do not care.
- JUDGE CLARK: Okay. I'll probably go
- 25 with Liberty.

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1	Page 21 For the Staff of the Commission?
2	MR. THOMPSON: Kevin Thompson and Nicole
3	Mers for the Staff of the Public Service Commission,
4	Post Office Box 360, Jefferson City, Missouri 65102.
5	JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Staff.
6	For Midwest Energy Consumers Group?
7	MR. WOODSMALL: Good morning, Your Honor.
8	David Woodsmall on behalf of MECG.
9	JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, MECG.
10	Anyone here for the Empire District
11	Retired Members and Spouses Association?
12	MR. JARRETT: Yes, Your Honor. Terry
13	Jarrett of Healy Law, appearing on behalf of the
14	Empire District Retired Members and Spouses
15	Association.
16	JUDGE CLARK: And you go by EDRA?
17	MR. JARRETT: Yes, E-D-R-A, EDRA.
18	JUDGE CLARK: Okay. Thank you, EDRA.
19	The Empire District Company
20	MR. JARRETT: I'm sorry?
21	JUDGE CLARK: Did I interrupt you? I
22	apologize.
23	MR. JARRETT: No.
24	JUDGE CLARK: The Empire District
25	Electric Company SERP Retirees?

Page 22 Good morning, Your Honor. 1 MR. WOODSMALL: 2. David Woodsmall for the SERP Retirees. 3 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Woodsmall. Renew Missouri filed a motion to be 4 5 excused and that motion was granted. The City of 6 Ozark filed a motion this morning to be excused and 7 that motion will be granted. 8 Moving on to preliminary matters, are 9 there any pending motions that need to be addressed? 10 MR. WILLIAMS: Judge, would you like an entry from the Office of Public Counsel? 11 12 JUDGE CLARK: I apologize. Office of Public Counsel. 13 Nathan Williams appearing 14 MR. WILLIAMS: on behalf of the Office of Public Counsel and the 15 public. 16 17 Thank you, Mr. Williams. JUDGE CLARK: 18 I'll get back to preliminary matters. 19 Are there any pending motions that have not been 20 I see no hands. addressed? 21 Are there any evidence that the parties 2.2 want to enter now that are undisputed or do you just 23 want to wait until the time? 24 MS. CARTER: Judge, it may be easier to 25 go ahead and put in all of our pre-filed testimony

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the list.

Page 23 The only witnesses that will take the stand are 1 2. on the one issue of class cost-of-service. 3 JUDGE CLARK: Are there going to be any 4 objections to entering testimony on behalf of the 5 witnesses? MR. WILLIAMS: Not from the Office of 6 7 Public Counsel. 8 MR. THOMPSON: Staff has no objection. 9 MS. CARTER: The company has no 10 objection. 11 MR. JARRETT: EDRA has no objection. 12 MR. WOODSMALL: No objection. 13 JUDGE CLARK: And Mr. Woodsmall, I assume that's no objection from both your clients? 14 15 MR. WOODSMALL: Yes. 16 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. So there are no 17 objections. What evidence would we like to go ahead 18 and admit? What testimony? 19 MS. CARTER: For the company, we 20 circulated the exhibit list. And we have paper copies 21 up there for the court reporter. Judge, would you 2.2 like me to go through the list or just refer to the 23 exhibit list? 24 JUDGE CLARK: I would like to go through

Page 24 1 Okay. For the company we MS. CARTER: 2 have Exhibit 1, direct testimony of Tim Wilson; Exhibit 2, rebuttal testimony of Tim Wilson; Exhibit 3 3, we have public and confidential version, Tim Wilson 4 5 surrebuttal testimony; Exhibit 4 in public confidential and highly confidential version, Todd 6 7 Mooney direct testimony; Exhibit 5, Todd Mooney rebuttal testimony; Exhibit 6 in public and 8 9 confidential versions, Todd Mooney surrebuttal testimony; Exhibit 7, public and confidential Shaen 10 Rooney direct testimony; Exhibit 8, Shaen Rooney 11 rebuttal testimony; Exhibit 9, public and 12 13 confidential, Shaen Rooney surrebuttal testimony, Exhibit 10, public and confidential, Aaron Doll direct 14 testimony; Exhibit 11, Aaron Doll rebuttal testimony; 15 Exhibit 12, Aaron Doll surrebuttal testimony; Exhibit 16 17 13, Jeffery Westfall direct testimony; Exhibit 14, 18 Jeffery Westfall surrebuttal testimony; Exhibit 15, Chad Hook direct testimony; 16, Chad Hook rebuttal 19 20 testimony; Exhibit 17, in public and confidential 21 versions, Chad Hook surrebuttal testimony; Exhibit 18, public and confidential, Drew Landoll direct 22 23 testimony; 19, Jill Schwartz, direct testimony; 20, Tisha Sanderson direct testimony; 21, Tisha 24 25 Sanderson rebuttal testimony; 22, Tisha Sanderson

- 1 surrebuttal testimony; Exhibit 23, 24 and 25,
- 2 Charlotte T. Emery direct testimony, rebuttal
- 3 testimony, and surrebuttal testimony; Exhibit 26,
- 4 public and confidential, Zachary Quintero direct
- 5 testimony; Exhibit 27, Greg Tillman direct testimony;
- 6 28, Greg Tillman rebuttal testimony; 29, Greg Tillman
- 7 surrebuttal testimony; Exhibit 30, public and
- 8 confidential, Todd Tarter direct testimony; 31, Todd
- 9 Tarter surrebuttal testimony; Exhibit 32, Eric Fox
- 10 direct testimony; Exhibits 33, 34 and 35, John Reed
- 11 direct testimony, rebuttal testimony, and surrebuttal
- 12 testimony.
- 13 And our witness who will be taking the
- 14 stand this morning, Exhibit 36, 37 and 38, Timothy S.
- 15 Lyons, direct testimony, rebuttal testimony and
- 16 surrebuttal testimony. 39, Jon Harrison direct
- 17 testimony; 40, Jon Harrison rebuttal testimony; 41,
- 18 Jon Harrison, surrebuttal testimony; Exhibit 42, Nate
- 19 Hackney direct testimony; 43, Nate Hackney rebuttal
- 20 testimony; 44 Nate Hackney surrebuttal testimony.
- Exhibits 45, 46, and 47, Dane Watson
- 22 direct testimony, rebuttal testimony, and surrebuttal
- 23 testimony; and Exhibit 48 and 49, James Fallert direct
- 24 testimony, and rebuttal testimony; and Exhibit 50, 51
- 25 and 52, Frank Graves, direct testimony, rebuttal

Page 26 testimony, and surrebuttal testimony. And that should 1 2. be all the exhibits for the company 3 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. Is that what 4 everybody was expecting? Is there anyone who wishes 5 to object to submitting any of that testimony onto the hearing record? Bear with me just a second. Okay. 6 7 So how many pieces of testimony total? MS. CARTER: 8 Fifty-two, but some of those 9 have different versions. 10 JUDGE CLARK: You mean public, confidential and highly confidential? 11 12 MS. CARTER: Yes. 13 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. Okay. Exhibits 1 through 52 will be admitted onto the hearing record 14 15 for Liberty. (Liberty Exhibits 1 through 52 were 16 received into evidence.) 17 18 JUDGE CLARK: Next, let's go with Commission Staff. 19 20 Thank you, Judge. At this MR. THOMPSON: 21 time we would tender Exhibit 100, direct testimony of Amanda McMellen; 101, public and confidential Staff 2.2 cost-of-service report; 102, Staff accounting 23 schedules; 103, Staff's corrected --24 25 JUDGE CLARK: Slow down just a second.

Page 27 Slow down just a second. 1 I'm sorry. Let's go back to 2. Staff's cost-of-service. 3 MR. THOMPSON: Okay. 4 JUDGE CLARK: And that's public and confidential. Correct? 5 6 MR. THOMPSON: Yes, Judge. 7 JUDGE CLARK: All right. Go ahead. Exhibit 102, Staff's 8 MR. THOMPSON: 9 accounting schedules. 10 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. 11 MR. THOMPSON: Exhibit 103, Staff's 12 corrected accounting schedules. 13 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. Exhibit 104, direct 14 MR. THOMPSON: 15 testimony of Cedric Cunigan. 16 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. 17 MR. THOMPSON: Exhibit 105, public and confidential, Staff class cost-of-service report. 18 19 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. 20 Exhibit 106, rebuttal MR. THOMPSON: 21 testimony of Kimberly Bolin. 22 JUDGE CLARK: All right. 23 MR. THOMPSON: Exhibit 107, rebuttal 24 testimony of Kory Boustead. 25 JUDGE CLARK: Okay.

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1	Page 28 MR. THOMPSON: Exhibit 108, rebuttal
2	testimony of Peter Chari.
3	JUDGE CLARK: Okay.
4	MR. THOMPSON: Exhibit 109, rebuttal
5	testimony of Amanda Coffer.
6	JUDGE CLARK: Okay.
7	MR. THOMPSON: Exhibit 110, rebuttal
8	testimony of Kim Cox.
9	JUDGE CLARK: Okay.
10	MR. THOMPSON: Exhibit 111, rebuttal
11	testimony of Cedric Cunigan.
12	JUDGE CLARK: Okay.
13	MR. THOMPSON: Exhibit 112, public and
14	confidential, rebuttal testimony of Saeid Dindarloo.
15	JUDGE CLARK: Okay.
16	MR. THOMPSON: Exhibit 113, rebuttal
17	testimony of Scott Glasgow.
18	JUDGE CLARK: Okay.
19	MR. THOMPSON: Exhibit 114, rebuttal
20	testimony of Courtney Horton.
21	JUDGE CLARK: Okay.
22	MR. THOMPSON: Exhibit 115, rebuttal
23	testimony of Jordan Hull.
24	JUDGE CLARK: Okay.
25	MR. THOMPSON: 116, rebuttal testimony of

Page 30 124 is rebuttal testimony 1 MR. THOMPSON: 2 of Joseph Roling, public and confidential. 3 JUDGE CLARK: Go ahead. MR. THOMPSON: 125, rebuttal testimony of 4 5 Ashley Sarver; 126 accounting schedules, 127, 6 surrebuttal of Kimberly Bolin, 128 surrebuttal of 7 Cedric Cunigan; 129, surrebuttal of Keith Foster; 130, surrebuttal of Courtney Horton; 131, surrebuttal of 8 9 Sarah Lange; 132, public and confidential, surrebuttal of J Luebbert; 133, public and confidential, 10 surrebuttal of Brooke Mastrogiannis; 134, surrebuttal 11 of Amanda McMellen; 135, surrebuttal of Caroline 12 Newkirk; 136, public and confidential, surrebuttal of 13 Angela Niemeier; 137, surrebuttal of Mark 14 Oligschlaeger; 138 is the surrebuttal of Ashley 15 Sarver; 139 is the surrebuttal of Seoung Joun Won; and 16 17 140 is Staff's surrebuttal EMS Run. 18 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. Are there any 19 objections to admitting Exhibits 100 through 140 for 20 Staff on to the hearing record? I see no objections. Exhibits 100 through 140 for Staff are admitted onto 21 2.2 the hearing record. (Staff Exhibits 100 through 140 were 23 24 received into evidence.) 25 I have copies here for the MR. THOMPSON:

- 1 court reporter.
- 2 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you. If you just
- 3 want to set them up there, I will see that they're
- 4 taken care of.
- 5 MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Judge.
- 6 JUDGE CLARK: Next, for the Office of
- 7 Public Counsel.
- 8 MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you. Geoff Marke,
- 9 direct, 200 HC and public version; Geoff Marke
- 10 rebuttal, which includes rate design, Exhibit 201-C
- 11 and the public version; Geoff Marke surrebuttal, 202,
- 12 highly confidential and public version; Lena Mantle
- 13 revenue requirement direct 203, three versions, HC
- 14 confidential, and public.
- 15 JUDGE CLARK: Say that again, please.
- 16 MR. WILLIAMS: There are three versions;
- 17 highly confidential, confidential and public.
- JUDGE CLARK: No, the witness name,
- 19 please. Lena Mantle?
- 20 MR. WILLIAMS: Lena M. Mantle.
- JUDGE CLARK: Okay.
- MR. WILLIAMS: And then Lena M. Mantle
- 23 direct, rate design, Exhibit 204; Lena M. Mantle
- 24 rebuttal, Exhibit 205, HC, C, and public version; Lena
- 25 M. Mantle surrebuttal, Exhibit 206, confidential and

- 1 public version; David Murray direct, Exhibit 207,
- 2 confidential and public version; David Murray
- 3 rebuttal, 208, confidential and a public version;
- 4 David Murray surrebuttal, 209, highly confidential,
- 5 confidential, public version; John S. Riley direct,
- 6 Exhibit 210; John S. Riley rebuttal, 211, a highly
- 7 confidential and a public version; John S. Riley
- 8 surrebuttal, Exhibit 212; John A. Robinett direct, two
- 9 versions, 213 confidential and a public version; John
- 10 A. Robinett rebuttal, two versions, 214 highly
- 11 confidential and public; John A. Robinett surrebuttal,
- 12 two versions, 215 confidential and public.
- 13 That's all of our exhibits. There are
- 14 copies up by the witness stand.
- 15 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Williams.
- 16 Any objections to admitting OPC's Exhibits 200 through
- 17 215 onto the hearing record? Hearing no objections.
- 18 OPC's Exhibits 200 through 215 will be admitted onto
- 19 the hearing record.
- 20 (OPC Exhibits 200 through 215 were
- 21 received into evidence.)
- JUDGE CLARK: Midwest Energy Consumers
- 23 Group.
- MR. WOODSMALL: Thank you, Your Honor.
- 25 We have Exhibit 350, the direct testimony of Greg

- 1 Meyer; Exhibit 351 -- and I'll note that when I sent
- 2 out the exhibit list, I didn't include the
- 3 confidential versions so if you're working from my
- 4 exhibit list, there's a change on that.
- 5 Exhibit 351 is the public and
- 6 confidential version of the surrebuttal testimony of
- 7 Greg Meyer; Exhibit 352, the direct testimony of
- 8 Kavita Maini --
- JUDGE CLARK: Hold on just a second. You
- 10 said that was rebuttal?
- MR. WOODSMALL: That was 352, her direct.
- 12 JUDGE CLARK: Direct. Thank you. Go
- 13 ahead.
- MR. WOODSMALL: 353 is her rebuttal
- 15 testimony; Exhibit 354 is her surrebuttal testimony;
- 16 Exhibit 355 is the direct testimony of Andrew Teague;
- 17 finally Exhibit 356 is the direct testimony of Steve
- 18 Chriss.
- 19 We'd offer each of those pieces of
- 20 evidence, Your Honor.
- JUDGE CLARK: Thank you. Any objection
- 22 to MECG's Exhibits 350 through 356?
- I see none. Exhibits 350 through 356 for
- 24 MECG will be admitted onto the hearing record.
- 25 (MECG Exhibits 350 through 356 were

- 1 I know that took a while. I appreciate everybody
- 2 going through it, but I think it will save some time
- 3 down the road.
- 4 Okay. I'm relying on the parties,
- 5 because there is a lot of confidential information in
- 6 this case. If I catch it, I will immediately mute and
- 7 go in-camera, but if you know in advance you're going
- 8 to be putting on confidential testimony, please let me
- 9 know so I can go in-camera for the presentation of
- 10 that.
- 11 With that in mind, is there anything else
- 12 I need to address before we begin opening statements
- 13 from the parties?
- Okay. I see none so I will go with the
- 15 order as was submitted for opening statements and that
- 16 has Liberty Utilities going first for opening.
- 17 MS. CARTER: Thank you, Judge. Good
- 18 morning. I am Diana Carter, the director of legal
- 19 services for Liberty's Central Region, which includes
- 20 the Empire District Electric Company. And in addition
- 21 to Dean Cooper, I have with me today Charlotte Emery,
- 22 our Central Region director of rates and regulatory
- 23 affairs; and Tim Wilson, our vice president for
- 24 electric is on WebEx in case there happen to be
- 25 questions for him.

We are completing a trilogy with this 1 2. We started with our customer savings plan docket back in 2017 where the Commission noted that 3 the public policy of this state is to diversify the 4 5 energy supply through the support of renewable and alternative energy sources. And this Commission held 6 7 back in that 2017 proceeding that Empire's proposed acquisition of 600 megawatts of additional wind 8 9 generation assets is clearly aligned with the public 10 policy of the Commission and of this state. 11 Next, in 2019, Empire received the 12 requested certificates of convenience and necessity 13 for the wind project. And this grant was based on the Commission findings that there is a need for the 14 service, that Empire is qualified and has the 15 financial ability to provide the service, that 16 17 Empire's proposal is economically feasible and that 18 approval of the wind project promotes the public 19 interest. 20 I am very proud to say that we've 21 executed on our customer savings plan and purchased 2.2 the three wind farms so now we are here to complete 23 our trilogy. 24 To benefit all stakeholders, the Asbury 25 coal plant has been retired and our three wind

- 1 projects are now online. We have Kings Point and
- 2 North Fork Ridge here in Missouri and Neosho Ridge
- 3 over in Kansas. The wind farms are an investment in
- 4 the future of our company, for our customers and for
- 5 local community.
- The pre-filed testimony that has now been
- 7 admitted into the record also explains that Empire has
- 8 made other investments in our system that will
- 9 continue to serve our customers for decades to come.
- 10 We've installed smart meters, AMIs that will allow our
- 11 customers to see their energy usage in near real-time.
- 12 In turn, giving customers greater ability to control
- 13 their energy usage and ultimately their electric
- 14 bills.
- 15 Coupled with management actions, AMI led
- 16 to a dramatic decrease in estimated bills. We heard
- 17 our customers and we heard from the Commission through
- 18 the discussion in our last rate case. We worked very
- 19 hard to improve our customer service moving to more
- 20 advanced technology and offering more ways for our
- 21 customers to interact with us.
- 22 All of the revenue requirement issues are
- 23 settled among the parties with rates to be designed
- 24 using an annual increase of approximately
- 25 35.5 million. Asking customers to pay more is not an

- 1 easy thing to do, not for us and not for the
- 2 Commission. We understand that. But the stipulated
- 3 rate increase here is an investment in the future that
- 4 will pay off for years to come for customers, the
- 5 company and all stakeholders.
- 6 And we worked hard to minimize the rate
- 7 increase. First, with the design of the company's
- 8 initial filing, by working with all parties to reach
- 9 the four partial stipulations. And also, as we all
- 10 know, significant legislation was signed into law
- 11 after we filed our rate case and Empire was able to
- 12 file the first of its kind petition in Missouri under
- 13 this new securitization statute for the qualified
- 14 extraordinary costs for Winter Storm Uri and the
- 15 company has also now filed a notice of intent
- 16 regarding the retirement of the Asbury generating
- 17 plant.
- 18 Pursuant to the stipulations that are on
- 19 file with the Commission, rates stemming from this
- 20 case will not reflect any increase related to Storm
- 21 Uri and Asbury will not be reflected in those rates.
- 22 The Asbury AAO will continue, but with tracking
- 23 balances reset to zero, all issues on Asbury of Storm
- 24 Uri will move over to those securitization dockets.
- The Storm Uri and Asbury costs were

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Page 39 removed from the company's rate request to reflect the 1 2 company's election to securitize those costs in lieu 3 of pursuing traditional rate recovery in this proceeding, and this will lead to significant customer 4 benefits. 5 6 The four partial stipulations resolve all 7 but one issue in this case. Although not signed by 8 all parties, all four of those stipulations have the 9 affirmative non-objections. So those four stipulations could be approved now, treated as 10 11 unanimous as a near global resolution of this case. 12 The first stipulation established some 13 starting numbers using Staff's rate base and other 14 balances reflected in Staff's surrebuttal filings. And then the fourth stipulation resolved the issue of 15 the appropriate annual revenue requirement increase. 16 17 Numerous rate design issues and other 18 matters are also resolved with the stipulation, 19 including the establishment of tariffs to implement 20 Empire's new transportation electrification program, 21 various additional reports in stakeholder meetings to 2.2 maintain open lines of communication, continuation of Empire's low-income pilot program, and additional 23 24 shareholder funding for low-income programs, and the

creation of time-of-use rates for all residential and

- 1 small commercial customers.
- 2 The time-of-use agreement establishes a
- 3 default for limited impact time-of-use rates. It also
- 4 maintains options in the form of the current
- 5 non-time-of-use rates and a limited availability high
- 6 differential time-of-use rates. This portfolio of
- 7 rates supports the educational benefit, introducing
- 8 all customers to time differentiated rates, the value
- 9 of high differential TOU rates and increasing customer
- 10 response, incenting that customer response, and
- 11 provides the company with the ability to further
- 12 understand our customers' response to these new rate
- 13 options.
- With the four partial stipulations, only
- 15 one issue remains for hearing today: The question of
- 16 how Empire's stipulated revenue requirement should be
- 17 allocated among Empire's customer classes.
- The company recommends an allocation
- 19 method that considers the results of the class
- 20 cost-of-service study consistent with the rate design
- 21 principles of fairness and equity, but also considers
- 22 customer bill impact. The company's witness, Tim
- 23 Lyons, will be appearing by WebEx this morning.
- 24 Permitting Empire to charge reasonable
- 25 rates that will allow us to recover our cost to

Page 41 provide electric service is an essential element of a 1 2 long recognized compact that assures the reliability of electric service. 3 4 We ask that the Commission recognize the 5 overwhelming benefits to our customers from the transformation to doing the right thing for a 6 sustainable future for our customers. And in 7 conjunction with the Commission's decision on the one 8 9 remaining contested issue, we ask that the Commission 10 approve the final stipulation as a just and reasonable 11 resolution of this case. Thank you, Judge. 12 JUDGE CLARK: Any questions from the Commission? 13 Okay. I have no questions. Thank you, 14 Liberty. 15 MS. CARTER: Thank you. 16 JUDGE CLARK: Next for opening statements 17 is the Staff of the Commission. And Mr. Thompson, is 18 that microphone on? 19 MR. THOMPSON: Should be on. 20 JUDGE CLARK: Yes, thank you. 21 MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Judge. May it 2.2 please the Commission. 23 Today we are here to litigate the single 24 remaining issue in this case, which is the area of 25 rate design. Rate design is the process of devising

- 1 prices that will collect the necessary revenue
- 2 requirement from the company's customers.
- 3 The particular issue under consideration
- 4 today is that of class cost responsibility shifts.
- 5 What does that mean? Utility customers are sorted
- 6 into classes based upon various characteristics.
- 7 Rates are devised for each class based upon the cost
- 8 of serving the customers in that class.
- 9 The goal is to match costs to cost
- 10 causers so that each customer will pay an amount
- 11 approximately equivalent to what it actually costs to
- 12 serve that customer.
- Sometimes, however, rates and costs get
- 14 out of alignment. In that situation, the prices
- 15 charged for service no longer match the actual cost of
- 16 the service. In such circumstances, some customers
- 17 pay more than the actual cost of their service and
- 18 other customers pay less than the actual cost of their
- 19 service.
- This problem is addressed through class
- 21 cost responsibility shifts. This entails a percentage
- 22 adjustment to the cost responsibility of each class in
- 23 order to bring prices and costs back into alignment.
- 24 Necessarily, this causes some rates to go up and some
- 25 rates to go down.

Page 43 1 The Staff and the Office of Public 2 Counsel oppose any class cost responsibility shifts in 3 this case, and instead, support equal percentage That means that everybody's rates would 4 increases. 5 increase by the same percentage. 6 Empire and MECG, on the other hand, urge 7 the Commission to make class cost responsibility 8 adjustments in order to bring rates back into 9 alignment with costs. Why would Staff oppose this? Rate design 10 11 is guided by a complex statistical study known as a 12 class cost-of-service study. In the present case, Empire submitted a class cost-of-service study and the 13 Missouri Energy Consumers Group has made certain 14 adjustments to it. Staff believes that these studies 15 are flawed and, therefore, should not be trusted. 16 17 Staff is strongly opposed to class cost responsibility 18 adjustments based on unreliable studies. 19 The studies in question purport to show 20 that the rates of the residential class are nearly 21 20 percent below the actual cost of serving that 2.2 The industrial classes, on the other hand, are class. 23 purportedly paying 20 percent more than their actual 24 cost-of-service. Those industrial customers, of 25 course, are MECG's clients.

Page 44 1 If the class cost responsibility shifts 2 proposed by MECG and Empire are implemented, the industrial rates will go down and the residential 3 rates will go up. 4 5 Staff is of the opinion that class cost 6 responsibility shifts should not be made on the basis 7 of untrustworthy studies. Much better studies will be available in the future, due to the new meters that 8 9 are being deployed by Empire. Staff urges the 10 Commission to leave any class cost responsibility 11 adjustments for Empire's next rate case when they can 12 be made with confidence on the basis of reliable data. 13 Thank you, Judge. 14 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Staff. 15 questions from the Commission? And I have no questions at this time. 16 17 Opening statement from Public Counsel. May it please 18 MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you. 19 the Commission. My name's Nathan Williams and I'm 20 appearing before you on behalf of the Office of the 21 Public Counsel and the public. 2.2 As the other -- as the -- as Liberty and 23 Staff have indicated, we're left with one issue 24 basically before the Commission and that's rate 25 design, and in particular, whether or not there should

- 1 be shifting class responsibilities to increase the
- 2 rates of residential customers more than other
- 3 classes.
- 4 It's the Office of Public Counsel's
- 5 position that the customer charge for the residential
- 6 customer should not be changed and that generally
- 7 rates should be increased across the board in an equal
- 8 proportion of all the rate elements of the different
- 9 classes.
- The Commission should not dogmatically
- 11 look at class cost-of-service when deciding shifts in
- 12 class responsibility. It's a factor that should be
- 13 taken into consideration, but it should also take into
- 14 consideration that if the Commission approves the
- 15 agreements in this case, there's going to be about a
- 16 6 percent increase in every cus- -- on average, of
- 17 costs more towards customers coming out of this case,
- 18 and we're going to be seeing a couple of
- 19 securitization cases shortly that are also going to
- 20 have a rate impact to increase rates.
- 21 Those are all additional factors the
- 22 Commission should take into consideration. And the
- 23 impact on low-income customers that Covid -- as well
- 24 as others, but Covid has had recently and inflation
- 25 that's impacting our economy currently. Those are all

- 1 considerations the Commission should take into
- 2 account.
- Additionally, there's a reason for why
- 4 the rate class responsibilities are what they are now
- 5 and it's historical. I couldn't tell you exactly why,
- 6 but it didn't come about by accident. Thank you.
- JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Public Counsel.
- 8 Any questions from the Commission? Okay. No
- 9 questions for me at this time either.
- 10 And while Midwest Energy Consumers Group
- 11 sets up, I believe they have a presentation and --
- 12 hold on. Let me see how I get that presentation on.
- 13 I'm not 100 percent sure. Bear with me while I figure
- 14 out how we get this onto the WebEx. And let's go off
- 15 the record for just a moment.
- 16 (Off the record.)
- 17 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. Let's go back on the
- 18 record. I assume we can all see it now. Sorry for
- 19 the technical difficulty.
- 20 MECG, if you want to go ahead with your
- 21 opening statement.
- MR. WOODSMALL: Thank you, Your Honor.
- 23 Good morning. David Woodsmall appearing on behalf of
- 24 the Midwest Energy Consumers Group.
- As you know, MECG represents the

- 1 interests of large commercial and industrial customers
- 2 in Missouri. Relevant to the Empire District
- 3 Electric, MECG represents the interests of large
- 4 customers being served on the general power, large
- 5 power, and transmission service tariffs.
- 6 As it pertains to the issues to be heard
- 7 here today, each of these rate classes are paying
- 8 rates that are significantly above cost-of-service
- 9 simply to help subsidize residential rates. The
- 10 obvious impact of the continued existence of this
- 11 residential subsidy is to place a mammoth drain on the
- 12 economic development of the Empire service area.
- 13 Uh-oh. That didn't get it.
- MR. WILLIAMS: Do you want me to try and
- 15 see if I can?
- 16 (Off the record discussion between
- 17 counsel.)
- 18 MR. WOODSMALL: Okay. Here are the
- 19 issues that I'll be discussing today during my
- 20 statement. I'll discuss the class cost-of-service
- 21 studies that have been filed in this case.
- 22 Specifically I'll discuss the studies completed by
- 23 both Empire and MECG.
- Importantly, no other party has filed a
- 25 class cost-of-service study. Instead, Staff has

- 1 simply raised unfounded criticisms designed to
- 2 convince the Commission to reject the unavoidable --
- 3 unavoidable conclusions in both the Empire and MECG
- 4 studies and continue to preserve the residential
- 5 subsidy.
- 6 Next, I'll discuss how the Commission
- 7 should interpret these class cost-of-service studies
- 8 and how they should make decisions regarding revenue
- 9 allocation in this case. After this, I will discuss
- 10 several of OPC's self-serving pleas designed to
- 11 maintain that same residential subsidy. Finally,
- 12 since the Commission has relied upon it in other
- 13 Empire cases, I will discuss the competitiveness of
- 14 Empire's industrial rates.
- 15 As I mentioned, there were two class
- 16 cost-of-service studies filed in this case. One by
- 17 Empire, the other prepared by MECG. Importantly, both
- 18 of these studies utilize the A and E method for
- 19 allocating fixed production costs. This is important
- 20 because the Commission, just last Wednesday, found
- 21 that the Ameren study, which also relied upon the
- 22 A and E methodology, provided the most reasonable
- 23 estimate of Ameren's class cost-of-service.
- While Empire and MECG both utilized that A and
- 25 E methodologies, there were originally three issues

- 1 between those parties in their methodology. First,
- 2 there was the difference over the manner in which the
- 3 load factor portion of the A and E was calculated. In
- 4 its rebuttal, however, Empire agreed to a load factor
- 5 calculation that is based upon a single coincident
- 6 peak. Given that resolution, that issue has now been
- 7 resolved.
- Next, there was a disagreement between
- 9 MECG and Empire over the manner in which interruptible
- 10 credits should be allocated amongst the classes.
- 11 Again, this has been resolved by Empire agreeing that
- 12 interruptible load should be eliminated from the A and
- 13 E allocator used to allocate interruptible credits.
- 14 So a second point of contention has been resolved.
- 15 Finally, MECG and Empire utilized a
- 16 different variant of the A and E allocator,
- 17 specifically Empire originally used a 12 NCP version
- 18 that considers the peak months or the peaks from all
- 19 12 months. On the other hand, MECG originally used
- 20 only the peaks from the five months that are within
- 21 10 percent of the annual peak.
- 22 After some testimony was filed, both MECG
- 23 and Empire agreed to a middle ground, which would
- 24 consider the peaks from eight months; four summer
- 25 months and four winter months. So with that

- 1 resolution, all differences between Empire and MECG's
- 2 class cost-of-service studies have been resolved.
- 3 They are in perfect alignment.
- 4 And here you see the outcome of that.
- 5 What this shows, without any disagreement between
- 6 Empire and MECG, is that the residential class in
- 7 order just to get to cost-of-service, would need an
- 8 18.99 percent rate increase. And then any rate
- 9 increase in this case would need to be put on top of
- 10 that. So just a revenue neutral increase of 18.99
- 11 percent for residential.
- Who's paying for that? Who is currently
- 13 paying to allow residential customers to have this
- 14 subsidized rate? Basically every non-lighting class.
- 15 So the commercial class, the Casey's General Store,
- 16 the pizza parlors, everybody else. You can see
- 17 they're currently rates that are 4.2 percent above
- 18 cost-of-service.
- 19 The general power class. These are
- 20 larger commercial customers and some small industrial
- 21 customers. So you'll see Wal-Marts in here and
- 22 pipelines and companies like that. They're paying
- 23 rates that are currently 19.8 percent above
- 24 cost-of-service simply so that the residential class
- 25 can have subsidized rates.

Page 51 The large power class. Who is this? 1 2 This is the General Mills, the Tysons, the TAMCOs of They're all currently paying rates -- you 3 the world. can see here -- 19.58 percent above cost-of-service 4 5 simply so residential can have a subsidized rate. And finally, the worst one, the 6 7 transmission service class. Currently paying rates 8 31.8 percent above cost-of-service simply so 9 residential customers can pay less than 10 cost-of-service. 11 As I mentioned, there are no disputes 12 about the existence of a residential subsidy. Both 13 class cost-of-service studies show this to be a fact. Staff didn't file a class cost-of-service study. 14 15 Rather, Staff simply stood on the sideline and leveled criticism at the MECG and Empire studies. Each Staff 16 criticism, however, has been discredited. 17 As an initial matter, Staff questioned 18 19 the legitimacy of the A and E methodology. But as I 20 mentioned, just last week the Commission said that 21 Ameren's A and E methodology provided the best estimation of the class cost -- of the cost to serve 2.2 23 each class. So the A and E is a valid methodology. 24 Next, Staff claims that the demand data 25 contained in the studies is unreliable. Empire's

- 1 Witness Lyons pointed out, however, that there is no
- 2 data, no analysis, no study to support such a
- 3 criticism. It's just been thrown out there. And he
- 4 showed that it's not a problem.
- Next, Staff raises a new concern and
- 6 suggests that the studies are unreliable because the
- 7 Empire classes are unstable due to rate switching.
- 8 But as Mr. Lyons points out, quote, rate switching
- 9 occurs every year and a level that occurred in the
- 10 test year did not appear to be extraordinary, end
- 11 quote.
- 12 Criticism number three here, Staff
- 13 suggests that the A and E approach, the same approach
- 14 just adopted by the Commission, is faulty because it
- 15 is heavily dependent on class peak demands. But
- 16 Mr. Lyons pointed out that this is completely
- 17 unfounded. As Mr. Lyons points out, given the A and E
- 18 methodology and the way it was calculated, actually
- 19 57.3 percent of fixed production costs are allocated
- 20 based upon class energy usage. Only 42.7 percent is
- 21 on class peak demand. So it is not dependent on class
- 22 peaks; if anything, it is overly dependent on class
- 23 energy usage.
- 24 Criticism number four, Staff claims that
- 25 Empire's class cost-of-service study is faulty because

- 1 it allocates SPP revenues to the classes. As
- 2 Mr. Lyons points out in his testimony, however, it
- 3 makes sense to allocate SPP revenues on the basis of
- 4 class energy usage. The same costs that are used to
- 5 create SPP revenues, the operating costs, the fuel,
- 6 the costs are allocated based upon class energy usage;
- 7 therefore, it only makes sense that the SPP revenues
- 8 also be allocated based upon class energy usage.
- 9 Finally, Staff lofts a more generic
- 10 criticism by claiming that class -- that company's
- 11 cost-of-service study is unreliable. Mr. Lyons, in
- 12 his surrebuttal testimony, astutely points out --
- 13 points out, however, that the results of the study are
- 14 quote, generally consistent, end quote, with the
- 15 studies in the last two cases.
- There's nothing new here. The results
- 17 that the studies are done the same way using the same
- 18 data, the results are all relatively similar. There's
- 19 no basis to suggest that the study in this case is
- 20 unreliable when the Commission has used it in the 2014
- 21 and 2016 cases.
- 22 So where are we? We have two class
- 23 cost-of-service studies in this case. Those studies
- 24 are each based on the same methodology adopted by the
- 25 Commission just last week in the Ameren rate case.

- 1 Both of these studies now show the existence of a
- 2 significant residential subsidy.
- Originally, MECG asked that the
- 4 Commission eliminate 25 percent of the residential
- 5 subsidy. This is consistent with the two recent
- 6 Empire rate cases in which the Commission did that
- 7 very thing. In 2014, you can see here, ER-2014-0351,
- 8 Commission's order: The Commission finds that the
- 9 increase to residential rates by 25 percent of a
- 10 needed 8.1 percent revenue neutral adjustment is just
- 11 and reasonable. Commission used that 25 percent that
- 12 we were originally recommending. Again, in 2016, the
- 13 Commission approved a settlement that did that very
- 14 thing again.
- While MECG believes a 25 percent shift is
- 16 appropriate, we are willing to modify that slightly.
- 17 Specifically in its testimony, Empire suggested that
- 18 residential rates should be capped at a 9.9 percent
- 19 increase. Originally the 9.9 percent increase was
- 20 designed to mitigate the rate increase originally
- 21 sought in this case.
- That said, however, Empire also said that
- 23 if the overall rate increase was reduced then, quote,
- 24 principles of fairness and equity, end quote, dictate
- 25 that a revenue neutral shift is appropriate.

Page 55 With the revenue requirement settlement 1 2 in this case, the parties agree that Empire should receive an overall increase of something around 3 Therefore, as Empire points out, you can 4 7.5 percent. now increase residential customers to 9.9 percent. 5 Ιt will take care of some amount of the residential 6 7 subsidy and would be consistent with interests of 8 fairness and equity, and recognizes bill impacts. 9 It is critical that the Commission not 10 waste this opportunity again. As I said, in 2014 and '16, the Commission took decisive steps to address the 11 12 residential subsidy. In the last case, however, the Commission was convinced by Staff and Public Counsel 13 that there was a problem with the studies because of 14 15 high number of estimated bills. Therefore, relying upon this concern, the 16 Commission simply applied the rate increase in that 17 18 last case on an equal percent basis. The practical effect of the Commission's decision to ignore this 19 20 issue in the last case was to undo all the efforts 21 that had been made in previous cases. 2.2 As you can see from this chart -- as you 23 can see from this chart, several classes -- as you work from right to left, the far right for each one is 24 25 the 2014 case, then the middle color is the 2019 case

- 1 and now this case.
- 2 So if you look at like the large power
- 3 class, what you see is the overall rate of return for
- 4 that class is now going up higher and higher and
- 5 higher. In the meantime, the residential class on the
- 6 far left has seen its earned rate of return go down.
- What that means is because the Commission
- 8 didn't do anything on this issue in the last case, the
- 9 problem has now been exacerbated.
- 10 I'll just wing it from here.
- 11 What is the implication of having large
- 12 commercial industrial customers pay rates that are
- 13 above cost-of-service?
- 14 JUDGE CLARK: Mr. Woodsmall, would you
- 15 like me to get someone in here to --
- 16 MR. WOODSMALL: Let me see if I can --
- 17 we'll just leave it on there. I can finish up.
- 18 What is the implication of having large
- 19 commercial industrial customers pay rates that are
- 20 above cost-of-service? In just a few words, the
- 21 residential subsidy means that industrial rates are
- 22 not competitive.
- In 2011 and 2014, the Commission
- 24 discussed the need to eliminate subsidies and have
- 25 classes pay cost-based rates. For instance, in 2014,

- 1 the Commission specifically stated that, quote,
- 2 competitive industrial rates are important for the
- 3 retention and expansion of industries within Empire's
- 4 service area. If businesses leave Empire's service
- 5 area, Empire's remaining customers bear the burden of
- 6 covering the utility's fixed cost with a smaller
- 7 number of billing determinants, end quote.
- 8 In other words, while residential
- 9 customers may think that they're getting a great deal
- 10 with the residential subsidy, they may end up paying
- 11 more later. Eventually industries will leave Empire
- 12 service area for cheaper rates in other parts of the
- 13 state and the nation. When that happens, residential
- 14 customers will pay more.
- There was no old adage in an oil filter
- 16 commercial where a mechanic says "You can pay me now
- 17 or you can pay me later." That adage is equally
- 18 applicable here. The residential customers may think
- 19 they're getting a break now, but when industrial
- 20 customers leave, they'll end up paying for it.
- 21 So how competitive are Empire's
- 22 industrial rates? They are terribly uncompetitive.
- 23 Here you see a chart that is based upon the EEI
- 24 typical bills and average rate report. What you see
- 25 here on the far left is Empire's average industrial

- 1 rate. This shows that Empire's average industrial
- 2 rate is 22 percent above the Missouri average
- 3 industrial rate, about the same above the regional
- 4 average industrial rate, and about the same above the
- 5 national average industrial rate.
- 6 You can see all three of those others run
- 7 about 6.7 percent. But in Empire's service area,
- 8 because of the significance of the residential
- 9 subsidy, it's almost 8.3 percent -- 8.3 cents per
- 10 kilowatt hour.
- 11 And the situation is getting worse. In
- 12 2015, the Empire industrial rate was 17 percent above
- 13 the national average. In 2019, the Empire industrial
- 14 rate was then 21 percent above the national average.
- 15 Now, after having ignored this problem in the last
- 16 case, Empire's industrial rate is now 24 percent above
- 17 the national average. It's time to wake up and
- 18 address this issue.
- 19 In its testimony, OPC tried to make light
- 20 of this sobering situation and claimed that the same
- 21 dynamic exists for all Empire's customers. This is
- 22 inaccurate. As you can see in this table, Empire's
- 23 residential rate is only 3.6 percent above the
- 24 national average, basically right at the national
- 25 average. Empire's commercial rate, only 5.4 percent

- 1 above the national average. Only the industrial rate
- 2 sees this huge problem, 24.3 percent above the
- 3 national average.
- 4 In another effort to make light of this
- 5 drastic situation, Staff questions the reliability of
- 6 the EEI data. Noticeably, Staff doesn't provide
- 7 anything better. It just questioned whether the data
- 8 could be used.
- 9 But as we've seen, EEI data is used
- 10 routinely by utilities, commissions and customers.
- 11 Data request responses show that the EEI data is used
- 12 by Excel, Evergy Metro and Evergy West to assess the
- 13 competitiveness of its rates.
- Commissions -- as I told you, in 2014 the
- 15 Commission expressly relied on testimony that
- 16 relied -- that utilized that EEI data. Finally,
- 17 customers use it. As Steve Chriss and Rick Nelson
- 18 noted in the 2019 case, while the values are based on
- 19 averages, the rankings can still be meaningful as
- 20 customers seek to benchmark their energy costs against
- 21 other utilities and regions and use those to assess
- 22 competitiveness of utilities.
- Like Staff, Public Counsel also didn't
- 24 conduct a class cost-of-service study. Unlike Staff,
- 25 however, Public Counsel does not question the accuracy

- 1 or reliability of the two studies in this case.
- 2 Rather, Public Counsel on behalf of its client, the
- 3 residential class, throws itself on the mercy of the
- 4 Commission. Specifically, Public Counsel points to
- 5 inflation and uncertainty surrounding the ongoing
- 6 Covid pandemic. The evidence indicates, however, that
- 7 these factors are equally applicable to all customers.
- 8 They are not unique to the residential class.
- 9 Frankly, Public Counsel has a litany of
- 10 excuses to get the Commission not to address the
- 11 residential subsidy. Estimated bills, unreliable
- 12 data, Covid, inflation, unemployment. You name it,
- 13 they have a book upstairs where they can find an
- 14 excuse to keep you from addressing it.
- 15 As Commissioner Rupp noted just last week
- 16 when deliberating the Ameren case, quote, the argument
- 17 is made that this is not the right time to do it,
- 18 address the residential subsidy, because it's never
- 19 the right time to do it, end quote.
- 20 That's Public Counsel playbook. Don't it
- 21 now because of Covid. Don't do it now because of
- 22 inflation. But if those factors go away, in the next
- 23 case it will be unemployment or something else. It's
- 24 never the right time. As Commissioner Rupp noted
- 25 about Public Counsel's position, it's never the right

- 1 time to address it.
- 2 That's the extent of my comments. Just
- 3 urge the Commission to go back to what they did in
- 4 2014 and '16 and take steps to address the residential
- 5 subsidy in this case. Thank you, Your Honor.
- 6 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you. Are there any
- 7 questions from the Commission? And I'll remind
- 8 everybody who is participating via phone, you want to
- 9 dial *6 to unmute. I hear no questions and I have no
- 10 questions at this time.
- We're going to go off record for just a
- 12 moment while we set up for the next opening statement.
- 13 (Off the record.)
- 14 JUDGE CLARK: And we will go back on the
- 15 record now. Is there an opening statement from the
- 16 Empire District Retired Members and Spouses
- 17 Association?
- 18 MR. JARRETT: Yes. Good morning, Judge
- 19 and Commissioners. Just a brief opening statement.
- 20 As Ms. Carter indicated in her opening
- 21 statement, EDRA has entered into a stipulation and
- 22 agreement on its one issue with the company. The
- 23 association represents retirees of Empire, which was
- 24 acquired by Liberty in the merger case in 2016 and so
- 25 these are sort of the legacy Empire retirees.

Page 62 An agreement on post-retirement benefits 1 2 was approved in a stipulation and agreement in that 3 2016 merger case. The purpose of the new stip- -stipulation in this case is to clarify some of the 4 5 language from that original stipulation and agreement and it also gives company some flexibility to 6 7 transition those retirees into a new -- new plan so 8 long as the benefits stay -- stay materially similar to the existing plan. 9 We would urge the Commission to approve 10 We also believe that it's just and reasonable to 11 12 do so. And with that, I will take any questions. 13 JUDGE CLARK: Any questions from the 14 Commission? I have no questions. 15 But what I am going to do at this time is say that, just for clarification, there are four filed 16 17 partial stipulations in this case that are meant to resolve all but the class cost-of-service issue. 18 19 had set this as hearing for two days, but what it is, 20 is today is the evidentiary hearing in regard to the 21 class cost-of-service issue, which is the issue up for the Commission's determination. 22 23 Tomorrow is the on-the-record 24 presentation for Commission questions. These are two 25 separate hearings. I don't want to muddy the record

- 1 in this case by combining those two. So you're
- 2 welcome to make whatever opening statement you would
- 3 like to make today certainly.
- 4 Does EDRA have a position on class
- 5 cost-of-service they want to put forward? Or did you
- 6 just want to talk about the stipulation at this point?
- 7 MR. JARRETT: No, Judge. Yes, I just
- 8 wanted to talk about the stipulation. I was going to
- 9 ask for leave to be excused for the rest of the
- 10 hearing today and obviously be available tomorrow. I
- 11 can come back and answer any questions about the
- 12 stipulation.
- 13 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. Is there -- and --
- 14 and it's possible that we may move to give the
- 15 Commission more time to look at that stipulation.
- 16 It's possible that we may move tomorrow's hearing
- 17 date, but I will have to check on that.
- 18 But to address one thing at a time, is
- 19 there any objection to the Commission excusing EDRA
- 20 from the rest of the hearing?
- I see no objections. Mr. Jarrett, thank
- 22 you very much. I'll grant your request and you're
- 23 excused from the rest of the day's hearing and I hope
- 24 that you will certainly come back and talk about the
- 25 stipulation for the on-the-record presentation.

Page 64 1 MR. JARRETT: Absolutely we'll be here. 2 Thank you, Judge. 3 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you. Mr. Woodsmall, do the SERP Retirees have any opening statement that 4 5 they wanted to make? 6 MR. WOODSMALL: No, Your Honor. 7 JUDGE CLARK: City of Ozark and Renew, as I said before, have both asked to be excused from 8 9 today's hearing and that was granted in both cases so 10 we're now ready to take witnesses in this case. 11 anybody at this point need to take a break? 12 MR. WOODSMALL: No, Your Honor, but I did want to bring up something. We never spelled out an 13 order of cross-examination in the second issue list. 14 15 The very first one that had a multitude of issues, we 16 did. I believe the situations are different. 17 18 We usually do cross-examination in order of how 19 opposed parties are. So I would say that I would probably cross-examine Empire's witness first, but 20 21 similarly I think Staff and OPC on their witnesses, I 2.2 should get to cross-examine last. 23 Okay. Well, why don't we JUDGE CLARK: I was looking at the order of cross. And 24 do this. 25 the way I have it right now is, is there -- EDRA has

23

followed by MECG.

Page 65 asked to be excused. Are the SERP Retirees going to 1 2 have any cross-examination? MR. WOODSMALL: No, Your Honor. 3 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. Then let me -- let 4 me go through the order of cross minus all the parties 5 that have asked to be excused and minus those parties 6 7 that have indicated they do not have a cross-examination. And -- and from that, we'll see if 8 9 we can cobble together an order of cross. 10 Now, for Liberty, for witness Tim Lyons, I currently have MECG going first for 11 12 cross-examination, followed by Staff and OPC. Any objection to that order? I see none. 13 In regards to Staff's witness Sarah 14 15 Lange, I have MECG, followed by OPC and then Liberty. Any objection? 16 17 MR. WOODSMALL: Yes. I believe given 18 that MECG is most opposed of the parties, that we 19 should get to do cross-examination last. 20 JUDGE CLARK: Any objection to that? I 21 see no objection. So cross-examination for Staff's 2.2 witness will be OPC first, followed by Liberty,

- For OPC witness Dr. Geoff Marke, I have 24
- MECG, followed by Staff, followed by Liberty. 25

Page 66 Same point, Your Honor. 1 MR. WOODSMALL: 2 I believe MECG should go last. JUDGE CLARK: Any objections from any 3 party to MECG going last? Okay. I see none. 4 The new order of cross-examination for OPC's witness is Staff, 5 followed by Liberty, followed by MECG. 6 7 And finally for MECG's witness Ms. -- is 8 it Maini? 9 MR. WOODSMALL: Maini. 10 JUDGE CLARK: Maini, I apologize. I have 11 OPC, followed by Staff, followed by Liberty. Any 12 objections to that order of cross-examination? 13 MR. THOMPSON: We believe that Empire should go first, followed by OPC, followed by Staff. 14 JUDGE CLARK: Any objections to that? 15 The new order of cross-examination for MECG's 16 witness is Liberty, followed by OPC, followed by 17 18 Staff. Now, I've got this penciled in as best I can. If for some reason I accidentally deviate from that, 19 20 I'd rather you stop me before questions get asked, but 21 I will do my best to adhere to that order. 22 Okay. Given that -- nobody indicated 23 they wanted to take a break at this time, but it is my intention to take a break around eleven o'clock --24 between 10:30 and 11:00. Why don't we go ahead and 25

25

Page 67 hear from the first witness and if we need to break in 1 2. the middle of that witness's testimony, we will. 3 Liberty call your witness. 4 MS. CARTER: Tim Lyons. 5 (Witness sworn by Judge Clark.) 6 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Lyons. 7 Okay. Liberty, you can commence with your direct examination. 8 9 TIMOTHY LYONS, 10 appearing virtually, having been first duly sworn, 11 testified as follows: 12 MS. CARTER: Thank you. 13 DIRECT EXAMINATION BY MS. CARTER: 14 Mr. Lyons, if you will please state and Ο. 15 spell your first and last name. 16 Α. Timothy S. Lyons. Last name 17 Is L-y-o-n-s. 18 Ο. By whom are you employed and in what 19 capacity? 20 I am with ScottMadden and I'm a partner. Α. 21 Ο. Are you testifying today on behalf of the 2.2 Empire District Electric Company? 23 Α. Yes, I am. 24 Did you prepare and prefile direct, 0.

rebuttal and surrebuttal testimony in this matter that

Page 68 has now been marked and admitted as Exhibit 36, 37 and 1 2. 38? Yes, I did. 3 Α. 4 Do you have any corrections for your 0. 5 pre-filed testimony? 6 Α. No, I do not. 7 Q. If I were to ask you those same questions 8 today, would your answers be substantially the same? 9 Α. Yes, they would. 10 And are those answers true and correct to 0. the best of your information, knowledge and belief? 11 12 Α. Yes, they are. 13 Q. Thank you. 14 MS. CARTER: I tender Mr. Lyons for 15 cross-examination. 16 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Liberty. First 17 to cross-examine Liberty's witness is MECG. 18 MR. WOODSMALL: Thank you, Your Honor. 19 CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MR. WOODSMALL: 20 Good morning, sir. Can you hear me? 0. 21 Α. I can. Thank you. Good morning. 2.2 0. So it's my understanding that you conducted -- or your firm conducted the class 23 cost-of-service study presented by Empire in this 24 case; is that correct? 25

- 1 A. That's correct.
- 2 Q. And the only other class cost-of-service
- 3 study in this case was filed by MECG. Is that your
- 4 understanding?
- 5 A. Yes, it is.
- 6 Q. Were you here for my opening statement?
- 7 A. Yes, I was.
- 8 Q. Would you agree that as far as Empire's
- 9 class cost-of-service study and MECG's class
- 10 cost-of-service study, there were initially three
- 11 differences? Is that a fair assessment?
- 12 A. I have not done a side-by-side comparison
- 13 of the two studies, but I think the issues that you
- 14 identified were the major differences.
- 15 Q. Okay. Let's -- let's walk through those.
- 16 First off, just as some background, can you tell me
- 17 how the average in excess is calculated?
- 18 A. Sure. The average in excess is -- it's a
- 19 production plan allocator and it reflects that --
- 20 that -- that the plants are designed to meet both
- 21 energy and demand requirements. And so it's really
- 22 split into two different allocators.
- 23 First is the energy allocator that's
- 24 developed based on energy load throughout the year,
- 25 the kWh. And then the second would be the peak

- 1 demands, and it looks at non-coincidental peak demands
- 2 by class and apportions -- the other piece of the
- 3 allocator is based on those non-coincidental demands.
- 4 So the average in excess is a combination of both or
- 5 a -- of both the energy and the peak demand
- 6 components.
- 7 Q. And can you tell me how the system load
- 8 factor is then utilized for the average in excess
- 9 calculation?
- 10 A. Sure. When you put those together, the
- 11 energy and the peak demands, the question is what
- 12 percent would you use that's energy and what percent
- 13 would be peak demands, because they're separate
- 14 allocators. And what the load factor does is you look
- 15 at the system load factor and then based on that
- 16 percentage, you would apply it to the energy and then
- 17 the remaining percentage would be peak demand.
- So with this case, the energy portion
- 19 would be based on the load factor and the peak demand
- 20 would be one minus the load factor.
- 21 Q. And originally there was a difference
- 22 between MECG and your study and how that load factor
- 23 is calculated; is that true?
- A. That's correct.
- Q. And it was my understanding that you had

- 1 originally used a load factor calculation that looked
- 2 at all 12 months and that MECG looked at one single
- 3 annual system load factor. Is that accurate?
- 4 A. Yes, that is.
- 5 Q. And in your rebuttal testimony, you
- 6 agreed to the use of one single system load peak for
- 7 calculating the load factor. Is that accurate?
- 8 A. Yes. Except what we said is we wouldn't
- 9 oppose it. You had that in your slides as well.
- 10 Q. Okay. And then there was an issue
- 11 between the MECG and Empire class cost-of-service
- 12 study and the method by which interruptible credits
- 13 are allocated. First off, can you tell me what
- 14 interruptible credits are?
- 15 A. Sure. These are credits that compensate
- 16 interruptible customers for foregoing having firm
- 17 service. So at the time of peak demand, the
- 18 interruptible customers will leave the system or not
- 19 add to -- to that demand. So the credits are a way to
- 20 compensate customers for interrupting their load or
- 21 not being on the system at the time of that peak
- 22 demand.
- Q. And can you tell me -- describe what the
- 24 difference was between the way these credits were
- 25 allocated among the classes between the Empire and the

- 1 MECG studies?
- 2 A. Yes. So in the Empire study, the credit
- 3 was applied to all of the customer classes, including
- 4 the interruptibles. And in the MECG study, it was
- 5 applied to all of the credit -- all of the classes
- 6 except the interruptible class. And -- and we agreed
- 7 with that application.
- 8 O. Okay. So that difference has been
- 9 resolved between MECG and Empire; is that correct?
- 10 A. Yes, it has.
- 11 Q. Okay. Finally, it is my understanding
- 12 that initially Empire used an average in excess that
- 13 was based upon the peaks for all 12 months; is that
- 14 correct?
- 15 A. That is.
- 16 Q. And is it fair to use the acronym 8 NCP
- 17 for that variant?
- 18 A. Yes. So the original was a 12 NCP, so it
- 19 was using all 12 months. And then in our rebuttal
- 20 testimony we -- we reverted to the NCP using eight
- 21 months.
- Q. Okay. And MECG agreed that the 8 NCP
- 23 version of the average in excess was appropriate as
- 24 well; is that true?
- A. Yes, that's correct.

Page 73 So that difference has been resolved 1 Ο. 2 between MECG and Empire as well; is that correct? 3 Α. Yes. Okay. And I believe at the very 4 0. 5 beginning you mentioned that there were three -- those were the three major differences between the Empire 6 and the MECG studies. Correct? 7 8 Α. Yes. 9 Okav. So would you agree then that there 0. 10 are no longer any major differences between the two 11 class cost-of-service studies? 12 Α. Yes, I would. 13 Okay. Moving on, Staff leveled a number 0. of criticisms at your class cost-of-service study and 14 15 at the use of the average in excess methodology. you read those -- that -- those criticisms? 16 17 Α. Yes. 18 O. First, do you believe -- well, did you, 19 by any chance, have the opportunity to read the Ameren 20 order from last week where they adopted the Ameren 21 class cost-of-service study? 22 I've only read a very small section of Α. 23 it. Is it your understanding that Ameren 24 0. 25 utilized an A and E allocator for fixed production

- 1 costs?
- 2 A. I didn't look at that section,
- 3 unfortunately.
- 4 Q. Okay. Do you believe the average in
- 5 excess allocator is still relevant?
- 6 A. Yes, I do.
- 7 Q. And that hasn't changed based upon the
- 8 introduction of the MPP integrated marketplace?
- 9 A. No, it hasn't.
- 10 Q. And would you agree that the average in
- 11 excess allocator is widespread in its usage by state
- 12 utility commissions in vertically integrated states?
- 13 A. I haven't done a study on it. I know
- 14 it's used in other jurisdictions. It's included in
- 15 the NARUC Electric Utility Cost Allocation Manual and
- 16 it's generally accepted -- it's generally one of the
- 17 accepted methodologies for allocating production plant
- 18 investments.
- 19 O. Do you recall a criticism from Staff that
- 20 demand data, as it's used in the average in excess
- 21 methodology, is unreliable?
- 22 A. Yes.
- Q. Do you agree with that criticism?
- 24 A. No. And we've -- no.
- 25 Q. Can you tell me why you don't agree with

- 1 that criticism?
- 2 A. Well, first, it's -- it's data and it's
- 3 an approach that the company has been using for -- for
- 4 a number of years now. It's based on load research
- 5 information that it has where it's measuring actual
- 6 customer demands across the service area.
- 7 And in Staff's criticism, we didn't see
- 8 any data or analysis or studies that would support
- 9 exactly why this data couldn't be used in this case
- 10 but it was used in other cases.
- 11 Q. So what you're saying, if I may try to
- 12 summarize, you're saying that Staff made the
- 13 criticism, but then didn't provide any real
- 14 justification for that criticism?
- 15 A. Yeah. As I said, we just didn't see any
- 16 data, analyses or studies that ended up supporting
- 17 that position that the demand data could not be used
- 18 in this study.
- 19 O. Did you also see Staff's criticism about
- 20 concerns with rate switching; that is, migration
- 21 between customer classes?
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. Do you believe that is a valid concern in
- 24 this case?
- 25 A. No. So I spoke with the company about

- 1 this and their -- their reference was that rate
- 2 switching occurred -- occurs in any year and that in
- 3 the test year that there wasn't any extraordinary
- 4 switching that occurred that would -- would create
- 5 concerns for using the data.
- 6 O. And would you agree that rate switching
- 7 is a phenomenon that is not unique to Empire? That it
- 8 happens with all utilities?
- 9 A. Yes. I would agree with that.
- 10 Q. Staff also criticized your study because
- 11 it allegedly relies extensively on class peak demand.
- 12 Are you familiar with that criticism?
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. And do you agree with that criticism?
- 15 A. No. That was one of the reasons for
- 16 using an average in excess production allocator where
- 17 it's based both on energy and peak requirements. As I
- 18 mentioned earlier, the average requirements would be
- 19 the kWh demand throughout the year, and then the
- 20 excess piece or the peaking piece would be related to
- 21 those non-coincidental demands by class. So it's a
- 22 combination -- it's a combination allocator, both
- 23 energy and demand.
- Q. So if a party was to propose to residents
- 25 a 1 CP methodology for allocating fixed production

- 1 costs, that would rely entirely on class peak demand;
- 2 is that correct?
- 3 A. Yes, that's correct.
- 4 Q. And the A and E as proposed by both you
- 5 and MECG and Ameren all rely more heavily on class
- 6 energy usage than class peak demand; is that correct?
- 7 A. Well, by that the percentage that's
- 8 related to the energy allocator is higher than the
- 9 percentage -- percentage that's related to the demand
- 10 allocator, that's correct.
- 11 Q. Okay. Staff criticized your study
- 12 because you allocated SPP revenues on the basis of the
- 13 energy allocator. First off, can you tell me what SPP
- 14 revenues are?
- 15 A. Yes. My understanding is that any
- 16 production that Empire has, they can sell it into the
- 17 market and be able to accrue revenues associated with
- 18 it.
- 19 Q. And would you agree that the costs,
- 20 primarily fuel, needed to derive those SPP revenues
- 21 are allocated amongst the parties based upon an energy
- 22 allocator?
- A. Yes, that's correct.
- Q. So by allocating the revenues on the
- 25 basis of the energy allocator, you're simply

- 1 replicating the same allocator for both the costs and
- 2 the associated revenues?
- 3 A. Yes. That's correct. In the surrebuttal
- 4 testimony, we pointed out that there is additional --
- 5 or there's isolated revenues related to the wind
- 6 investments. And so in that case, there would be no
- 7 incremental expenses associated with that. And so
- 8 those revenues were apportioned based on the A and E
- 9 allocator, which is consistent with how the investment
- 10 is allocated. So that's -- that's the one exception
- 11 to that.
- 12 Q. Okay. Finally, page 7 of your
- 13 surrebuttal you state that you believe that your class
- 14 cost-of-service study provides, quote, important
- 15 guidance on the allocation of any revenue requirement.
- 16 Do you still believe this?
- 17 A. Yes, I do.
- 18 Q. Okay. You filed testimony in Empire's
- 19 last electric rate case; is that correct?
- 20 A. Yes, it is.
- 21 Q. And is it correct too that in that case,
- 22 you proposed to address the residential subsidy by
- 23 placing a greater amount of revenue responsibility on
- 24 the residential class versus the other classes?
- 25 A. I haven't reviewed that testimony, but

- 1 subject to check, I would agree with that.
- Q. Okay. Are you aware that Empire has also
- 3 filed a gas case that is pending as -- as of today?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 O. And you filed class cost-of-service
- 6 testimony in that gas case; is that correct?
- 7 A. That is correct.
- 8 Q. Is it your understanding that in that
- 9 case, the company is seeking an increase of 6.7
- 10 percent in base revenues?
- 11 A. I -- I don't have those numbers in front
- 12 of me, but I'll -- I'll accept your representation at
- 13 this point.
- Q. Okay. And would you agree that your
- 15 class cost-of-service study in that case showed that
- 16 residential class should receive a revenue neutral
- 17 increase of 22.4 percent?
- 18 MR. THOMPSON: I'm going to object on the
- 19 basis of relevance, Judge.
- JUDGE CLARK: Mr. Woodsmall, do you have
- 21 a response?
- MR. WOODSMALL: Just trying to show how
- 23 the methodology that he is using in this case, how it
- 24 is consistent or inconsistent with that gas case.
- JUDGE CLARK: Mr. Thompson?

Page 80 Gas and electric are two 1 MR. THOMPSON: 2 different things, Judge. And I'm not even sure that the service territories are the same. I don't see the 3 relevance of what's being done in a gas case to what 4 5 is being done in the electric case. 6 MR. WOODSMALL: I'll give you gas is 7 different than electric. I'll also give you that the 8 Empire -- the service areas are somewhat different. 9 The methodologies and how he applies revenue 10 allocation are relevant to each other. 11 JUDGE CLARK: Why? 12 Why? Well, what I'm MR. WOODSMALL: going to show is that how he used -- in this case, he 13 14 is proposing a 9.9 percent rate cap on residential 15 In the gas case, he proposed the same customers. 16 I'm going to show why those -- those target thing. 17 revenues are consistent and how he's using the 18 information. 19 JUDGE CLARK: Why does it -- I don't 20 understand why it matters if he chose a number -- the 21 same number for gas as for electric. I don't -- I 22 don't see what those have to do with each other. 23 MR. WOODSMALL: Well, in the -- in the electric case, originally the company had an 24 25 increase -- an overall increase greater than

- 1 10 percent and he used the rate cap to justify a
- 2 lessened system average to the residential class. In
- 3 the gas case it's just the exact reverse. That's
- 4 where it started.
- Now that we have a settlement, I want to
- 6 ask him if his position in this case has changed. I'm
- 7 just trying to provide some foundation, some
- 8 background to get to the point of asking whether his
- 9 position has changed.
- 10 MR. THOMPSON: Judge, the fact that he
- 11 just characterized the position of his witness in the
- 12 two different -- in the gas case as being the exact
- 13 reverse shows that it's irrelevant to this case.
- JUDGE CLARK: Well, it's --
- 15 MR. WOODSMALL: It was the exact reverse.
- 16 It is no longer the exact reverse.
- 17 JUDGE CLARK: I think you can ask him if
- 18 his position has changed without dealing with the gas
- 19 case. So I'm going to sustain the objection.
- 20 BY MR. WOODSMALL:
- Q. Okay. Let's see how I can get to that.
- 22 Okay. So in this case is it your understanding that
- 23 Empire was originally seeking an increase in excess of
- 24 10 percent? Sir, can you still hear me?
- 25 A. Yes. The overall increase exceeding

- 1 10 percent? I don't think so. That -- that's --
- 2 that's not my recollection.
- 3 Q. In the original case with the Uri
- 4 increase, you used a rate cap for residential
- 5 customers of 9.9 percent, which was less than the
- 6 system average; is that correct?
- 7 A. Yes. When you -- when you added Uri in
- 8 there, now I understand the numbers. Yeah. Yes.
- 9 Q. Okay. And so the rate cap that you used
- 10 in this case was designed to limit residential
- 11 customers to an increase below system average; is that
- 12 correct?
- 13 A. It was -- there was no rate cap. It was
- 14 simply just recognizing what the bill impacts would be
- 15 for the customer and managing that relative to the
- 16 overall increase for the residentials. But there
- 17 wasn't a -- a hard cap or established cap that the
- 18 company had.
- 19 Q. Okay. It was -- I'll use the words -- I
- 20 think you used target revenues; is that correct?
- 21 A. Yes.
- 22 Q. Okay. And are you aware that the revenue
- 23 requirement in this case is now settled?
- A. Yes, I am.
- Q. And would you agree that the settled

- 1 revenue increase is about 7.5 or 7.6 percent?
- 2 A. I -- it's -- it's in that -- I think the
- 3 number that you had up on your chart was somewhere
- 4 around 7.6 percent. So I think that's generally
- 5 within the range of what I thought it would be.
- 6 Q. Okay. In your rebuttal testimony, you
- 7 originally said that you agreed with the principles of
- 8 MECG's revenue allocation. You talked about
- 9 principles of fairness and equity, but you said that
- 10 that should be -- you should also consider bill
- 11 impacts. Do you recall that?
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 Q. And now that the settled rate increase is
- 14 7.6 percent, would you agree still that a 9.9 percent
- 15 increase for residential customers considers bill
- 16 impacts while now supporting the principles of
- 17 fairness and equity?
- 18 A. No. I -- the -- the testimony that the
- 19 company and the position that the company has taken is
- 20 really supporting -- it's more principle based than
- 21 numbers based. And so there was no hard cap, as you
- 22 said earlier, or there was no hard percentage in terms
- 23 of what it means to be subject to bill impacts.
- 24 And so as we discussed earlier with the
- 25 cost-of-service study, it's really focused on

- 1 measuring what does fairness mean or what does equity
- 2 mean. So how does the cost-of-service apportion to
- 3 each of the classes relative to the revenues. And
- 4 that's really focused on the -- the principles around
- 5 fairness and equity.
- In terms of bill impact, that has more to
- 7 do with what the overall impact is on the rate, so how
- 8 much would the rates go up relative to -- to the
- 9 current levels. So those are -- those are concepts
- 10 that kind of work together.
- 11 And at this point, like I said, that --
- 12 that -- there's a framework that's been established,
- 13 but the company's not taking a specific position as to
- 14 beyond what -- what's already in the testimony in
- 15 terms of that framework.
- 16 Q. Okay. Now I'm really confused. So as
- 17 far as setting target revenues in this case, you and
- 18 the company were originally okay with the residential
- 19 class receiving a 9.9 percent rate increase; is that
- 20 correct?
- 21 A. The original target was based on that
- 22 amount, yes.
- Q. Okay. How has that been changed now that
- 24 the settlement provides for a 7.64 percent overall
- 25 increase?

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Page 85
                 Well, it -- like I said, it wasn't --
1
           Α.
 2
    there wasn't a target in terms of what the bill impact
    would be. So there wasn't a -- an established amount
 3
    that the company had that said that based on any level
 4
 5
    of increase, this is the amount that -- that the
    residential customers would see.
 6
 7
                 So it wasn't that hard cap of saying
8
    okay, it must be 9.9. It was looking at the overall
9
    increase for the -- for the company, which at that
10
    time the base rate increase was around 50, 52 million.
11
                 And it looked at that relative to what
12
    impact that would be on the different classes,
13
    including the residential class, and decided that it
    was reasonable to have that 9 percent increase for the
14
15
    residential relative to the overall increase, with the
    overall company increase of that 50 to 52 million.
16
17
                 How that translates into the settlement,
18
    that's something that the company hasn't taken a
19
    position on other than the fact that it still has the
20
    framework in place, which is balancing the fairness
21
    and equity issues relative to the bill impacts.
2.2
                 And that's what I'm asking you to do.
           Ο.
                                                         Τо
23
    take a position, as the expert here today, on what is
    the appropriate increase to the residential class in
24
25
    light of principles of fairness and equity and in
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- 1 light of a settlement of 7.64 percent?
- 2 A. Yeah. And beyond the framework that I
- 3 mentioned, just balancing the fairness and equity
- 4 relative to the bill impacts, that's as -- that's as
- 5 far as -- that the company is going at this point is
- 6 the framework is still in place -- going back to your
- 7 earlier comment where is the consistency, that's the
- 8 consistency at looking at fairness and equity relative
- 9 to the bill impacts.
- 10 How that translates into what that
- 11 revenue target, what that means for the residential
- 12 class, that's -- that's beyond the stated testimony at
- 13 this point.
- 14 Q. I appreciate that and appreciate the
- 15 company hasn't gone that far. You are the expert here
- 16 today. You've testified on this issue in other cases
- 17 umpteen times.
- Do you -- let's start this way. Do you
- 19 believe that an increase for the residential class of
- 20 something above 7.64 percent is appropriate?
- 21 MR. THOMPSON: I'm going to object,
- 22 Judge. He's badgering the witness. The witness has
- 23 already answered the question, that the company has
- 24 not taken a position.
- MR. WOODSMALL: And I'm asking for his

- 1 expert opinion.
- 2 JUDGE CLARK: I -- I disagree. I
- 3 actually -- in all of the things that Mr. Lyons has
- 4 said, I did not hear whether his position has changed
- 5 or not. I heard a lot of talking around that point,
- 6 but my understanding from his testimony was that it
- 7 was 9.9 percent when it was -- when Uri was included
- 8 in the request and he hasn't -- he hasn't actually
- 9 answered the question.
- 10 So I don't believe he's badgering the
- 11 witness. He just hasn't had his question answered.
- 12 So I'm going to overrule your objection.
- MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Judge.
- 14 BY MR. WOODSMALL:
- 15 Q. Your Honor -- or excuse me. Mr. Lyons,
- 16 to restate this, let's start with given a settlement
- 17 of a 7.64 percent revenue increase, do you believe
- 18 that it is appropriate, fair, equitable to increase
- 19 residential rates by more than 7.64 percent?
- 20 A. Let me -- let me put it this way. That
- 21 an increase beyond the 7.6 can be supported by the
- 22 results of the class cost-of-service study. However,
- 23 any increase would need to be subject to any bill
- 24 impact considerations.
- 25 Q. But -- and when you -- when you

- 1 previously filed testimony, you said bill impact
- 2 considerations allowed more increase for residential
- 3 customers of 9.9 percent; is that correct?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. And can you tell me why if bill impact
- 6 considerations allowed for an increase of 9.9 percent
- 7 before, why it wouldn't allow for an increase of
- 8 9.9 percent now?
- 9 A. Well, in -- we -- there is -- in -- in
- 10 looking at any of the designs, right, it's not just
- 11 one factor. So you're just focused on, you know, one
- 12 factor. And it's really -- there's a number of
- 13 factors that play into setting the overall design.
- And it's -- it's not -- you know, it's --
- 15 it's not -- it -- there's just a lot of factors. And
- 16 there's no rule of thumb when it comes to setting
- 17 these, balancing the equity and the fairness relative
- 18 to the impact. And that's -- that -- that's what
- 19 we're -- that's what I'm trying to get across.
- Q. But what you said in your direct
- 21 testimony and what you've said repeatedly today is
- 22 that bill impact considerations led to a
- 23 recommendation of 9.9 percent. Correct?
- 24 A. Yes.
- Q. Can you tell me why those same bill

- 1 impact considerations would not allow for that same
- 2 9.9 percent increase to residential customers given
- 3 the reduced revenue requirement?
- 4 A. Well, the circumstances are different.
- 5 The overall increase is different. And you know, that
- 6 would be -- that would be a consideration in terms of
- 7 what would -- what you would look at on a relative
- 8 overall increase for one class versus another --
- 9 O. So --
- 10 A. -- that -- go ahead.
- 11 Q. -- bill impact considerations always work
- 12 in the favor of the residential customers. Is that
- 13 what you're saying?
- 14 A. Not necessarily. I think in -- in some
- 15 cases, maybe even in the last case, I think there was
- 16 some special considerations given to the industrial
- 17 class, for example.
- 18 Q. In your -- that's what I was asking
- 19 earlier. In your testimony in the last case, you
- 20 agreed that the residential customers should receive
- 21 an above-system average increase.
- 22 A. Yes. That's what I recall. And I recall
- 23 at the same time that I think on the industrial side
- 24 as well, that there was a -- there was special
- 25 consideration given to that increase for the

- 1 industrials. So I was just responding to your earlier
- 2 question. It's not only focused on the residential,
- 3 but it also can clude the -- include the industrials
- 4 as well.
- 5 Q. Okay. And even though your
- 6 recommendation in the last case was, quote, to give
- 7 special consideration to the industrial customers and
- 8 provide a system average increase -- over a system
- 9 average increase to residential customers, the
- 10 Commission did not adopt that position, did they?
- 11 A. No. That's correct.
- 12 Q. And would you agree that the magnitude of
- 13 the residential subsidy has increased since that last
- 14 case?
- 15 A. I'm just looking at the graph that you
- 16 showed earlier, which is that unit rate of return. It
- 17 looks at the class rate of return relative to the
- 18 system ROR. And if I compare -- if I look at that
- 19 chart -- so this would be on the -- in the surrebuttal
- 20 testimony, Exhibit 38.
- 21 MR. WILLIAMS: That's him relying on
- 22 something that's not in evidence in the case.
- MR. WOODSMALL: He's referring to where
- 24 it is in evidence.
- 25 THE WITNESS: On page 6 within that

Page 91 Exhibit 38, which is the surrebuttal testimony -- I 1 2. don't have the numbers in front of me. All I have is this visual. And it does look like the return -- the 3 unit rate of return for the residential --Mr. Lyons, hold on just a 5 JUDGE CLARK: 6 second. 7 THE WITNESS: Sure. 8 JUDGE CLARK: Mister -- OPC's objection 9 will be overruled. 10 Go ahead and answer, Mr. Lyons. 11 So if I look at that THE WITNESS: Okay. 12 graphic, I don't have the numbers in front of me. only have that Figure 1, page 6, surrebuttal 13 14 testimony, which has been marked as Exhibit 38. 15 looks like the blue bar, which is the 2021 class cost-of-service, is -- is just a shade higher than the 16 2019. So what that would mean is that the return is a 17 18 little bit higher for the residential in this case 19 than it was in the last case. 20 BY MR. WOODSMALL: 21 0. But still well below where it was in 2018; is that correct? 2.2 23 Yes, that's correct. Α. 24 And you would agree that under all three Ο. of those studies, there is a residential subsidy in 25

- 1 that the residential class is not paying its full rate
- 2 of return; is that correct?
- 3 A. Yes. The return of that class is below
- 4 the unit rate of return or less than the overall
- 5 company rate of return in each of those studies.
- 6 O. Okay. Let's look at some -- on that same
- 7 table then, let's look at some of the other classes.
- 8 Would you agree that the LP, the large power class, is
- 9 generally the industrial class?
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. And would you agree that since the last
- 12 case, the large power class is paying even more above
- 13 cost base rates than it was in the last case; is that
- 14 correct?
- 15 A. Yes. I would agree that that unit rate
- 16 of return has increased from '14 to 2019 and then
- 17 again in 2021.
- 18 O. And we see an even more dramatic increase
- 19 for what is labeled as the SVP class; is that true?
- 20 A. Yes.
- 21 O. So what all those show is that industrial
- 22 customers are paying even more above cost-based rates
- 23 since the last case; is that true?
- 24 A. Yes.
- Q. Okay. You were saying earlier that your

- 1 recommendations depend on the context of a case --
- 2 your recommendations regarding revenue allocation
- 3 depend on the context of the case. Do you recall
- 4 that?
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 O. Okay. And just to test that out after
- 7 you said it, can you tell me what your recommendation
- 8 was in the pending gas case?
- 9 A. Well, the -- the approach was the same --
- 10 MR. THOMPSON: Judge --
- 11 THE WITNESS: -- which is looking at the
- 12 class cost-of-service --
- JUDGE CLARK: Hold on, Mr. Lyons. I
- 14 did -- I did sustain the objection to that. I believe
- 15 that information was already out though prior to the
- 16 objection.
- 17 MR. THOMPSON: Very well.
- MR. WOODSMALL: Let me repeat the
- 19 question, Your Honor.
- 20 BY MR. WOODSMALL:
- 21 Q. Can you tell me what your revenue
- 22 allocation recommendation is in the context of that
- 23 Empire Gas case?
- A. It's a -- it's a similar approach to
- 25 what's done in the Empire electric, which is to

- 1 perform the class cost-of-service and then based on
- 2 the principles of fairness and equity, subject to bill
- 3 impacts, establish revenue targets.
- I don't have the case in front of me, I
- 5 don't have the numbers in front of me so I don't want
- 6 to at this point just go pure on memory of exactly
- 7 what all those allocations are. So -- but it's the
- 8 same principle, same approach and same conditions
- 9 around bill impact considerations.
- 10 Q. Well, would you agree in that case that
- 11 your recommendation was for the residential class to
- 12 receive above a system average increase?
- 13 MR. THOMPSON: I'm going to object,
- 14 relevance.
- MR. WOODSMALL: He was saying it all
- 16 depends on the context of the case. Now he's talked
- 17 about the context of that case and I'm just asking
- 18 what his recommendation was in the context of that
- 19 case.
- JUDGE CLARK: We've gone outside the
- 21 9.9 percent that was previously out there and you're
- 22 kind of going back on track, so I'm going to sustain
- 23 that objection.
- MR. WOODSMALL: Well, I'm not talking
- 25 about the 9.9. I'm just asking whether his

- 1 recommendation in that case was an increase that's
- 2 above the system average -- an increase for the
- 3 residential classes above the system average.
- 4 JUDGE CLARK: And -- and right now we're
- 5 in an electric case that's kind of in hearing and this
- 6 is a case that is just -- the gas case is a case
- 7 that's currently pending right now.
- 8 MR. WOODSMALL: Right. And I'm just
- 9 asking --
- 10 JUDGE CLARK: And so it's in its -- in
- 11 its beginning stages. It hasn't gone through really
- 12 anything, has it?
- MR. WOODSMALL: Testimony has been filed
- 14 by all parties. I'm just simply asking one question,
- 15 whether his recommendation in the context of the case
- 16 and given principles of fairness and equity, one
- 17 question, was it above -- for the residential class,
- 18 above system average.
- 19 THE WITNESS: Subject to check, I'll --
- 20 I'll agree with that.
- JUDGE CLARK: Hold on, Mr. Lyons.
- 22 THE WITNESS: Sorry.
- MR. THOMPSON: It's got nothing to do
- 24 with this case, Judge.
- JUDGE CLARK: I'm going to allow him to

- 1 ask the question. Overruled.
- 2 MR. WILLIAMS: Judge -- Judge given what
- 3 I heard about "subject to check," I object to any
- 4 testimony being admitted that's subject to check. He
- 5 either knows or he does not.
- 6 MR. WOODSMALL: If we want to go there, I
- 7 have his testimony. I can take the time to send it to
- 8 him as an exhibit and we can walk through it.
- 9 JUDGE CLARK: You -- you can ask him if
- 10 he knows; and if he knows, he can answer the question.
- 11 BY MR. WOODSMALL:
- 12 Q. Do you know, in the context of that gas
- 13 case in which you filed testimony, whether your
- 14 recommendation was an increase for the residential
- 15 class that is above the system average?
- 16 A. Subject to check, I believe that's the
- 17 case.
- 18 MR. THOMPSON: Objection. When he says
- 19 "subject to check," Judge, he's saying he doesn't
- 20 know.
- MR. WOODSMALL: Okay, your Honor. Can
- 22 you -- I need to send an exhibit --
- JUDGE CLARK: Are you going to be getting
- 24 into testimony from another case?
- MR. WOODSMALL: I'm just asking --

Page 97 I mean is that what 1 JUDGE CLARK: 2 you're -- is that what you're asking to do is to -- to 3 submit as an exhibit, testimony from a gas case? MR. WOODSMALL: I'm not going to mark it 4 5 as an exhibit. I'm going -- because they're griping about the subject to check, I'm giving him an 6 7 opportunity to -- to check. And I'm sure -- do you 8 have the testimony right there or do you need me to If he was here, I'd hand it to him. 9 send it? 10 JUDGE CLARK: Hold on. Hold on. Let me 11 think about this. Because, in essence, this is a 12 memory refresh. While I don't think it's very -particularly relevant and I'm going to take it on 13 weight, I'm going to allow you to refresh his memory. 14 BY MR. WOODSMALL: 15 16 0. Do you, by any chance, have your 17 testimony from the Empire Gas case or do you need me 18 to --19 I just brought it up and I can confirm Α. The overall was a 6.7 and the 20 what you said. 21 residential was a 9.9. 22 0. And your -- your class cost-of-service 23 study showed that residential needed a 22.4 percent; is that correct? 24 25 Α. Yes, that's correct.

Page 98 And you believe that recommendation in 1 0. 2. that case was consistent with principles of fairness 3 and equity; is that true? 4 Yes. Α. 5 MR. WOODSMALL: I have no further 6 questions, Your Honor. 7 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. It's now 10:56. I think what I'd like to do before Staff's 8 9 cross-examination is take a 15-minute recess. And so 10 why don't -- or roughly 15 minutes. Why don't we come 11 back at 11:15. And we will go off the record. 12 (A recess was taken.) 13 JUDGE CLARK: Let's go on the record. We're going to pick up where we left off with 14 Mr. Lyons' testimony. And it is -- it is Staff's 15 cross-examination. So Staff. 16 Thank you, Judge. I'll 17 MR. THOMPSON: 18 try to make this brief. CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MR. THOMPSON: 19 20 How are you doing, Mr. Lyons? 0. 21 Α. Hi. How are you? Good morning. 22 0. I'm okay. Thank you. 23 I wonder if you could tell me what is the percentage increase that you recommend for the 24 residential customer class if, in fact, you have a 25

- 1 percentage increase that you recommend?
- 2 A. No, there's no percentage increase at
- 3 this point.
- 4 Q. And am I correct in understanding the
- 5 general increase to be 7.64 percent?
- 6 A. Yes. Based on the settlement.
- 7 Q. And would you have any problem with a
- 8 7.64 percent increase for the residential class?
- 9 A. No. That could be supported based on
- 10 bill impact considerations.
- 11 Q. And if you know, is Empire deploying
- 12 improved meters in the near future?
- 13 A. Yes. The AMI meters.
- 14 Q. And will those meters provide a
- 15 significantly improved data set for class cost
- 16 responsibility shifts in the future?
- 17 A. It will provide more data. Whether it's
- 18 better data or not remains to be seen based on the
- 19 results of that data.
- Q. Okay. But it could be better data; isn't
- 21 that correct?
- 22 A. It could be. It will certainly be -- it
- 23 will be more data. And if the data is good, it will
- 24 be a full population as opposed to a sample
- 25 population.

- 1 O. Okay. And you made revisions to your
- 2 class cost-of-service study in your surrebuttal; isn't
- 3 that correct?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. And that's because your original study,
- 6 in fact, was incorrect; isn't that correct?
- 7 A. The update that was provided in the
- 8 surrebuttal included three changes. One was just
- 9 update the revenue requirements. The second was the
- 10 wind allocation, which I mentioned earlier. And the
- 11 third was to revise the allocation of the
- 12 interruptible credit. Those were the three changes.
- 13 Q. Okay. But wouldn't you agree that that
- 14 made your surrebuttal study more reliable than your
- 15 direct study?
- 16 A. It made it a little more precise,
- 17 especially, for example, around the wind allocation
- 18 and then the interruptible credit. But I -- it's --
- 19 yeah, more precise.
- 20 O. The chart that Mr. Woodsmall was working
- 21 off, was that based on your direct study or your
- 22 surrebuttal study?
- 23 A. It was based on the direct.
- Q. So it was not as precise as it could have
- 25 been; isn't that correct?

- 1 A. Sure. Yes.
- 2 MR. THOMPSON: I have no further
- 3 questions. Thank you.
- 4 JUDGE CLARK: Cross-examination from the
- 5 Office of Public Counsel.
- 6 MR. WILLIAMS: I think just a few
- 7 questions.
- 8 CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MR. WILLIAMS:
- 9 Q. Mr. Lyons, at this point in this case,
- 10 Asbury impacts on rates and Storm Uri impacts on rates
- 11 are not part of the company's position at this time,
- 12 are they?
- 13 A. Yes, that's my understanding. It's not
- 14 part of the base rate increase.
- 15 Q. And with those changes, do those impact
- 16 what you would recommend for class revenue shifts from
- 17 what you put in your pre-filed testimony?
- 18 A. No. There's no -- there's nothing -- in
- 19 terms of recommendation, there's nothing beyond what's
- 20 already been stated in our testimony -- in the
- 21 testimony.
- 22 O. But all that testimony was predicated on
- 23 Storm Uri costing and Asbury costing in the case, was
- 24 it not?
- 25 A. It was a factor in the decision, yes.

Page 102 1 No further questions. MR. WILLIAMS: 2 JUDGE CLARK: Any questions from the 3 Commission? 4 QUESTIONS BY JUDGE CLARK: 5 Okay. I have one just because -- I believe it's been answered, but we've kind of danced 6 7 around it too. Mr. Lyons, I think as MECG asked you, 8 your position originally in your direct testimony was a 9.9 percent shift; is that correct? 9 10 It's not a 9.9 percent shift. Α. It was a 11 9.9 percent increase. 12 0. Okay. Thank you for clarifying that. And MECG asked you if your position had changed. And 13 it appeared that you went from having a position to no 14 longer having a position. Is that correct or is that 15 16 incorrect? 17 Well, in the direct testimony, it was a Α. 18 specific position in terms of what the increase would 19 be for the residential class. Now it's not specific. 20 It's more of just continuing with the same framework; 21 fairness, equity, subject to bill impacts, but not coming out with a specific position on what the 2.2 23 increase could -- should be for the residential class. 24 Thank you. Q. Okay. 25 JUDGE CLARK: Any questions based upon

- 1 Bench questions?
- 2 MR. WILLIAMS: No, thank you.
- 3 MR. THOMPSON: No, thank you.
- 4 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. Not seeing any, is
- 5 there any reason this witness should not be excused?
- 6 MS. CARTER: I had some redirect, Your
- 7 Honor.
- 8 JUDGE CLARK: I apologize. Go ahead.
- 9 MS. CARTER: Thank you.
- 10 REDIRECT EXAMINATION MS. CARTER:
- 11 Q. Mr. Lyons, can you hear me okay?
- 12 A. Yes, I can.
- 13 Q. I have some questions just based for
- 14 clarity on the questions you received based on
- 15 cross-examination. Currently Empire commercial
- 16 customers are paying more than their cost-of-service;
- 17 is that correct?
- 18 A. Yes, it is.
- 19 Q. And your testimony filed on behalf of
- 20 Empire generally supports moving all classes closer to
- 21 their true cost-of-service; is that correct?
- 22 A. Yes, it does.
- Q. You stated in response to Mr. Thompson's
- 24 question on behalf of the Staff of the Commission that
- 25 your testimony in this case could support a

- 1 residential increase of 7.6 percent. Do you recall
- 2 that?
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. Is it accurate that your testimony and
- 5 the rate design principle discussed in your testimony
- 6 could equally support an increase in the residential
- 7 rate anywhere between the 7.6 and 9.9?
- 8 A. Yes, it could.
- 9 MS. CARTER: That's all I had. Thank
- 10 you.
- 11 JUDGE CLARK: Any recross? I see none.
- 12 All right. Mr. Lyons, you're excused.
- 13 THE WITNESS: Thank you.
- 14 MR. WOODSMALL: Your Honor, before we
- 15 move on to the next witness, as you know, several
- 16 parties filed a stipulation on Saturday morning.
- 17 While MECG originally indicated that it did not oppose
- 18 that, we have now reconsidered that and it's likely
- 19 that we will be opposing that stipulation.
- 20 I don't believe it's -- it's still within
- 21 our statutory timeline and I don't believe it's
- 22 prejudiced anybody because that was filed on Saturday
- 23 and here we are on Monday morning. So we are
- 24 continuing to look at that, but I just want to make
- 25 people aware that we may be filing that objection.

Page 105 1 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. You say -- you say 2 that it didn't -- you don't believe it's prejudiced anyone, but that was what reduced it to the number of 3 issues we have today. So I'm assuming that based upon 4 5 that, that would -- that you would be asking that all 6 of these issues go back into play. 7 MR. WOODSMALL: Correct. And this is 8 being filed on the first business day after that 9 objection -- or after that stipulation was filed. 10 it's not like days of the hearing were cancelled in light of that stipulation. This objection is the 11 12 first business day after that stipulation. 13 JUDGE CLARK: Well, certainly Friday was cancelled in anticipation. 14 15 MR. WOODSMALL: In anticipation. So I'm 16 just making you aware we're considering that. 17 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. Thank you. 18 All right. Our next witness is from 19 Staff. Staff you may call your witness. 20 MR. THOMPSON: It's my understanding that 21 the parties are in agreement to waive cross on 2.2 Ms. Lange. 23 MR. WOODSMALL: Correct. 24 MR. THOMPSON: So Staff doesn't see any point in calling her at this time. 25

Page 106 Since her testimony 1 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. 2 had been admitted, you have no direct you wanted to 3 ask? 4 The parties have waived MR. THOMPSON: 5 cross, so I think Ms. Lange is free to leave. 6 JUDGE CLARK: Is there any party not 7 waiving cross on Ms. Lange? 8 MR. WILLIAMS: As long as the 9 Commissioners have no questions. 10 JUDGE CLARK: Does the Commission have 11 any questions for Ms. Lange? I hear none. I have no questions for Ms. Lange, so we will rest on testimony 12 13 in the record? 14 MR. THOMPSON: Yes, Judge. Thank you. 15 Okay. Ms. Lange, you're JUDGE CLARK: 16 excused. 17 Okay. Mister -- OPC, would you call your witness? 18 19 MR. WILLIAMS: I believe the same 20 circumstance applies to Mr. Marke. 21 JUDGE CLARK: Is there any party that has 2.2 questions for Mr. Marke? 23 No questions, Judge. MR. THOMPSON: 24 MR. WOODSMALL: No, Your Honor. 25 Liberty, I see a head nod. JUDGE CLARK:

- 1 Is that --
- MS. CARTER: Oh, that was the "no
- 3 questions head nod."
- 4 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. So OPC is just
- 5 willing to rest on his admitted testimony?
- 6 MR. WILLIAMS: Certainly.
- 7 JUDGE CLARK: Any Commission questions
- 8 for Dr. Marke? I hear none and I have none. I'm
- 9 getting some feedback. Does somebody have a question
- 10 for Dr. Marke? Okay. I hear none. I have no
- 11 questions. Dr. Marke, you're excused.
- MR. WOODSMALL: I guess we're up to my
- 13 witness, Your Honor.
- 14 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. MECG's witness.
- MR. WOODSMALL: And just to be clear,
- 16 what I'm being told now is that the other parties are
- 17 willing to waive on her.
- 18 MR. THOMPSON: That's correct.
- 19 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. Which brings me to
- 20 my next issue. Given that you've indicated that
- 21 you're going to object, do we come back this afternoon
- 22 and start the remaining issues? Because that seems to
- 23 be where we are.
- MR. WOODSMALL: I think that it's
- 25 necessary, yes, Your Honor. We'll know by the end of

- 1 the day whether we're going to file the objection.
- 2 But I think in order to try to get as close on
- 3 schedule as we can, I think it's necessary.
- 4 MS. CARTER: Do you have cross for
- 5 anyone?
- 6 MR. WOODSMALL: No.
- 7 MR. WILLIAMS: Everything's admitted.
- 8 MS. CARTER: Could we all just waive
- 9 cross on everybody?
- MR. WOODSMALL: We can do that.
- JUDGE CLARK: Okay. So there's currently
- 12 no -- there are no questions for any -- from any party
- 13 for Ms. Maini?
- MR. WOODSMALL: Maini.
- 15 JUDGE CLARK: Maini, thank you. Are
- 16 there any Commission questions for Ms. Maini? Okay.
- 17 I hear none. I have no questions that come to mind.
- 18 So you're willing to rest on her admitted testimony?
- MR. WOODSMALL: Yes.
- JUDGE CLARK: Okay. So I don't have any
- 21 more witnesses for this issue. I don't know at this
- 22 point -- here's what I'm going to do. I'm going to go
- 23 off the record so that we can discuss some scheduling
- 24 matters. I think that's probably the appropriate
- 25 thing to do. So we will go off the record for a few

Evidentiary Hearing February 07, 2022 Page 109 1 minutes. 2 (Off the record.) 3 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. We're going to go back on the record. We are going to take an early 4 5 lunch until one o'clock to give the parties an opportunity to discuss how we are going to conduct the 6 7 remainder of the case and see if they can agree on a 8 schedule and what issues need to be resolved by the 9 So with that, we'll -- we'll return at Commission. 10 one o'clock and we'll go off the record. 11 (A recess was taken.) 12 JUDGE CLARK: We will go back on the 13 It is one o'clock. Hope everyone had a record now. 14 good lunch. Bear with me just a second. There we go. 15 That's what I want. When we left off, we had finished 16 Okay. 17 presenting evidence in regards to the single issue 18 that was up for today. At that point, Mr. Woodsmall 19 had indicated that MECG would be filing an objection

- 20 to the, I believe, fourth stipulation; is that
- 21 correct?
- 22 MR. WOODSMALL: Yes, Your Honor. So
- 23 during the break, we had some discussion about some of
- the events that occurred this morning and to try to 24
- 25 clarify some positions. And I think the company is

25

Page 110 going to clarify its position, which will alleviate my 1 2 need to object. JUDGE CLARK: Okay. And -- and how --3 how are we planning on doing this? 4 5 MS. CARTER: Judge, if I could just make a statement that would effectively add to or amend our 6 7 position statement in light of this stipulation, if 8 that works for you? It's a very short little 9 statement. 10 JUDGE CLARK: Is that acceptable? 11 MR. WOODSMALL: Yes, Your Honor. 12 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. If that will resolve 13 the issue, I'm -- I'm certainly happy to do that. Let 14 me ask, just because I want to be sure I've covered 15 all my bases. Is there any other evidence that needs 16 to be presented at this time in regards to class 17 cost-of-service? 18 MR. WILLIAMS: No. 19 JUDGE CLARK: And everybody's gotten 20 everything into the record they wanted in the way of 21 testimony and evidence? 22 MR. WOODSMALL: Yes, Your Honor. 23 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. Empire, if you --24 you indicated that you wanted to clarify the position

of the Empire District Electric Company; is that

Page 111 1 correct? 2 MS. CARTER: Yes, Judge. 3 JUDGE CLARK: Okav. We file position statements, 4 MS. CARTER: 5 of course, based on the list of issues at the time. 6 And since position statements were filed, the 7 stipulations were entered into and submitted to the Commission for consideration. With regard to the one 8 9 remaining contested issue, we wanted to clarify the 10 company's position. 11 Given the stipulation, particularly the fourth stipulation, if you then couple that with Tim 12 Lyons' testimony and the fairness and equity 13 consideration in his testimony, the company would 14 15 recommend an 8.3 percent increase for the residential 16 class. 17 And in relation to our understanding --18 THE COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry, 19 Ms. Carter. You were breaking up there. 20 MS. CARTER: Our understanding of Public 21 Counsel's rate design proposal as applied to 2.2 stipulation would be an increase to the residential 23 class of approximately 7.6 percent. So again, that would be -- the company's recommendation would be a 24 25 residential increase of approximately 8.3 percent in

- 1 relation to that 7.6 percent.
- JUDGE CLARK: Okay. Okay. I've noted
- 3 that. Does anyone else have anything they wanted to
- 4 say on that topic? Okay. I'll ask again, are there
- 5 any -- hold on just a second. Let me get to my --
- 6 I've addressed issues. Ms. Taylor, when do you have
- 7 transcripts currently set to be -- to be done?
- 8 THE COURT REPORTER: I don't have an
- 9 expedited order, so right now it's two weeks.
- 10 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. Can you give me a
- 11 date? And I'm not ordering any expedited transcript.
- 12 THE COURT REPORTER: All right. Give me
- 13 just a second here.
- 14 (Off the record.)
- 15 THE COURT REPORTER: It would be the 22nd
- 16 of February.
- 17 JUDGE CLARK: The 22nd. And initial
- 18 briefs are due the 25th; is that correct?
- 19 MR. WOODSMALL: It's something like that.
- 20 I don't have an exact date.
- 21 JUDGE CLARK: I'm reluctant to order an
- 22 expedited transcript when we are only discussing one
- 23 issue.
- MS. CARTER: Currently, Judge, I had on
- 25 my calendar that briefs are due on February 24th.

Page 113 If I moved it to the 25th, 1 JUDGE CLARK: 2 would that work for everybody? That gives an 3 additional day. 4 Why not the 24th? MR. WILLIAMS: MR. WOODSMALL: 5 If it's possible to do the bre- -- or the transcript in ten days, that would 6 7 be better, but I don't understand those logistics. 8 JUDGE CLARK: There are logistics 9 involved. It's just not -- it's not something we like 10 to order unless there's an absolute need for it. given that there's only one issue involved, I think it 11 12 would be easier to move the due date of the briefs by one day then do that. So I'm going to move the dates 13 for initial briefs to February 25th. 14 Is there any reason that I would need to 15 move the responsive briefs from the March 11th? Okay. 16 17 I see no input on that. 18 All right. At this point in time and 19 there's going to be a little bit more discussion on 20 it, but at this point in time, I'm thinking that we 21 will probably want to do an on-the-record presentation 22 where the Commission can ask questions about the filed 23 stipulation this Thursday, the 10th. Is that going to 24 be a problem for anyone? And I will provide a WebEx 25 number for any witnesses who would like to be present

- 1 via WebEx.
- 2 MR. WILLIAMS: Judge, would that be at
- 3 nine o'clock?
- 4 JUDGE CLARK: That -- I really don't have
- 5 a preference between 9:00 or 10:00. I don't know how
- 6 many questions there are going to be, but typically
- 7 the on-the-records don't take as long. So if the
- 8 parties have a time that they would prefer, I'm
- 9 certainly willing to work in regard to that.
- 10 Somebody has -- I'm getting some feedback
- 11 so somebody is not muted. If you could please mute
- 12 yourself, I would appreciate it.
- 13 MR. WILLIAMS: If it suits the
- 14 Commission, I would suggest ten o'clock.
- 15 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. I'm seeing some nods
- 16 so ten o'clock bid wins it. So as of right now, I'm
- 17 planning on ordering it for this Thursday. If that
- 18 changes, I will let everybody know. I will issue a
- 19 written order to that effect once we've made sure that
- 20 that is the date and I will make a point to set it for
- 21 10:00 a.m.
- 22 Are there any matters that need to be
- 23 addressed by the Commission before we adjourn?
- MS. CARTER: Judge, I just want to make
- 25 sure it would be all right for the company

Page 115 representative, other than counsel, to appear by WebEx 1 2 on Thursday? 3 JUDGE CLARK: Yes. Anything else that needs to be addressed before we adjourn? 4 MR. WILLIAMS: I -- this is the counsel 5 6 for Public Counsel. I just suggest that if the 7 Commission has specific questions of specific witnesses, if it's possible to identify that in 8 9 advance, that would be great. 10 JUDGE CLARK: If I can give anybody a 11 head's up at all as to subjects that the Commission will have questions on, I will certainly do so. 12 13 MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you. 14 JUDGE CLARK: All right. Well, I would 15 like to thank everybody for their participation today. And with that, we will adjourn this proceeding. 16 This evidentiary hearing is adjourned and we will go off 17 18 the record. (WHEREUPON, the evidentiary hearing 19 20 concluded at 1:10 p.m.) 21 22 23 24 25

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3	
4	I, Tracy Thorpe Taylor, CCR No. 939, within the
5	State of Missouri, do hereby certify that the
6	testimony appearing in the foregoing matter was duly
7	sworn by me; that the testimony of said witnesses was
8	taken by me to the best of my ability and thereafter
9	reduced to typewriting under my direction; that I am
10	neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any
11	of the parties to the action in which this matter was
12	taken, and further, that I am not a relative or
13	employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the
14	parties thereto, nor financially or otherwise
15	interested in the outcome of the action.
16	Tray It Jaylor
17	
18	Tracy Thorpe Taylor, CCR
19	
20	
21	
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24	
25	

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