

Exhibit No.:
Issues: *Overview of the Staff's Rate
Design Filing; Policy;
Customer Comments*
Witness: *Kimberly K. Bolin*
Sponsoring Party: *MoPSC Staff*
Type of Exhibit: *Direct Testimony*
Case No.: *ER-2016-0023*
Date Testimony Prepared: *April 8, 2016*

MISSOURI PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

COMMISSION STAFF DIVISION

AUDITING

DIRECT TESTIMONY

OF

KIMBERLY K. BOLIN

THE EMPIRE DISTRICT ELECTRIC COMPANY

CASE NO. ER-2016-0023

*Jefferson City, Missouri
April 2016*

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1 **DIRECT TESTIMONY**
2 **OF**
3 **KIMBERLY K. BOLIN**
4 **THE EMPIRE DISTRICT ELECTRIC COMPANY**
5 **CASE NO. ER-2016-0023**

6 Q. Please state your name and business address.

7 A. Kimberly K. Bolin, P.O. Box 360, Suite 440, Jefferson City, MO 65102.

8 Q. By whom are you employed and in what capacity?

9 A. I am a Utility Regulatory Auditor for the Missouri Public Service Commission
10 (“Commission”).

11 Q. Are you the same Kimberly K. Bolin who has previously filed direct testimony
12 concerning revenue requirement and portions of the Commission Staff’s (“Staff”) *Revenue*
13 *Requirement Report* filed on March 25, 2016, in this proceeding?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Have you provided your educational background and work experience in this
16 file?

17 A. Yes. My educational and work experience was included in my direct
18 testimony filed March 25, 2016.

19 Q. What is the purpose of this testimony?

20 A. The purpose of my direct testimony is to provide an overview of Staff’s policy
21 on rate design in this case. For more detailed information concerning Staff’s rate design and
22 class cost-of-service (“CCOS”) study, please refer to Staff’s *Rate Design and Class Cost-of-*
23 *Service Report* (“*CCOS Report*”) which is being filed concurrently with this direct testimony.

1 Staff witness Sarah Kliethermes' direct testimony sponsors the Staff's recommendations in its
2 *CCOS Report*. I will also provide an update on customer comments received since Staff filed
3 its revenue requirement report on March 25, 2016.

4 **OVERVIEW OF STAFF'S RATE DESIGN AND CLASS COST OF SERVICE**

5 Q. What is the source of the revenue requirement information used by Staff in
6 determining its CCOS recommendations to the Commission in this proceeding?

7 A. Staff's CCOS study was developed by using Staff's *Accounting Schedules*
8 filed with Staff's *Revenue Requirement Report*, which show that an increase in The Empire
9 District Electric Company's ("Empire" or "Company") revenue requirement in the range of
10 \$19,482,192 to \$22,333,538 is warranted. Staff's *Revenue Requirement Report* shows that the
11 mid-point of Staff's calculated return on equity range is \$20,913,732 based on a rate of return
12 of 7.48% at the mid-point return on equity ("ROE") range of 9.5% to 10%. The Staff's
13 revenue requirement as presented in the *Accounting Schedules* includes an estimate of the
14 future impact to the revenue requirement of \$19,563,847 for the increase in rate base within
15 the timeline for this case due to the conversion of the Riverton 12 combustion cycle plant to a
16 combined cycle plant.

17 Q. Is Staff recommending revenue-neutral shifts between rate classes in its rate
18 design recommendation in this case?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. What is Staff's rationale for the revenue-neutral shifts it recommends?

21 A. Staff recommendation is based upon the following considerations:

- 22 1. In a general rate case resulting in an increase in a utility's
23 overall revenue requirement, Staff is reluctant to recommend that any

1 class's rates be reduced while the overall revenue requirement is
2 increasing.

3 2. CCOS studies are not precise and should serve as a guide to
4 setting revenue requirements. For example, CCOS studies are based on
5 a direct-filed revenue requirement, and the allocation of that revenue
6 requirement among specific accounts, using a specific rate of return.
7 Unless that exact set of *Accounting Schedules* and billing determinants
8 and characteristics is approved by the Commission in setting the
9 revenue requirement in a particular case, there is an inherent disconnect
10 between the CCOS study used in providing a party's class cost of
11 service and rate design recommendations, and the actual class cost of
12 service that would result at the conclusion of a case.

13 3. Consideration of policy, such as rate continuity, rate stability,
14 revenue stability, minimization of rate shock to any one customer class,
15 meeting of incremental costs, and consideration of promotional
16 practices are also taken into account in Staff's ultimate
17 recommendation of Empire's class revenue recovery through rate
18 design. Staff endeavors to provide methods to implement in rates any
19 Commission-ordered overall change in customer revenue responsibility
20 promoting revenue stability and efficiency, and retain, to the extent
21 possible, existing rate schedules, rate structures and important features
22 of the current rate design that reduce the number of customers that
23 switch rates looking for the lowest bill, and mitigate the potential for
24 rate shock. Rate schedules should be understood by all as to proper
25 application and interpretation.

26 4. Staff endeavors to provide the Commission with a rate design
27 recommendation based on each customer class's relative cost-of-
28 service responsibility and which yields the total revenue requirement to
29 all classes in a fair manner, avoiding undue discrimination, including
30 methods to recover both fixed and variable costs in a timely manner;
31 ensuring Empire receives an amount above its marginal costs on sales
32 of electricity, and each class is providing a contribution to cover fixed
33 costs.

34 5. Staff will recommend revenue-neutral shifts so that once the
35 rate increase is applied, a given class does not underpay by greater than
36 5% of its revenue requirement while another class or classes overpay
37 by greater than 5% of its revenue requirement.

38 All of these points are discussed in more detail in Staff witness Sarah L. Kliethermes' direct
39 testimony and in Staff's *Rate Design and Class Cost-of-Service Report*.

1 Q. Will the Riverton 12 conversion be completed by the agreed to in-service date
2 of June 1, 2016?

3 A. As of today, all indications are that the Riverton 12 conversion will be
4 complete and the plant will be in service by June 1, 2016. If Riverton 12 is not in service, it
5 will not be included in rate base as of March 31, 2016, the true-up date, and Staff will
6 recommend that no revenue-neutral adjustments be made.

7 **CUSTOMER COMMENTS**

8 Q. Has Staff received more customer comments since the filing of Staff's *Revenue*
9 *Requirement Report* on March 25, 2016?

10 A. Yes. At the time of the filing of Staff's direct testimony on March 25, 2016,
11 the Commission had received 30 public comments regarding the subject matter of this rate
12 case. As of this filing, the Commission has received 58 public comments. Additional
13 comments are still being received. The attached Schedule KKB-d2 shows the comments that
14 have been received to date. It is expected that the April local public hearings and the later
15 stages of the case will continue to generate additional comments.

16 Q. Does this conclude your direct testimony concerning rate design policy in this
17 proceeding?

18 A. Yes, it does.

The Empire District Electric Company

Public Comments ER-2016-0023

Number	Public Comment Number	Person	Date	Comments
1	P201600811	David Foster	9/22/2015	Against Rate Increase
2	P201600812	Gwen Groves	9/23/2015 7:58	I heard on KY3 news this morning that Empire Electric is requesting yet another rate increase. The anchor also said they just received one in July! How long will you continue to allow them to get rate increases? I live on a very tight budget and can't afford these constant rate changes anymore!
3	P201600849	James Haskins	10/7/2015 8:49	They have asked for more rate increases in the past 2 years than other electric companies. The last one is upsetting. It is to pay for new solar programs and they charge their customers for it. My wife and I oppose a rate increase
4	P201600881	Jeff Cartright	10/19/2015 8:00	This letter is a complaint about Empire District Electric asking for another rate increase. I have watched my electric bill double in the last 10 years and it is making it tough to survive for me and my family because of course my wages have not doubled. I have friends that work at Empire and the waste that goes on at that place is crazy and the people are tired of paying for the wastefulness
5	P201600893	Jamie Gallaway	10/19/2015 10:50	I would like to ask that you not allow empire to have an rate increase. Every year they want an increase for this or that and they get it. Please no more for empire. They are blood sucking parasites. Jamie.
6	P201600897	Mallorie Perry	10/19/2015 11:00	Good afternoon, I have been informed of another price increase from my electric company. This is getting a bit out of control! It seems like every few months there is a price increase in the electric bill. Just last month Empire read our meter wrong, so they say, and charged us the extra amount on the current bill, I mean I get it, people make mistakes but come on, how could have they read the meter so wrong we ended up having to pay more than double what we regularly pay and we didn't even change anything. The weather was nice and we didn't even have to use the air conditioner. It's getting to a point where my husband and I are going to have to make a cut in our budget somewhere in order to make sure we can pay our bill. I know you all get a lot of complaints, I'm sure, but why another increase??? Is it even vital??
7	P201600960	Robert Womrath	10/21/2015 11:05	More rate increases might be necessary for you but for me and others I'm sure we all would oppose this. Especially when it was on the news this morning as our first notice. Notices for rate increases should be sent out with our electric bills so all would know. I feel like I'm in a vice and you just took one more turn.
8	P201600967	Amanda Modayil	10/22/2015 8:23	We own several rental properties in the Empire District. Our tenants frequently comment on the utility costs in the area. They simply cannot afford to live here. Their jobs are seasonal, and the bills are at their highest when they are out of work. Please do not increase the rates. They will find it even harder to make ends meet.
9	P201600977 and P201600992	Justin Pittman	10/23/2015 14:34	I would like to speak out against the rate increase, I am a business owner and know the cost of doing business and have to deal with competition, and can not increase my rates just to create a better bottom line or I will be out of business very quickly, yet Empir yearly sometimes more often gets just that and other increases for padding their bottom line because the cost of doing business Mabe their shareholders should absorb this for a change and not the customers who have no other option than Empire the monopoly! They are allowed to pass on expense to the customer, unlike most business who have competition! I read almost every year that Empire has record profits, the shortly after there is a rate increase! Quit forcing citizens who have no option and limited income to have to foot the bill when there are many cost cutting changes Empire can make! Its getting out of hand! Thank you Justin Pittman , Joplin Mc
10	P201600993	April Phillips	10/24/2015 9:01 PM	My family are very much opposed to a price increadse proposed by Empire Electric! Are rates are already too high. We used to live in the country where we had the Rural cooperative (in SE and SW Missouri) and it was much more reasonable. Ever since moving into the Empire Electric area, our bill has increased almost monthly. We have a much smaller house and the bill is higher! It's approximately 2000 sq ft and our bill is 220-280 a month for a family of 4. Ridiculous. Our lasrt house that was about 3400 sq ft and our bill ranged from \$120 - \$180 (Co-op). We are adamant about conserving energy, changed out our lights to energy efficient bulbs, and turn out lights/unplug things as much as possible. We cannot afford a price increase! April Phillips
11	P201601056	Laurie Whitlock	10/30/2015 13:26	Strongly against proposed rate increase because there have been so many recently. Retired 69 year old. Fixed income and this rate increase will adversely my resources.

The Empire District Electric Company

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Number	Public Comment Number	Person	Date	Comments
12	P201601057	Laurie Whitlock	10/30/2015 13:33	(as) Consumer is opposed to the rate increase. She is retired and on a fixed income, and people in her situation cannot afford any other increases on a monthly basis. Her retirement certainly does not increase each year.
13	P201601071	Nora Sharp	11/5/2015 8:51	(sc) Why would they ever advertise this. Why would anyone want their electricity to go up? My mother is on a fixed income and doesn't get a raise but the electric company apparently does. This is taking food off of the table. My daughter is a single mother putting herself through school and this is her gas money
14	P201601103	Rock Riddick	11/19/2015 5:12	In regard to Empire District Electric latest request for a rate increase, I would like to encourage the commission to reject it. It is way past time for Empire to reign in their own wasteful spending and corporate cost! I stand with Joplin in opposing their effort and I expect other municipalities in the area to follow shortly.
15	P201601145	Linda Kelly	1/13/2016 10:00	Please cap fixed fees and rate hikes for seniors in Missouri. Other states have done so . . .I'm urging legislation and consideration.
16	P201601494 and P201601495	Karen Brooks	2/10/2016	Dear Sirs: This is written in regard to an article in the Joplin Globe stating that Empire District Electric Company has filed a rate request that is about 7.3% increase.I know there are hearings set for April but it will not be possible for me to attend any of those meetings. So I sending my wishes by this email. I wish to protest such a huge rate increase and then adding insult is the proposed \$1.95 monthly per customer charge. This electric company is doing well, buying additional land next to their home office so now they own a whole city block. That is all well and good but they give little consideration to those of us that are on set incomes and everyone knows that all of us on Social Security has not received a raise for several years. Please consider all of us that feel this requested increase is much too large. Thank you! Karen J. Brooks. Carl Junction. MO 64834
17	P201601496	Paula Litteken	2/10/2016	http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2016/02/09/supreme-court-puts-obamas-clean-power-plan-on-hold.html Please, please tell me that Empire's (Liberty's) neverending rate increases will be re-examined! Paula Litteken, 3708 Wind Cliff Lane, Joplin, MO
18	P201601503	Melody G Cundiff	2/10/2016	Dear Sirs: This is written in regard to an article in the Joplin Globe stating that Empire District Electric Company has filed a rate request that is about 7.3% increase.I know there are hearings set for April but it will not be possible for me to attend any of those meetings being a single mother who works a full-time job. So I sending my wishes by this email. I wish to protest such a huge rate increase and then adding insult is the proposed \$1.95 monthly per customer charge. This electric company is doing well, buying additional land next to their home office so now they own a whole city block. That is all well and good but they give little consideration to those of us that are trying to live on a single monthly income and raise a teenage daughter without any additional assistance from anyone. Please consider all of us that feel this requested increase is much too large and unnecessary. Thank you! Melody G Cundiff, Carl Junction, MO 64834
19	P201601512	Suzanne Comstock	2/11/2016	(sc) My bills are pretty big. My windows are huge and it gets pretty cold. I have been able to reduce bills during January from last year. I am on a fixed income with a part time job. Don't raise the rates in this area.
20	P201601595	Betsy Huhn	3/8/2016	(bh) Just because new company is buying it that don't give them the right to raise rates. Opposes rate increase.
21	P201601615	Ric Roberts	3/8/2016	last thing we need in this economy is another rate hike. most of us are having a hard enough time making ends meet.
22	P201601636	Galen Cartright	3/10/2016	I am against any raises on any utility, because my wife and I did not get a raise this year on our Social Security. We had our pensions cut. Please don't allow to happen.
23	P201601653	Donna Popplewell	3/13/2016	(HM) See Attached. Over the last six years the Cost-of-Living increase for Social Security recipients has averaged 1.42% per year. Over that same time period inflation has been 1.53%. With the proposed 7.3 percent increase requested by Empire District Electric those of us on Social Security are being hit really hard. My bank account continues to dwindle because I have more outgo than income. Please take this into consideration at any hearings. I took my information from the internet so it may not be completely accurate. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

The Empire District Electric Company

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Number	Public Comment Number	Person	Date	Comments
24	P201601659	Joyce Faulk	3/14/2016	(sc) I don't understand why Empire has to have an increase every year. Fuel prices are down. We don't have to have an increase. We do fairly well on our social security but a lot don't.
25	P201601661 and P201601665	Kenneth Riley	3/15/2016	Dear Sirs, I received a card in the mail from Empire Electric seeking a rate increase. When is this going to end. When we moved here, to Joplin, I thought about investing in Empire Elec. I am glad I didn't. I would have been earning money off the backs of the poor and needy and elderly. That is not right. So I didn't invest. Also, when rates started up my wife and we did our best to save on electricity. We hang our clothes out on a line, bought energy saving light bulbs, unplugged appliances. And our electric bill continues to go up. We put our thermostat set on 68 degrees, bought three Eden Pure heaters so save money and they helped, but rates continue to go up. In the summer time we set our thermostat at 78 to help, and our rates continue to climb. I take blood thinner medicine and wear heavy clothes in the winter to keep warm. It would seem that Empire Elec. is more interested in making money than serving the people. I am OPPOSED to any rate increase. Please do not increase the rates. We are giving and doing our part, how about Empire share and help those below poverty. We receive approximately \$20,000 a year to live on. Everything is going up in prices except our monthly check. Kenneth Riley, Jesus is coming soon.
26	P201601662	Tamala Stevenson	3/15/2016	Please no more increases. We cannot afford the electric bills as high as they are. If the increases keep coming, we are going to have to move out of Empire Electric's area and drive in to work. Please do not increase the rates any more.
27	P201601666	Deborah Emerick	3/15/2016	Case No. ER-2016-0023. I totally oppose the proposed utility rate increase. How about a possible REDUCTION in rates since fuel costs are half what they were a year ago??? It is not fair to the elderly on fixed incomes or people working two jobs just to make a living.
28	P201601668	Sharon Anderson	3/15/2016	Case # ER-2016-0023 I opposed this rate increase
29	P201601669	Mary Talie	3/15/2016	We recently moved to Branson from Central Arkansas. Our winter electric rates were .055 cents per kilowatt hour. Summer rates were .075 cents per kilowatt hour. Currently Empire's rates are .125 cents per kilowatt hour. They have one of the highest rates for electricity in the Central United States. I don't feel they should be granted another rate increase. I certainly haven't received a pay raise like what they are asking for.
30	P201601677	Don Whisenant	3/18/2016	I feel that the increase Empire is requesting is an extreme amount. I could understand how a small increase could be justified. Most people aren't getting a raise at their jobs, and if they do it might be 1%. This is just too much money for one increase.
31	P201601678	Norma Dannenbring	3/18/2016 15:22	(co) Customer upset with Empire Electric wanting more money. Senior citizens can't afford. Someone needs to shut this company down
32	P201601679	Norma Dannenbring	3/18/2016 15:31	I can't believe Empire is asking for more money! And they want us to continue to pay for their fuel! What do they think their customers are made of? We senior citizens are having trouble making ends meet as it is. They constantly want more and more. I am strongly against this proposed rate increase.
33	P201601680	Patrick Wolf	3/18/2016 16:37	(co) Customer thinks charges are extreme in the country vs. city. If Empire doesn't charge for security, he'd be okay with that. Claims the rate increase will increase his bill well over \$30, which is high for someone on social security.
34	P201601692	Crystal Stewart	3/21/2016 0:00	Empire district recently gave themselves a rate hike in July of 2015 which increased my overall bill by almost 30.00 dollars. I however have not received a cost of living raise to help cover this. Take in to account for the retired people of Missouri who do not get raises from social security to cover this either and they live on a very small income every month and need food stamps just to help them eat.
35	P201601696	Gary Tetric	3/22/2016	(bh) Working MO citizen and my wages have not gone up in the last 8 years and electric has every year. It is getting very tough to pay bills when everything keeps going up and wages do not. Opposes rate increase.
36	P201601697	Gary Tetric	3/22/2016	I haven't received a raise in 10 years. I keep watching my income drop while my utilities, insurance and everything else is going up. I work in Springfield, MO and my coworkers told me their electric bills don't go over \$160 per month while my electric bill this month was close to \$400. Why are Empire's rates so much higher than others? I have done everything I can think of to reduce my bill - insulate, LED light bulbs, energy efficient appliances, etc. It is getting harder and harder to pay my bills. I'm very concerned about any rate increases.

The Empire District Electric Company

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Number	Public Comment Number	Person	Date	Comments
37	P201601702	Gladys Collins	3/22/2016 15:22	It seems that every time we turn around they want an increase and we just can't afford another one. We live on \$125 a month. They always want increases but then we lose electricity on calm days and nothing is done about it. My husband just had heart surgery and we have to buy another medication, so we have no extra income to pay a higher energy bill. I hope the Commission turns them down this time.
38	P201601704	Gladys Collins	3/22/2016 16:03	Against, Senior Citizen, Fixed Income\Living on Social Security Benefits, No raise, Bad economy; My husband just had heart surgery. We cannot afford any more for electricity. Soon we will have to choose between electricity and food. Our electric service goes out a lot! The weather can be calm and it will go out. It's out then it comes on for a few minutes then it goes out again. Maybe Empire should actually fix their equipment instead of wasting the money they receive from their customers
39	P201601720	Susan Dennis	3/25/2016	As a customer who utilizes less than 1 kw per month. I would love to see a rate reduction for the minimum charge. We who only have power for necessity do not appreciate carrying those who utilize electricity for their primary energy source. \$25. per month just to maintain power to an outbuilding is outrageous.
40	P201601723	James T Cobb	3/25/2016	Disagree with any increases
41	P201601724	Kyle McDowell	3/25/2016	I am a resident in Ozark MO using EDEC I can't drive to Joplin or Reeds Springs to attend My main question is what was their rational for the 7.3% increase to our bill? Is demand growing or is the use of natural resources like solar or wind being affected in your decision? Will this increase that would project an extra 33.4 million be used to do maintenance or any upgrades that would in the long run make our bills less expensive? I'm more interested on your thoughts on the rentable usage
42	P201601726	Geno Green	3/27/2016	I wish to protest the 7.3 percent increase petition that is being pursued by Empire Electric. The FAC continuation request should also be denied as well because of the drop in fuel prices. I believe when this was put into effect, fuel was climbing and it was to offset that. Missourians are not seeing favorable increases in cost of living at this time.
43	P201601727 and P201601731	Cody Brown	3/28/2016	<p>As the public hearings on the proposed rate increase for Empire District Electric Company are in a word problematic, and inconvenient for customers while at the same time expedient for said utility company, I have felt obliged to take issue with the matter that the company is presenting. Customers who are only afforded one hour in which to question representatives about the rates as they are, the service as a whole, and what particular issues justify them in increasing their current rates "which would increase the Company's jurisdictional annual gross revenues by \$33.4 million, or approximately 7.3%" (according to the notice that arrived with this month's bill), could not possibly leave anyone but Empire District Electric Company satisfied in offering the merest opportunity to discuss these matters directly with those customers who have absorbed the lion-share of every acquisition, upgrade or newly constructed property of this company. Just recently, Empire spent over \$11 million dollars to build a new office facility on my great grandmother's former property in Duenweg that had been in the family for nearly 75 years. Yet more recently, the company purchased a defunct restaurant property to the immediate south of its own building in Joplin and has demolished it in favor of installing a parking lot that I am sure is to be strictly for their vehicles, since I must assume that the existing multi-level parking garage there must not be adequate.</p> <p>I have been a customer of this, the only utility company in our area to provide electricity over a wide section of the community, for more than 11 years. I now own a home that was built in 2004 that I purchased in 2009, and it is well worth a six-figure amount. I have been employed with the State of Missouri in the Circuit Courts as a clerk for nearly 9 years, and took the job just months after my graduation from Missouri Southern State University. I have done all this under the notion that it serves my community to be a college graduate, a full-time public servant earning a wage far less than many of those I serve in the courts, a single parent and homeowner contributing to my local economy and serving as an example to future generations. It is my understanding that Empire District Electric has done very well for its shareholders, and one issue that I am sure will not be discussed in detail is their recent sale of the company to a Canadian buyer. For instance, will any of this proposed increase find its way to the new owners? Is any portion of this increase to be used for the buyout or layoff, or bonuses, or severance of local employees of the company in favor of the new owners installing their existing staff on the executive or administrative level? The company president has been awarded for his leadership of the company (which again points to profits made), the linemen are well-compensated as electrical workers typically are involved in collective bargaining but who more importantly risk their lives, and people will always say that this company is one of the best places to work, due largely to the compensation and insurance offered.</p>

Number	Public Comment Number	Person	Date	Comments
	cont'd			<p>But the one thing that I feel is not being legitimately recognized is the effect on the customer. My home is 12 years old. I am a single parent raising one child with joint custody that is nearly 50%. My home is 1205 square feet with 3 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms, with a 1-ton central heat and air unit and double pane windows. The first winter I resided here, there were several power outages and that has continued to be an issue. The monthly bill with the thermostat set at 65 degrees was in excess of \$250. In the summer time if I were to set the air conditioning at 75 degrees, then this would also be about the same monthly cost as my bill in the winters, so effectively I cannot keep the home at this slightly uncomfortable temperature either. I have resorted to unplugging all major appliances: I do not run the washer and dryer simultaneously, I have turned the water heater down to its lowest setting, I have even further weather stripped windows and doors and utilized blinds and curtains in every window, as well as closed off rooms I might not be using presently. I do not use the dishwasher, or hardly the oven. I installed efficiency lighting throughout the home. The attic has 3 feet of blasted insulation and the crawl space is 4 feet deep. The roofing is a high quality 30-year Tamko product manufactured right here in Joplin, it is sided and has storm doors with a front patio and rear deck. I have a simple thermostat now versus the programmable device that came with the home, and if the cold is not extreme I will set it to lock out the heating coils in an attempt to save every single dollar on utility bills. Gentlemen, I burn candles to take the edge out of the room. With all this, my bill this month was nearly \$70: so you can imagine what the impact of extreme temperatures has on the house, and my wallet. Could it possibly be that the rates charged by the Empire District Electric Company are already excessive? I can tell you that I applaud the people on both sides of this issue for their bravery in personally attending these abbreviated public forums, and would like to remind you about the public's reaction to this news on social media. They are after all customers being dealt yet another increase despite the company's profitability and monopoly of service for one of the largest expenditures a person makes in their budget every single month.</p> <p>I feel however that it is all the other customers who will not have this opportunity, and who cannot find the words to express their own situation regarding our local utility provider, or who certainly have older homes either rented or owned that are far less efficient than mine and in need of nearly constant repair of some kind. \$12.54 each month referring again to the notice, can always have a direct impact on someone's ability to meet their needs, since this is only reflected in a per 1000 kilowatt hour estimation. I am not a single mother of three, or a married couple that only sees one employed at the moment. I am not an elderly person making less than \$800 a month before all the other costs for medication, treatment or insurance and the like. I am not one whom is barely able to feed my child for having to choose between heat and going without, so that I can provide a meager meal for them. These are real examples of people who live day to day in our area. And there are so many more that no profit margin could justify.</p>
44	P201601770	Lisa Martin	3/30/2016	(sc) I'm on disability and only get \$700 per month. That's before I pay my rent. I don't think that should go through.
45	P201601775	Gail Lisi	3/30/2016	Ref: CASE NO. ER-2016-0023 received notice of EMPIRE wanting to INCREASE our ELECTRIC bill. for residential based on 1,000 kilo a month it would INCREASE to \$12.54 each month. WE DO NOT WANT TO HAVE ANOTHER PRICE INCREASE IN OUR ELECTRICITY! WE WOULD LIKE TO VOTE AGAINST THIS PRICE INCREASE ALTOGETHER. WE ARE NOT ABLE TO ATTEND THE MEETING SCHEDULED ON THE 14TH OF APRIL 16 AT THE REEDS SPRING CITY HALL. WE WANTED TO BE SURE TO VOICE OUR OPPOSITION ON THIS PROPOSAL. THANK YOU!
46	P201601819	Florence Cross	3/31/2016	Against. City Utilities in Springfield is lowering their costs. RFD is not as high as Empire. I'm in my 70's and living on a fixed income. I can't afford an increase.
47	P201601822	Diana Alexander	3/31/2016	(as) Consumer is opposed to the rate increase. She has had no increase in SS, medication is \$400 a month. Increase will be too much of a hardship.
48	P201601825	Carol Jones	3/31/2016	(HM) I believe that the people have just about paid as much as we can pay. Charges are being added for every utility that we require use of. I am opposed to any kind of rate increase.
49	P201601826	Mara Mooneyham	3/31/2016	(sc) I do not want this to happen.. Empire employees are over staffed. If it rains they just set inside and do nothing. If this passes I'll have to go to solar panels.
50	P201601828	Joshua Terrell	3/31/2016	RE: Case No. ER-2016-0023 Position: OPPOSED A decision on increase in rates or continued fuel adjustment charges should be held until it is clear what entity will control Empire in the future, and once that entity has requested rate increases in due form.

Number	Public Comment Number	Person	Date	Comments
51	P201601830	Samantha Terrell	3/31/2016	Position: OPPOSED. Grounds: Stated purpose for increase is for compliance with clean air standards put in place in 2008 as well as contract and property tax increases. Rebuttal: 1. Empire consistently ranks in the top 10 un shareholder payout (dividends) and seems to think a utility should pay shareholders at a higher rate than many riskier general stocks. Empire has continued to pay these high dividends even though it has known for at least eight years that it would be required spend on capital improvements to meet clean air standards. http://www.forbes.com/sites/dividendchannel/2015/02/27/empire-district-electric-added-as-top-10-utility-dividend-stock-with-4-07-yield/#5e3f2754a999 2. Empire has asked for and received multiple rate increases over the past ten tears including a 13.5% increase for Arkansas customers in 2014 generating \$1.37 million increased revenues for capital improvements. 3. Empire may soon be sold and Empire's executives seem to be anticipating said sell by buying up shares of Empire stock. http://rtuner229.blogspot.com/2016/02/empire-district-executives-buy.html 4. Empire's CEO Brad Beecher's compensation comes in at \$2 million per year, which is nearly double the rate that other utility CEO's make. Executive compensation for Empire's named officers tops \$6million. http://projects.kansascity.com/2015/ceo-pay/ 5. Empire was granted the ability to add fuel adjustment charges to utility bills in 2007-2009-2015 and although it has reduced these charges, Empire has done so at a much slower rate than the drop in fuel costs would warrant. Conclusion: Empire has failed to budget for knowable and obvious costs when determining dividends and now wants to saddle the public for the money they paid to their shareholders. Empire's executives are causing the appearance of impropriety by purchasing shares ahead of a potential sale and taking lavish incomes for themselves. A decision on increase in rates or continued fule adjustment charges should be held until it is clear what entity will control Empire in the future, and once that entity has requested rate increases in due form.
52	P201601835	Elmer NG	4/1/2016	(HM) I am opposed to Empire Electric being approved for an additional rate increase. They just got one and now they are asking for another one. Their rates are already higher than the surrounding utilities. They just want one increase after another, despite their costs going down with low fuel rates. I am opposed to the rate increase.
53	P201601836	Marjorie Countryman	4/1/2016	(HM) All the bills are increasing, but it seems like Empire always wants a raise in our rates. My bills are so high anyways, and it is stuff like this that keeps hurting us. I am elderly and most of us do not have enough income to pay the bills. I am opposed to a rate increase.
54	P201601838	Marjorie Countryman	4/1/2016	It seems like Empire always wants a raise. Why can't they give older people a discount? I get \$1,500 per month and soon I won't be able to pay al my bills. I am totally disgusted with Empire.
55	P201601839	Margaret Noe	4/1/2016	(as) Consumer is opposed to the rate increase.
56	P201601840	Margaret Noe	4/1/2016	I am against the proposed rate increase for Empire. Their rates are too high now. I will not be able to afford anymore increases. (OPC-JB)
57	P201601843	Hilda Underwood	4/4/2016	I received a notice in my electric bill of a pending rate increase. I have lived in lots of towns all over the US and have never been in a state that charges so much for utilities; especially Branson, Mo.! We live 6 months (winter) in Aberdeen, MS and 6 months (summer) in Branson. We have a home in the Woodlands on Fall Creek Road and have been there 5 years. I think we have has an increase in one utility or another every year. I have noticed the crowds are facing off in Branson & Real estate is not selling and I know why. It costs too much to live there! the City alone has the highest sales tax of anywhere I have ever been. They "gouge" you on everything from shoes to sewer service fees. I will not be able to attend any of the meetings listed on the card in my statement but I want tp go on record as being vehemently oppose tgany rate increase. We older retired folks don't get a raise in our Social Security every year and it is hard to make ends meet sometime. Please enter my Vote, per say, as NO INCREASE !
58	P201601848	Steve Carlile	4/4/2016	(HM)I am retired and disabled on social security. This rate increase is ridiculous. We didn't get a social security raise and a \$13 increase is going to hurt a lot of people. I think it is horrible how often they increase rates. They are spending money they don't have and then charging it to people who can't afford it. It is not right for them to do that.