In the Matter of the Application of Evergy Missouri West, Inc.
Hearing before: Judge John T. Clark August 01, 2022
Vol 01
PHIPPS REPORTING Raising the Bar!

BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

STATE OF MISSOURI

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

Evidentiary Hearing

Monday, August 1, 2022 9:01 a.m. - 3:11 p.m.

Missouri Public Service Commission Governor Office Building 200 Madison Street Jefferson City, MO 65102 and WebEx

> VOLUME 1 Pages 1 - 57

In the Matter of the Application)
of Evergy Missouri West, Inc.)
d/b/a Evergy Missouri West for a)
Financing Order Authorizing the) File No. EF-2022-0155
Financing of Extraordinary Storm)
Costs Through an Issuance of)
Securitized Utility Tariff Bonds.)

JOHN T. CLARK, Presiding SENIOR REGULATORY LAW JUDGE

RYAN A. SILVEY, Chairman SCOTT T. RUPP, Commissioner MAIDA J. COLEMAN, Commissioner JASON R. HOLSMAN, Commissioner GLEN KOLKMEYER, Commissioner

Stenographically Reported By: Beverly Jean Bentch, RPR, CCR No. 640

Job No. 263056

1 **APPEARANCES:** 2 On behalf of Evergy Missouri West: 3 Evergy, Inc. 1200 Main Street, 16th Floor P.O. Box 418679 4 Kansas City, MO 64105-9679 5 BY: ROGER W. STEINER, ESQ. 6 roger.steiner@evergy.com Fischer & Dority, P.C. 7 101 Madison Street, Suite 400 Jefferson City, MO 65101 8 9 BY: JAMES M. FISCHER, ESQ. jfischer@aol.com 10 Dentons US LLP 4520 Main Street, Suite 1100 11 Kansas City, MO 64111 12 KARL ZOBRIST, ESQ. BY: 13 JACQUELINE WHIPPLE, ESQ. karl.zobrist@dentons.com 14 jacqueline.whipple@dentons.com 15 On behalf of the Staff of the Public Service Commission: 16 Public Service Commission 200 Madison Street, Suite 800 17 P.O. Box 360 Jefferson City, MO 18 65102 19 BY: JEFF KEEVIL, ESO. jeff.keevil@psc.mo.gov 20 On behalf of the Office of the 21 Public Counsel: Office of the Public Counsel 22 200 Madison Street, Suite 650 23 P.O. Box 2230 Jefferson City, MO 65102 24 BY: LINDSAY VanGERPEN, ESQ. 25 Lindsay.VanGerpen@opc.mo.gov

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1	Page 5 The following proceedings began at 9:01 a.m.:
2	JUDGE CLARK: Good morning. Today is August
3	the 1st, and the current time is 9:01 a.m. This
4	proceeding is being held in Room 310 of the Governor
5	Office Building, as well as electronically via WebEx.
6	I'm going to ask that if you have a phone that
7	you would silence that phone, or put it on vibrate, and
8	I'm going to remind everyone, because I will probably
9	forget several times, to keep your mike muted if you
10	don't have something to say. There's a green light on
11	your mike that will brighten when it's in use.
12	Now, the Commission has set aside this time
13	for an evidentiary hearing in In the Matter of the
14	Application of Evergy Missouri West, Inc. d/b/a as
15	Evergy Missouri West for a Financing Order Authorizing
16	the Financing of Extraordinary Storm Costs Through an
17	Issuance of Securitized Utility Bonds, and that is File
18	No. EF-2022-0155.
19	My name is John Clark, and I'm the Regulatory
20	Law Judge presiding over this hearing today. We have
21	some Commissioners present today. I heard Chairman
22	Silvey and Commissioner Holsman and Coleman. I don't
23	know what other Commissioners we may have on at the
24	moment.
25	At this time I'm going to ask

Page 6 1 COMMISSIONER KOLKMEYER: Good morning, Judge. 2 This is Commissioner Kolkmeyer. JUDGE CLARK: Good morning, Commissioner 3 4 Kolkmeyer. Thank you for letting me know you are here. 5 COMMISSIONER RUPP: Commissioner Rupp is here 6 as well. 7 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. We have -- All of the 8 Commission is here. I'm going to ask the counsel for 9 parties to enter their appearance on behalf of the 10 parties starting with Evergy Missouri West. 11 MR. STEINER: Good morning, Your Honor. Roger 12 W. Steiner on behalf of the Company. My contact information has been given to the court reporter. I 13 also have Karl Zobrist, Jackie Whipple, and Jim Fischer 14 15 appearing for the Company. 16 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Steiner. On behalf of the Staff of the Commission. 17 18 MR. KEEVIL: Yes, Judge. Appearing on behalf 19 of the Staff of the Commission, Jeff Keevil, and my contact information has been given to the court 20 21 reporter. Thank you. 22 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Keevil. 23 On behalf of the Office of the Public Counsel. 24 MS. VanGERPEN: Good morning, Your Honor. 25 Lindsay VanGerpen on behalf of OPC, and my contact

Page 7 1 information has also been given to the court reporter. 2 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Ms. VanGerpen. 3 On behalf of Midwest Energy Consumers Group. MR. OPITZ: Good morning, Your Honor. 4 Tim 5 Opitz on behalf of Midwest Energy Consumers Group. My 6 address is 308 East High Street, Suite B101, Jefferson 7 City, Missouri 65101. 8 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Opitz. 9 Missouri Industrial Energy Consumers emailed 10 me this morning indicating that they wished to be excused from today's hearing and also indicating that 11 12 they would be withdrawing from this case. So that's 13 going to be granted and they're excused from this hearing. 14 15 On behalf of Nucor Steel. 16 MR. ELLINGER: Good morning, Judge. Mark 17 Ellinger on behalf of Nucor Steel. My contact 18 information has been provided to the court reporter. 19 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Ellinger. 20 And on behalf of Velvet Tech Services. 21 MS. BELL: Yes, Your Honor. Stephanie Bell on 2.2 behalf of Velvet Tech Services, and the court reporter 23 has my contact information. Thank you. 24 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Ms. Bell. By way of 25 preliminary matters, I'm just going to note that today

Page 8 we are limited a little bit in the time that we can go 1 2 to 4:00 p.m. this afternoon and that is because our 3 court reporter has a prior engagement that needs to be The rest of Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday we 4 made. can go to 5:00; and if for whatever reason on Friday if 5 we are running behind, we can run over if need be, just 6 7 to let everybody know. 8 Do the parties have any preliminary matters to 9 address at this time? 10 MR. FISCHER: Yes. Yes, Judge. Jim Fischer 11 on behalf of the Company. 12 As we mentioned to you when we were off the record, the Company and Staff and Public Counsel have 13 been talking about ways to resolve this matter. And we 14 would like, if there's no objection, to take a short 15 recess perhaps until one o'clock today to see if we can 16 17 finally resolve these issues in what may become a 18 non-unanimous stipulation and shorten our hearing. 19 JUDGE CLARK: Are there any objections to 20 Everyy West's motion for a continuance to one o'clock 21 for I guess negotiation? I see no objections. I think 2.2 somebody on the WebEx -- somebody has muted their mike. 23 Thank you. I see no objections and I heard no 24 Okay. 25 objections to Evergy Missouri West's motion. I'm going

1	Page 9 to express my concern that we have a tightly packed
2	hearing with a lot of witnesses, and so I'm going to
3	grant the request with the understanding that we may
4	need to move relatively quickly or make some
5	accommodations further along in the hearing.
6	With that being said, are there any other
7	preliminary motions or matters that need to be taken up
8	at this time? I see none.
9	Then I am going to say, before we go off the
10	record to Evergy Missouri West, you may get some
11	questions today regarding Evergy Metro's Tariff Sheets
12	No. 50 through 50.31, and that's for Evergy Metro. And
13	you may get some questions today for Evergy West's
14	Tariff Sheets No. 124 through 127.23. I'm giving you
15	notice now so that you can have those tariff sheets
16	available.
17	MR. STEINER: Could you give me the Metro
18	sheets again, Judge?
19	JUDGE CLARK: Absolutely. Those are Sheets
20	No. 50 through 50.31.
21	MR. STEINER: And West 124 through 127.23?
22	JUDGE CLARK: Yes, and I believe those are
23	tariff sheets that concern the FAC provision.
24	MR. STEINER: Thank you.
25	MR. KEEVIL: Both of them, Judge, both sets?

JUDGE CLARK: I believe so. I could be wrong. MR. KEEVIL: One thing that did occur to me, Judge, last Wednesday Evergy West filed a motion for reconsideration of your order directing Staff to file, and allowing other parties as well, to file a proposed financing order in the case.

7 The time -- I think we have ten days after 8 filing to respond to that. I certainly was planning to, 9 assuming nothing ever gets resolved. Were you planning 10 to allow the full time for Staff to respond to that or 11 were you going to shorten the time? Did you have any 12 plans regarding that motion at all?

JUDGE CLARK: I do. I've given it a great 13 deal of thought. My intention -- Obviously I'm not 14 going to rule on it at this time. I think this is 15 something that probably will need to be taken up by the 16 17 Commission. I intend to allow the full ten days to 18 respond since it's requesting that Staff provide, and 19 allowing other parties to provide, a financing order or portions of a financing order in exemplar form. 20 I am 21 going to hold on that for now --

22 MR. KEEVIL: Okay.

JUDGE CLARK: -- because I don't believe -- I believe that the requirement was that they be filed with initial briefs, and we're still pretty far off from

Page 11 1 that. 2 MR. KEEVIL: That's correct, Judge. It was with initial briefs. 3 JUDGE CLARK: So I'm going to hold on that 4 5 time and allow for the full time for responses. 6 MR. STEINER: Judge, one more preliminary 7 matter. Witness Bridson, I was informed he is not feeling -- had some food poisoning perhaps. I haven't 8 9 checked with the parties; but if the parties do have 10 questions, then we'll bring him here. The order noted he may need to be out of order. If we don't, I might be 11 12 asking you if the Commissioners have questions. If not, then could waive him. OPC or other parties might have 13 14 questions. Just wanted to alert you to that. 15 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. As I said, we've got a packed hearing. I've been made to understand that 16 17 people are talking without their microphones on and that 18 that is not going out over the WebEx. Again, be sure 19 that your little green light is lit up when you're speaking so that others can hear you. If that's the 20 21 case, given the packed hearing that we have, I would like you to keep in mind what Tuesday witnesses could 22 potentially be moved forward if we have some extra time 23 today, which we may not, given that we're going to be 24 25 coming back at 1:00 p.m.

Page 12 1 MR. STEINER: Okay. 2 JUDGE CLARK: Is there anything else that needs to be taken up by the Commission at this time? 3 4 Seeing nothing, we will recess. We will go off the 5 record and recess until one o'clock. 6 MR. STEINER: Thank you. 7 MR. FISCHER: Thank you, Judge. 8 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you. (Thereupon, a recess was taken from 9:15 a.m. 9 10 until 1:00 p.m., after which the following proceedings 11 were held:) * * * 12 The following proceedings began at 1:00 p.m.: 13 14 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. Let's go on the record. 15 It is now one o'clock. I'm going to remind anybody 16 who's speaking to please be sure your mike is on. We've 17 had some difficulty with people being able to hear 18 what's being said in this hearing room. 19 It's my understanding that some of the parties 20 have a request; is that correct? 21 MR. STEINER: Your Honor, we have made some 2.2 progress, lots of progress on the stipulation. We're 23 trying to finalize that right now among the parties and anticipate filing that and then going on the record at 24 2:00 for opening statements. 25

Page 13 1 Okay. Are there any objections? JUDGE CLARK: 2 MR. OPITZ: No objection. 3 JUDGE CLARK: I see none. I'm not going to waste any time that could be spent negotiating. 4 So we 5 will be in recess until 2:00. All right. We're off the 6 record. See everybody at two o'clock. 7 CHAIRMAN SILVEY: Thank you, Judge. 8 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Chairman. 9 (Thereupon, a recess was taken from 1:01 p.m. 10 until 2:00 p.m., after which the following proceedings 11 were held:) * * * 12 The following proceedings began at 2:00 p.m.: 13 Okay. It's two o'clock. 14 JUDGE CLARK: Let's go back on the record. Good afternoon. We're back on 15 16 the record. It appears that a Non-Unanimous Stipulation 17 and Agreement was filed by Evergy West, the Commission Staff, and the Office of the Public Counsel. 18 It looks 19 like at least on one page it indicates that the Midwest Energy Consumers Group and Velvet Tech Services do not 20 21 oppose this stipulation. What about Nucor? 22 MR. ELLINGER: Nucor does not object to the 23 stipulation. 24 Thank you for letting me know JUDGE CLARK: 25 Before we go into openings, I've got one quick that.

question about the stipulation that maybe somebody can answer for me. I haven't had an opportunity to do much more than skim it.

But in looking at provision 9, regarding the financing order, it states the signatories agree to utilize the Company's filed Financing Order with updates and other adjustments necessary to comply with the Statute 393.1700 RSMo. and incorporate this Stipulation and resolution of contested cost recovery issues.

10 In regard to that, how binding do you see that 11 being on the Commission? Are you wanting basically to 12 have the order, the order that was filed along with Mr. -- not filed, that was attached to Mr. Lunde's testimony 13 issued as it is with minor changes, or is this one 14 where, because the Commission is already doing -- I 15 guess there was some questions about format compliance 16 17 and whether or not this format will work with the way 18 the Commission does its reports and orders for a 19 financing order. In other words, would it be sufficient 20 if the Commission kept the substance of the order but 21 perhaps put it in a different format? Can anybody 22 answer that for me?

23 MR. STEINER: I think we were anticipating 24 that the format that we filed in Mr. Lunde's testimony 25 would be used, but there are some changes that will need 1 to happen to that.

2 MR. KEEVIL: I was going to say, Judge, from 3 Staff's perspective, format wasn't really honestly 4 something that we were looking at so much as substance 5 of the document. And I agree with Mr. Steiner I think there are changes that will need to be discussed between 6 7 the parties frankly to come up -- I was anticipating 8 another some sort of compliant financing order being 9 submitted.

10 MR. STEINER: I think that's right. It's not 11 going to look -- There would be changes from the version 12 that's in Mr. Lunde's testimony. So it will have to be 13 submitted to the Commission.

JUDGE CLARK: And is it your intent for the Commission to then take that wholesale, because I know that the Commissioners probably want to, at least as to issues that aren't resolved, do its own findings of fact, conclusions of law and such that one would normally see in a report and order.

20 MR. KEEVIL: I don't think there will be a 21 problem with that as to the issues that are not 22 resolved. But like Mr. Steiner said, I mean, we're 23 going to have to, we the parties, not we including you, 24 but the parties are going to have to submit something I 25 think in which incorporates as the stipulation says the

Page 16 statute and the stipulation because there's some --1 2 JUDGE CLARK: I guess to just cut to the chase 3 of my question, is it going to be a deal breaker if the 4 Commission does its own order that incorporates the 5 substance of Evergy West's submitted order? MR. STEINER: It's hard for me to answer that 6 7 without knowing what that is. 8 JUDGE CLARK: And I get that. And I do. But 9 nonetheless I need to ask it, because we're certainly, 10 we've got one of these already in the works. And 11 certainly there was some questions about whether the format of the one that was attached to Mr. Lunde's 12 testimony was satisfactory for not just the statute but 13 for the Commission and 536, among other things. 14 15 I'm just not familiar with the MR. STEINER: formatting issue that the Commission might have. 16 17 JUDGE CLARK: Having just skimmed it, I wish I 18 could be more specific but I can't at this time. Why 19 don't we do this then. I think I've got as much of an 20 answer as I'm going to get at this point. Why don't we 21 qo through what issues -- And like I said, I've skimmed this, what issues does this resolve on the issues list. 2.2 23 Let's just go through that real quick. MR. STEINER: So 1 I believe it does resolve 24 25 between the Staff and Company, but there are additional

1	Page 17 OPC issues that will need to be tried.
2	JUDGE CLARK: Okay. So what subletters under
3	1 still remain, because when I skimmed it I think I saw
4	something in regards to prudence issues but also
5	something in regard to carrying costs.
6	MR. STEINER: So I think 1g remains.
7	JUDGE CLARK: Okay.
8	MR. STEINER: That would be 1h as well.
9	JUDGE CLARK: Okay.
10	MR. STEINER: li remains. lj remains. lk
11	remains.
12	JUDGE CLARK: At least in part.
13	MR. STEINER: Yep. I think that's it.
14	JUDGE CLARK: Anything in regard to 2, 3?
15	MR. STEINER: Hang on just a second. I'm
16	sorry. 1m remains. I don't think 2 remains.
17	MR. KEEVIL: What about a and b?
18	MR. STEINER: I don't believe so. I don't
19	believe that's an issue any more.
20	JUDGE CLARK: Okay.
21	THE STENOGRAPHER: Mr. Keevil, what did you
22	say?
23	MR. KEEVIL: I said what about a and b.
24	MR. STEINER: 3, let's see. 3a would remain.
25	Issue 4 would remain. Issue 5 would remain. Issue 8

1	Page 18 would remain sorry. Issue 8 does not remain.
2	JUDGE CLARK: 6 and 7 do not?
3	MR. STEINER: I don't believe so.
4	JUDGE CLARK: Okay. Thank you very much,
5	Mr. Steiner. I appreciate that. I think myself and
6	others would like to look the stipulation over. I
7	certainly applaud the effort everybody has put in. What
8	I think I would like to do at this point before we
9	excuse any witnesses from those issues is maybe, since
10	I've only got the court reporter until 4:00 today, is
11	why don't we try and get through openings and if we get
12	through openings maybe end the day at that point and
13	take up tomorrow morning the issue of which witnesses
14	we're going to keep and which ones will be excused.
15	MR. STEINER: We did go through all of that.
16	I can give you the recommendations of the witnesses that
17	parties don't believe they have questions for.
18	JUDGE CLARK: That would be great,
19	Mr. Steiner. Thank you. Go ahead.
20	MR. STEINER: Jason Humphrey we do not believe
21	any party has questions. John Bridson, no questions.
22	Matt Gummig, no questions. John Carlson, no questions.
23	J Luebbert, no questions. Mark Davis, no questions.
24	John Robinett, no questions. That's it that we were
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Page 19 Commission has questions, we'll make them available. 1 2 JUDGE CLARK: Okay. And like I said, why 3 don't we address that tomorrow morning. That will give 4 me a chance to take a look at it tonight and see, I know 5 at least for some of those the Commission had some questions, and see whether they still want to follow 6 7 through with those. 8 MR. KEEVIL: Judge, if I could jump in here 9 real quick. Mr. Steiner indicated that no other party 10 had questions for Mr. Davis of Ducera Partners who is Staff's outside consultant. There might or may not be 11 12 some -- The sooner I can know whether he needs to come in from New York the better I quess is where I'm going 13 14 with this, Judge. If the Commission has questions, we 15 can certainly make him available. Otherwise, we may 16 not. Thank you. 17 Okay. It looks like even if we JUDGE CLARK: 18 were to get rolling tomorrow, with the list we have it 19 appears that we probably wouldn't get to Mr. Davis at 20 that point anyway perhaps. But I will try --21 MR. KEEVIL: Oh, yeah, he won't be here 2.2 tomorrow. I'm sorry if I misled you there. He's 23 scheduled to be here on Thursday. I don't know that he could be here before Thursday. 24

JUDGE CLARK: Okay. I've got a little bit of

1	Page 20 time to figure this out. Thank you.
2	Okay. I'm going to follow the order of
3	openings that was proposed by the parties, and with that
4	in mind let's start with Evergy Missouri West.
5	MR. ZOBRIST: Thank you, Judge. May it please
б	the Commission. Karl Zobrist from the Dentons Law Firm
7	in Kansas City. Just for the record I think we've had
8	the rest of the counsel introduced, so I won't do that
9	in the interest of time.
10	Because of the filing of the Non-Unanimous
11	Stipulation and Agreement within the last hour, I've
12	tried to trim down my opening statement. So I'm not
13	going to, for example, regale the Commission about the
14	devastation that was wrought by Winter Storm Uri.
15	Everyone has accepted the fact that that was an
16	extraordinary event. It was an anomalous weather event,
17	and it does qualify as an extraordinary cost under the
18	statute. No party has disputed that.
19	I'm going to proceed to talk about some of the
20	dollars issues. Our testimony reflects that Staff and
21	the Company and some of the other parties did differ in
22	terms of the qualified extraordinary costs. The
23	non-unanimous stipulation that was filed has a figure in
24	there of 278.5 million, and that is the amount that we
25	believe qualify as the storm costs from Winter Storm Uri

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1 for purposes of the stipulation. 2 Now, before the enactment of the securitization law, there were only two ways that a 3 electric utility could recover these costs or two 4 That was to rely upon the standard fuel 5 customary ways. adjustment clause mechanism under Section 386.266, the 6 7 Commission's fuel adjustment clause rule, with deferral 8 to a regulatory asset under the plant-in-service 9 accounting statute or to seek an accounting authority 10 order under the general powers of the Commission to 11 defer these expenses into a regulatory asset and then 12 seek recovery in a subsequent general rate case. Those customary solutions would have imposed 13

substantial financial burdens upon Evergy's customers, 14 15 as well as the Company. However, the securitization law now offers an innovative and cost-saving way to address 16 17 these difficult issues through securitized utility tariff bonds. 18

19 And Evergy's Vice President of Regulatory 20 Affairs, Darrin Ives, is present and can answer any 21 questions that the Commission may have with regard to 2.2 him or the other parties. Now, what can be securitized 23 with these bonds? There are two categories only one of which is relevant to this proceeding. 24

The first is the financing of qualified

Page 22 extraordinary costs that were incurred prudently during 1 2 anomalous weather events. And then there's another 3 section of the statute that deals with energy transition Now, the recent Empire District Electric Liberty 4 costs. 5 case dealt with both categories. This case is less complicated. We're only dealing with the qualified 6 7 extraordinary costs.

Those costs are defined as those of an 8 9 extraordinary nature which would cause extreme customer 10 rate impacts if they were reflected in retail customer rates and recovered through customary ratemaking. 11 Α 12 cost qualifies if it was incurred prudently during anomalous weather events. And John Bridson, Vice 13 President of Generation for Evergy, is here to testify 14 15 as to the prudence of costs incurred by the Company during Winter Storm Uri. 16

We believe that as a result of the discussions 17 18 that have resulted in the Non-Unanimous Stipulation and 19 Agreement that the costs of Winter Storm Uri fuel and 20 purchased power are 278.5 million. And we calculate the 21 carrying costs again as a result of the discussions 2.2 between Staff and the Company to be \$20.9 million. I'11 23 deal with how we came to that figure a little bit later. 24 What I want to stress is the focus of this 25 proceeding should be the period of time when Winter

25

Page 23 Storm Uri costs were incurred. The securitization 1 2 statute we believe does not call for a wide-ranging 3 inquiry into events that occurred prior to February It does not permit a review of the Company's past 4 2021. 5 decisions that were made regarding issues like resource planning, corporate strategy, or other issues. 6 7 The securitization statute provides for the 8 recovery of financing costs both what we call up-front 9 costs and ongoing costs. And we have stipulated that the estimated up-front costs are 6.6 million. Again, 10 this is the stipulation with Staff. 11 12 The statute requires that there be a net present value showing. It requires Evergy to show that 13 issuing the bonds and imposing the securitized utility 14 15 tariff charges necessary to recover the extraordinary costs and the associated financing costs are expected to 16 17 provide quantifiable net present value to retail 18 customers compared with the customary method of 19 financing. That's right out of the statute. Everqy 20 must show that. 21 The Commission must find that the charge is 2.2 expected to provide quantifiable net present value 23 benefits to customers as compared with the customary 24 method of recovery.

The evidence in this proceeding will show that

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Page 24
even in today's rising interest rate environment that
the expected benefit to Evergy's customers is we believe
approximately 45 million at a minimum and possibly as
high as 100 million. Ron Klote, Senior Director of
Regulatory Affairs and a CPA, will present this net
present value benefit analysis to the Commission.

7 Now, why is this apparent? Why can these net benefits occur? They can occur because the 8 9 securitization bonds themselves are secured by an 10 irrevocable right to bill, collect, and receive charges that are subject to periodic adjustment. And the 11 12 irrevocable right is defined in law as the securitized utility tariff property, and this is the property that 13 Everyy will seek to sell and will be purchased by its 14 15 wholly-owned bankruptcy remote special purpose entity.

16 The SPE will issue the bonds and will transfer 17 the net proceeds from their sale to Evergy. It's 18 important to remember that the securitized costs in 19 these bonds will never contain an equity component and will never include any cost of equity. And Evergy's 20 21 Assistant Treasurer Jason Humphrey is here to discuss this in response to any questions from the Commission. 2.2 23 Page 18 of our petition contains the 24 I know the Commission is generally transaction. 25 familiar with that from the Liberty case, so I won't go

Page 25 There is a process by which a 1 into that in any detail. 2 financing order would be issued by the Commission if it approves the petition. And it deals with a number of 3 I believe there are 15. And it's very 4 requirements. 5 prescriptive and it tells the Commission that if it grants the petition it must include findings and orders 6 7 with regard to those 15 elements.

Similarly, after the financing order is 8 9 issued, Evergy is required to present you with an 10 issuance advice letter prior to the issuance of the bonds. Your financing order is to include the form of 11 12 the issuance advice letter to Evergy that will indicate what the final structure of the bonds is, the best 13 estimate of the total ongoing financial financing costs 14 in the initial securitized tariff charges. 15 And the issuance advice letter will also certify that the 16 17 securitization of the qualified extraordinary costs and 18 the financing costs will provide quantifiable net 19 present value benefits to customers. And it will also 20 detail the role of the Staff and its advisors in how it 21 will work with the Company in that process.

I presented the Commission with a list of our direct testimony witnesses. I really present that more as a playbill than anything else so everybody can see who exactly is here in Jefferson City and who is going

Page 26 to testify to what. We have five witnesses from Mr. 1 2 Ives and Mr. Klote to a number of others, including Mr. Lunde from Citigroup, who provided direct testimony. 3 A number of them also provided surrebuttal 4 5 testimony, but we have other witnesses that addressed specific issues that were raised in rebuttal and that's 6 7 set forth there in that power point. 8 No party opposes Evergy's petition for 9 securitization and no party opposes the request to 10 securitize some measure of Winter Storm Uri costs and the associated financing costs. There are disagreement 11 on the total costs. 12 I'm not going to go through the stipulation in 13 14 detail except to say that among the issues that had been 15 resolved were imposing the 95 percent/5 percent split or sharing mechanism. Every initially opposed that, and 16 17 we think there are good reasons for that. In order to 18 come to a negotiated settlement in regard to the entire 19 proceeding, we have come to a figure that resolves that 20 issue as far as we're concerned. 21 There are some issues concerning up-front 2.2 financing costs I believe from perhaps the position of 23 Public Counsel but I'm not going to speak to them. The 24 non-fuel operating and maintenance cost issue has been 25 resolved.

Page 27 1 Public Counsel has reserved the right to deal 2 with the imprudence issue. I want to speak to that for 3 just a minute. Lena Mantle, Ms. Mantle is the leading witness for Public Counsel. I simply want to talk about 4 a couple of the points that she makes. In our view, she 5 goes beyond the scope that is required by the statute to 6 7 look at what actually happened during Winter Storm Uri. 8 She has lengthy testimony that goes back before Evergy 9 Missouri West, before KCP&L, Greater Missouri Operations Company, going back to Aquila criticizing the integrated 10 resource planning efforts of the Company. We don't even 11 12 believe that's relevant. To the extent we get in this, I will probably object simply to preserve that legal 13 objection in the record, but we don't believe that that 14 is relevant to this proceeding. 15

The other thing that I would point is that one 16 17 of the things that is shocking to us that Ms. Mantle 18 recommended is that Evergy Missouri West should have 19 turned off its customers' electricity during Winter 20 Storm Uri in which she delicately calls a controlled 21 service interruption to conserve resources. And we 2.2 can't imagine what would have been the public reaction 23 to that. The headline in the Kansas City Star would have probably read something like Evergy Cuts Off Power 24 25 to Customers to Save Money. We don't believe that that

1	Page 28 recommendation is consistent with the statutory
2	obligation upon an electric utility in Missouri to
3	provide efficient and safe service on just and
4	reasonable rates as embodied in Section 393.130.1.
5	There are some tax issues that Public Counsel
6	has raised. They were raised by Mr. John Riley, and
7	Evergy's Senior Director of Taxes Melissa Hardesty
8	provides surrebuttal to them.
9	There are also some disputes over, with Public
10	Counsel, on carrying costs and the discount rate. Mr.
11	Murray is Public Counsel's witness on that, and we have
12	responded to that I believe in Mr. Ives' testimony and
13	Mr. Klote's testimony.
14	We do have agreement on the affiliate
15	transactions rule. Staff in rebuttal, Ms. Bolin I
16	believe, stated that they did not oppose the waiver of
17	Section (2)(A) which is the Standards section in the
18	affiliated transaction rule and the Company agrees with
19	that. That's fine.
20	There are a variety of tariff and billing
21	issues and cost allocation issues. I understand that
22	there may be some questions from the Commissioners on
23	that. Mr. Lutz and I believe Mr. Gummig are here to
24	respond to those issues.
25	Let me just close with an observation about

25

the rising interest rates that I mentioned earlier. As
we all know, the Federal Reserve raised the interest
rates by .75 percentage, 75 basis points last Wednesday,
July 27. There was some other economic reports that
came out later in the week, kind of a mixed bag but not
all bad news.

7 It appears that although the data from June 8 itself shows that inflation was proceeding at a rapid 9 rate, it has already declined and here we are now on 10 August 1 and it appears that natural gas prices and 11 gasoline prices and some other commodity and food prices 12 have declined.

The important thing to remember is that 13 regardless of what we are dealing with right here today, 14 at the time of the issuance advice letter it has to 15 certify that the financing of the qualified 16 17 extraordinary costs and the financing costs will provide 18 those net present value with benefits, and that's what 19 should give the Commission assurance that issuing the 20 financing order and issuing and granting the petition 21 and the other provisions that the financing order contains will be in the public interest and will save 2.2 23 customers net present value benefits for many years. 24 Thank you, Your Honor.

Thank you. Any questions from

JUDGE CLARK:

1 the Commission? I hear none.

I've got a couple of short quick questions. If these are better answered by a witness, please let me know. One of the things that I know is concern is what does Evergy see as the level of Staff's representative's involvement?

7 MR. ZOBRIST: We think the statute is very 8 clear, and I know that Mr. Ives talks about this, but 9 they have the right to provide input, there is a 10 collaborative process, but the actual legal right and the statutory right to place the bonds is with the 11 12 utility and with its financing advisors. Unless Mr. Steiner has anything to add, I would say that Mr. 13 Ives would be the person to elaborate this with. 14

15 JUDGE CLARK: And secondly, as you had 16 mentioned in your opening, the fed has now and in very short succession raised rates twice to attempt to rein 17 18 in inflation. I'm assuming with each time it does this 19 it diminishes or affects that net present value. Does Everyy West at this point, if there were to be another 20 21 interest rate hike, does Evergy still see this as a 22 feasible solution?

23 MR. ZOBRIST: I will defer that ultimate 24 question to Mr. Lunde from Citigroup who is here. 25 He can talk about the interest rates. The only thing

1	$_{\rm Page~31}$ that I would just say as their counsel is that those
2	rates affect both debt and equity, but Mr. Lunde is the
3	best person to respond to that and perhaps Mr. Ives.
4	JUDGE CLARK: Okay. Thank you. Next opening
5	statement from Staff of the Commission.
6	MR. KEEVIL: Judge, if I might beg your
7	forbearance a little bit here if I could do my opening
8	from the seated position rather than standing at the
9	podium due to my leg issues I would appreciate it.
10	JUDGE CLARK: That's absolutely fine. Go
11	ahead.
12	MR. KEEVIL: Thank you, sir. May it please
13	the Commission. I'm Jeff Keevil representing Staff of
14	the Commission. As you are aware, this case involves
15	the request of Evergy Missouri West for a financing
16	order authorizing the issuance of securitized utility
17	tariff bonds pursuant to Section 393.1700, RSMo. This
18	is a relatively new statute. I believe this is only the
19	second hearing the Commission has had under the statute.
20	I originally wrote this opening prior to the
21	filing of the stipulation and agreement, so I'm going to
22	kind of on the fly here try to delete portions of it and
23	move things along as well as I can.
24	As the case was originally filed prior to the
25	stipulation, you were going to be asked, and you still

Page 32 are frankly, but asked to decide some issues that I 1 2 would consider to be in the nature of traditional 3 utility ratemaking issues like disallowances and adjustments and things of that nature. Several of those 4 5 have been resolved as a result of the stipulation at least as between Staff, Company, and to some extent 6 7 Public Counsel. However, the Statute 393.1700 contains several 8 9 provisions which I would not consider to be traditional, 10 and I'm sure, Judge, Your Honor is aware of, at least not traditional in Missouri and requires the Commission 11 12 to make a rather lengthy list of findings in the order itself regarding several of these matters. 13 And the statute also provides for certain 14 15 processes or procedures which are not typically 16 encountered in Missouri. One of the several items that the Commission 17 18 is required to find in the order is that the proposed 19 structuring and pricing of the securitized utility tariff bonds are reasonably expected to result in the 20 21 lowest securitized utility tariff charges consistent with market conditions at the time the securitized 22 23 utility tariff bonds are priced and the terms of the 24 financing order. 25 Staff's outside consultant, Mark Davis of

1	Page 33 Ducera Partners, LLC, in his rebuttal testimony
2	discusses the importance of the involvement of Staff's
3	designated representative and advisor throughout the
4	process, including the bond structuring, marketing, and
5	pricing process. He will be available to testify later
б	this week and encourage you to ask him any questions you
7	may have regarding the staff representative and advisor
8	process as he has seen it employed in other
9	jurisdictions that have securitized utility tariff bond
10	procedures.
11	So what is a designated staff representative?
12	That's a good question. That's one of those
13	non-traditional ratemaking items that I mentioned
14	earlier. The statute provides in part that as the
15	actual structure and pricing of the securitized utility
16	tariff bonds will be unknown at the time the financing
17	order is issued, prior to the issuance of each series of
18	bonds, an issuance advice letter shall be provided to
19	the Commission by the electrical corporation following
20	the determination of the final terms of such series of
21	bonds no later than one day after the pricing of the
22	securitized utility tariff bonds.
23	The Commission shall have the authority to
24	designate a staff representative or representatives from

25 Commission staff, who may be advised by a financial

Judge John T. Clark August 01, 2022

Page 34 advisor or advisors contracted with the Commission, to 1 2 provide input to the electrical corporation and 3 collaborate with the electrical corporation in all facets of the process undertaken by the electrical 4 5 corporation to place the securitized utility tariff bonds to market so the Commission's representative or 6 7 representatives can provide the Commission with an 8 opinion on the reasonableness of the pricing, terms, and conditions of the bonds on an expedited basis. 9

10 You'll notice that the statute, and I believe 11 Mr. Zobrist also referred to the issuance advice letter, 12 the statute provides that the issuance advice letter 13 shall be provided to the Commission by the corporation, 14 in this case Evergy West, no later than one day after 15 the pricing of the securitized utility tariff bonds.

16 The statute goes on to say that unless an 17 earlier date is specified in the financing order, the 18 electrical corporation may proceed with the issuance of 19 the bonds unless, prior to noon on the fourth business day after the Commission receives the issuance advice 20 21 letter, the Commission issues a disapproval letter 2.2 directing that the bonds as proposed shall not be issued 23 and the basis for that disapproval.

24One little side item here that I would25mention. You should be aware that the draft financing

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Page 35 order submitted by Evergy Missouri West, which you 1 2 referred to earlier, Judge, attached to the direct 3 testimony of Evergy's Witness Lunde, actually shortens the time in which the Commission may issue a disapproval 4 letter from noon on the fourth business day after the 5 Commission receives the issuance advice letter to noon 6 7 on the fourth business day after pricing of the securitized utility tariff bonds. 8

As we mentioned earlier I believe on the 9 10 record, that that financing order is going to require the parties to -- if you look at the stipulation, I 11 12 believe there's language in the stipulation about the signatories to the stipulation agree to utilize the 13 Company's order with updates and other adjustments 14 15 necessary to comply with the statute and to incorporate the stipulation and the resolution of contested cost 16 17 recovery issues. What I just mentioned there, the 18 shortening of the disapproval process time, would be one 19 of the areas that I would expect to be addressed by the parties when they address the financing order. 20 21 Hopefully here now you can see that the

importance of the financing order itself, and I'm sure you're aware of it prior to me saying anything, on July -- excuse me. I'll skip that.

As I mentioned earlier, there are a lot of

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Page 36 1 issues that you must decide under the statute, and I'm 2 not going to address every single one of them in this opening. However, I would like to touch on one area 3 that I'll refer to as the rate design and tariff 4 5 provisions which are primarily included in the list of issues as Issues 4 and 5. 6 7 If you look at Staff's Statement of Position 8 on Issue 4, you will see the first sentence of Staff's Statement of Position states that the Commission order 9 10 should state the Winter Storm Uri SUTC should be recovered from all applicable customers on the basis of 11 12 loss-adjusted energy sales. 13 If you look at Evergy Missouri West's Statement of Position on the same issue, you will see 14 15 that the first sentence of Evergy's position statement 16 says Evergy Missouri West concurs in Staff Witness 17 Lange's recommendation to use loss-adjusted energy sales 18 to allocate the SUTC among the Company's customers. 19 In other words, Evergy has changed its 20 position from its direct testimony and come over to 21 Staff's position in their surrebuttal and effectively 2.2 from my perspective or my interpretation has effectively 23 abandoned the position that it took in its direct testimony on that issue. 24

Now, Staff will present, or make available at

1	Page 37 least, five witnesses in this proceeding. We have J
2	Luebbert, Brad Fortson, Mark Davis of Ducera Partners,
3	which is Staff's outside consultant on this case, Kim
4	Bolin, and Sarah Lange. If you have any questions on
5	their issues, I would encourage you to ask them as I'm
6	sure they can give a much better answer than I could.
7	But one thing I would like to point out here
8	is Mr. Zobrist was referring earlier to the designated
9	representative, and there is a provision in the
10	stipulation, which I cannot find at the moment since I
11	need it, but there's a provision in the stipulation that
12	addresses the involvement of Staff's representative in
13	the process which at least the signatories to the
14	stipulation have agreed to. Like I said, I can't find
15	it right now but would just want to mention that. It's
16	very important from Staff's perspective the involvement
17	of the representative and advisors, and so I don't want
18	that to be overlooked.
19	With that, I will be quiet and like I said we
20	will have witnesses available throughout the week if the
21	Commission has questions. Thank you.
22	JUDGE CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Keevil. Any
23	questions from Commissioners?
24	COMMISSIONER HOLSMAN: No questions, Judge.
25	JUDGE CLARK: Okay. I have no questions at

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Page 38 Moving on. Opening statement from Midwest 1 this time. 2 Energy Consumers Group. 3 THE STENOGRAPHER: I'm sorry. Which 4 Commissioner was that? JUDGE CLARK: Commissioner Kolkmeyer, was that 5 6 you who said you did not have any questions? 7 COMMISSIONER HOLSMAN: Holsman. This is Commissioner 8 COMMISSIONER KOLKMEYER: 9 Kolkmeyer, and I have no questions either. I believe 10 that was Commissioner Holsman. 11 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you very much. We were 12 just trying to sort that out. Go ahead. 13 May it please the Commission. MR. OPITZ: My name is Tim Opitz on behalf of Midwest Energy Consumers 14 15 Group. And the single issue with the largest impact on commercial and industrial customers is Issue 4, how 16 17 should the securitized utility tariff charge be allocated. 18 19 Now, if we look at the, as an example just the 20 large power class of customers using the Staff's 21 loss-adjusted energy sales per kWh, which I'll refer to as their FAC method, compared to what the Company had 22 23 proposed in its direct testimony, the large power class 24 customers would pay a rate that's approximately 46 25 percent higher than it otherwise would.

This would be true for customers in that class who curtailed during the storm and didn't use power, and it would be true for customers who were not even in existence during the storm for the life of the securitized charge.

6 The FAC method does not allocate charges among 7 the retail customer classes. It inappropriately shifts 8 costs to commercial and industrial customers and it 9 should be rejected. Instead, any securitized costs you 10 approve should be allocated among retail customer 11 classes using the method as proposed in the Company's 12 direct testimony of Bradley Lutz.

13 What he did in that testimony was customer 14 class revenue allocations adopted by the Commission in 15 Evergy's most recent general rate proceeding, and this 16 method is consistent with the provisions of the 17 securitization statute discussing allocation among 18 retail customer classes and updates incorporating 19 changes from general rate proceedings.

20 Specifically in his direct, the Company -- in 21 the direct testimony of Mr. Lutz, the Company allocated 22 total first-year revenue requirements to each of the 23 Company's rate classes based on class revenues set at 24 the conclusion of ER-2018-0146, which was the Company's 25 last general rate proceeding. 1 Then the Company used the energy billing 2 determinants from that case to calculate the per kWh 3 charge for each class dividing total class 4 securitization revenue requirement for each customer 5 rate class by the kWh sales for each customer rate 6 class.

As you've heard in surrebuttal testimony, the Company has acquiesced to the Staff's proposal to treat the securitized charge as if it were a fuel adjustment charge. And as I mentioned earlier, the Commission should reject this approach. This is not an FAC case. It is a securitization case.

13 The language of the securitization statute 14 talks about the allocation of costs and subsequent 15 adjustments in the context of how those allocations 16 should be done in a general rate proceeding. Only the 17 approach presented by the Company's direct testimony 18 satisfies that requirement.

MECG supports the approval of the securitized utility tariff bonds only to the extent that there are quantifiable net present value benefits of securitizing those costs. Whatever amount you the Commission authorize in this case the Commission should order the Company to follow the statute and develop rates for each customer class using the methodology from its direct

1	Page 41 testimony. Thank you for your attention, and I'm happy
2	to answer any questions.
3	JUDGE CLARK: Thank you. Any Commissioner
4	questions? I hear none. I'm going to ask you
5	MR. OPITZ: Sure.
6	JUDGE CLARK: just to be sure I understand
7	this. Now, my understanding is MECG wants to allocate
8	the securitized utility tariff charge on the basis of
9	class
10	MR. OPITZ: That's correct.
11	JUDGE CLARK: which I believe from
12	submitted testimony you indicate complies with the
13	language that's used that the statute itself uses the
14	term class; is that correct?
15	MR. OPITZ: The statute itself, I'll say it's
16	Section 393.1700.2(3)(c)h uses the term or the sentence
17	says how securitized utility tariff charges will be
18	allocated among retail customer classes.
19	JUDGE CLARK: Okay. I think one of the
20	concerns that I remember fairly early on in this is that
21	we're talking about if there are the securitized bonds
22	with a life of 15 or 17 years that it may outpace some
23	of the rate cases or some of the rate cases may outpace.
24	I may be speaking, in other words, that classes could
25	change in a rate case and that could present a problem

Page 42 with how the allocations are done. At least that was my 1 2 understanding as to why Staff was recommending that it 3 be done on the basis of usage. Am I misunderstanding 4 that? So I don't want to speak for 5 MR. OPITZ: 6 Staff's concerns. I know they have multiple concerns in 7 the testimony of Ms. Lange, but I will say that the same 8 provision of the statute that I just quoted to you does 9 talk about updating it within the context of a general 10 rate proceeding, the allocations. So it's true that that could change within a rate case. Does that answer 11 12 your question? 13 JUDGE CLARK: It does. Thank you. No further questions. 14 15 MR. OPITZ: Thank you. 16 JUDGE CLARK: Opening statement from Nucor 17 Steel. 18 MR. ELLINGER: Mr. Chairman, Commissioners, 19 Judge, my name is Mark Ellinger, Ellinger & Associates, on behalf of Nucor Steel Sedalia, LLC. 20 21 As you may recall, Nucor takes service under a 2.2 special contract that this Commission approved in 2019. 23 In 2021, Section 393.1700 was passed by the General That's the statute that created the 24 Assembly. 25 securitization proceeding that we're under today to

Page 43 1 address extraordinary costs that are caused by an 2 extraordinary storm. 3 That statute expressly excludes applying any securitized utility tariff charge to any customer taking 4 5 service under a special contract that existed as of August 28, 2021. Nucor is taking service under a 6 7 special contract that was entered into prior to August 8 28, 2021, and therefore pursuant to Section 393.1700.1(16) and 393.1700.2(3)(c)d, no securitized 9 10 utility tariff charge should be imposed upon Nucor under 11 the statute. I'd be happy to answer any questions. 12 Thank you. 13 JUDGE CLARK: Any questions from Commissioners? I have no questions at this time either. 14 15 Thank you very much. MR. ELLINGER: 16 JUDGE CLARK: Opening statement from Velvet 17 Tech Services. 18 MS. BELL: Mr. Chairman, Commissioners, Judge, 19 my name is Stephanie Bell, and I am here on behalf of 20 Velvet Tech Services, LLC. 21 As you are aware, Velvet plans to construct an 2.2 \$800 million Enterprise Data Center in the Kansas City 23 The project is a result of numerous Metro area. partnerships at the local, state, and regional level. 24 25 Velvet supports MECG's position on Issue 4 as

Page 44 to allocation. Costs should be allocated among customer 1 2 classes consistent with the requirement in the securitization statute and consistent with the direct 3 testimony of Mr. Lutz. 4 Staff's method, what Mr. Opitz called the FAC 5 6 method, puts the burden of securitization 7 disproportionally on Evergy's largest customers, 8 potentially disincentivizing large customers from locating in Missouri and is contrary to the way this 9 10 Commission has traditionally and consistently approached 11 and facilitated economic development. 12 While the securitization statute does state 13 the charge is nonbypassable, the statute must be read in 14 harmony with Missouri's other statutes, statutes which 15 are designed to attract large customers to Missouri. The securitization statute cannot be read or implemented 16 17 without also recognizing the public policy of this state 18 in attracting large scale projects to our state. 19 On behalf of Velvet, I respectfully request 20 that this Commission adopt MECG's position as to 21 allocation or Issue No. 4 in this matter. Thank you. 22 JUDGE CLARK: Thank you. Any questions from 23 Commissioners? I have one that I probably could have asked Mr. Opitz as well, but you unfortunately get to 24 25 answer it. You said the FAC method and that the FAC

Page 45 1 method, if you're supporting MECG's position, is 2 inappropriate. Why would the FAC method be 3 inappropriate since that would normally be how these costs would be recovered through the FAC? 4 MS. BELL: I think if we compare the direct 5 6 testimony of Mr. Lutz as to which classes were causing 7 the costs and we'd go back to traditional ratemaking 8 principles of cost causation, for some of the same reasons that Mr. Opitz said, when you compare the costs 9 10 based on causation, what was in Mr. Lutz's direct testimony, with the revised costs that are in Mr. Lutz's 11 12 surrebuttal consistent with Staff's FAC method, we're getting away from cost causation principles and it 13 disproportionally affects customers who are utilizing 14 15 large amounts of energy. 16 JUDGE CLARK: Do you believe the FAC --17 scratch that. I have no further questions. 18 MS. BELL: Thank you. 19 MR. OPITZ: Your Honor, other parties may 20 object but I would make myself available for additional 21 questions you kind of mentioned you had wanted to ask me about that. I'm willing to do so if you're so inclined. 2.2 23 JUDGE CLARK: If you'd like to go ahead and answer that, I would love to hear the answer. 24 You don't 25 have to come up if you don't want to. You can do it

1 from your seat.

2 MR. OPITZ: I believe the question you posed 3 to Ms. Bell was whether if it would be collected through 4 the FAC otherwise. And I think the answer from MECG's 5 perspective is that these sort of costs would not be 6 collected through the FAC.

As the Company's counsel mentioned in opening, these extraordinary costs would either be deferred into a regulatory asset or they would possibly be deferred into an accounting authority order. So that would be my response. Thank you.

JUDGE CLARK: Okay. So the only reason it wouldn't be recovered through the FAC is because you believe it would most likely given the size of it be moved into an AAO or something else similar?

MR. OPITZ: I think that that's the direct response. I think Ms. Bell's answer also addresses the cost causation impacts of it which if it were taken into an AAO would be hashed out in the context of a general rate proceeding.

JUDGE CLARK: Okay. Thank you, MECG. Okay.
Final opening statement today from the Office of the
Public Counsel.

24 MS. VanGERPEN: Thank you, Your Honor. I 25 wanted to let you know that Ms. Mantle is handing out

Page 47 copies of the handouts I'll be going through today, so 1 2 I'll wait until everyone has that to get started. Good morning. May it please the -- Good 3 afternoon now and may it please the Commission. 4 My name 5 is Lindsay VanGerpen, and I'm here today on behalf of the Office of the Public Counsel. 6 7 Today I want to focus on fairness. What is 8 fair for Evergy Missouri West to recover for the Storm 9 Uri costs that it incurred. The OPC is not here today 10 to oppose securitization, nor do we dispute that Storm 11 Uri was an extraordinary event. We recognize that the frigid conditions caused 12 Evergy Missouri West to incur increased costs. We also 13 know that as a provider of a necessary service Evergy 14 15 Missouri West should be made whole for the prudent costs that it incurred. 16 17 But is it really fair for Evergy Missouri West to profit off of this terrible situation? Of course 18 19 not. Should Evergy Missouri West be held accountable 20 for its choices in the months and years leading up to 21 Storm Uri that further increased its costs during the 2.2 storm? Absolutely. That's fair. 23 So I'd like to start this morning or this afternoon in talking about in deciding what Evergy 24 25 Missouri West should fairly recover, the Commission

Page 48 should consider the true cost of Storm Uri. Another way 1 2 to think of true cost is to determine the amount that someone is actually out of pocket. To illustrate this 3 concept, imagine that you have a \$200,000 home. 4 You 5 also have a homeowner's insurance policy. In the horrific event that your home burns down, you're 6 7 initially out of pocket \$200,000, the cost of your home. That's devastating, but a small shred of silver lining 8 exists, the money from your insurance policy. 9

Imagine that amount is \$150,000. In that case the true cost of your home burning down is actually \$50,000. \$200,000, the amount of your home that you lost, minus the \$150,000, the amount of your insurance policy. True cost, the amount of the loss minus any benefit recovered.

16 To find the true cost of Storm Uri to Evergy 17 Missouri West, the Commission must consider any benefits 18 that Evergy Missouri West received. As OPC's witness 19 Mr. John Riley explains, that includes tax benefits. 20 Now, taxes sound a lot more intimidating than my 21 homeowner's insurance analogy, but it's actually very 2.2 simple. Each of you has a handout entitled True Cost 23 Determination, and for those appearing on the WebEx I believe it is also showing on the WebEx now. 24 25 This handout includes three scenarios. It's

Page 49 based in a hypothetical simple world. 1 The utility here 2 has a hypothetical of \$300 million in taxable income. 3 You'll see that at step 1 in each of the three In two of the scenarios, a hypothetical 4 scenarios. extreme event happens that costs the utility \$260 5 In the hypothetical world where this utility 6 million. 7 operates, the applicable corporate tax rate is 25 8 percent. So let's walk through each of the scenarios to 9 10 find the true cost. We'll begin in the left-hand column, Scenario 1. In this scenario, no extreme event 11 12 occurs. So when it comes tax time, at row 1 we see the utility's \$300 million in taxable income. We can skip 13 steps 2 and 3, because no costs associated with an 14 15 extreme event exists. So we'll move down to step 4 and we'll see 16 17 again the \$300 million in taxable income. There's been 18 no change to that. To determine how much the utility 19 needs to pay in taxes, we simply apply our corporate tax rate and we see that the utility needs to pay \$75 20 21 million in taxes. Because there's been no extreme 2.2 event, there's no true cost. Fairness dictates that the 23 utility recovers nothing more. 24 Moving on to Scenario 2, the middle table, 25 you'll see that there's been an extreme event. In this

Page 50
case, the utility chooses to recover its costs through
its fuel adjustment clause or its FAC. Again, we'll
start with step 1, \$300 million. However, at step 2
we'll include the cost that the utility suffered due to
the extreme event which is 260 million.

Moving to step 3, we see that the utility has 6 7 been made whole for the costs it incurred through 8 recovery in its FAC. And we see the \$260 million in 9 taxable income. So here steps 2 and 3 have canceled each other out. And again, step 4 shows the same \$300 10 million in taxable income. So again we'll see that the 11 12 utility needs to pay \$75 million in taxes. Here the true cost of the extreme event has been fully recovered. 13 The utility has been made whole for the costs it 14 15 incurred through recovery in its FAC. In fairness, it needs to recover nothing more. 16

17 Finally, let's turn to Scenario 3 that appears 18 on the right hand -- in the right-hand table. This is 19 what brings us here today, securitization. In this table -- In this case, the utility has incurred costs 20 21 because of an extreme event. However, in this case it 22 has chosen to securitize those costs. So let's work 23 through the same calculations we've done for Scenarios 1 and 2 to see the true cost of the extreme event in this 24 25 circumstance.

Page 51 Again, we'll start at step 1 and we see the 1 2 same amount of taxable income. At step 2 we see that the utility has incurred 260 million in costs due to the 3 extreme event. At step 3, though, we see zero dollars. 4 5 This is different than Scenario 2, and that is because the proceeds the utility received from the securitized 6 7 bonds are received tax free. Mr. Riley, a CPA with 8 extensive experience in utility regulation, refers to this as a tax-free transaction. 9

10 Moving to step 4, we see the great impact of 11 this tax-free transaction. The utility's total taxable 12 income has dropped to just \$40 million. That is \$260 million less than the prior two scenarios. 13 The impact of this tax-free transaction continues when we see the 14 15 amount the utility must pay in taxes. With recovery through securitization, that amount is down to just \$10 16 million, but we're still not done. We have to find the 17 18 true cost of the extreme event under securitization.

19 Ultimately what is fair for the utility to 20 recover? To find that, we need two more steps and 21 you'll see those at the bottom of the handout below the 22 tables. First we need to look at the difference in tax 23 liability. With recovery through the FAC, the utility 24 paid \$75 million in taxes, the same amount it paid as if 25 no extreme event occurred. The difference between

Page 52 1 recovery through the FAC and recovery through 2 securitization is \$65 million. Recovery through securitization saved the utility \$65 million in taxes. 3 This is just one of the benefits of securitization. 4 But 5 again what are the true costs of the extreme event. The 6 utility still incurred \$260 million in costs due to the 7 extreme event, but that's not the true cost here. 8 To find that, we need to recognize the tax

9 savings by removing them from the costs the utility 10 incurred just like we did in the home burning example. So there at the bottom of the handout circled in red is 11 the true cost, \$195 million. That is what the utility 12 is out of pocket for the extreme event. That is the 13 amount it should be allowed to securitize. 14 That is what 15 is fair for the utility to recover before recognizing any other disallowances. 16

Allowing the utility to recover any more would simply allow it to profit off of a terrible situation. It would defeat the benefit of tax savings associated with securitization.

21 Next I want to talk a little bit about 22 accountability. It's certainly hard to talk about 23 fairness without talking about accountability. Choices 24 have consequences and those consequences have to be 25 dealt with. Commission in the world of utility

Page 53 1 regulation, you are the ones who determine the 2 consequences. Two utilities, one storm, two very 3 different consequences. I've handed you another handout entitled 4 5 Accountability. And for those on the WebEx you should 6 I'd ask everyone else in the room to turn see it now. 7 to that as well. 8 Let's talk about Evergy Missouri West and its 9 sister company Evergy Metro. These companies share the 10 same management. They both suffered the brunt of Storm 11 Uri. However, a gap, or more of a chasm really, of over 12 \$350 million separates these two companies, and you'll see that here on the handout. Everyy Missouri West 13 claims over \$295 million in costs related to Storm Uri. 14 Evergy Metro, on the other hand, made enough to not only 15 cover its load and to pay its fuel cost. It also 16 17 generated an additional \$58.2 million in revenue. 18 Again, two utilities, one storm, two very different 19 consequences. 20 How is this possible? Something must have 21 gone wrong. Fairness says that someone must be held 2.2 accountable for the problems that caused this chasm. 23 As described in Mr. John Robinett's testimony, for at least the last four years the OPC has been 24 25 detailing the problems with Evergy Missouri West's

Page 54 Ms. Lena Mantle, an engineer with over 1 resource plan. 2 30 years of experience and one of the original authors 3 of the Commission's resource planning rules, expands on those problems in this case. It was not only the 4 5 extreme circumstances of Storm Uri that caused Evergy Missouri West costs, and again the OPC is not saying 6 7 that Storm Uri was not an extreme event, but it was also 8 Evergy Missouri West's choices in the years and months leading up to the storm that played a part as well. 9

10 The Commission has to act. It has to hold 11 Evergy Missouri West accountable for its choices. In 12 fairness to Evergy Missouri West's ratepayers, the 13 Commission should recognize the consequences of the 14 Company's choices when deciding the amount that Evergy 15 Missouri West can securitize. If not now, when.

For my last point, I'd again like to bring us back to undue profits. Again, what is fair for Evergy Missouri West to recover? So let's talk a little bit about the rate to calculate carrying costs. Again, it helps to think about a simple example here.

Imagine that you need money for a new car. A bank tells you that they will loan you the money with a 2 percent interest rate. You agree and buy the car. Life is good. You have a new car. Everything is great. Then when you go to pay the money back the bank demands

1	$_{\tt Page\ 55}$ payment with the use of a 5 percent interest rate.
2	You're shocked. That's not fair. The agreement was 2
3	percent. Mr. Dave Murray, a CFA with years of
4	experience before the Commission, describes how that is
5	exactly the situation here.
б	I have also handed you a copy of a handout
7	entitled Undue Profits. Again for those on the WebEx
8	you should see it now and I ask that everyone in the
9	room turn to that handout now.
10	As Mr. Murray testifies, Evergy Missouri West
11	admits that it uses short-term debt to fund at least
12	part of the Storm Uri costs. However, Evergy Missouri
13	West and Staff as a result of the stipulation, now asks
14	the Commission to calculate carrying costs using the
15	higher long-term debt rate.
16	Again, where is the fairness in this? What
17	happens to the extra interest money? The answer, that
18	money goes right back to Evergy Missouri West
19	shareholders as undue profits. That simply is not fair.
20	I'd like to conclude this afternoon how I
21	started by reminding the Commission that the OPC is
22	simply asking for what is fair. It is not asking the
23	Commission to deny securitization, nor is the OPC
24	disputing that Storm Uri was extraordinary. Rather the
25	OPC only asks that the Commission hold Evergy Missouri

1	$_{\tt Page\ 56}$ West accountable for its choices and not allow it to
2	profit off of a terrible situation. I encourage you to
3	ask the OPC's experts questions throughout this week,
4	and I'm also available for any questions that you may
5	have at this time. Are there any questions for me?
б	JUDGE CLARK: Any questions from
7	Commissioners? I don't have any questions at this time
8	either.
9	MS. VanGERPEN: Thank you.
10	JUDGE CLARK: Thank you. We have no further
11	opening statements at this time. It's now 3:10. I had
12	indicated I think I'd like some more time given that
13	this stipulation which was filed I think a lot of people
14	would like to take a look at it before I release any
15	witnesses from having to appear. So I think we'll just
16	recess for the day at this point and pick up tomorrow
17	with the first witnesses at 9:00 a.m. in the morning.
18	Is there anything before I adjourn this
19	proceeding for the day that the Commission needs to take
20	up? Okay. I heard nothing. We will go off the record
21	and I will see you all at 9:00 a.m. tomorrow.
22	(Thereupon, the proceedings adjourned for the
23	day at 3:01 p.m., and will continue in Volume 2.)
24	
25	

1	Page 57 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER
2	STATE OF MISSOURI)
3	COUNTY OF COLE)
4	I, Beverly Jean Bentch, RPR, CCR No. 640, do
5	hereby certify that I was authorized to and did
6	stenographically report the foregoing Public Service
7	Commission evidentiary hearing and that the transcript,
8	pages 1 through 56, is a true record of my stenographic
9	notes.
10	I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not a relative,
11	employee, attorney, or counsel of any of the parties,
12	nor am I a relative or counsel connected with the
13	action, nor am I financially interested in the action.
14	Dated this 10th day of August, 2022.
15	0 0 - 0 1
16	Beverly Jean Bertch
17	Beverly Jean Bentch, RPR, CCR No. 640
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