

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI**

In the Matter of Union Electric Company)	
d/b/a Ameren Missouri's Request for a)	
Waiver of Various Tariffs and Regulations)	Case No. EE-2019-0382
to Enable the Deployment of Automated)	
Metering Infrastructure Beginning in)	
2020.)	

**PUBLIC COUNSEL’S MOTION
FOR AN EVIDENTIARY HEARING**

COMES NOW the Office of the Public Counsel (“OPC”) pursuant to § 386.710 RSMo, and for its Motion for an Evidentiary Hearing, states as follows:

1. On October 8, 2019, Union Electric Company d/b/a Ameren Missouri filed a request for waivers from various tariffs and regulations related to Ameren’s deployment of automated metering infrastructure (AMI) beginning in 2020.

2. Ameren states that as it develops the IT infrastructure to support the AMI network, it needs to know if certain variances can be obtained.

3. The first requested variance is related to Ameren’s desire to include automatic meter shut-off capabilities within the AMI technology. An automatic shut-off feature would enable Ameren to remotely disconnect and reconnect service at the meter. Currently, Ameren performs disconnections and reconnections using technicians that physically perform the disconnections at the customer’s home or business. Ameren states that the new technology, if installed, would eliminate the need to send technicians to perform disconnections and reconnections.

4. Ameren states further that it cannot eliminate the technician visit to the premise for a disconnection due to Public Service Commission rule 20 CSR 4240-

13.050(9) requiring the company to make an attempt to contact the customer in person at the premise before disconnection. For that reason, Ameren seeks to waive this “door knock” requirement for all customers with AMI.

5. In 2014, the Commission revised its Chapter 13 rules related to billing and service disconnection, and considered a similar proposal to allow electronic communication to substitute for written and verbal communication of a disconnection. The Commission rejected the change and responding to concerns raised by AARP, stated:

RESPONSE: The concerns of the AARP group are well founded. Internet access could be the first service lost to a customer facing economic difficulties and that could prevent the customer from being made aware of a pending disconnection until they get a phone call twenty-four (24) hours before they lose service. By then it might be too late for them to obtain help. The commission will not allow electronic service to be substituted for the written and verbal notice required elsewhere in the rule.¹

Ameren’s proposal in the present case would allow Ameren to disconnect service without both written and verbal notice, and would also include a phone call to the customer only on the day of disconnection.²

6. In the 2014 *Order of Rulemaking* addressed above, the Commission also addressed the door knock requirement of 20 CSR 4240-13.050(9) and a proposal to eliminate this requirement. The Commission found:

The AARP group, Public Counsel, and Jacqueline Hutchinson strongly urge the commission to keep the door knock requirement in place. They believe a knock on the door will often reveal the presence of some person

¹ *Missouri Register*, Volume 39, No. 4, February 18, 2014, p. 509
(<https://www.sos.mo.gov/CMSImages/adrules/moreg/previous/2014/v39n4/v39n4a.pdf>)

² See Application for Variances, p. 7.

or circumstance that would make a disconnection of utility service a threat to the health or wellbeing of the resident. For example, the door knock might reveal that a resident has electronic medical equipment in use and would be harmed if service is disconnected. One (1) utility, Missouri-American Water Company expressed continued support for the existing door knock rule. RESPONSE: The commission continues to agree with the consumer groups. The door knock requirement as it currently exists in the rule is a proper balancing of the interest of the safety of utility employees against the need to protect the health and welfare of vulnerable customers. The commission will not change the door knock rule.³

7. OPC shares the concerns raised in the 2014 rulemaking docket and agreed to by the Commission, and respectfully requests an evidentiary hearing to allow this issue to be more fully developed and all concerns addressed before any waivers are granted.

8. OPC also seeks an opportunity to more fully understand the additional waivers requested in Ameren's Application, and reserves the right to raise any additional concerns it may have with the requested waivers.

WHEREFORE, the Office of the Public Counsel respectfully requests the parties be directed to develop a proposed procedural schedule that includes an evidentiary hearing to allow an opportunity to fully explore the issues presented by the Application.

Respectfully submitted,

OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC COUNSEL

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³ *Missouri Register*, Volume 39, No. 4, February 18, 2014, p. 510

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that copies of the foregoing have been mailed, emailed or hand-delivered to all counsel of record this 23rd day of October, 2019.

/s/ Marc Poston
