

Public Hearing Vol 5 - February 24, 2014

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STATE OF MISSOURI
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

Local Public Hearing
February 24th, 2014
Kansas City, Missouri

VOLUME 5

In the Matter of the General)
Rate Increase,)File No.
Tariffs For Missouri Gas Energy,)GR-2014-0007
A Division of Laclede Gas Company,)

KENNARD L. JONES, Presiding
SENIOR REGULATORY LAW JUDGE:

ROBERT S. KENNEY, Chairman

STEPHEN M. STOLL, Commissioner

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I N D E X

(No Exhibits were marked.)

Public Hearing Vol 5 - February 24, 2014

Page 3

1 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: My name is
2 Kennard Jones. I'm the Regulatory Law Judge
3 presiding over this case. To my right is a Chairman,
4 Robert Kennedy, to my left is Commissioner Stoll.
5 This is case number GR-2014-0007, the case of
6 Missouri Gas Energy's request for a rate increase.

7 At this time let's take entries of
8 appearances from the attorneys present. Let's begin
9 with Missouri Gas Energy.

10 MR. JACOBS: Todd Jacobs on behalf of
11 MGE.

12 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: From the Office
13 of Public Counsel?

14 MR. POSTON: Thank you. Marc Poston
15 from the Office of Public Counsel.

16 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Staff of the
17 Commission?

18 MR. BORGMEYER: Thank you, Judge,
19 thanks for everyone being here. My name is John
20 Borgmeyer, appearing on behalf of the staff of the
21 Missouri Public Service Commission.

22 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: And
23 Mr. Kauffman?

24 MR. KAUFFMAN: John B. Kauffman
25 appearing on behalf of AARP, as well as the Consumers

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1 Council of Missouri.

2 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Is there any
3 other party represented here that hasn't had an entry
4 of appearance that wishes to do so? I don't see an
5 indication that there is.

6 You all have just had a question and
7 answer session. I hope you got your questions
8 answered. If you did not however, those same persons
9 that were here for that portion will be here and if
10 something comes to mind, don't hesitate to ask.
11 This, however, is not an opportunity for you to ask
12 questions. We will only be taking testimony. It
13 will be recorded and a transcript will be printed up
14 on our website, the commission's electronic filing
15 information system.

16 I have a list of people who want to
17 give testimony. I will call your name, ask you to
18 come forward to this microphone and podium. I'll
19 swear you in as a witness and then you can make your
20 statement. Afterwards you may want to remain just as
21 long as myself or any other Commissioners may have
22 questions for you. And after we've gone through this
23 list, if there is someone else here who wants to make
24 a statement on the record, you'll be -- you'll have
25 an opportunity to do that after I have gone through

1 the list.

2 Mr. Chairman, is there anything that
3 you would like to add?

4 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Just very briefly,
5 Judge, thank you. Thank you all for being here
6 today. Your voice is critically an important part of
7 the process. As the Judge indicated a court reporter
8 is taking down your testimony. This is the portion
9 of the local public hearing where you will be sworn
10 in and so your testimony will be transcribed and it
11 will become a part of the public record.

12 There are four of us currently sitting
13 on the commission. You should not be discouraged by
14 the fact that our other two colleagues are not here.
15 They will have an opportunity to review the
16 transcript and it will enter into their deliberations
17 as we decide the case. So, again, thank you very
18 much for taking time out of your day, your work
19 schedule, out of your otherwise I'm sure busy day and
20 coming down to participate in this process. We look
21 forward to hearing your testimony. Thank you.

22 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Commissioner
23 Stoll?

24 COMMISSIONER STOLL: I do want to
25 thank everyone for being here today. As the Chairman

Public Hearing Vol 5 - February 24, 2014

Page 6

1 said, your statements are important. We're going to
2 be here in Kansas City for the next three days. We
3 have five local public hearings and I look forward to
4 hearing your comments and again appreciate your being
5 here.

6 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Let's go ahead
7 and get started. First person on the list is Desiree
8 Conley.

9 MS. CONLEY: Should I go on and make a
10 comment?

11 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Raise your
12 right hand.

13 DESIREE CONLEY,
14 duly affirmed, testified as follows:

15 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: And can you
16 state your name?

17 MS. CONLEY: Desiree Conley.

18 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: C-o-n-l-e-y?

19 MS. CONLEY: Uh-huh. I think 49.25 --

20 REGULATORY LAW REGULATORY: And if
21 you're reading something, it will be in the
22 transcript.

23 MS. CONLEY: Okay. 49.25 is too much
24 per month for a customer charge for five months.
25 Almost everyone needs help with food prices, KCPL

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1 prices, gas station prices and with no increase in
2 pay wages. Increase in employee and major budget
3 cutbacks, not to mention the rate increase will put
4 the unemployment rate up. Small business will
5 suffer, regular families will suffer.

6 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Thank you,
7 Ms. Conley. Next on the list is Corina Brown. Is
8 there a Corina Brown? I see.

9 MS. BROWN: Yes.

10 CORINA BROWN,
11 duly affirmed, testified as follows:

12 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Thank you. You
13 may proceed.

14 MS. BROWN: Yeah. I'm giving a
15 statement that hey, we can't afford another increase
16 in our utility, gas service. Right now we're being
17 overcharged as it is, you know, for different
18 services and whatever, whatever. And then I know for
19 a fact that when I get my gas bill is running me like
20 100, \$200 a month, hey, I don't even get, what, \$600
21 a month, that's my total that I have and I have to
22 pay 200, 250, sometimes 300 a month just for gas to
23 pay for -- to try to keep my gas on so I can stay
24 warm and it's ridiculous. And they -- you know, and
25 I know that I can't be burning that kind of gas in

1 the house because my house is not open. I mean it's
2 closed tight, so I mean, hey, they just charge
3 whatever they choose to charge.

4 My daughter, she got a gas bill, it
5 cost her like \$800 and some dollars a month. No way,
6 no way that she could burn that kind of a gas in a
7 month's time in her little old two bedroom house.
8 It's ridiculous. And yet still every time you look
9 around, they're taking the bill up higher and higher
10 and higher. So when is it going to stop? And the
11 purpose that we come here today to sit here to ask
12 questions or whatever, you know, you make us feel
13 like, hey, it's a joke. We haven't accomplished
14 anything. We came out here, thought we could get
15 some answer to our problems, our questions, and we
16 can't get answers to the questions that we ask. I
17 mean anybody -- hey, is anybody going to be -- help
18 us to get some relief on this or not? That's why I
19 came out today. I'm like, okay, good. We'll come
20 out here and maybe somebody will listen, somebody
21 will do something, you know, about jacking the prices
22 up higher and higher every month. Whether it's cold
23 or not, we may have five cold days that's not below
24 zero, but we may have 20 days like in the 30s and up,
25 but still they're going to say, well, last year it

1 was such and such a thing, so, you don't charge me
2 more than my bill was last year. What last year got
3 to do with it? It don't make sense. And then you
4 say something about, well, we have to do this because
5 in the summertime the gas, you ain't burning no gas,
6 so we have to -- no. If I go on a plan, it's going
7 to level out my monthly payments, the payment is so
8 high I can't pay the plan. And I'm paying year
9 around through the summer and through the winter.
10 And there's nobody doing anything to kind of help the
11 utilities company from jacking up their prices on
12 utilities, energy, nobody. They don't give a -- they
13 don't care. I mean, hey, they say, well, you can cut
14 your gas off in the summertime so you won't have to
15 pay. No; you guys cut our gas off in the summertime
16 because we are behind in our bills and we can't catch
17 up. And then we go trying -- wintertime coming up,
18 we try to get some help to get our gas bill back on
19 because winter is coming in and we can't get no help
20 to get it back on. So that's why we trying to keep
21 warm in the wintertime, we don't have no gas. We
22 might as be a fly in a bucket somewhere. And they're
23 cold, we're cold, so what are we going to do? It's a
24 joke.

25 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Ms. Brown --

Public Hearing Vol 5 - February 24, 2014

Page 10

1 Ms. Brown, would you remain at the podium for a
2 moment?

3 MS. BROWN: I'm very upset about it.

4 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Ma'am, I can
5 appreciate that fact. Thank you for taking the time
6 to be here today. So a few brief questions for you
7 if you don't mind. You said that you had some
8 questions that you didn't feel were adequately
9 answered, would you mind --

10 MS. BROWN: No, they tell us all that
11 bull crap around all this, this, this, this. Hey,
12 you don't even come forward and just answer the
13 question straight out so people can know where you're
14 coming -- you're going to tell us how much you did
15 this, this and this and tell us you did this or that,
16 no, you got to answer the question. Hey, give us
17 straight outright answers.

18 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: I would encourage if
19 you are willing to do it, to have a one-on-one
20 conversation with representatives of the company, I'm
21 sure they would be willing to stay as long as
22 possible to make sure that you understand whatever
23 the question is that you have. Sometimes it might be
24 harder in an open forum like this to get an answer
25 that you're looking for, so I would encourage you

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1 take advantage of the opportunity to speak directly
2 with members of MGE.

3 MS. BROWN: I have tried -- I have
4 tried calling them folks up on the telephone and I
5 get the same bull crap runaround.

6 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Well, I don't know
7 what happened before and I just know sometimes when
8 we have these local public hearings and got
9 representatives of the company that are actually
10 here, you may have a better ability to get a better
11 answer to your question. I can't guarantee that, but
12 you might have a better time than on the phone or in
13 the context of the larger discussion earlier, so I
14 would encourage if you're so inclined to do that,
15 talk one on one with members of the company that are
16 here. That was the only question I had for you.
17 Thank you very much.

18 COMMISSIONER STOLL: I might -- I
19 might add you could also speak to members of the
20 Public Service Commission staff, they can sometimes
21 help give you answers, so maybe check out those
22 sources. Also public counsel over here represents
23 the people, you could also speak to the gentleman
24 over here. Thank you.

25 MS. BROWN: So they're going to help

1 us get our utilities down?

2 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: I don't know
3 what the results will be, but perhaps your questions
4 can be answered.

5 MS. BROWN: We need help. I mean what
6 kind of talking if we don't get no help and that's
7 what's not good about it. I mean my mom, she's got
8 -- her gas was cut down. We had a couple days, we
9 got warm weather, they cut her gas off for two days.
10 They said, "Oh, no, we won't cut your grass off in
11 the wintertime," but two days the weather went up,
12 for two or three days we got warm weather and they
13 come and cut her gas off.

14 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Again, I think if
15 you -- the company will sometimes make payment
16 arrangements and you probably have already explored
17 that over the phone, but they may be able to explore
18 ways to help you and your mom to get through these
19 months. And I would also encourage you to talk to
20 counsel about any other community action programs
21 that may be available as well.

22 MS. BROWN: Yeah. Actually she tried
23 some of those agencies to get some help. They don't
24 have any money.

25 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Yes, ma'am.

1 MS. BROWN: It's a joke.

2 MR. JACOBS: If I may point out
3 briefly. Ms. Brown, raise your hand. You can talk
4 to Mrs. Lewis when you get a chance. She can talk to
5 you about making arrangements looking at your account
6 and bills. She has access to the payments through
7 us.

8 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Next on the
9 list is Jason Niemeier.

10 MR. NIEMEIER: Thank you for allowing
11 us to have the opportunity to speak.

12 JASON NIEMEIER,
13 duly affirmed, testified as follows:

14 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: You may
15 proceed.

16 MR. NIEMEIER: On the proceeding we
17 have had here today with questions and answers,
18 Mr. Jacobs did a good job. I wish we had more time
19 for those, but we don't. A lot of people would have
20 questions if you had a lot more people here at the
21 noon meeting just like the gentleman said.

22 I would like to state that Mr. Jacobs
23 pointed out MGE was bought out by Laclede Gas Company
24 and that was back in September 2013, which is the
25 same exact month that it was asked to increase the

1 rate; that's weird.

2 Furthermore, it was their full
3 intention in December of 2012, when Laclede Gas
4 Company announced the attempt of the acquisition of
5 MGE as well as New England Gas Company. New England
6 Gas Company was then turned around and sold I believe
7 to a Canada-base organizational Algonquin, if that's
8 how you pronounce it, Power & Utilities for a \$14
9 million profit. That's a pretty nice return. If
10 you're on the stock exchange, I'm not sure if MGE is.
11 Do you know?

12 COMMISSIONER STOLL: Say what?

13 MR. NIEMEYER: Was or is MGE on the
14 New York stock exchange?

15 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: I don't know.

16 MR. NIEMEYER: Okay. Well, Laclede
17 is, and as of yesterday their profit is up .51
18 percent, 23 percent -- 23 cents up from the end of
19 their closing bell. I know this doesn't make sense
20 to you guys, but it makes a whole lot of sense to
21 maybe us as consumers that the bottom line is the
22 money for the rate increase is going to the pockets
23 of the Laclede group who actually owns the Laclede
24 Gas and their subsidiaries, if that is how you
25 pronounce that, subsidiaries -- thank you. Laclede

1 Energy Resource, Incorporation; Laclede Intra
2 Corporation, Laclede Developing Company, Laclede
3 Investment, LLC; Laclede Gas Family Services, Inc.;
4 Laclede Pipeline Company. Sounds like a monopoly to
5 me and we don't have a damn thing to say about it.

6 September it was bought, MGE from
7 Laclede for \$975,000,000 and they gained about 1.1
8 million customers in that acquisition. If you did
9 the math for just 500,000 or a little under or a
10 little over, that's \$20 million a year or a month,
11 I'm sorry -- year or month, and I don't -- that's
12 just 500,000, not 1.1 million customers that they're
13 going to get in return.

14 September of last year, Laclede's
15 fiscal year ending, their net income was \$62.6
16 million with \$1.3 billion operating revenue. I think
17 they have more than enough money to operate the
18 business. We already pay high gas prices period.
19 Their headquarters are in St. Louis and there is
20 scrutiny over in St. Louis because they moved their
21 corporate offices and they were actually allowed a
22 TIF on that. I'm sure you're aware of it because
23 there was some hearings with the Public State
24 Commission as well as the Public Services Commission
25 as well. Are you familiar with those?

1 COMMISSIONER STOLL: We're familiar.

2 MR. DELANEY: Okay. We'll get to
3 that, don't worry.

4 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Let me stop you
5 for a moment. When you ask us questions, I assume
6 them to be rhetorical.

7 MR. DELANEY: Okay. I'll go ahead and
8 keep going with my statements and please if I do go
9 fast, let me know. The cost for the new headquarters
10 was \$46.4 million including an 8.1 million TIF, which
11 actually was lowered to seven million. Their current
12 office, the Hertz group offered to do a full
13 renovation on their own behalf as well as the \$7
14 million TIF on all the renovations as well. They
15 chose not to.

16 So what they did is they go ahead and
17 increased the St. Louis area in August of 2013 and
18 asked you guys for a \$36.1 million increase which I
19 believe was passed, was it not? They're not allowed
20 to answer, that's right. Sorry.

21 With all the scrutiny and everything
22 over there in St. Louis, they actually went ahead in
23 November to lower the increase, not the -- just the
24 rate usage, the thermal, what we call CCF here, they
25 call it the thermal whatever there. They lowered it

1 52 cents per thermal unit, which is the lowest that
2 they've ever decreased it in ten years, which equated
3 to about \$12.00 a month in average savings during the
4 winter heating season. That was in November of 2013.
5 They requested increases of us for September 2013,
6 just two months prior. We're trying to cover-up
7 money where they're losing it over in Kansas City.

8 Also, man, where do I go from there?
9 I just think it's wrong that a company that is
10 suppose to be public that is privately owned
11 currently making money on the stock market for all
12 their businesses that they own, and they want to keep
13 on putting the money towards us. It's just wrong.
14 For the five months increase that MGE or Laclede Gas
15 Company is asking is \$40.95 a month, which is a
16 \$70.35 profit and on the seventh month, they are
17 going to give us a break, a \$22.31 decrease -- \$4.57
18 decrease which equals \$31.99 a month. For that total
19 year they're going to gain \$360.92 just for the
20 service of the gas. That is a \$3.19 increase. Are
21 you awake back there? Because that math is right and
22 you don't take averages of turning off peoples gas
23 and you don't take averages of the actual units used.
24 That is a straight fixed rate, period. I think I
25 might be done here.

Public Hearing Vol 5 - February 24, 2014

Page 18

1 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Did you have
2 any questions of this gentleman?

3 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Mr. Niemeyer, I
4 thank you for being here, taking the time to be here.
5 I did want to point out a couple things. You
6 mentioned that there were folks that may have had
7 questions that didn't get their questions answered.
8 So I want to remind you and whomever else that we got
9 another one tonight in Gladstone, two more tomorrow
10 and then another one back in the KC area on
11 Wednesday, so we're trying to make certain we give
12 ample opportunity to make your voice heard because it
13 is important to us, so we're providing those
14 additional opportunities, so there will be other --

15 MR. NIEMEYER: I have two jobs.

16 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: I'm sorry.

17 MR. NIEMEYER: I have two jobs.

18 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: I appreciate that
19 fact and I do appreciate that fact which is why we're
20 doing these over multiple days at multiple times at
21 noon and six to accommodate people that do have jobs
22 and we do the best we can to make sure that the
23 public input is amply taking into account.

24 Let me ask an additional question. I
25 appreciate your thoughtful testimony, you obviously

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1 have done research and this is an issue that you have
2 spent time on that, so thank you for that.

3 Can you share with me how or what your
4 view is of the customer service that you've received
5 from MGE? Put aside the corporate profits and the
6 charges that they charge, how has your customer
7 service been?

8 MR. NEIMEYER: Well, I've been a
9 homeowner for almost two years and the customer
10 service has been fine. I live in a newer home as
11 opposed to an older home. The only issue that I had,
12 and I'm sure everybody has had, is I called one time
13 and that was to get the letter printed off that I
14 mistakenly lost, and I'm glad that I'm here and I
15 called, but it took them four hours to call me back.
16 I had to leave my phone number on that message which
17 brings me to another point. Am I allowed to come
18 back and speak if I need to or --

19 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: You mean today?

20 A. No -- yeah, later on today.

21 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: After I go
22 through this list, I will ask if someone else wants
23 to speak and you can speak then if you have something
24 else to tell us.

25 MR. NIEMEYER: Well, I actually --

1 that's a good question Mr. Kenney and I want to get
2 to that as well because Laclede has actually
3 dedicated their services to four things, and this is
4 their website, developing and investing the universe
5 of technologies, investing in infrastructure,
6 acquiring businesses and leveraging its current
7 business unit competencies. President Steve Lindsey
8 said, "To increase distribution through private
9 pipeline replacement," which I don't see the wear and
10 tear on the gas pipelines as opposed to just the
11 destruction of companies digging, "implement new
12 customer care technology." I hope that they really
13 do improve or implement that new customer care
14 technology. That was the answer to your question as
15 far as the customer care. But, yes, I feel it's fine
16 except for the four hour delay phone call back just
17 to get a simple letter.

18 I want to say also that MGE or Laclede
19 Gas, their ultimate goal is to continue providing
20 investors with a solid overall return. And if we're
21 a public utility, why aren't we, as the customers,
22 putting our money to them in their pockets, why are
23 we not getting a small share of that overall return?

24 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Do you have
25 anymore questions?

Public Hearing Vol 5 - February 24, 2014

Page 21

1 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Now Mr. Neimeyer, I
2 think that some of your questions could be answered
3 by Office of Public Counsel or our staff or the staff
4 of MGE particularly about wear and tear on
5 distribution infrastructure that may be something
6 that they can help explain to you and there is
7 probably some folks either from our staff or OPC or
8 from the company that can explain to you the utility
9 business model.

10 MR. NEIMEYER: No, I understand that
11 any business model is to grow and continue with their
12 infrastructure and everything like that. I think
13 that's a good thing, but I think it's a bad thing
14 when you put it back on the customers when you are
15 already getting a high return anyway. Again, net
16 profit is \$62.6 million at the end of the fiscal
17 year, really? And you want another 20 million a year
18 or a month from the customers of an increase, that's
19 where you guys come in. It's your decision to say no
20 and you have said no to them before. You actually
21 said no to them on a recovery bill over in St. Louis.
22 It was known as Keep Up or Track Up or something like
23 that. Let me get that out here. That's right, you
24 rejected Laclede Public Commission -- Public Service
25 Commission of Missouri rejected Laclede to raise

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1 \$6,000,000 to help delinquent customers Catch Up/
2 Keep Up program and there was scrutiny about that,
3 but I think -- I think I know why because they were
4 going to put that money again back on the customers
5 and you told them no, maybe because they are already
6 overcharging the customers and breaking the rules.
7 They currently have on their bill where you can put a
8 checkmark and actually give a dollar on each bill to
9 help out customers. Maybe we need that here, I don't
10 know. I've never seen a checkmark where I can put
11 add another dollar to my bill, but that's a good
12 thing. I'd like to see the numbers of how much money
13 is actually going to those customers that need it.

14 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Mr. Niemeyer, thank
15 you for taking the time to be here, I do appreciate
16 it.

17 MR. NEIMEYER: Okay.

18 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Next we will
19 hear from Rosemary Woods.

20 MS. WOODS: It's Rosemarie.

21 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Rosemarie.

22 ROSEMARIE WOODS,
23 duly affirmed, testified as follows:

24 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: You may
25 proceed.

1 MS. WOODS: So many facts have already
2 been given that I don't need to go into it, it's all
3 part of the public record, but I would like to say is
4 we senior citizens receive a whopping rate increase
5 of 1 percent in January. We have to maintain our
6 homes, our food, our gas on our Social Security
7 checks. Some of us do have other income, but many of
8 us don't. And what I'm tired of, even though I think
9 businesses deserve to make a profit, not an obscene
10 one, and I'm tired of businesses making more profit
11 than is needed on the backs of seniors, students and
12 the poor. Thank you.

13 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Dean Kennedy?

14 DEAN KENNEDY,
15 duly affirmed, testified as follows:

16 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: You may
17 proceed.

18 MR. KENNEDY: Thank you for coming to
19 MGE. I'm just opposed to the rate increase for --
20 for citizens here in Kansas City, Missouri. We got
21 World War II Veterans, Korean Veterans, and the guys
22 coming back from overseas, the Veterans. You know,
23 I'm just opposed to it. I don't think they need a
24 rate increase. Thank you.

25 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Thank you, sir.

1 Michael Patterson? Raise your right hand.

2 MICHAEL PATTERSON,

3 duly affirmed, testified as follows:

4 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Thank you, sir,
5 you may proceed.

6 MR. PATTERSON: Excuse me, I couldn't
7 hear you.

8 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: You may
9 proceed.

10 MR. PATTERSON: Basically I am opposed
11 to this rate increase simply because it's, as far as
12 I can see, it's probably the, excuse my language, but
13 the stupidest design rate increase I've ever seen.
14 We're talking about raising the monthly fee to \$40.95
15 in the coldest, probably the five coldest months of
16 the year when people struggle to pay their gas bill
17 anyway. Even with the break during the summer, we're
18 still talking about a flat monthly increase of \$3.19.
19 That's paid no matter whether you use a single bit of
20 gas or not. It's for the privilege of having being
21 connected to their lines. It's there. So there is
22 profit to be made in that simply because if you don't
23 use any, they're still getting money. And I
24 understand maintenance and upkeep of the lines, it's
25 required, it's necessary. For a lot of years before

1 it wasn't done, then we simply had lines exploding,
2 blowing up houses and homes and then we came back and
3 decided we got to throw money at the maintenance.
4 Maintenance is an ongoing problem and should be
5 treated that way, upgrades and all.

6 Now, I don't understand Laclede group
7 not asking for this rate increase basically in their
8 own name instead of MGE. For all intents and
9 purposes it doesn't exist. You cannot find any
10 information on the New York Stock Exchange about it.
11 The only one that is there is Laclede. You can't
12 find out what their quarterly reports are for MGE,
13 only Laclede reports are available through the stock
14 exchange. I pulled up their 2012 annual report
15 because I can't get their 2013 annual report. It's
16 not on their website yet. According to them the
17 report of 2012, they had basically common
18 shareholders of 4220. They had shares outstanding at
19 \$22.5 million. Their regulated gas revenues were
20 like \$763 million, a little over. The consumers --
21 again, the 2012 report doesn't include any of
22 Missouri MGE because it wasn't purchased then. So
23 like I said it's nearly impossible to find anything
24 concerning just MGE through this. Then they had
25 customers of 628,000 in the St. Louis area on the

1 regulated gas system, St. Louis and about ten other
2 counties. The revenues from what I can figure out,
3 the total revenue was like \$1,100,025 million, plus
4 thousands. An ungodly amount of money and I
5 understand they have expenses coming out of the total
6 revenues and all, but again, the only place you can
7 pull up the 2013 annual reports is the New York Stock
8 Exchange. How accurate that is I don't know, should
9 be pretty good, but basically the common equity
10 available at the end of the year of 2013 is
11 \$1,046,000,000.

12 Now, this is basically money after all
13 liabilities have been paid, you know. The large
14 block owners to this company, Laclede, spent 225 of
15 those. The shares come to a total of 22.7 million.
16 These are investment groups, these are funds, mutual
17 funds, these are banks. One of the directors of the
18 company itself, according to this on 1-30-2014 has
19 1,169,000 plus shares of stock. Now, this company
20 pays -- in 2012 it paid a dividend of \$1.70 per a
21 share. In 2013 the dividend had gone up to \$1.76 per
22 share. Now basically that works out to about three
23 -- 3.88 percent return per share. That's an
24 outrageously good return for an investor, better than
25 most opening companies. As the gentleman said

1 earlier when he was first setting up, Wal-Mart has
2 the ability to raise their prices, they're not
3 regulated. Their dividend is only 2.62 percent
4 return per share. Their share prices are a lot
5 higher on the market right now as of today than
6 Laclede. So if you're investor, it's a very wise
7 bet. Where else are you going to go and get about 3
8 percent return on your money? Most banks aren't
9 paying it. The problem is the dividends that they
10 pay out is money that most normal companies would use
11 to help pay for maintenance, upkeep, improvements.
12 That, I would imagine that's why Wal-Mart's dividend
13 is lower. They have a lot of maintenance and upkeep
14 and part of that money that they receive to pay
15 dividends with is used for that.

16 Dividends basically profits at the end
17 of the year after everybody and everything is suppose
18 to have been paid. You divide those out among your
19 shareholders. Now, I understand the company has to
20 make a profit or they won't stay in business. Like
21 was stated earlier, it's the amount of profit I'm
22 having problems with because as a consumer in the
23 monopoly system we have in this state as far as
24 utilities, I don't have the option of saying, "Hey,
25 you're price is too high, I don't want to do business

1 with you. I'll buy it from somebody else." That
2 option is not there. So I depend on the Public
3 Service Commission to stand there and say, "Hey, some
4 of these things are getting excessive. We can't
5 afford to do this."

6 Quite truthfully, as I said, as far as
7 I'm concerned if you were going to ask for a rate
8 increase, you should have taken the \$3.19 and said,
9 "Hey, we want \$3.19 a month all four months."
10 Basically, you're talking about the 3.19 a month, if
11 it had been added that way and done that way, you're
12 talking about raising monthly costs up to, I believe
13 it was \$30.07 a month. This is a monthly fee. If
14 you use no gas at all, you still pay it.

15 Now, I've got one example here for you
16 or two actually. I brought my gas bill. In
17 December, the month of December, I used 86 CCF.
18 Okay. Came to total dollars cost for the gas itself
19 nothing else of \$48.13. Now with that monthly fee
20 you're talking about in December, I will be paying
21 another \$40.95 along with that \$48.00. The other
22 bill I have is from July of 2013. Total gas usage in
23 that month is nine CCF. The cost of that was \$5.90.
24 My fixed monthly fee at that time was \$26.88. The
25 percentage that we're putting out here is 55, 60

1 percent. It seems to me that my gas usage is not
2 anywhere near what this 60 and 50 percent ratio that
3 everybody keeps talking about. And like I said, I'm
4 opposed to this increase simply because as the man
5 stated, it's -- I got a buddy during the summer the
6 only thing he has is his hot water tank. It's
7 actually going to be cheaper for him to turn his gas
8 off, put in an electric hot water tank and pay the
9 reconnection fee for his furnace in the winter when
10 he needs it. At my home I have a hot water tank, gas
11 drier, gas stove and a gas furnace. My house is
12 totally on gas. I've cut back as far as I can cut
13 back to save. I've lowered the temperature as far as
14 I can go and tolerate it. Again, I'm on disability
15 and a fixed income. I only have so much money per
16 month to work with. Food costs and all the other
17 costs that are associated, I mean there's a limited
18 amount to go around. So far I've been fortunate,
19 I've managed to pay my bills on time all the time. I
20 don't particularly care to be on a level pay plan for
21 the simple fact that the high bill of gas in the
22 wintertime goes out to the electric company during
23 the summertime. I pay extra this winter for gas, I
24 pay extra in the summer for the electric when the gas
25 bill goes down. If we keep raising these monthly

Public Hearing Vol 5 - February 24, 2014

Page 30

1 fees like we're doing, my gas bill won't go down
2 anymore. The money won't stretch far enough. Thank
3 you.

4 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Thank you, sir.
5 Next is Sandy Stiner.

6 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Mr. Patterson,
7 thanks for being here. I want to ask just one
8 question. Obviously you've done your research, but I
9 appreciate your very thoughtful comments. I have a
10 question to ask that I have asked one of the other
11 customers, how has your customer service experience
12 been with MGE?

13 MR. PATTERSON: Customer service I
14 haven't had to deal with them. I pay the bill, my
15 gas is on.

16 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Fair enough. Thank
17 you for taking the time to come and share your very
18 well thought out thoughts with us. We appreciate it.

19 MR. PATTERSON: All right. Thank you.

20 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Ms. Stiner?
21 Raise your right hand.

22 SANDY STINER,
23 duly affirmed, testified as follows:

24 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Pronounce your
25 last name.

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1 MS. STINER: Stiner.

2 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Okay. Thank
3 you.

4 MS. STINER: I asked a question prior
5 to this starting which I don't feel I ever got an
6 answer to. I appreciate very much the gas company's
7 concern for the safety of their customers. However,
8 we have safety from KCP&L. We don't get a charge for
9 that. We have safety from the water company, we
10 don't get a charge for delivery from either of these
11 companies. I still do not understand the reason for
12 this increase for safety. That's all I got out of
13 that. At \$26.88 month for 12 months, comes to
14 \$323.66 per year coming from each customer of the gas
15 company. If Laclede acquired the gas company and an
16 increase of 1.1 million customers coming from MGE,
17 I'm not a mathematician, but that's a whole lot of
18 money. It's at least \$323,000,000.

19 What is the gas company doing with
20 this money and how does it cost so much to transport
21 an odorless, invisible gas through a pipe that is big
22 and round compared with the electric or the I'm
23 sorry, the water company's pipes that are this big
24 around (indicating). And I just -- I just don't
25 understand why you're asking for this increase other

Public Hearing Vol 5 - February 24, 2014

Page 32

1 than -- I'm sorry, not you people, but the gas
2 company is asking for this increase other than their
3 last increase was in 2010 and at that time I was
4 paying \$4.00 a gallon approximately for gasoline for
5 my car and now I'm paying \$3.00 and something for
6 gasoline, so gas has come down. Why is this one so
7 much money? And you did ask about customer service?

8 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Yes, ma'am.

9 MS. STINER: I would like to address
10 that.

11 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Yes, ma'am.

12 MS. STINER: I try to save money
13 wherever I can. I pay my gas bill by calling and
14 have it deducted from my checking account. The voice
15 on the gas company's customer service line makes me
16 think of someone wearing a dirty raincoat with no
17 buttons, who hangs around kindergarten grade school
18 playgrounds. It's long and very irritating to have
19 to listen to. Thank you.

20 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: John Hunter?

21 MR. HUNTER: In the interest of time I
22 decline.

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Sheila Barnett?

24 MS. BARNETT: Hi, I'm Sheila Barnett.

25 SHEILA BARNETT,

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1 duly affirmed, testified as follows:

2 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Thank you. You
3 may proceed.

4 MS. BARNETT: Well, I think I speak
5 for a lot of Missourians when we are being asked for
6 a rate increase for our gas when a lot of us just
7 recently got laid off or have been laid off and are
8 no longer collecting unemployment or have financial
9 hardships. I live in a familial home. It's been in
10 my family since the 50's. We have paid our gas bill
11 on time for decades. We have rolled with the
12 punches, paid more money, done everything that we
13 were suppose to do. Yet, now when we, the people,
14 are in financial straits and our gas company gets
15 sold to a bigger company and we have no other options
16 for gas, we're now asked to pay more money during the
17 months that is really crucial for us to have heat.
18 We have to program the thermostat. It's set on 65
19 degrees, and if I need to be warmer, I have to put on
20 more clothes.

21 If you're going to do a rate increase,
22 you need to give us an example of exactly what it is
23 you intend on fixing in infrastructure and what
24 exactly you intend on doing to deliver our gas to us
25 more efficiently, which I don't see how you can do

1 that.

2 And in regards to the billing because
3 that is -- I'm a former bookkeeper so, never written
4 a bad check in my life, always pay my bills on time,
5 recently decided to go online and pay the gas bill
6 online; new experience for me because I don't want
7 anybody having permission to dip into my checkbook,
8 okay. So I went in, I paid my bills. I thought
9 everything was fine. Been paying it on time for,
10 I've owned a house for 24 years. I get my mail. I
11 don't always open it every day because I know when
12 the bills are due. I got something from the gas
13 company and I'm like I don't know what that is. I
14 mean I got a letter. Finally I opened it up.
15 They're telling me they are going to disconnect my
16 gas when it's the coldest time of the year and really
17 they can't come and do it. So I'm like you couldn't
18 -- I realize it was my error on the computer in
19 paying my bill, so it was my fault, but they have my
20 e-mail address, my phone number. I think that they
21 could have e-mailed me and said something is not
22 right, you did something wrong, instead of sending me
23 a letter. Maybe I could have been out of town, out
24 of state having to deal with elderly parents like I
25 have had to be in the last couple years with my

1 stepfather passing away and my mom having a broken
2 back. I could come home and find out my utilities
3 aren't on just because I made one simple little error
4 on the computer that they couldn't reply back on the
5 computer, but they send me a letter.

6 I believe that if a rate increase is
7 necessary, then the people need to know exactly what
8 you're going to do with that money to fix our
9 infrastructure, to get our gas to us in a timely
10 manner and if you have to do the rate increase, it
11 shouldn't be this -- this four -- what is it, five
12 months, seven months, whatever, it should be divided
13 over a 12 month period so that people can budget that
14 into their incomes because everybody, everybody, I
15 don't care who you are, you live within a budget, and
16 if you can't -- if you have to say, oh, well, during
17 the winter when I really need the heat and I only got
18 so much money I can afford for bills, but now I got
19 to come up with extra money to be able to pay a
20 higher rate when I don't know where -- I don't know
21 -- I don't know, to rob from Peter to pay Paul or
22 take it for Tom and give it to Harry, you know. I
23 appreciate your time in listening to me.

24 I just have one comment for
25 Mr. Jacobs. He referred to the increase having

1 something to do with Hurricane Sandy. I don't know
2 that Hurricane Sandy ever hit Missouri, so I don't
3 see how Hurricane Sandy has anything to do with the
4 rate increase. Thank you very much.

5 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Just a moment,
6 Ms. Barnett.

7 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: I want to thank you
8 for you being here, but I want to also ask you that
9 situation where they sent you the disconnect notice,
10 did that get resolved to your satisfaction.

11 MS. BARNETT: Of course it did, I got
12 on the Internet and paid the bill and I made sure I
13 typed the numbers in correctly and went in the very
14 next day to make sure that I had -- that I had --
15 that it was paid and the balance was zero.

16 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Okay. Did you have
17 to interact with the company directly?

18 MS. BARNETT: You know that I know a
19 lot of people who actually pay me to interact with
20 the company because they don't like being on hold and
21 having to push one, push two, like for instance, my
22 mother, a senior citizen, okay. There are a lot of
23 people that A, don't have computer access; B, don't
24 have the patience because there is no customer
25 service anymore, you always get automated. And like

1 the gentleman said, you could make a call and leave a
2 message and sit all day to get a call back. Not that
3 I've had that experience with MGE, but I have had
4 that experience with other corporations, so it's just
5 the norm. You cannot call anybody and talk to a
6 person until you go through a voicemail system first.

7 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Last question or
8 comment rather. With respect to your questions about
9 the infrastructure that's going to be replaced that
10 the company is proposing to replace, I think your
11 questions are valid and to the extent you haven't had
12 them properly answered, I would encourage you to have
13 a one-on-one discussion. They can perhaps more
14 adequately answer your question.

15 MS. BARNETT: Well, you know the water
16 company was on the news not very long ago, they're
17 starting to work on replacing the pipes. If they get
18 all the water pipes in Kansas City replaced, it will
19 take them 100 years. I won't be here to see that.
20 So, you know, that's why I just want to know what
21 specifically is wrong in the infrastructure that
22 needs to be fixed and I think that a lot of people
23 feel the same way. Thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Thank you.

25 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Thank you. The

1 next one is Nadine Civitello. Did I pronounce your
2 last name right?

3 MS. CIVITELLO: Yes.

4 NADINE CIVITELLO,
5 duly affirmed, testified as follows:

6 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Thank you. You
7 may proceed.

8 MS. CIVITELLO: My name is Nadine
9 Civitello, I'm here also with everybody else, I can't
10 imagine anyone who would agree to a rate increase
11 after all everything goes up. And I'm not here to
12 whine and complain about it because as we know
13 everything goes up every year. What I do want to
14 complain about is I pay for a lot of utilities. I
15 pay for gas, I pay for electricity, water, and no
16 other company bills me for the pleasure of billing
17 me. The electricity company doesn't charge me to
18 give me electricity to charge me on the electricity.
19 The gas company is charging me to give me gas that
20 they're charging me for. That's not right. That is
21 an oxymoron. There's a lot of morons I think that
22 are writing these rules. I mean it's double
23 jeopardy. You can't be tried in Court for that, but
24 I can pay for gas twice in one month. It's not
25 right.

1 Also to come up with the solution that
2 dividing my bill per month all year long is going to
3 just make me feel better? That doesn't make me feel
4 better. As that gentleman with the hat said, when my
5 gas bill goes down in the summer, I use to just pay
6 the electricity bill. It's not like paying my gas
7 bill evenly all year around is going to fix anything.
8 I need my gas bill to go down so I can pay my
9 electricity bill. In the winter months when they
10 want to raise this an astronomical amount at the same
11 time we need to pay our personal property taxes.
12 Let's not forget those hundreds of dollars that we
13 all just got billed for on top of this new gas bill
14 that they want to raise. If you want to have us pay
15 more for infrastructure like the previous lady just
16 said, divide it evenly. Don't ask us to pay when we
17 already have all the family holidays, all travel
18 time, and the personal property tax and now you want
19 me to pay to pay my bill. Once again, it's a double
20 fee. I think that needs to be said and on the record
21 multiple times.

22 Also, as has been said previous, we're
23 a monopoly. We don't have the choice of what gas
24 bill we have. If there was another choice, I would
25 certainly go to one with better customer service. I

1 have had problems with them. They are rude, they
2 don't answer questions and they do not like to call
3 you back.

4 Also, that 50 to 60 percent of my bill
5 is the CCF charge is also wrong. When I have a \$5.00
6 gas bill and a 20 something dollar fee that, works
7 out to more like 95 percent than 5 percent, something
8 like that.

9 AUDIENCE: 20 percent.

10 MS. CIVITELLO: Thank you. Also I
11 agree that they should show us where the money is
12 going. It is not my responsibility to look up their
13 paperwork so that I can find where the money is
14 going. I'm paying this money. You need to prove to
15 me what good is it doing? Where is it going? And
16 I'm sure it's probably going a lot more in pockets
17 than it is to line the gas lines.

18 On the front of this paper I have here
19 it says that we will be charged, if they get
20 everything they want, \$40.95 a month. Then it
21 explains it and breaks it down. A little lower than
22 that, what has not been mentioned, it says -- it says
23 also on top of this fee, they want to add a volume
24 base rate of .1649, so it's not just not the 40.95.
25 It's my understanding they're also going to raise

1 every CCF used another roughly 17 cents. I feel like
2 that also has not been addressed.

3 When it comes to just paying to pay
4 the bill, I've been lucky enough to be able to
5 purchase a small second house for rental property.
6 When I called to change the bill over, they said that
7 I would need to pay an extra \$20.00 on top of my
8 normal 26.88 because it's a second house. That
9 second house should not cost extra to get the gas
10 there. As the man said earlier, the gas doesn't --
11 the fees to get the gas to the house is no different
12 in the summer or winter. So because I'm lucky enough
13 to have a small second house, why should I have to
14 pay double just to pay double again every month when
15 they send you the bill.

16 I believe that's all I have written
17 down. I do think they need to show us where the
18 money is going and it's not fair to pay the bill.

19 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Thank you.
20 Kenneth Topp.

21 KENNETH TOPP,
22 duly affirmed, testified as follows:

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Thank you. You
24 may proceed.

25 MR. TOPP: Okay. I just want to say

1 straight out up-front that I'm definitely opposed to
2 this rate increase. But what I want to talk about is
3 perhaps something a little bit different. I'm not
4 going to ask rhetorical question to the people
5 sitting here, but I'm going to assume that Kansas
6 City, Missouri, is the second largest population in
7 MGE's service area. I'm going to assume that Kansas
8 City, Missouri, is the second largest population in
9 MGE's particular service area.

10 So because we're the second largest, I
11 guess I have to say that I feel slighted and I'm
12 going to digress for a second here. I see the ads on
13 television and I get them in the newspaper for
14 Dillard's, Macy's, J.C. Penney's, Kohl's, Sears, Best
15 Buy, I don't think Wal-Mart is in Kansas City, none
16 of those places that I named have a physical store in
17 Kansas City, Missouri. I got a problem with the
18 Public Service Commission when you have public
19 meetings, in the second largest population area, and
20 you have them at 12:00 o'clock, you have them at 1:00
21 o'clock, okay, my thought is then you're looking for
22 mosquitos in the desert. But if you're looking for
23 the public to come out, you're doing the wrong thing,
24 the absolute wrong thing, so that's my particular
25 problem. Okay.

Public Hearing Vol 5 - February 24, 2014

Page 43

1 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Thank you for being
2 here. Thanks for taking the time to be here. I do
3 want to point that we will have nother one of these
4 this evening at six in Gladstone.

5 MR. TOPP: Gladstone is not Kansas
6 City, Missouri. Gladstone is considerably north of
7 the river.

8 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: This one at noon and
9 then one at six. We will have two more tomorrow in
10 Independence and St. Joe and then we will be back
11 here.

12 MR. TOPP: Wait a minute;
13 Independence, St. Joe?

14 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: What we try -- what
15 we try to do, sir, is make sure that throughout the
16 entire service territory, that we have opportunities
17 throughout the entire service territory. We are back
18 here again on Wednesday.

19 MR. TOPP: 1:00 o'clock.

20 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Let me ask you this.
21 It's important feedback so I'm glad you shared that
22 with us.

23 MR. TOPP: Wait a minute; let me ask
24 you something. If you want people, and I guess I'm
25 concerned that you don't know exactly where Kansas

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Public Hearing Vol 5 - February 24, 2014

Page 44

1 City, Missouri is. You're talking about Gladstone,
2 you're talking about St. Joseph, you're talking about
3 Independence. Kansas City, Missouri is where we are,
4 and the meetings -- if you're looking for people of
5 Kansas City, Missouri to come and talk to you, then
6 you need to have at least one meeting in the evening.

7 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Mr. Topp, just
8 so you know, our purpose is to get feedback from
9 MGE's service territory. We set them up in Kansas
10 City, yes, Gladstone, yes, Independence, yes. As far
11 as the meeting on Wednesday is concerned, that
12 location at the multi-culture center at 1:00 o'clock
13 to five, the place is closed after five. So
14 logistically someone is not going to be happy. We
15 can't please all the people all the time. That is
16 just a fact. And if you have comments that -- if you
17 want to be heard on or if you know someone that wants
18 to be heard and couldn't be at these meetings,
19 comments can be filed on our website and they're
20 taken into account just as fully as comments made at
21 these hearings. Also comments being made to the
22 Office of Public Counsel, who also represents the
23 public's interest and those comments can be made and
24 the arguments you make during the process of it, so
25 don't feel like Kansas City has been slighted.

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Public Hearing Vol 5 - February 24, 2014

Page 45

1 Kansas City it's not the most important element.

2 MR. TOPP: No, I didn't say Kansas
3 City was the most important element. What I said was
4 it would make sense, just common sense --

5 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: It's important --

6 MR. TOPP: -- to have an evening
7 meeting.

8 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: It's important
9 feedback and we can take the feedback that you have
10 given us and apply it in future situations. We are
11 interested in hearing your voice, so we appreciate
12 your feedback. Thank you very much.

13 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Deborah Thomas.
14 Raise your right hand.

15 DEBORAH THOMAS,
16 duly affirmed, testified as follows:

17 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Thank you. You
18 may proceed.

19 MS. THOMAS: All right. First of all
20 we are on a fixed income. I'm on a level payment
21 plan with the gas company and with the light company,
22 so I really don't even look at my gas bills because I
23 probably would get depressed if I did. I just pay
24 them as they come in and it's taken care of. If I
25 could bargain hunt, bargain shop for my utility bill,

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1 I certainly would because I know that it keeps going
2 up and up and up, and I don't have any choice. I
3 have to pay it, I have to use gas, you know, so it's
4 a done deal.

5 What I would like, and I've mentioned
6 this before, our gas bill is, you know, comes out of
7 our income, so that's it. But I have a brother who I
8 kind of take care. He's had a stroke. His income is
9 about \$700 a month. For his gas usage last month or
10 his gas, his gas bill was \$40.92 last month. His gas
11 usage was \$13.02. So that's a considerable amount of
12 his money that goes towards gas whether he's using
13 gas or not. In the summertime his gas bill is going
14 to be 26.88 plus tax minimum even if he never turns
15 his stove on to cook a scrambled egg or whatever. He
16 has to cook. He's going to have to spend that money
17 out of his \$700. He's going to have to spend that
18 already. It's not fair.

19 I mentioned that he lives in an
20 apartment building and there are 16 apartments in
21 that building. Everyone of those people who are your
22 low income residents are paying that \$26.88. That's
23 a lot of money just to have gas going into an
24 apartment building. And it's unfair. It's really
25 unfair. They can't afford it, we can't afford it,

1 you know. We would have to pay it. We would pay it
2 if we had to, but, you know, it would cut -- we have
3 to cut corners other places. But my brother and
4 those other 15 people in that apartment building
5 cannot afford a price increase on their gas. That's
6 all there is to it. Thank you for addressing my
7 concerns.

8 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Thank you,
9 Ms. Thomas. Allan Norman.

10 ALAN NORMAN,
11 duly affirmed, testified as follows:

12 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Thank you, sir.
13 You may proceed.

14 MR. NORMAN: First of all, I would
15 like to thank the Commission for coming to Kansas
16 City.

17 COMMISSIONER STOLL: You're welcome.

18 MR. NORMAN: I would like to thank
19 Missouri Gas Energy for having the nerve to come
20 here. I just have a couple of points I would like to
21 make. I know you all will do the best you can and
22 make a fair decision about this. I really know you
23 will do that.

24 First of all, no rate increase. I'm a
25 community leader. I'm pretty active in a lot of

1 things around the city and I've not talked to anybody
2 that thinks there should be an increase in the cost
3 of gas. I know a little bit about the gas industry,
4 not a lot, but I'm not an expert, but the production
5 of gas is about 19 cents compared to this 73 cents
6 that they want to charge you for gas. That's a
7 pretty good spread. Now in there is also a pipeline
8 distribution cost. This fixed charge, we know why
9 the gas company wants a fixed monthly customer charge
10 is because of the increase in the cost of the energy.
11 A few years ago people began to buy more efficient
12 furnaces, go to alternative energy sources and so
13 they went to this fixed income source. That needs to
14 be balanced out and fair though. I'm not saying I'm
15 against that, I just think it needs to be a little
16 more fair. We all hear all about income equity.
17 Income equity, we hear that all the time. The gas
18 company pays their people well. They pay them very
19 well as far as I know. They give good service. You
20 asked a question awhile ago of someone about the
21 service. Over the last 16 years I can give you some
22 information on ten properties all located in one
23 neighborhood within a ten minute walk of each other.
24 Okay. The service that the gas company has done on
25 those particular ten pieces of properties was to

1 change the two gas meters at their own initiative to
2 put in new meters and to put in a pressure regulator
3 vent hose on one. All of that was done probably
4 because their insurance company requested it,
5 probably. It was for their benefit not mine. That's
6 the service that we got on those ten properties in 16
7 years and we're talking about how much it cost to
8 maintain this pipe system? I don't see it, guys.
9 What I see here is democracy at work and I know you
10 all appreciate that.

11 And also I want to thank the other
12 people that have testified here. They're speaking
13 from their hearts. Thank you very much.

14 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Thank you.
15 Next we have Brian McConnell. Is Brian McConnell
16 present?

17 MR. MCCONNELL: Yes. I couldn't hear
18 you. You were talking so soft.

19 BRIAN MCCONNELL,
20 duly affirmed, testified as follows:

21 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: You may
22 proceed.

23 MR. MCCONNELL: Well, one of the
24 things I've noticed is that for the last couple years
25 what we've been hearing is about the pipelines in

1 Alaska, all the natural gas we have here in America
2 and how cheap our energy is suppose to be getting.
3 And if that's true, then the rates should show that.
4 It should be a commensurate structure.

5 Every time I get my bill, when I send
6 in my little check, which is, you know,
7 accumulatively we're all paying for all this, I let
8 them know that I disapprove of this service charge.
9 This service charge is ridiculous. That does not
10 cost them that much money. If you look at all the
11 people and all the businesses and all the hospitals
12 and industry here, it doesn't cost them that much to
13 maintain all of that and, yet, because of their greed
14 not ours, they continue to raise the price. They
15 cannot justify these expense increases on behalf of
16 customers. In my opinion I believe that you should
17 instead of giving them an increase, they should
18 receive a reduction.

19 Everybody here keeps talking about
20 trying to go, hey, well, you know maybe a little
21 here, and a little there, that's proverbial camel's
22 nose under the tent. Everybody here knows what that
23 means. And so it's one more way of them jacking with
24 us and you know what? In my family if we don't have
25 enough income, we find other ways of making revenue

1 that are legal. Maybe the gas company needs to find
2 a better way of taking care of their customers and
3 become inventive instead of leeches with what they're
4 getting, what they have availed. I mean stop and
5 think about all the other countries that need natural
6 gas. We have tons of it here. Why don't they create
7 new commodity structures over there and start taking
8 it over to them; find other sources of revenue.
9 That's what we have to do. If you got more money
10 going out than coming in, then you need to get off
11 your butt and work instead of being parasites on the
12 rest of us and that's my comment.

13 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Thank you, Mr.
15 McConnell. Evaline Taylor?

16 EVALINE TAYLOR,
17 duly affirmed, testified as follows:

18 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Thank you,
19 ma'am. You may proceed.

20 MS. TAYLOR: I'm here today speaking
21 on behalf of an organization called the New Gray
22 Panthers. I'm a board member. Our organization
23 basically is connected with about 3,000 seniors. We
24 are definitely against, opposed to the rate increase.
25 We are badly hard now to fight another program called

1 the Spend Down Program, which is taking sometimes
2 four or \$500 out of the seniors' pockets in order to
3 get their health coverage, Medicaid, and so we just
4 cannot afford to have anything else coming out. I
5 mean this is taking food out of their pockets. In
6 some cases it's making people homeless and so we
7 cannot afford to have any other attacks on the
8 seniors.

9 Also, we would like to know today, it
10 was mentioned that the rate increase would not be
11 because of the JJ incident and we would like to see
12 documentation that actually states this is what it's
13 going to be, that that's not the case. Talking is
14 cheap, so we would like to see something in writing.

15 Also, I'd like to point out that having
16 the meetings in the afternoon for the -- in midtown
17 or the urban core of the city has always been set up
18 that way, and we believe that it is by design and we
19 feel like again that if the people are to come out
20 and voice their opinion and speak, then we need to
21 have an evening meeting. Now you listed all the
22 other locations, but, again, I know that you -- not
23 to be rude to anyone, but I know that you can't hear
24 clearly and the other locations that you mentioned
25 still did not address the issue of having an evening

1 meeting in this area. And so the citizens are really
2 tired of feeling like that they're left out of a lot
3 of discussion.

4 We also wanted to state that
5 eventually your monopoly is going to end and your
6 customers will see to that one way or the other
7 because the seniors are sick and tired of tolerating
8 all of these attacks that are coming on them. They
9 have worked hard. A lot have retired and everything
10 and then to have to keep -- it's like a vicious
11 circle. They receive the funds and then there is
12 people that are waiting to just snatch them back and
13 so we're going to do everything in our power to grow
14 even more and to put a stop to these monopolies that
15 are going on. Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Thank you,
17 Ms. Taylor.

18 MS. TAYLOR: Yes, sir.

19 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Thanks for being
20 here and thank you for speaking on behalf of your
21 organization. And just like I said to Mr. Topp
22 earlier, we do appreciate your feedback about the
23 location and timing of the meetings and that's
24 something that we will take into account in the
25 future and I do appreciate it.

Public Hearing Vol 5 - February 24, 2014

Page 54

1 MS. TAYLOR: Okay.

2 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Thank you.

3 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: There's another
4 name listed, so whoever signed after Ms. Taylor, I
5 can't read or pronounce your name. Is there someone
6 here that signed up to speak that hasn't been called
7 yet?

8 MS. HAMILTON: Bathsheba.

9 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: What's your
10 last name?

11 MS. HAMILTON: Hamilton.

12 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Hamilton? That
13 looks like Hamilton. If you signed up, will you step
14 forward?

15 MS. HAMILTON: As you probably guessed
16 I'm opposed --

17 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Can you raise
18 your right-hand?

19 BATHSHEBA HAMILTON,
20 duly affirmed, testified as follows:

21 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Can you
22 pronounce your first name?

23 MS. HAMILTON: Bathsheba like in the
24 bible. It comes from the bible, Bathsheba.

25 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: All right.

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1 Because you stated it, I don't suppose you know how
2 to spell it or anything? Okay. Your last name is
3 Hamilton?

4 MS. HAMILTON: Yes.

5 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: You may
6 proceed.

7 MS. HAMILTON: As you probably have
8 guessed, I am opposed to the rate increase. I've
9 been unemployed for, going on two years. I have zero
10 income coming in. I'm 58 years old and limited
11 education. I've been looking for a job and cannot
12 find one, so I don't know where I'll be able to get
13 the, whatever amount of increase that you want.

14 When I purchased my house I bought MGE
15 efficient appliances to get my bill down and then
16 with a couple rate increases, with the new rate
17 increase that you're proposing, is going to pretty
18 much defeat the purpose of actually paying the money
19 to get the energy efficient appliances. Like I said
20 I'm unemployed and I don't know where with zero
21 income and I don't know where I'll be able to get the
22 rate increase from.

23 Customer service, I pay my bill on
24 time all the time. That's pretty much -- I have
25 limited, pretty much, contact with the person when I

1 do call MGE because I just pay by phone. I push the
2 button, they take it out of my check and it gets
3 paid, so I have limited customer service contact.
4 That's all I have to say.

5 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Thank you, Ms.
6 Hamilton.

7 COMMISSIONER STOLL: Thank you.

8 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: We exhausted
9 the list of those that signed up. Is there anyone
10 else here that has not signed up? Raise your
11 right-hand.

12 NATESHA OLIVER,
13 duly affirmed, testified as follows:

14 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Could you,
15 please, for the record state your first name?

16 MS. OLIVER: My name is Natesha
17 Oliver, N-a-t-e-s-h-a and I am opposed to the rate
18 increase, adamantly opposed to the rate increase.
19 I'm new to the Kansas City area, but I stay in a
20 one-bed apartment and my one bedroom, the cost of gas
21 charged, the CCF, it says I use 168 CCF's for a one
22 bedroom. And they say it's airy in my apartment
23 because of the windows not insulated and everything,
24 so they say it's airy, but \$94 for a one bedroom,
25 plus the 26.88 monthly charge for one bedroom, that's

1 excessive. And now they're trying to increase that
2 to \$49.00, that's scary. It's like if you were, you
3 know, having problems like all of us having problems
4 with the gas charge and the service charge and
5 they're double charging, so we're being charged for
6 the service charge, the gas charge, the fees and the
7 taxes, so I'm curious to see where do they pick up
8 their costs, the pure costs, or the crude costs that
9 they're suppose to pick up from the business. Am I
10 paying -- MGE operates like a nonprofit. Everything
11 comes back to the consumer. I don't understand why
12 we have to pay a fixed monthly charge, a delivery
13 charge, infrastructure replacement, surcharge, I
14 don't even know what that is, and the cost of gas
15 charge and fees, tax and total. I'm curious as to
16 where does MGE or Laclede, where do they pick up any
17 costs? I guess that's it. I'm not understanding how
18 they charge their rates. I'm not understanding why
19 we are being charged for everything. The total gas
20 for one bedroom, and I stay in a 200 unit apartment
21 complex, so that's 200 people have to pay 26.88 and,
22 yes, granted some people don't pay their gas bill,
23 you know. I know people who don't pay it in the
24 summertime. I get that, but I'm not one of those
25 people, so to pick up their charge because they're

1 not paying, that's not fair for me and monopoly,
2 they're operating in a monopoly. I, like a lot of
3 people, wish I could choose a different option. I
4 mean we have different telecommunication services,
5 why can't we have different gas providers?

6 Customer service depends on when you
7 call. Sometimes they are nice, sometimes they are
8 nasty. I mean it's customer service. You have to
9 take the bad with the good. MGE is also a customer
10 service business, so they're providing a public
11 utility. It's not a luxury, you know what I'm
12 saying? So if we need gas we're going to pay for it,
13 but at some point we need a break from them. They're
14 taking all the money and -- I mean hey, yeah, we want
15 to put peoples' kids through college, but come on,
16 let's be fair about it. So I believe they are
17 overcharging with the 26.88. I would prefer if there
18 was a decrease instead of an increase.

19 And the raising CCF rates, I didn't
20 even see that. I don't even know where that's coming
21 from, so that's another issue. That's it.

22 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Ms. Oliver, thank
23 you for taking the time to come down and stay down
24 here with us and provide your thoughts. I would
25 encourage you to talk to either the Office of Public

1 Counsel or our staff, more particularly the company,
2 until you get an adequate understanding of your bill.
3 You do have a right to understand that and I'm sure
4 they would love to take the time to make sure you, at
5 least have some understanding of what you're paying
6 for it. Thank you again.

7 MS. HAMILTON: Thank you.

8 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: We have someone
9 here.

10 MARY REEDUS-SALDANA,
11 duly affirmed, testified as follows:

12 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Can you please
13 state and spell your first and last name for the
14 record?

15 MS. REEDUS-SALDANA: Mary
16 Reedus-Saldona. Reedus is R-e-e-d-u-s, hyphen,
17 S-a-l-d-a-n-a.

18 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Thank you. You
19 may proceed.

20 MS. REEDUS-SALDANA: I'm opposed to
21 this, you know, rate increase and, of course, the
22 surcharge of 26.88 a month and I'm speaking on behalf
23 of me and my -- probably say my sister, which we are
24 both on Social Security Disability. I just don't
25 want, you know, the company to come in and give us

1 false hope like the casinos gave us false hope about
2 the schools, and you see what happened to the
3 schools. That's a lot of money being wasted.

4 And as far as they were saying about
5 energy efficient appliances, I can't afford energy
6 efficient appliances, so that means I can't afford to
7 pay the higher rates on gas. I would have to go to
8 bed every night for all these really cold winter
9 months that we've had, I would have to sleep in three
10 layers of clothing just to keep warm because I'm
11 trying to keep my thermostat on 65. No senior
12 citizen, no child, no one should have to go to bed
13 cold or hungry or -- I have to decide on whether I
14 should pay my gas bill or should I buy food because I
15 have to sit and make a grocery list, which first?
16 What did I pay first? Do I buy food? Do I pay gas?
17 Do I pay lights? What? I can't even hardly drive my
18 car because I have to worry about the gas prices, how
19 far I have to go to average my time and how many
20 miles I have to drive a month to make sure I can put
21 gas in my automobile. So I'm opposing any rate
22 increase because it's just senseless. And then the
23 gas company shouldn't expect the customers to pick up
24 their, I guess if they want to say losses. I don't
25 know. We shouldn't have to pick up what they're --

1 what they want to gain I guess from us and I don't
2 feel like we should have to line the CEOs, the chief
3 Executive Officers or whatever the case is, we
4 shouldn't have to line their pockets. I can't go on
5 vacation, I can't take my grand child to Disney
6 World, I can't even take him to Worlds of Fun. So,
7 no, I shouldn't -- we should not have to pay for what
8 they want to do with their kids and their vacations
9 and their yachts and their Lexuses and their
10 Mercedes; no. So I oppose all of it. Thank you.

11 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: There was
12 someone on my left here? Yes.

13 ESTER HOLZENDORF,
14 duly affirmed, testified as follows:

15 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Could you say
16 and spell your last name for the court reporter?

17 MS. HOLZENDORF: Ester, E-s-t-e-r,
18 H-o-l-z-e-n-d-o-r-f. I oppose the rate increase.
19 I'm one of those senior citizens. I live on a fixed
20 income. My husband continues to work. We're in our
21 70's, but he works because we need the income. We
22 have children and grandchildren that we are trying to
23 help because they have lost their jobs. They find
24 other jobs, they are temporary, no benefit jobs, so
25 we've had to move my daughter in with me, with us, my

Public Hearing Vol 5 - February 24, 2014

Page 62

1 husband and I. We have a grandson and his family
2 that lives with us; same situation, low income, they
3 can't afford to live on their own. So here we are,
4 grandmothers and grandfathers trying to help our
5 children because they can't find jobs. Most of the
6 manufacturing jobs as we all know, they send them off
7 shore and we have CEOs getting these big bonuses,
8 whatever they call it, while we are trying to
9 struggle to pay for our children. We don't go on
10 vacations, you know. It's not fair. KCP&L, my light
11 bill went up \$150 month. I called the utility
12 commission because I was blindsighted. I got that
13 bill in December. I had to pay personal property tax
14 and so I called the utility commission because I
15 wanted to find out when did KCP&L have a community
16 meeting to discuss this with us? Someone from the
17 utility commission was suppose to send me something
18 in writing, I haven't heard anything from them. So
19 it's just a lot of things that we as customers and
20 consumers are having to deal with, with very little
21 representation from anybody that I know of. If I'm
22 wrong, I'd be glad for somebody to straighten me out
23 because I'm very serious what I'm saying. I didn't
24 come here to today to play, you know. This is a very
25 serious, serious issue for all of us and we need some

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1 answers. Now are you all the same utility commission
2 that has to do the KCP&L?

3 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Yes.

4 MS. HOLZENDORF: You are all? Okay.

5 Then it was your group of people that said they were
6 going to send me something in writing and I gave them
7 my e-mail address, my home address and everything. I
8 haven't heard from anybody. But for somebody to
9 blindsight customers and increase their utilities
10 \$150 month and they are struggling, trying to figure
11 out how am I going to pay this and pay personal
12 property tax and all this other stuff. So this is a
13 very serious issue. I do not agree with any rate
14 increases for any utility company. They're getting
15 too much already.

16 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Ms. Holzendorf, we
17 do appreciate you taking the time and I appreciate
18 your frustration. Someone with our staff will talk
19 to you right now and try to see what went on with
20 your contact with our office. We will get that
21 straightened out.

22 COMMISSIONER STOLL: This lady right
23 here.

24 RENEE BARTEE,

25 duly affirmed, testified as follows:

Public Hearing Vol 5 - February 24, 2014

Page 64

1 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Thank you.

2 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Can you state
3 and spell your name for the court reporter?

4 MS. BARTEE: My name is Renee,
5 R-e-n-e-e, and then Bartee, B-a-r-t-e-e.

6 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Ms. Bartee, you
7 may proceed.

8 MS. BARTEE: I do have a question.
9 After what everybody has said here today, which is
10 real relevant, everybody has the same idea, so you
11 all are listening to the questions, the concerns of
12 the people, are you going to take into consideration
13 that you may not do a rate hike? I mean what is this
14 going to do? That's my question that you've heard
15 from everybody.

16 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Well, I'm
17 taking you came here later on.

18 MS. BARTEE: Yes, I did.

19 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: There was a
20 question and answer session that was held before this
21 session.

22 MR. BARTEE: Yeah. We didn't decide
23 -- a friend and I came. We decided not to sign the
24 paper, but they said if we wanted to have a question,
25 but the lady that was -- just left, if you are with

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1 the light company, I think it's something with the
2 light company and the gas company. They both run
3 neck and neck. I don't have a problem with my water
4 bill, but the light company in the summer and the
5 gas, I just -- I really do think what everybody said
6 here today it really should be taken into
7 consideration, that was my question.

8 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Okay.

9 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Are you finished?

10 MS. BARTEE: Yes.

11 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Ms. Bartee, thanks
12 for being here. We can't answer your questions
13 directly because we ultimately end up sitting and
14 presiding over the case. I can't answer your
15 question directly. What I will say to you though is
16 what I said earlier, this is the portion of the
17 hearing where your testimony is actually being
18 transcribed by the court reporter and that's why the
19 Judge asks you to affirm because your testimony will
20 become a part of the record. I'm prohibited from
21 telling you exactly what we will do with that
22 testimony because that would constitute prejudging
23 the case, but we take in every bit of information
24 that we receive and we will render a fair decision,
25 so we do take into account the comments that we

1 receive at local public hearings generally speaking,
2 and I can say for myself and my fellow commissioners,
3 that we value the testimony that we hear and it does
4 become part of the record. This is something that
5 we'll enter into our consciousness as we deliberate
6 the case.

7 MS. BARTEE: Thank you. Because it
8 may seem like people were just saying, but they're
9 really telling the truth. And some people that don't
10 even come to these hearings, they, you know, they
11 probably don't want to come because they don't think
12 it's going to do any good. You know, they probably
13 would like everyone was saying why do you have them
14 at certain times, but the reason they probably say,
15 "Oh, well, it may not even do any good." So that's
16 my opinion. I just hope that whatever everybody has
17 said in here today that -- it was kind of funny,
18 comical, but they take into consideration. Thank
19 you.

20 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Thank you.
21 Anyone else that would like to testify? Is it Dean?

22 MR. NEIMEYER: Jason Neimeyer.

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Jason Neimeyer.

24 You remain under oath. You may proceed.

25 MR. NEIMEYER: Okay. Thanks again for

1 letting me speak. I think the last couple ladies
2 have really said it all. And with the new piece of
3 information paper that I did not pick up from the
4 podium out back about the increase of rate of the 1.6
5 -- 16-and-a-half cents for the CCF, man, I mean you
6 guys just -- I said you guys, gas company, they just
7 want to keep plugging away, tugging and tugging and
8 squeezing every little bit out that they can get.
9 And for you guys as the Public Service Commission, I
10 don't think you guys even need to give a
11 recommendation back to them. Your position is to
12 \$22,000,000 lower than what their \$23.4 million is,
13 so you're basically still going to give them a \$1.4
14 million increase; that's insane, man. Why as a
15 Commission should you guys do that? What authority
16 do you guys have? We're the public. Who are you
17 appointed by? State representatives? I don't know.
18 I wish you guys could answer some of these questions.
19 I'm new to this form of speaking my mind, but who are
20 you to decide to give them or allow them to have \$1.4
21 million anyway? You're going to give them an
22 increase no matter what.

23 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Hold on, Mr.
24 Neimeyer, thank you again for being here. You asked
25 fair, valid questions that you are entitled to have

1 an answer to. We can't answer, but there are people
2 from staff that can tell you some of the information
3 at least that you're asking for about we're appointed
4 and who appointed us and that sort of thing, so I
5 would encourage you to talk to members of the Public
6 Service Commission staff who can answer some of those
7 specific questions about our appointment process and
8 our authority to hear rate cases. And we've got one
9 of our lawyers in the background that is standing up
10 that is raising his hand waiving to you as we see,
11 that would be happy to answer your questions. Thank
12 you very much.

13 MR. NEIMEYER: I would also encourage
14 you guys that if you did want to have, since you were
15 taking into consideration as far as time and
16 guidelines and stuff like that, maybe you should have
17 an open forum down in the city like open to the
18 public unless you guys want to go and be inside and
19 continue to waste this gas in here.

20 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Thank you for your
21 feedback.

22 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Is there anyone
23 else who hasn't signed up that wants to present
24 testimony on the record? You can remain under oath.
25 What's your name again?

1 SANDRA STINER: Sandra Stiner. I just
2 did some quick math on the lady who lives in the 200
3 unit apartment. For what that single apartment
4 building is paying, it comes out to \$63,522 a year
5 for gas delivery to that apartment. And I really
6 question with multi unit apartment buildings in the
7 city, how much money is being put into this delivery
8 fund? Laclede bought Missouri Gas Energy and
9 acquired a hundred -- 1.1 million new customers.
10 That's 300 and -- roughly \$325 million for existing
11 structures. What is being done to improve that and
12 the improvements that we are getting for gas service?
13 Thank you.

14 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: Thank you, Ms.
15 Stiner.

16 COMMISSIONER STOLL: I might add on
17 the table outside there are a couple papers you may
18 want to pick up. You probably didn't have time to
19 read them before you came in, so you may want to pick
20 one up and take it home with you. There's one from
21 staff of Missouri Public Service Commission and it
22 lays out the case before you. There's another
23 information sheet on the Missouri Gas Energy request
24 for rate increase and it's four pages and it talks
25 about the public testimony and how anyone who wasn't

1 here today, if you would like to give them this, how
2 they can make their comments heard.

3 There's also a letter from the Office
4 of Public Counsel, the gentleman over here, and so I
5 would encourage you to pick those up and read through
6 those and hopefully you'll have a little better
7 understanding of how the process works. I know it
8 can be confusing. If you have any other questions,
9 really, you know, go to the staff, our staff that's
10 here and the staff of the Missouri Public Service
11 Commission and ask those questions. Thank you for
12 being here today.

13 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE: I take it there
14 is no one else that wants to testify? Okay. Then we
15 will go off the record.

16 (WHEREIN, the hearing was concluded at
17 3:00 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

STATE OF MISSOURI)
) ss.
CITY OF KANSAS CITY)

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&	2010 32:3	323.66 31:14	63,522 69:4	acquired
& 14:8	2012 14:3	325 69:10	65 33:18 60:11	31:15 69:9
1	25:14,17,21	36.1 16:18	7	acquiring
1 23:5	26:20	360.92 17:19	7 16:13	20:6
1,046,000,0...	2013 13:24	3:00 70:17	70's 61:21	acquisition
26:11	16:17 17:4,5	4	70.35 17:16	14:4 15:8
1,100,025 26:3	25:15 26:7,10	4.00 32:4	700 46:9,17	action 12:20
1,169,000	26:21 28:22	4.57 17:17	73 48:5	71:12,17
26:19	2014 1:7	40.92 46:10	763 25:20	active 47:25
1-30-2014	2014-0007	40.95 17:15	8	actual 17:23
26:18	1:12 3:5	24:14 28:21	8.1 16:10	adamantly
1.1 15:7,12	22,000,000	40:20	800 8:5	56:18
31:16 69:9	67:12	40.95. 40:24	86 28:17	add 5:3 11:19
1.3 15:16	22.31 17:17	4220 25:18	9	22:11 40:23
1.4 67:13,20	22.5 25:19	46.4 16:10	94 56:24	69:16
1.6 67:4	22.7 26:15	48.00. 28:21	95 40:7	added 28:11
1.70 26:20	225 26:14	48.13. 28:19	975,000,000	additional
1.76 26:21	23 14:18,18	49.00 57:2	15:7	18:14,24
100 7:20 37:19	23.4 67:12	49.25 6:19,23	a	address 32:9
1077 71:20	24 34:10	5	aarp 3:25	34:20 52:25
12 31:13 35:13	24th 1:7	5 1:9 40:7	ability 11:10	63:7,7
12.00 17:3	250 7:22	5.00 40:5	27:2 71:10	addressed
12:00 42:20	26.88 31:13	5.90. 28:23	able 12:17	41:2
13.02. 46:11	41:8 46:14	50 29:2 40:4	35:19 41:4	addressing
14 14:8	56:25 57:21	50's 33:10	55:12,21	47:6
15 47:4	59:22	500 52:2	absolute	adequate 59:2
150 62:11	26.88. 28:24	500,000 15:9	42:24	adequately
63:10	46:22 58:17	15:12	access 13:6	10:8 37:14
16 46:20 48:21	3	51 14:17	36:23	ads 42:12
49:6 67:5	3 27:7	52 17:1	accommodate	advantage
1649 40:24	3,000 51:23	55 28:25	18:21	11:1
168 56:21	3.00 32:5	58 55:10	accomplished	affirm 65:19
17 41:1	3.19 17:20	6	8:13	affirmed 6:14
19 48:5	28:8,9,10	6,000,000 22:1	account 13:5	7:11 13:13
2	3.19. 24:18	60 28:25 29:2	18:23 32:14	22:23 23:15
2.62 27:3	3.88 26:23	40:4	44:20 53:24	24:3 30:23
20 8:24 15:10	30.07 28:13	600 7:20	65:25	33:1 38:5
21:17 40:6,9	300 7:22 69:10	62.6 15:15	accumulativ...	41:22 45:16
20.00 41:7	30s 8:24	21:16	50:7	47:11 49:20
200 7:20,22	31.99 17:18	628,000 25:25	accurate 26:8	51:17 54:20
57:20,21 69:2	323,000,000			56:13 59:11
	31:18			61:14 63:25

<p>afford 7:15 28:5 35:18 46:25,25 47:5 52:4,7 60:5,6 62:3 afternoon 52:16 agencies 12:23 ago 37:16 48:11,20 agree 38:10 40:11 63:13 ahead 6:6 16:7,16,22 ain't 9:5 airy 56:22,24 alan 47:10 alaska 50:1 algonquin 14:7 allan 47:9 allow 67:20 allowed 15:21 16:19 19:17 allowing 13:10 alternative 48:12 america 50:1 amount 26:4 27:21 29:18 39:10 46:11 55:13 ample 18:12 amply 18:23 announced 14:4 annual 25:14 25:15 26:7 answer 4:7 8:15 10:12,16 10:24 11:11 16:20 20:14</p>	<p>31:6 37:14 40:2 64:20 65:12,14 67:18 68:1,1,6 68:11 answered 4:8 10:9 12:4 18:7 21:2 37:12 answers 8:16 10:17 11:21 13:17 63:1 anybody 8:17 8:17 34:7 37:5 48:1 62:21 63:8 anymore 20:25 30:2 36:25 anyway 21:15 24:17 67:21 apartment 46:20,24 47:4 56:20,22 57:20 69:3,3,5 69:6 apartments 46:20 appearance 4:4 appearances 3:8 appearing 3:20,25 appears 71:7 appliances 55:15,19 60:5 60:6 apply 45:10 appointed 67:17 68:3,4 appointment 68:7</p>	<p>appreciate 6:4 10:5 18:18,19 18:25 22:15 30:9,18 31:6 35:23 45:11 49:10 53:22 53:25 63:17 63:17 approximat... 32:4 area 16:17 18:10 25:25 42:7,9,19 53:1 56:19 arguments 44:24 arrangements 12:16 13:5 aside 19:5 asked 13:25 16:18 30:10 31:4 33:5,16 48:20 67:24 asking 17:15 25:7 31:25 32:2 68:3 asks 65:19 associated 29:17 assume 16:5 42:5,7 astronomical 39:10 attacks 52:7 53:8 attempt 14:4 attorney 71:14 attorneys 3:8 audience 40:9 august 16:17 authority 67:15 68:8</p>	<p>automated 36:25 automobile 60:21 available 12:21 25:13 26:10 availed 51:4 average 17:3 60:19 averages 17:22,23 awake 17:21 aware 15:22 awhile 48:20</p>	<p>barnett 32:23 32:24,24,25 33:4 36:6,11 36:18 37:15 bartee 63:24 64:4,5,6,8,18 64:22 65:10 65:11 66:7 base 14:7 40:24 basically 24:10 25:7,17 26:9,12,22 27:16 28:10 51:23 67:13 bathsheba 54:8,19,23,24 bed 56:20 60:8,12 bedroom 8:7 56:20,22,24 56:25 57:20 began 48:11 behalf 3:10,20 3:25 16:13 50:15 51:21 53:20 59:22 believe 14:6 16:19 28:12 35:6 41:16 50:16 52:18 58:16 bell 14:19 benefit 49:5 61:24 best 18:22 42:14 47:21 71:9 bet 27:7 better 11:10 11:10,12 26:24 39:3,4 39:25 51:2</p>
b				
<p>b 3:24 36:23 64:5 back 9:18,20 13:24 17:21 18:10 19:15 19:18 20:16 21:14 22:4 23:22 25:2 29:12,13 35:2 35:4 37:2 40:3 43:10,17 53:12 57:11 67:4,11 background 68:9 backs 23:11 bad 21:13 34:4 58:9 badly 51:25 balance 36:15 balanced 48:14 banks 26:17 27:8 bargain 45:25 45:25</p>				

70:6 bible 54:24,24 big 31:21,23 62:7 bigger 33:15 bill 7:19 8:4,9 9:2,18 21:21 22:7,8,11 24:16 28:16 28:22 29:21 29:25 30:1,14 32:13 33:10 34:5,19 36:12 39:2,5,6,7,8,9 39:13,19,24 40:4,6 41:4,6 41:15,18 45:25 46:6,10 46:13 50:5 55:15,23 57:22 59:2 60:14 62:11 62:13 65:4 billed 39:13 billing 34:2 38:16 billion 15:16 bills 9:16 13:6 29:19 34:4,8 34:12 35:18 38:16 45:22 bit 24:19 42:3 48:3 65:23 67:8 blindsight 63:9 blindsighted 62:12 block 26:14 blowing 25:2 board 51:22 bonuses 62:7	bookkeeper 34:3 borgmeyer 3:18,20 bottom 14:21 bought 13:23 15:6 55:14 69:8 break 17:17 24:17 58:13 breaking 22:6 breaks 40:21 brian 49:15 49:15,19 brief 10:6 briefly 5:4 13:3 brings 19:17 broken 35:1 brother 46:7 47:3 brought 28:16 brown 7:7,8,9 7:10,14 9:25 10:1,3,10 11:3 11:25 12:5,22 13:1,3 bucket 9:22 buddy 29:5 budget 7:2 35:13,15 building 46:20,21,24 47:4 69:4 buildings 69:6 bull 10:11 11:5 burn 8:6 burning 7:25 9:5 business 7:4 15:18 20:7 21:9,11 27:20	27:25 57:9 58:10 businesses 17:12 20:6 23:9,10 50:11 busy 5:19 butt 51:11 button 56:2 buttons 32:17 buy 28:1 42:15 48:11 60:14,16 c c 6:18 call 4:17 16:24 16:25 19:15 20:16 37:1,2,5 40:2 56:1 58:7 62:8 called 19:12 19:15 41:6 51:21,25 54:6 62:11,14 calling 11:4 32:13 camel's 50:21 canada 14:7 car 32:5 60:18 care 9:13 20:12,13,15 29:20 35:15 45:24 46:8 51:2 case 3:3,5,5 5:17 52:13 61:3 65:14,23 66:6 69:22 cases 52:6 68:8 casinos 60:1 catch 9:16 22:1	ccf 16:24 28:17,23 40:5 41:1 56:21 58:19 67:5 ccf's 56:21 ccr 71:20 center 44:12 cents 14:18 17:1 41:1 48:5,5 67:5 ceos 61:2 62:7 certain 18:11 66:14 certainly 39:25 46:1 certificate 71:1 certified 71:5 certify 71:6 chairman 1:15 3:3 5:2,4 5:25 10:4,18 11:6 12:14,25 18:3,16,18 21:1 22:14 30:6,16 32:8 32:11 36:7,16 37:7,24 43:1,8 43:14,20 45:5 45:8 51:14 53:16,19 54:2 58:22 63:16 64:1 65:9,11 67:23 68:20 chance 13:4 change 41:6 49:1 charge 6:24 8:2,3 9:1 19:6 31:8,10 38:17 38:18 40:5 48:6,8,9 50:8 50:9 56:25	57:4,4,6,6,12 57:13,15,18 57:25 charged 40:19 56:21 57:5,19 charges 19:6 charging 38:19,20 57:5 cheap 50:2 52:14 cheaper 29:7 check 11:21 34:4 50:6 56:2 checkbook 34:7 checking 32:14 checkmark 22:8,10 checks 23:7 chief 61:2 child 60:12 61:5 children 61:22 62:5,9 choice 39:23 39:24 46:2 choose 8:3 58:3 chose 16:15 circle 53:11 citizen 36:22 60:12 citizens 23:4 23:20 53:1 61:19 city 1:8 6:2 17:7 23:20 37:18 42:6,8 42:15,17 43:6 44:1,3,5,10,25 45:1,3 47:16
--	--	--	---	---

48:1 52:17 56:19 68:17 69:7 71:4,4 civitello 38:1 38:3,4,8,9 40:10 clearly 52:24 closed 8:2 44:13 closing 14:19 clothes 33:20 clothing 60:10 cold 8:22,23 9:23,23 60:8 60:13 coldest 24:15 24:15 34:16 colleagues 5:14 collecting 33:8 college 58:15 come 4:18 8:11,19 10:12 12:13 19:17 21:19 26:15 30:17 32:6 34:17 35:2,19 39:1 42:23 44:5 45:24 47:19 52:19 58:15,23 59:25 62:24 66:10,11 comes 4:10 31:13 41:3 46:6 54:24 57:11 69:4 comical 66:18 coming 5:20 9:17,19 10:14 23:18,22 26:5 31:14,16 47:15 51:10	52:4 53:8 55:10 58:20 commensur... 50:4 comment 6:10 35:24 37:8 51:12 comments 6:4 30:9 44:16,19 44:20,21,23 65:25 70:2 commission 1:2 3:17,21 5:13 11:20 15:24,24 21:24,25 28:3 42:18 47:15 62:12,14,17 63:1 67:9,15 68:6 69:21 70:11 commission's 4:14 commissioner 1:16 3:4 5:22 5:24 11:18 14:12 16:1 47:17 56:7 63:22 69:16 commission... 4:21 66:2 commodity 51:7 common 25:17 26:9 45:4 community 12:20 47:25 62:15 companies 20:11 26:25 27:10 31:11	company 1:12 9:11 10:20 11:9,15 12:15 13:23 14:4,5,6 15:2,4 17:9,15 21:8 26:14,18 26:19 27:19 29:22 31:9,15 31:15,19 32:2 33:14,15 34:13 36:17 36:20 37:10 37:16 38:16 38:17,19 45:21,21 48:9 48:18,24 49:4 51:1 59:1,25 60:23 63:14 65:1,2,2,4 67:6 company's 31:6,23 32:15 compared 31:22 48:5 competencies 20:7 complain 38:12,14 complex 57:21 computer 34:18 35:4,5 36:23 concern 31:7 concerned 28:7 43:25 44:11 concerning 25:24 concerns 47:7 64:11 concluded 70:16	confusing 70:8 conley 6:8,9 6:13,17,17,19 6:23 7:7 connected 24:21 51:23 consciousness 66:5 considerable 46:11 considerably 43:6 consideration 64:12 65:7 66:18 68:15 constitute 65:22 consumer 27:22 57:11 consumers 3:25 14:21 25:20 62:20 contact 55:25 56:3 63:20 context 11:13 continue 20:19 21:11 50:14 68:19 continues 61:20 conversation 10:20 cook 46:15,16 core 52:17 corina 7:7,8 7:10 corners 47:3 corporate 15:21 19:5 corporation 15:2	corporations 37:4 correctly 36:13 cost 8:5 16:9 28:18,23 31:20 41:9 48:2,8,10 49:7 50:10,12 56:20 57:14 costs 28:12 29:16,17 57:8 57:8,8,17 council 4:1 counsel 3:13 3:15 11:22 12:20 21:3 44:22 59:1 70:4 71:11,15 counties 26:2 countries 51:5 couple 12:8 18:5 34:25 47:20 49:24 55:16 67:1 69:17 course 36:11 59:21 court 5:7 38:23 61:16 64:3 65:18 71:6 cover 17:6 coverage 52:3 crap 10:11 11:5 create 51:6 critically 5:6 crucial 33:17 crude 57:8 culture 44:12 curious 57:7 57:15
---	--	--	---	---

current 16:11 20:6	62:20	depend 28:2	53:3	e
currently 5:12 17:11 22:7	dean 23:13,14 66:21	depends 58:6	disney 61:5	e 2:3 6:18 34:20,21 56:17 59:16 59:16 61:17 61:17,18 63:7 64:5,5,5,5,5
cushing 71:5 71:20	deborah 45:13,15	deposition 71:8,13	distribution 20:8 21:5 48:8	earlier 11:13 27:1,21 41:10 53:22 65:16
customer 6:24 19:4,6,9 20:12 20:13,15 30:11,13 31:14 32:7,15 36:24 39:25 48:9 55:23 56:3 58:6,8,9	decades 33:11	depressed 45:23	divide 27:18 39:16	education 55:11
customers 15:8,12 20:21 21:14,18 22:1 22:4,6,9,13 25:25 30:11 31:7,16 50:16 51:2 53:6 60:23 62:19 63:9 69:9	december 14:3 28:17,17 28:20 62:13	desert 42:22	divided 35:12	efficient 48:11 55:15,19 60:5 60:6
cut 9:13,15 12:8,9,10,13 29:12,12 47:2 47:3	decide 5:17 60:13 64:22 67:20	deserve 23:9	dividend 26:20,21 27:3 27:12	efficiently 33:25
cutbacks 7:3	decided 25:3 34:5 64:23	desiree 6:7,13 6:17	dividends 27:9,15,16	egg 46:15
d	decision 21:19 47:22 65:24	destruction 20:11	dividing 39:2	either 21:7 31:10 58:25
d 2:3 59:16,17 61:18	decline 32:22	developing 15:2 20:4	division 1:12	elderly 34:24
damn 15:5	decrease 17:17,18 58:18	different 7:17 41:11 42:3 58:3,4,5	documentati... 52:12	electric 29:8 29:22,24 31:22
daughter 8:4 61:25	decreased 17:2	digging 20:11	dollar 22:8,11 40:6	electricity 38:15,17,18 38:18 39:6,9
day 5:18,19 34:11 36:14 37:2	dedicated 20:3	digress 42:12	dollars 8:5 28:18 39:12	electronic 4:14
days 6:2 8:23 8:24 12:8,9,11 12:12 18:20	deducted 32:14	dillard's 42:14	double 38:22 39:19 41:14 41:14 57:5	element 45:1 45:3
deal 30:14 34:24 46:4	defeat 55:18	dip 34:7	drier 29:11	employed 71:12,15
	definitely 42:1 51:24	direction 71:11	drive 60:17,20	employee 7:2 71:14
	degrees 33:19	directly 11:1 36:17 65:13 65:15	duly 6:14 7:11 13:13 22:23 23:15 24:3 30:23 33:1 38:5 41:22 45:16 47:11 49:20 51:17 54:20 56:13 59:11 61:14 63:25 71:8	encourage 10:18,25 11:14 12:19 37:12 58:25 68:5,13 70:5
	delaney 16:2,7	directors 26:17	drive 60:17,20	energy 1:12 3:9 9:12 15:1
	delay 20:16	dirty 32:16	due 34:12	
	deliberate 66:5	disability 29:14 59:24	duly 6:14 7:11 13:13 22:23 23:15 24:3 30:23 33:1 38:5 41:22 45:16 47:11 49:20 51:17 54:20 56:13 59:11 61:14 63:25 71:8	
	deliberations 5:16	disapprove 50:8	duly 6:14 7:11 13:13 22:23 23:15 24:3 30:23 33:1 38:5 41:22 45:16 47:11 49:20 51:17 54:20 56:13 59:11 61:14 63:25 71:8	
	delinquent 22:1	disconnect 34:15 36:9	duly 6:14 7:11 13:13 22:23 23:15 24:3 30:23 33:1 38:5 41:22 45:16 47:11 49:20 51:17 54:20 56:13 59:11 61:14 63:25 71:8	
	deliver 33:24	discouraged 5:13	duly 6:14 7:11 13:13 22:23 23:15 24:3 30:23 33:1 38:5 41:22 45:16 47:11 49:20 51:17 54:20 56:13 59:11 61:14 63:25 71:8	
	delivery 31:10 57:12 69:5,7	discuss 62:16	duly 6:14 7:11 13:13 22:23 23:15 24:3 30:23 33:1 38:5 41:22 45:16 47:11 49:20 51:17 54:20 56:13 59:11 61:14 63:25 71:8	
	democracy 49:9	discussion 11:13 37:13	duly 6:14 7:11 13:13 22:23 23:15 24:3 30:23 33:1 38:5 41:22 45:16 47:11 49:20 51:17 54:20 56:13 59:11 61:14 63:25 71:8	

47:19 48:10 48:12 50:2 55:19 60:5,5 69:8,23 energy's 3:6 england 14:5 14:5 enter 5:16 66:5 entire 43:16 43:17 entitled 67:25 entries 3:7 entry 4:3 equals 17:18 equated 17:2 equity 26:9 48:16,17 error 34:18 35:3 ester 61:13,17 evaline 51:15 51:16 evening 43:4 44:6 45:6 52:21,25 evenly 39:7,16 eventually 53:5 everybody 19:12 27:17 29:3 35:14,14 38:9 50:19,22 64:9,10,15 65:5 66:16 exact 13:25 exactly 33:22 33:24 35:7 43:25 65:21 example 28:15 33:22 excessive 28:4 57:1	exchange 14:10,14 25:10,14 26:8 excuse 24:6,12 executive 61:3 exhausted 56:8 exhibits 2:5 exist 25:9 existing 69:10 expect 60:23 expense 50:15 expenses 26:5 experience 30:11 34:6 37:3,4 expert 48:4 explain 21:6,8 explains 40:21 exploding 25:1 explore 12:17 explored 12:16 extent 37:11 extra 29:23,24 35:19 41:7,9 f f 61:18 fact 5:14 7:19 10:5 18:19,19 29:21 44:16 facts 23:1 fair 30:16 41:18 46:18 47:22 48:14 48:16 58:1,16 62:10 65:24 67:25 false 60:1,1 familial 33:9	familiar 15:25 16:1 families 7:5 family 15:3 33:10 39:17 50:24 62:1 far 20:15 24:11 27:23 28:6 29:12,13 29:18 30:2 44:10 48:19 60:4,19 68:15 fast 16:9 fault 34:19 february 1:7 fee 24:14 28:13,19,24 29:9 39:20 40:6,23 feedback 43:21 44:8 45:9,9,12 53:22 68:21 feel 8:12 10:8 20:15 31:5 37:23 39:3,3 41:1 42:11 44:25 52:19 61:2 feeling 53:2 fees 30:1 41:11 57:6,15 fellow 66:2 fight 51:25 figure 26:2 63:10 file 1:11 filed 44:19 filing 4:14 finally 34:14 financial 33:8 33:14	financially 71:16 find 25:9,12 25:23 35:2 40:13 50:25 51:1,8 55:12 61:23 62:5,15 fine 19:10 20:15 34:9 finished 65:9 first 6:7 27:1 37:6 45:19 47:14,24 54:22 56:15 59:13 60:15 60:16 fiscal 15:15 21:16 five 6:3,24 8:23 17:14 24:15 35:11 44:13,13 fix 35:8 39:7 fixed 17:24 28:24 29:15 37:22 45:20 48:8,9,13 57:12 61:19 fixing 33:23 flat 24:18 fly 9:22 folks 11:4 18:6 21:7 follows 6:14 7:11 13:13 22:23 23:15 24:3 30:23 33:1 38:5 41:22 45:16 47:11 49:20 51:17 54:20 56:13 59:11 61:14 63:25	food 6:25 23:6 29:16 52:5 60:14,16 foregoing 71:7 forget 39:12 form 67:19 former 34:3 fortunate 29:18 forum 10:24 68:17 forward 4:18 5:21 6:3 10:12 54:14 four 5:12 19:15 20:3,16 28:9 35:11 52:2 69:24 friend 64:23 front 40:18 42:1 frustration 63:18 full 14:2 16:12 fully 44:20 fun 61:6 fund 69:8 funds 26:16 26:17 53:11 funny 66:17 furnace 29:9 29:11 furnaces 48:12 further 71:13 furthermore 14:2 future 45:10 53:25
--	--	--	---	--

g	58:5,12 60:7 60:14,16,18 60:21,23 65:2 65:5 67:6 68:19 69:5,8 69:12,23 gasoline 32:4 32:6 general 1:11 generally 66:1 gentleman 11:23 13:21 18:2 26:25 37:1 39:4 70:4 getting 20:23 21:15 24:23 28:4 50:2 51:4 62:7 63:14 69:12 give 4:17 9:12 10:16 11:21 17:17 18:11 22:8 33:22 35:22 38:18 38:19 48:19 48:21 59:25 67:10,13,20 67:21 70:1 given 23:2 45:10 giving 7:14 50:17 glad 19:14 43:21 62:22 gladstone 18:9 43:4,5,6 44:1,10 go 6:6,9 9:6,17 16:7,8,16 17:8 19:21 23:2 27:7 29:14,18 30:1 34:5	37:6 39:8,25 48:12 50:20 60:7,12,19 61:4 62:9 68:18 70:9,15 goal 20:19 goes 29:22,25 38:11,13 39:5 46:12 going 6:1 8:10 8:17,25 9:6,23 10:14 11:25 14:22 15:13 16:8 17:17,19 22:4,13 27:7 28:7 29:7 33:21 34:15 35:8 37:9 39:2,7 40:12 40:14,15,16 40:25 41:18 42:4,5,7,12 44:14 46:1,13 46:16,17,23 51:10 52:13 53:5,13,15 55:9,17 58:12 63:6,11 64:12 64:14 66:12 67:13,21 good 8:19 12:7 13:18 20:1 21:13 22:11 26:9,24 40:15 48:7,19 58:9 66:12,15 gr 1:12 3:5 grade 32:17 grand 61:5 grandchildren 61:22 grandfathers 62:4	grandmothers 62:4 grandson 62:1 granted 57:22 grass 12:10 gray 51:21 greed 50:13 grocery 60:15 group 14:23 16:12 25:6 63:5 groups 26:16 grow 21:11 53:13 guarantee 11:11 guess 42:11 43:24 57:17 60:24 61:1 guessed 54:15 55:8 guidelines 68:16 guys 9:15 14:20 16:18 21:19 23:21 49:8 67:6,6,9 67:10,15,16 67:18 68:14 68:18	68:10 hangs 32:17 happened 11:7 60:2 happy 44:14 68:11 hard 51:25 53:9 harder 10:24 hardships 33:9 harry 35:22 hat 39:4 headquarters 15:19 16:9 health 52:3 hear 22:19 24:7 48:16,17 49:17 52:23 66:3 68:8 heard 18:12 44:17,18 62:18 63:8 64:14 70:2 hearing 1:6 5:9,21 6:4 45:11 49:25 65:17 70:16 hearings 6:3 11:8 15:23 44:21 66:1,10 hearts 49:13 heat 33:17 35:17 heating 17:4 held 64:20 help 6:25 8:17 9:10,18,19 11:21,25 12:5 12:6,18,23 21:6 22:1,9 27:11 61:23 62:4
		h		
		h 56:17 61:18 half 67:5 hamilton 54:8 54:11,11,12 54:13,15,19 54:23 55:3,4,7 56:6 59:7 hand 6:12 13:3 24:1 30:21 45:14 54:18 56:11		

<p>hertz 16:12 hesitate 4:10 hey 7:15,20 8:2,13,17 9:13 10:11,16 27:24 28:3,9 50:20 58:14 hi 32:24 high 9:8 15:18 21:15 27:25 29:21 higher 8:9,9 8:10,22,22 27:5 35:20 60:7 hike 64:13 hit 36:2 hold 36:20 67:23 holidays 39:17 holzendorf 61:13,17 63:4 63:16 home 19:10 19:11 29:10 33:9 35:2 63:7 69:20 homeless 52:6 homeowner 19:9 homes 23:6 25:2 hope 4:7 20:12 60:1,1 66:16 hopefully 70:6 hose 49:3 hospitals 50:11 hot 29:6,8,10 hour 20:16</p>	<p>hours 19:15 house 8:1,1,7 29:11 34:10 41:5,8,9,11,13 55:14 houses 25:2 huh 6:19 hundred 69:9 hundreds 39:12 hungry 60:13 hunt 45:25 hunter 32:20 32:21 hurricane 36:1,2,3 husband 61:20 62:1 hyphen 59:16</p> <p style="text-align: center;">i</p> <p>idea 64:10 ii 23:21 imagine 27:12 38:10 implement 20:11,13 important 5:6 6:1 18:13 43:21 45:1,3,5 45:8 impossible 25:23 improve 20:13 69:11 improvements 27:11 69:12 incident 52:11 inclined 11:14 include 25:21 including 16:10</p>	<p>income 15:15 23:7 29:15 45:20 46:7,8 46:22 48:13 48:16,17 50:25 55:10 55:21 61:20 61:21 62:2 incomes 35:14 incorporation 15:1 increase 1:11 3:6 7:1,2,3,15 13:25 14:22 16:18,23 17:14,20 20:8 21:18 23:4,19 23:24 24:11 24:13,18 25:7 28:8 29:4 31:12,16,25 32:2,3 33:6,21 35:6,10,25 36:4 38:10 42:2 47:5,24 48:2,10 50:17 51:24 52:10 55:8,13,17,22 56:18,18 57:1 58:18 59:21 60:22 61:18 63:9 67:4,14 67:22 69:24 increased 16:17 increases 17:5 50:15 55:16 63:14 independence 43:10,13 44:3 44:10 indicated 5:7</p>	<p>indicating 31:24 indication 4:5 industry 48:3 50:12 information 4:15 25:10 48:22 65:23 67:3 68:2 69:23 infrastructure 20:5 21:5,12 33:23 35:9 37:9,21 39:15 57:13 initiative 49:1 input 18:23 insane 67:14 inside 68:18 instance 36:21 insulated 56:23 insurance 49:4 intend 33:23 33:24 intention 14:3 intents 25:8 interact 36:17 36:19 interest 32:21 44:23 interested 45:11 71:16 internet 36:12 intra 15:1 inventive 51:3 investing 20:4 20:5 investment 15:3 26:16 investor 26:24 27:6</p>	<p>investors 20:20 invisible 31:21 irritating 32:18 issue 19:1,11 52:25 58:21 62:25 63:13</p> <p style="text-align: center;">j</p> <p>j.c. 42:14 jacking 8:21 9:11 50:23 jacobs 3:10,10 13:2,18,22 35:25 january 23:5 jason 13:9,12 66:22,23 jeopardy 38:23 jj 52:11 job 13:18 55:11 jobs 18:15,17 18:21 61:23 61:24,24 62:5 62:6 joe 43:10,13 john 3:19,24 32:20 joke 8:13 9:24 13:1 jones 1:14 3:2 joseph 44:2 judge 1:14 3:1 3:2,12,16,18 3:22 4:2 5:5,7 5:22 6:6,11,15 6:18 7:6,12 9:25 12:2 13:8,14 14:15</p>
---	--	--	---	---

16:4 18:1 19:19,21 20:24 22:18 22:21,24 23:13,16,25 24:4,8 30:4,20 30:24 31:2 32:20,23 33:2 36:5 37:25 38:6 41:19,23 44:7 45:13,17 47:8,12 49:14 49:21 51:13 51:18 54:3,9 54:12,17,21 54:25 55:5 56:5,8,14 59:8 59:12,18 61:11,15 63:3 64:2,6,16,19 65:8,19 66:20 66:23 68:22 69:14 70:13 july 28:22 justify 50:15	21:22 22:2 29:25 53:10 60:10,11 67:7 keeps 29:3 46:1 50:19 kennard 1:14 3:2 kennedy 3:4 23:13,14,18 kenneth 41:20 41:21 kenney 1:15 5:4 10:4,18 11:6 12:14,25 18:3,16,18 20:1 21:1 22:14 30:6,16 32:8,11 36:7 36:16 37:7,24 43:1,8,14,20 45:5,8 51:14 53:16,19 54:2 58:22 63:16 64:1 65:9,11 67:23 68:20 kids 58:15 61:8 kind 7:25 8:6 9:10 12:6 46:8 66:17 kindergarten 32:17 know 7:17,18 7:24,25 8:12 8:21 10:13 11:6,7 12:2 14:11,15,19 16:9 22:3,10 23:22 26:8,13 34:11,13 35:7 35:20,20,21 35:22 36:1,18 36:18 37:15	37:20,20 38:12 43:25 44:8,17 46:1,3 46:6 47:1,2,21 47:22 48:3,8 48:19 49:9 50:6,8,20,24 52:9,22,23 55:1,12,20,21 57:3,14,23,23 58:11,20 59:21,25 60:25 62:6,10 62:21,24 66:10,12 67:17 70:7,9 known 21:22 knows 50:22 kohl's 42:14 korean 23:21	large 26:13 larger 11:13 largest 42:6,8 42:10,19 law 1:14 3:1,2 3:12,16,22 4:2 5:22 6:6,11,15 6:18,20 7:6,12 9:25 12:2 13:8,14 14:15 16:4 18:1 19:19,21 20:24 22:18 22:21,24 23:13,16,25 24:4,8 30:4,20 30:24 31:2 32:20,23 33:2 36:5 37:25 38:6 41:19,23 44:7 45:13,17 47:8,12 49:14 49:21 51:13 51:18 54:3,9 54:12,17,21 54:25 55:5 56:5,8,14 59:8 59:12,18 61:11,15 63:3 64:2,6,16,19 65:8 66:20,23 68:22 69:14 70:13 lawyers 68:9 layers 60:10 lays 69:22 leader 47:25 leave 19:16 37:1 leeches 51:3 left 3:4 53:2 61:12 64:25	legal 51:1 letter 19:13 20:17 34:14 34:23 35:5 70:3 letting 67:1 level 9:7 29:20 45:20 leveraging 20:6 lewis 13:4 lexuses 61:9 liabilities 26:13 life 34:4 light 45:21 62:10 65:1,2,4 lights 60:17 limited 29:17 55:10,25 56:3 lindsey 20:7 line 14:21 32:15 40:17 61:2,4 lines 24:21,24 25:1 40:17 list 4:16,23 5:1 6:7 7:7 13:9 19:22 56:9 60:15 listed 52:21 54:4 listen 8:20 32:19 listening 35:23 64:11 little 8:7 15:9 15:10 25:20 35:3 40:21 42:3 48:3,15 50:6,20,21 62:20 67:8 70:6
k	kansas 1:8 6:2 17:7 23:20 37:18 42:5,7 42:15,17 43:5 43:25 44:3,5,9 44:25 45:1,2 47:15 56:19 71:4 kauffman 3:23,24,24 kc 18:10 kcp&l 31:8 62:10,15 63:2 kcpl 6:25 keep 7:23 9:20 16:8 17:12	l		
		l 1:14 6:18 59:17 61:18 laclede 1:12 13:23 14:3,16 14:23,23,25 15:1,2,2,3,4,7 17:14 20:2,18 21:24,25 25:6 25:11,13 26:14 27:6 31:15 57:16 69:8 laclede's 15:14 ladies 67:1 lady 39:15 63:22 64:25 69:2 laid 33:7,7 language 24:12		

<p>live 19:10 33:9 35:15 61:19 62:3 lives 46:19 62:2 69:2 llc 15:3 local 1:6 5:9 6:3 11:8 66:1 located 48:22 location 44:12 53:23 locations 52:22,24 logistically 44:14 long 4:21 10:21 32:18 37:16 39:2 longer 33:8 look 5:20 6:3 8:8 40:12 45:22 50:10 looking 10:25 13:5 42:21,22 44:4 55:11 looks 54:13 losing 17:7 losses 60:24 lost 19:14 61:23 lot 13:19,20 14:20 24:25 27:4,13 31:17 33:5,6 36:19 36:22 37:22 38:14,21 40:16 46:23 47:25 48:4 53:2,9 58:2 60:3 62:19 louis 15:19,20 16:17,22 21:21 25:25</p>	<p>26:1 love 59:4 low 46:22 62:2 lower 16:23 27:13 40:21 67:12 lowered 16:11 16:25 29:13 lowest 17:1 lucky 41:4,12 luxury 58:11 lynn 71:5,20</p>	<p>mart 27:1 42:15 mart's 27:12 mary 59:10,15 71:5,20 math 15:9 17:21 69:2 mathematici... 31:17 matter 1:11 24:19 67:22 mcconnell 49:15,15,17 49:19,23 51:15 mean 8:1,2,17 9:13 12:5,7 19:19 29:17 34:14 38:22 51:4 52:5 58:4,8,14 64:13 67:5 means 50:23 60:6 medicaid 52:3 meeting 13:21 44:6,11 45:7 52:21 53:1 62:16 meetings 42:19 44:4,18 52:16 53:23 member 51:22 members 11:2 11:15,19 68:5 mention 7:3 mentioned 18:6 40:22 46:5,19 52:10 52:24 mercedes 61:10</p>	<p>message 19:16 37:2 meters 49:1,2 mge 3:11 11:2 13:23 14:5,10 14:13 15:6 17:14 19:5 20:18 21:4 23:19 25:8,12 25:22,24 30:12 31:16 37:3 55:14 56:1 57:10,16 58:9 mge's 42:7,9 44:9 michael 24:1 24:2 microphone 4:18 midtown 52:16 miles 60:20 million 14:9 15:8,10,12,16 16:10,10,11 16:14,18 21:16,17 25:19,20 26:3 26:15 31:16 67:12,14,21 69:9,10 mind 4:10 10:7,9 67:19 mine 49:5 minimum 46:14 minute 43:12 43:23 48:23 missouri 1:1,8 1:12 3:6,9,21 4:1 21:25 23:20 25:22</p>	<p>36:2 42:6,8,17 43:6 44:1,3,5 47:19 69:8,21 69:23 70:10 71:2 missourians 33:5 mistakenly 19:14 mo 71:6 model 21:9,11 mom 12:7,18 35:1 moment 10:2 16:5 36:5 money 12:24 14:22 15:17 17:7,11,13 20:22 22:4,12 24:23 25:3 26:4,12 27:8 27:10,14 29:15 30:2 31:18,20 32:7 32:12 33:12 33:16 35:8,18 35:19 40:11 40:13,14 41:18 46:12 46:16,23 50:10 51:9 55:18 58:14 60:3 69:7 monopolies 53:14 monopoly 15:4 27:23 39:23 53:5 58:1,2 month 6:24 7:20,21,22 8:5 8:22 13:25 15:10,11 17:3</p>
	<p>m</p>			
	<p>m 1:16 ma'am 10:4 12:25 32:8,11 51:19 macy's 42:14 mail 34:10,20 63:7 mailed 34:21 maintain 23:5 49:8 50:13 maintenance 24:24 25:3,4 27:11,13 major 7:2 making 13:5 17:11 23:10 50:25 52:6 man 17:8 29:4 41:10 67:5,14 managed 29:19 manner 35:10 manufacturi... 62:6 marc 3:14 marked 2:5 market 17:11 27:5</p>			

17:15,16,18 21:18 28:9,10 28:13,17,23 29:16 31:13 35:13 38:24 39:2 40:20 41:14 46:9,9 46:10 59:22 60:20 62:11 63:10 month's 8:7 monthly 9:7 24:14,18 28:12,13,19 28:24 29:25 48:9 56:25 57:12 months 6:24 12:19 17:6,14 24:15 28:9 31:13 33:17 35:12,12 39:9 60:9 morons 38:21 mosquitos 42:22 mother 36:22 move 61:25 moved 15:20 multi 44:12 69:6 multiple 18:20 18:20 39:21 mutual 26:16	25:8 30:25 38:2,8 54:4,5 54:10,22 55:2 56:15,16 59:13 61:16 64:3,4 68:25 named 42:16 nasty 58:8 natesha 56:12 56:16 natural 50:1 51:5 near 29:2 nearly 25:23 necessary 24:25 35:7 neck 65:3,3 need 12:5 19:18 22:9,13 23:2,23 33:19 33:22 35:7,17 39:8,11 40:14 41:7,17 44:6 51:5,10 52:20 58:12,13 61:21 62:25 67:10 needed 23:11 needs 6:25 29:10 37:22 39:20 48:13 48:15 51:1 neighborhood 48:23 neimeyer 19:8 21:1,10 22:17 66:22,22,23 66:25 67:24 68:13 neither 71:11 nerve 47:19 net 15:15 21:15	never 22:10 34:3 46:14 new 14:5,5,14 16:9 20:11,13 25:10 26:7 34:6 39:13 49:2 51:7,21 55:16 56:19 67:2,19 69:9 newer 19:10 news 37:16 newspaper 42:13 nice 14:9 58:7 niemeyer 13:9 13:10,12,16 14:13,16 18:3 18:15,17 19:25 22:14 night 60:8 nine 28:23 nonprofit 57:10 noon 13:21 18:21 43:8 norm 37:5 normal 27:10 41:8 norman 47:9 47:10,14,18 north 43:6 nose 50:22 nother 43:3 notice 36:9 noticed 49:24 november 16:23 17:4 number 3:5 19:16 34:20 numbers 22:12 36:13	o o 6:18 61:18 61:18 o'clock 42:20 42:21 43:19 44:12 oath 66:24 68:24 obscene 23:9 obviously 18:25 30:8 odorless 31:21 offered 16:12 office 3:12,15 16:12 21:3 44:22 58:25 63:20 70:3 officers 61:3 offices 15:21 oh 12:10 35:16 66:15 okay 6:23 8:19 14:16 16:2,7 22:17 28:18 31:2 34:8 36:16,22 41:25 42:21 42:25 48:24 54:1 55:2 63:4 65:8 66:25 70:14 old 8:7 55:10 older 19:11 oliver 56:12 56:16,17 58:22 once 39:19 ongoing 25:4 online 34:5,6 opc 21:7 open 8:1 10:24 34:11	68:17,17 opened 34:14 opening 26:25 operate 15:17 operates 57:10 operating 15:16 58:2 opinion 50:16 52:20 66:16 opportunities 18:14 43:16 opportunity 4:11,25 5:15 11:1 13:11 18:12 oppose 61:10 61:18 opposed 19:11 20:10 23:19 23:23 24:10 29:4 42:1 51:24 54:16 55:8 56:17,18 59:20 opposing 60:21 option 27:24 28:2 58:3 options 33:15 order 52:2 organization 51:21,22 53:21 organizational 14:7 outcome 71:16 outrageously 26:24 outright 10:17 outside 69:17
n n 2:3 6:18 56:17 59:17 61:18 64:5 nadine 38:1,4 38:8 name 3:1,19 4:17 6:16	n n 2:3 6:18 56:17 59:17 61:18 64:5 nadine 38:1,4 38:8 name 3:1,19 4:17 6:16			

outstanding 25:18	particularly 21:4 29:20	59:5 69:4	persons 4:8	point 13:2
overall 20:20	59:1	payment 9:7	peter 35:21	18:5 19:17
20:23	parties 71:12	12:15 45:20	phone 11:12	43:3 52:15
overcharged	71:15	payments 9:7	12:17 19:16	58:13
7:17	party 4:3	13:6	20:16 34:20	pointed 13:23
overcharging	passed 16:19	pays 26:20	56:1	points 47:20
22:6 58:17	passing 35:1	48:18	physical 42:16	poor 23:12
overseas	patience 36:24	penney's	pick 57:7,9,16	population
23:22	patterson 24:1	42:14	57:25 60:23	42:6,8,19
owned 17:10	24:2,6,10 30:6	people 4:16	60:25 67:3	portion 4:9
34:10	30:13,19	10:13 11:23	69:18,19 70:5	5:8 65:16
owners 26:14	paul 35:21	13:19,20	piece 67:2	position 67:11
owns 14:23	pay 7:2,22,23	18:21 24:16	pieces 48:25	possible 10:22
oxymoron	9:8,15 15:18	32:1 33:13	pipe 31:21	poston 3:14
38:21	24:16 27:10	35:7,13 36:19	49:8	3:14
p	27:11,14	36:23 37:22	pipeline 15:4	power 14:8
	28:14 29:8,19	42:4 43:24	20:9 48:7	53:13
p.m. 70:17	29:20,23,24	44:4,15 46:21	pipelines	prefer 58:17
pages 69:24	30:14 32:13	47:4 48:11,18	20:10 49:25	prejudging
paid 24:19	33:16 34:4,5	49:12 50:11	pipes 31:23	65:22
26:13,20	35:19,21	52:6,19 53:12	37:17,18	present 3:8
27:18 33:10	36:19 38:14	57:21,22,23	place 26:6	49:16 68:23
33:12 34:8	38:15,15,24	57:25 58:3	44:13	president 20:7
36:12,15 56:3	39:5,8,11,14	63:5 64:12	places 42:16	presiding 1:14
panthers	39:16,19,19	66:8,9 68:1	47:3	3:3 65:14
51:22	41:3,7,14,14	peoples 17:22	plan 9:6,8	pressure 49:2
paper 40:18	41:18 45:23	58:15	29:20 45:21	pretty 14:9
64:24 67:3	46:3 47:1,1	percent 14:18	play 62:24	26:9 47:25
papers 69:17	48:18 55:23	14:18 23:5	playgrounds	48:7 55:17,24
paperwork	56:1 57:12,21	26:23 27:3,8	32:18	55:25
40:13	57:22,23	29:1,2 40:4,7	please 16:8	previous
parasites	58:12 60:7,14	40:7,9	44:15 56:15	39:15,22
51:11	60:16,16,17	percentage	59:12	price 27:25
parents 34:24	61:7 62:9,13	28:25	pleasure	47:5 50:14
part 5:6,11	63:11,11	period 15:18	38:16	prices 6:25
23:3 27:14	paying 9:8	17:24 35:13	plugging 67:7	7:1,1 8:21
65:20 66:4	27:9 28:20	permission	plus 26:3,19	9:11 15:18
participate	32:4,5 34:9,19	34:7	46:14 56:25	27:2,4 60:18
5:20	39:6 40:14	person 6:7	pockets 14:22	printed 4:13
particular	41:3 46:22	37:6 55:25	20:22 40:16	19:13
42:9,24 48:25	50:7 55:18	personal	52:2,5 61:4	prior 17:6
	57:10 58:1	39:11,18	podium 4:18	31:4
		62:13 63:11	10:1 67:4	

private 20:8	program 22:2	public's 44:23	68:11 70:8,11	real 64:10
privately 17:10	33:18 51:25	pull 26:7	quick 69:2	realize 34:18
privilege 24:20	52:1	pulled 25:14	quite 28:6	really 20:12
probably 12:16 21:7	programs 12:20	punches 33:12	r	21:17 33:17
24:12,15	prohibited 65:20	purchase 41:5	r 59:16 61:17	34:16 35:17
40:16 45:23	pronounce 14:8,25 30:24	purchased 25:22 55:14	61:18 64:5,5	45:22 46:24
49:3,5 54:15	38:1 54:5,22	pure 57:8	raincoat 32:16	47:22 53:1
55:7 59:23	properly 37:12	purpose 8:11	raise 6:11	60:8 65:5,6
66:11,12,14	properties 48:22,25 49:6	44:8 55:18	13:3 21:25	66:9 67:2
69:18	property 39:11,18 41:5	purposes 25:9	24:1 27:2	69:5 70:9
problem 25:4	62:13 63:12	push 36:21,21	30:21 39:10	reason 31:11
27:9 42:17,25	proposing 37:10 55:17	56:1	39:14 40:25	66:14
65:3	prove 40:14	put 7:3 19:5	45:14 50:14	receive 23:4
problems 8:15	proverbial 50:21	21:14 22:4,7	54:17 56:10	27:14 50:18
27:22 40:1	provide 58:24	22:10 29:8	raising 24:14	53:11 65:24
57:3,3	providers 58:5	33:19 49:2,2	28:12 29:25	66:1
proceed 7:13	providing 18:13 20:19	53:14 58:15	58:19 68:10	received 19:4
13:15 22:25	58:10	60:20 69:7	rate 1:11 3:6	recommend... 67:11
23:17 24:5,9	public 1:2,6	putting 17:13	7:3,4 14:1,22	reconnection 29:9
33:3 38:7	3:13,15,21 5:9	20:22 28:25	16:24 17:24	record 4:24
41:24 45:18	5:11 6:3 11:8	q	23:4,19,24	5:11 23:3
47:13 49:22	11:20,22	quarterly 25:12	24:11,13 25:7	39:20 56:15
51:19 55:6	15:23,24	question 4:6	28:7 33:6,21	59:14 65:20
59:19 64:7	17:10 18:23	10:13,16,23	35:6,10,20	66:4 68:24
66:24	20:21 21:3,24	11:11,16	36:4 38:10	70:15
proceeding 13:16	21:24 23:3	18:24 20:1,14	40:24 42:2	recorded 4:13
proceedings 1:4	28:2 42:18,18	30:8,10 31:4	47:24 51:24	recovery 21:21
process 5:7,20	42:23 44:22	37:7,14 42:4	52:10 55:8,16	reduced 71:10
44:24 68:7	58:10,25 66:1	48:20 64:8,14	55:16,22	reduction 50:18
70:7	67:9,16 68:5	64:20,24 65:7	56:17,18	reedus 59:10
production 48:4	68:18 69:21	65:15 69:6	59:21 60:21	59:15,16,16
profit 14:9,17	69:25 70:4,10	questions 4:7	61:18 63:13	59:20
17:16 21:16		4:12,22 8:12	64:13 67:4	referred 35:25
23:9,10 24:22		8:15,16 10:6,8	68:8 69:24	regards 34:2
27:20,21		12:3 13:17,20	rates 50:3	regular 7:5
profits 19:5		16:5 18:2,7,7	57:18 58:19	regulated 25:19 26:1
27:16		20:25 21:2	60:7	27:3
		37:8,11 40:2	ratio 29:2	
		64:11 65:12	read 54:5	
		67:18,25 68:7	69:19 70:5	
			reading 6:21	

regulator 49:2	renee 63:24	resource 15:1	round 31:22	season 17:4
regulatory	64:4	respect 37:8	rude 40:1	second 41:5,8
1:14 3:1,2,12	renovation	responsibility	52:23	41:9,13 42:6,8
3:16,22 4:2	16:13	40:12	rules 22:6	42:10,12,19
5:22 6:6,11,15	renovations	rest 51:12	38:22	security 23:6
6:18,20,20 7:6	16:14	results 12:3	run 65:2	59:24
7:12 9:25	rental 41:5	retired 53:9	runaround	see 4:4 7:8
12:2 13:8,14	replace 37:10	return 14:9	11:5	20:9 22:12
14:15 16:4	replaced 37:9	15:13 20:20	running 7:19	24:12 33:25
18:1 19:19,21	37:18	20:23 21:15	s	36:3 37:19
20:24 22:18	replacement	26:23,24 27:4		42:12 49:8,9
22:21,24	20:9 57:13	27:8	s 1:15 56:17	52:11,14 53:6
23:13,16,25	replacing	revenue 15:16	59:16,17	57:7 58:20
24:4,8 30:4,20	37:17	26:3 50:25	61:17	60:2 63:19
30:24 31:2	reply 35:4	51:8	safety 31:7,8,9	68:10
32:20,23 33:2	report 25:14	revenues	31:12	seen 22:10
36:5 37:25	25:15,17,21	25:19 26:2,6	saldana 59:10	24:13
38:6 41:19,23	reporter 5:7	review 5:15	59:15,20	send 35:5
44:7 45:13,17	61:16 64:3	rhetorical	saldona 59:16	41:15 50:5
47:8,12 49:14	65:18 71:1,6	16:6 42:4	sandra 69:1,1	62:6,17 63:6
49:21 51:13	reports 25:12	ridiculous	sandy 30:5,22	sending 34:22
51:18 54:3,9	25:13 26:7	7:24 8:8 50:9	36:1,2,3	senior 1:14
54:12,17,21	representation	right 3:3 6:12	satisfaction	23:4 36:22
54:25 55:5	62:21	7:16 16:20	36:10	60:11 61:19
56:5,8,14 59:8	representati...	17:21 21:23	save 29:13	seniors 23:11
59:12,18	10:20 11:9	24:1 27:5	32:12	51:23 52:2,8
61:11,15 63:3	67:17	30:19,21	savings 17:3	53:7
64:2,6,16,19	represented	34:22 38:2,20	saying 27:24	sense 9:3
65:8 66:20,23	4:3	38:25 45:14	48:14 58:12	14:19,20 45:4
68:22 69:14	represents	45:19 54:18	60:4 62:23	45:4
70:13	11:22 44:22	54:25 56:11	66:8,13	senseless
rejected 21:24	request 3:6	59:3 63:19,22	says 40:19,22	60:22
21:25	69:23	river 43:7	40:22 56:21	sent 36:9
related 71:11	requested	rob 35:21	scary 57:2	september
relative 71:14	17:5 49:4	robert 1:15	schedule 5:19	13:24 15:6,14
relevant 64:10	required	3:4	school 32:17	17:5
relief 8:18	24:25	rolled 33:11	schools 60:2,3	serious 62:23
remain 4:20	research 19:1	rosemarie	scrambled	62:25,25
10:1 66:24	30:8	22:20,21,22	46:15	63:13
68:24	residents	rosemary	scrutiny 15:20	service 1:2
remind 18:8	46:22	22:19	16:21 22:2	3:21 7:16
render 65:24	resolved 36:10	roughly 41:1	sears 42:14	11:20 17:20
		69:10		19:4,7,10

21:24 28:3 30:11,13 32:7 32:15 36:25 39:25 42:7,9 42:18 43:16 43:17 44:9 48:19,21,24 49:6 50:8,9 55:23 56:3 57:4,6 58:6,8 58:10 67:9 68:6 69:12,21 70:10 services 7:18 15:3,24 20:3 58:4 session 4:7 64:20,21 set 33:18 44:9 52:17 setting 27:1 seven 16:11 35:12 seventh 17:16 share 19:3 20:23 26:21 26:22,23 27:4 27:4 30:17 shared 43:21 shareholders 25:18 27:19 shares 25:18 26:15,19 sheet 69:23 sheila 32:23 32:24,25 shop 45:25 shore 62:7 show 40:11 41:17 50:3 sick 53:7 sign 64:23	signed 54:4,6 54:13 56:9,10 68:23 simple 20:17 29:21 35:3 simply 24:11 24:22 25:1 29:4 single 24:19 69:3 sir 23:25 24:4 30:4 43:15 47:12 53:18 sister 59:23 sit 8:11 37:2 60:15 sitting 5:12 42:5 65:13 situation 36:9 62:2 situations 45:10 six 18:21 43:4 43:9 sleep 60:9 slighted 42:11 44:25 small 7:4 20:23 41:5,13 snatch 53:12 social 23:6 59:24 soft 49:18 sold 14:6 33:15 solid 20:20 solution 39:1 somebody 8:20,20 28:1 62:22 63:8 sorry 15:11 16:20 18:16 31:23 32:1	sort 68:4 sounds 15:4 source 48:13 sources 11:22 48:12 51:8 speak 11:1,19 11:23 13:11 19:18,23,23 33:4 52:20 54:6 67:1 speaking 49:12 51:20 53:20 59:22 66:1 67:19 specific 68:7 specifically 37:21 spell 55:2 59:13 61:16 64:3 spend 46:16 46:17 52:1 spent 19:2 26:14 spread 48:7 squeezing 67:8 ss 71:3 st 15:19,20 16:17,22 21:21 25:25 26:1 43:10,13 44:2 staff 3:16,20 11:20 21:3,3,7 59:1 63:18 68:2,6 69:21 70:9,9,10 stand 28:3 standing 68:9 start 51:7 started 6:7	starting 31:5 37:17 state 1:1 6:16 13:22 15:23 27:23 34:24 53:4 56:15 59:13 64:2 67:17 71:2 stated 27:21 29:5 55:1 statement 4:20,24 7:15 statements 6:1 16:8 states 52:12 station 7:1 stay 7:23 10:21 27:20 56:19 57:20 58:23 step 54:13 stepfather 35:1 stephen 1:16 steve 20:7 stiner 30:5,20 30:22 31:1,1,4 32:9,12 69:1,1 69:15 stock 14:10,14 17:11 25:10 25:13 26:7,19 stoll 1:16 3:4 5:23,24 11:18 14:12 16:1 47:17 56:7 63:22 69:16 stop 8:10 16:4 51:4 53:14 store 42:16 stove 29:11 46:15	straight 10:13 10:17 17:24 42:1 straighten 62:22 straightened 63:21 straits 33:14 stretch 30:2 stroke 46:8 structure 50:4 structures 51:7 69:11 struggle 24:16 62:9 struggling 63:10 students 23:11 stuff 63:12 68:16 stupidest 24:13 subsidiaries 14:24,25 suffer 7:5,5 summer 9:9 24:17 29:5,24 39:5 41:12 65:4 summertime 9:5,14,15 29:23 46:13 57:24 suppose 17:10 27:17 33:13 50:2 55:1 57:9 62:17 surcharge 57:13 59:22 sure 5:19 10:21,22 14:10 15:22
--	--	--	---	--

18:22 19:12 36:12,14 40:16 43:15 59:3,4 60:20 swear 4:19 sworn 5:9 71:8 system 4:15 26:1 27:23 37:6 49:8	tariffs 1:12 tax 39:18 46:14 57:15 62:13 63:12 taxes 39:11 57:7 taylor 51:15 51:16,20 53:17,18 54:1 54:4	47:11 49:12 49:20 51:17 54:20 56:13 59:11 61:14 63:25 testify 66:21 70:14 testimony 4:12,17 5:8,10 5:21 18:25 65:17,19,22 66:3 68:24 69:25 71:7,8 thank 3:14,18 5:5,5,17,21,25 7:6,12 10:5 11:17,24 13:10 14:25 18:4 19:2 22:14 23:12 23:18,24,25 24:4 30:2,4,16 30:19 31:2 32:19 33:2 36:4,7 37:23 37:24,25 38:6 40:10 41:19 41:23 43:1 45:12,17 47:6 47:8,12,15,18 49:11,13,14 51:13,14,18 53:15,16,20 54:2 56:5,7 58:22 59:6,7 59:18 61:10 64:1 66:7,18 66:20 67:24 68:11,20 69:13,14 70:11 thanks 3:19 30:7 43:2	53:19 65:11 66:25 thereto 71:15 thermal 16:24 16:25 17:1 thermostat 33:18 60:11 thing 9:1 15:5 21:13,13 22:12 29:6 42:23,24 68:4 things 18:5 20:3 28:4 48:1 49:24 62:19 think 6:19 12:14 15:16 17:9,24 21:2 21:12,13 22:3 22:3 23:8,23 32:16 33:4 34:20 37:10 37:22 38:21 39:20 41:17 42:15 48:15 51:5 65:1,5 66:11 67:1,10 thinks 48:2 thomas 45:13 45:15,19 47:9 thought 8:14 30:18 34:8 42:21 thoughtful 18:25 30:9 thoughts 30:18 58:24 thousands 26:4 three 6:2 12:12 26:22 60:9	throw 25:3 tif 15:22 16:10 16:14 tight 8:2 time 3:7 5:18 8:7,8 10:5 11:12 13:18 18:4 19:2,12 22:15 28:24 29:19,19 30:17 32:3,21 33:11 34:4,9 34:16 35:23 39:11,18 43:2 44:15 48:17 50:5 55:24,24 58:23 59:4 60:19 63:17 68:15 69:18 timely 35:9 times 18:20 39:21 66:14 timing 53:23 tired 23:8,10 53:2,7 today 5:6,25 8:11,19 10:6 13:17 19:19 19:20 27:5 51:20 52:9 62:24 64:9 65:6 66:17 70:1,12 todd 3:10 told 22:5 tolerate 29:14 tolerating 53:7 tom 35:22 tomorrow 18:9 43:9 tonight 18:9
t	tear 20:10 21:4 technologies 20:5 technology 20:12,14 telecommun... 58:4 telephone 11:4 television 42:13 tell 10:10,14 10:15 19:24 68:2 telling 34:15 65:21 66:9 temperature 29:13 temporary 61:24 ten 17:2 26:1 48:22,23,25 49:6 tent 50:22 territory 43:16,17 44:9 testified 6:14 7:11 13:13 22:23 23:15 24:3 30:23 33:1 38:5 41:22 45:16			
t 56:17 61:17 64:5 table 69:17 take 3:7 11:1 17:22,23 35:22 37:19 45:9 46:8 53:24 56:2 58:9 59:4 61:5,6 64:12 65:23,25 66:18 69:20 70:13 taken 28:8 44:20 45:24 65:6 71:9,13 talk 11:15 12:19 13:3,4 37:5 42:2 44:5 58:25 63:18 68:5 talked 48:1 talking 12:6 24:14,18 28:10,12,20 29:3 44:1,2,2 49:7,18 50:19 52:13 talks 69:24 tank 29:6,8,10				

Public Hearing Vol 5 - February 24, 2014

[tons - wishes]

Page 88

<p>tons 51:6 top 39:13 40:23 41:7 topp 41:20,21 41:25 43:5,12 43:19,23 44:7 45:2,6 53:21 total 7:21 17:18 26:3,5 26:15 28:18 28:22 57:15 57:19 totally 29:12 town 34:23 track 21:22 transcribed 5:10 65:18 transcript 1:4 4:13 5:16 6:22 transport 31:20 travel 39:17 treated 25:5 tried 11:3,4 12:22 38:23 true 50:3 truth 66:9 truthfully 28:6 try 7:23 9:18 32:12 43:14 43:15 63:19 trying 9:17,20 17:6 18:11 50:20 57:1 60:11 61:22 62:4,8 63:10 tugging 67:7,7 turn 29:7 turned 14:6 turning 17:22</p>	<p>turns 46:14 twice 38:24 two 5:14 8:7 12:9,11,12 17:6 18:9,15 18:17 19:9 28:16 36:21 43:9 49:1 55:9 typed 36:13 typewriting 71:10</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">u</p> <hr/> <p>u 59:16 uh 6:19 ultimate 20:19 ultimately 65:13 understand 10:22 21:10 24:24 25:6 26:5 27:19 31:11,25 57:11 59:3 understanding 40:25 57:17 57:18 59:2,5 70:7 unemployed 55:9,20 unemploym... 7:4 33:8 unfair 46:24 46:25 ungodly 26:4 unit 17:1 20:7 57:20 69:3,6 units 17:23 universe 20:4 upgrades 25:5 upkeep 24:24 27:11,13</p>	<p>upset 10:3 urban 52:17 usage 16:24 28:22 29:1 46:9,11 use 24:19,23 27:10 28:14 39:5 46:3 56:21 utilities 9:11 9:12 12:1 14:8 27:24 35:2 38:14 63:9 utility 7:16 20:21 21:8 45:25 58:11 62:11,14,17 63:1,14</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">v</p> <hr/> <p>vacation 61:5 vacations 61:8 62:10 valid 37:11 67:25 value 66:3 vent 49:3 veterans 23:21,21,22 vicious 53:10 view 19:4 voice 5:6 18:12 32:14 45:11 52:20 voicemail 37:6 volume 1:9 40:23</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">w</p> <hr/> <p>wages 7:2 wait 43:12,23 waiting 53:12</p>	<p>waiving 68:10 wal 27:1,12 42:15 walk 48:23 want 4:16,20 5:24 17:12 18:5,8 20:1,18 21:17 27:25 28:9 30:7 34:6 36:7,8 37:20 38:13 39:10,14,14 39:18 40:20 40:23 41:25 42:2 43:3,24 44:17 48:6 49:11 55:13 58:14 59:25 60:24 61:1,8 66:11 67:7 68:14,18 69:18,19 wanted 53:4 62:15 64:24 wants 4:23 19:22 44:17 48:9 68:23 70:14 war 23:21 warm 7:24 9:21 12:9,12 60:10 warmer 33:19 waste 68:19 wasted 60:3 water 29:6,8 29:10 31:9,23 37:15,18 38:15 65:3 way 8:5,6 25:5 28:11,11 37:23 50:23 51:2 52:18</p>	<p>53:6 ways 12:18 50:25 we've 4:22 49:25 60:9 61:25 68:8 wear 20:9 21:4 wearing 32:16 weather 12:9 12:11,12 website 4:14 20:4 25:16 44:19 wednesday 18:11 43:18 44:11 weird 14:1 welcome 47:17 went 12:11 16:22 34:8 36:13 48:13 62:11 63:19 whine 38:12 whopping 23:4 willing 10:19 10:21 windows 56:23 winter 9:9,19 17:4 29:9,23 35:17 39:9 41:12 60:8 wintertime 9:17,21 12:11 29:22 wise 27:6 wish 13:18 58:3 67:18 wishes 4:4</p>
--	---	--	---	--

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[witness - zero]

witness 4:19 71:7,9	69:4
woods 22:19 22:20,22 23:1	years 17:2 19:9 24:25 34:10,25
work 5:18 29:16 37:17 49:9 51:11 61:20	37:19 48:11 48:21 49:7,24 55:9,10
worked 53:9	yesterday 14:17
works 26:22 40:6 61:21 70:7	york 14:14 25:10 26:7
world 23:21 61:6	z
worlds 61:6	z 61:18
worry 16:3 60:18	zero 8:24 36:15 55:9,20
writing 38:22 52:14 62:18 63:6	
written 34:3 41:16	
wrong 17:9,13 34:22 37:21 40:5 42:23,24 62:22	
x	
x 2:3	
y	
y 6:18	
yachts 61:9	
yeah 7:14 12:22 19:20 58:14 64:22	
year 8:25 9:2 9:2,8 15:10,11 15:14,15 17:19 21:17 21:17 24:16 26:10 27:17 31:14 34:16 38:13 39:2,7	