

FILED
AUG 15 2024
Missouri Public
Service Commission

Exhibit No. 222

Staff – Exhibit 222
Amy Eichholz Testimony
Direct
File No. EO-2023-0136

Exhibit No.:
Issue(s): *Low-Income*
Witness: *Amy L. Eichholz*
Sponsoring Party: *MoPSC Staff*
Type of Exhibit: *Direct Testimony*
Case No.: *EO-2023-0136*
Date Testimony Prepared: *March 1, 2024*

MISSOURI PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

INDUSTRY ANALYSIS DIVISION

ENERGY RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

DIRECT TESTIMONY

OF

AMY L. EICHHOLZ

**UNION ELECTRIC COMPANY,
d/b/a AMEREN MISSOURI**

CASE NO. EO-2023-0136

Jefferson City, Missouri
March 2024

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13

**TABLE OF CONTENTS OF
DIRECT TESTIMONY
OF
AMY L. EICHHOLZ
UNION ELECTRIC COMPANY d/b/a AMEREN MISSOURI
CASE NO. EO-2023-0136**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 2

LOW-INCOME PROGRAM TARIFFS 3

RESIDENTIAL LOW- INCOME PROGRAM DESIGN 7

FEDERAL ASSISTANCE 8

LOW-INCOME NON-MEEIA PROGRAMS 9

1 and that if the Commission determines that MEEIA programs should continue,
2 what information the Commission should consider.

3 **LOW-INCOME PROGRAM TARIFFS**

4 Q. Does Union Electric Company d/b/a Ameren Missouri (“Ameren Missouri”)
5 currently have residential MEEIA low-income programs?

6 A. Yes, the Residential Single Family Low-Income (“SFLI”) Program¹ and the
7 Residential Multi-Family Low-Income (“MFLI”) Programs.²

8 Q. What customers is the SFLI Program available for?

9 A. Ameren Missouri’s SFLI Program tariff sheets state:

10 The Program is available for the Program Period³ to:

11 1. Qualifying single family low-income customers receiving service under
12 the Residential Service Rate 1(M) residing in single family detached housing,
13 attached dwellings of four (4) or fewer units, and mobile homes (wood-frame
14 bolted to steel chassis, designed to be transported); or

15 2. Organizations who perform qualified installations or distributions to
16 homes of qualified low-income residential end users may participate in this
17 Program by making application for a low-income efficiency housing grant.

18 In order to qualify for participation, low-income Participants must meet one of the
19 following income eligibility requirements:

20 1. Participation in federal, state, or local subsidized housing program.

¹ MO.P.S.C Schedule NO. 6 1st Revised Sheet NO.242 -242.1.

² MO.P.S.C. Schedule NO. 6 Original Sheet NO. 243.

³ March 1, 2019 – December 31, 2024.

1 2. Proof of resident income levels at or below 80% of area median income
2 (AMI) or 200% of federal poverty level.

3 3. Fall within a census tract included on Company's list of eligible low-
4 income census tracts.

5 Q. What customers is the Multi-Family Low-Income (“MFLI Program”)
6 available for?

7 A. Ameren Missouri’s MFLI Program tariff sheets⁴ state:

8 The MFLI Program is available for the Program Period⁵ to owners and operators of any
9 multi-family properties of three or more dwelling units receiving service under the Residential
10 Service Rate 1(M) or Service Classifications Small General Service Rate 2(M), Large General
11 Service Rate 3(M), Small Primary Service Rate 4(M) meeting one of the following
12 eligibility requirements:

- 13 1. Participation in federal, state, or local subsidized housing program.
- 14 2. Proof of resident income levels at or below 80% of area median income
15 (AMI) or 200% of federal poverty level.
- 16 3. Fall within a census tract included on Company's list of eligible low-
17 income census tracts.

18 Where a multi-family property does not meet one of the eligibility criteria listed above
19 and has a combination of qualifying tenants and non-qualifying tenants, at least 50% of the
20 tenants must be eligible for the entire property to qualify.

21 Q. Is “Low-Income” defined in Ameren Missouri’s tariff?

⁴ MO.P.S.C. Schedule NO. 6 Original Sheet NO. 243.

⁵ March 1, 2019 – December 31, 2024.

1 A. Yes. Ameren Missouri's tariff states,⁶

2 "Low-Income" customers means those Service Classification 1(M) residential
3 customers eligible for the low income exemption provisions contained in
4 Section 393.1075.6, RSMo. As approved in File No. ER-2014-0258, customers
5 eligible under this definition will be exempt from Rider EEIC charges for 12
6 billing months following assistance received from either Missouri Energy
7 Assistance (a.k.a. Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program or LIHEAP),
8 Winter Energy Crisis Intervention Program, Summer Energy Crisis Intervention
9 Program, the Company's Keeping Current Low Income Pilot Program, and/or
10 the Company's Keeping Cool Low Income Pilot Program.

11 Q. What does Section 393.1075.6. RSMo state?

12 A. Section 393.1075.6 states "The commission may reduce or exempt allocation of
13 demand-side expenditures to low-income classes, as defined in an appropriate rate proceeding,
14 as a subclass of residential services."

15 Q. What was approved in File No. ER-2014-0258 as referenced above?

16 A. On March 12, 2015, the Commission approved a *Nonunanimous Stipulation and*
17 *Agreement Regarding MEEIA Low Income Exemption and LED Streetlighting Issues*
18 ("Stipulation"). The portion of the Stipulation being referenced above states:

19 The Signatories recommend the Commission approve an exemption from Ameren
20 Missouri's Rider EEIC (Energy Efficiency Investment Charge) for qualifying low-
21 income customers. A qualifying low-income customer will be defined as any residential
22 customer who, in any of the prior 12 billing months, has received assistance from any
23 of the following qualifying low-income programs: Missouri Energy Assistance (a.k.a.
24 Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program or "LIHEAP"), Winter Energy Crisis
25 Intervention Program ("ECIP"), Summer ECIP, Keeping Current, and Keeping Cool.
26 This low-income exemption will begin with the June 2015 billing month, and Ameren
27 Missouri will file a Rider EEIC rate change request at least sixty (60) days in advance
28 of that date. The Rider EEIC filing to initially 2 implement the rate change will be based
29 on the same data provided in the November 2014 Rider EEIC filing adjusted only to
30 reflect the low-income exemption for the remainder of the tariff effective period. The
31 reduction in revenues associated with the low-income exemption will be recovered from
32 the remaining residential rate class customers.

33 Q. What concerns does Staff have with the above information?

⁶ MO.P.S.C. Schedule NO. 6 2nd Revised Sheet NO. 91.2.

1 A. Staff is concerned that these programs are not reaching those who are truly in
2 need. Income levels at or below 80% of area median income (“AMI”) or 200% of the
3 Federal Poverty Level (“FPL”) likely reaches more mid-income customers as opposed to actual
4 low-income customers. Staff is concerned those truly in need may be being denied assistance
5 due to homes being in disrepair. It is Staff’s understanding that contractors are unable to
6 perform a blower door test⁷ due to holes in walls, roofs, etc. Without this test, assistance cannot
7 be granted. It is not clear to Staff if the “Low-Income” definition and program availability
8 allows for customers with homes in disrepair to opt out of the EEIC or participate in the
9 Low-Income programs. These customers are the customers that are most likely to benefit for
10 opting out of the EEIC and/or participating in the Low-Income programs, to whatever extent
11 they can.

12 Also, Ameren Missouri’s tariffed “Low-Income” definition refers to Section
13 393.1075.6, RSMo, which refers to “low-income classes, as defined in an appropriate rate
14 proceeding, as a subclass of residential service.” Staff is unaware of a “low-income class”
15 being defined in any rate proceeding.

16 Further, Ameren Missouri’s tariffed “Low-Income” definition states, “As approved in
17 File No. ER-2014-0258, customers eligible under this definition will be exempt from Rider
18 EEIC charges for 12 billing months following assistance received from...” However,
19 File No. ER-2014-0258⁸ states, “A qualifying low-income customer will be defined as any
20 residential customer who, in any of the prior 12 billing months, has received assistance from...”
21 There is a huge discrepancy in the way “12 billing months” is being used in each and they are

⁷ [Blower Door Tests | Department of Energy.](#)

⁸ *Nonunanimous Stipulation and Agreement Regarding MEEIA Low Income Exemption and LED Streetlighting Issues*, filed on March 12, 2015.

1 far from consistent. The Ameren Missouri tariff language speaks to exemption for 12 billing
2 months **following** assistance, therefore limiting exemptions to 12 billing months. The
3 stipulation from File No. ER-2014-0258 speaks to receiving assistance in the **prior** 12 billing
4 months and appears to allow exemptions indefinitely. Staff is unclear if this discrepancy is
5 accidental, intentional, or if something changed the intent in a subsequent filing.

6 To further Staff's concern, as mentioned above in reference to File No. ER-2014-0258,
7 a qualifying low-income customer will be defined as any residential customer who, in
8 any of the prior 12 billing months, has received assistance from any of the following
9 qualifying low-income programs: Missouri Energy Assistance (a.k.a. Low-Income
10 Home Energy Assistance Program or "LIHEAP"), Winter Energy Crisis Intervention
11 Program ("ECIP"), Summer ECIP, Keeping Current, and Keeping Cool.

12
13 According to Ameren Missouri's tariff:

14
15 In order to qualify for participation, low-income Participants must meet one of the
16 following income eligibility requirements: 1. Participation in federal, state, or local
17 subsidized housing program. 2. Proof of resident income levels at or below 80% of area
18 median income (AMI) or 200% of federal poverty level. 3. Fall within a census tract
19 included on Company's list of eligible low-income census tracts.
20

21 This demonstrates inconsistencies between low-income opt-out qualifications and
22 MEEIA low-income program qualifications.

23 **RESIDENTIAL LOW- INCOME PROGRAM DESIGN**

24 Q. How should low-income programs be designed?

25 A. Low-income programs should be designed with the ability to truly effectuate
26 change for those in need. MEEIA low-income programs are not required to be cost-effective,

1 but they should still be designed in an effort to be cost-effective, and in a manner similar to how
2 other Staff witness' direct testimony⁹ has detailed non low-income programs be designed.

3 **FEDERAL ASSISTANCE**

4 Q. Is there federal assistance available for low-income customers?

5 A. Yes. There is federal assistance available for low-income individuals/families
6 including but not limited to grants, loans, and tax incentives, several of which are offered
7 through the recent passage of the Inflation Reduction Act ("IRA").

8 Q. What is the IRA?

9 A. The IRA is a Federally Funded program that is funneling millions of dollars into
10 Missouri to offer rebates to help promote energy efficiency upgrades to residents and businesses
11 of Missouri. Currently, it is projected that more than \$150 million could be available to
12 Missouri residents to promote energy efficient upgrades in the following areas: HVAC
13 upgrades, heat pump upgrades, weatherization, as well as other areas. These federal funds will
14 be handled by the State's Division of Energy ("DOE").

15 Q. How much of the IRA funding will be directed to low-income?

16 A. IRA funding will be available for low-income assistance through the following
17 programs, Home Energy Rebates Program¹⁰ & Home Electrification & Appliance Rebates
18 Program.¹¹ Each program will have roughly \$75 million with 40%¹² allocated to low-income
19 and 10%¹³ allocated to low-income multi-family.

⁹Please see the direct testimony of J Luebbert, Mark Kiesling and Jordan Hull.

¹⁰ IRA Section 50121.

¹¹ IRA Section 50122.

¹² Percentage of Low-Income Households (<80% AMI) in the State.

¹³ Min 10% Low-Income Multifamily Allocation.

1 **LOW-INCOME NON-MEEIA PROGRAMS**

2 Q. Is there Low-Income assistance provided by Ameren outside of MEEIA?

3 A. Yes. Throughout various rate cases over the past few years, several low-income
4 assistance programs have been approved by the Commission. The programs available include:

5 1. Keeping Current/Keeping Cool/Low-Income Pilot Program¹⁴

6 The purpose of the Keeping Current/Keeping Cool Low-Income Pilot
7 Program is to provide electric bill payment assistance to customers
8 meeting the eligibility requirements while assessing the delivery
9 methods used in the Program and the impacts on revenues and costs.

10 2. Critical Needs Program¹⁵

11 The Critical Needs Program is a pilot program designed to promote and
12 finance a community-based information resource network that will
13 identify and direct customers with critical medical needs to resources
14 that will help customers:

- 15 • Maintain or restore utility services
- 16 • Avoid negative impacts on residents with serious medical conditions
- 17 • Address build-up of utility arrears
- 18 • Provide a streamlined process to complementary services

¹⁴ MO.P.S.C. Schedule NO. 6 5th Revised Sheet NO. 160 – 160.3.

¹⁵ MO.P.S.C. Schedule NO. 6 1st Revised Sheet NO. 166.

1 3. Weatherization¹⁶

2 This voluntary Weatherization Program is intended to assist qualified
3 residential customers in reducing their use of energy through
4 weatherization and conservation.

5 4. Rehousing¹⁷

6 The Rehousing Low-Income Pilot Program is to provide additional
7 resources to electric customers meeting the eligibility requirements
8 while assessing the delivery methods used in the Program and the
9 impacts on revenues and costs. This Program is provided pursuant to the
10 Unanimous Stipulation and Agreement approved by the Missouri Public
11 Service Commission (MoPSC) in Case No. ER-2021-0240.

12 Q. Does there need to be MEEIA programs in order to provide low-income
13 programs in the future?

14 A. No. These programs will continue to be provided to low-income customers until
15 modified or discontinued in a general rate case. Therefore, low-income customers will continue
16 to receive services and benefits through these programs absent MEEIA programs Furthermore,
17 interested stakeholders in future Ameren rate cases will have the ability to request new
18 programs for Commission consideration.

19 Q. Does this conclude your direct testimony?

20 A. Yes.

¹⁶ MO.P.S.C. Schedule NO. 6 2nd Revised Sheet NO. 175.

¹⁷ MO.P.S.C. Schedule NO. 6 1st Revised Sheet NO. 157 – 157.1.

BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI

In the Matter of Union Electric Company d/b/a)
Ameren Missouri's 4th Filing to Implement)
Regulatory Changes in Furtherance of Energy) Case No. EO-2023-0136
Efficiency as Allowed by MEEIA)
)

AFFIDAVIT OF AMY L. EICHHOLZ

STATE OF MISSOURI)
) ss.
COUNTY OF COLE)

COMES NOW AMY L. EICHHOLZ and on her oath declares that she is of sound mind and lawful age; that she contributed to the foregoing *Direct Testimony of Amy L. Eichholz*; and that the same is true and correct according to her best knowledge and belief.

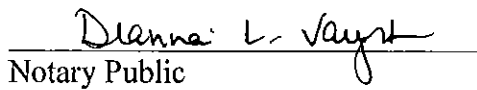
Further the Affiant sayeth not.


AMY L. EICHHOLZ

JURAT

Subscribed and sworn before me, a duly constituted and authorized Notary Public, in and for the County of Cole, State of Missouri, at my office in Jefferson City, on this 28th day of February 2024.

DIANNA L. VAUGHT
Notary Public - Notary Seal
State of Missouri
Commissioned for Cole County
My Commission Expires: July 18, 2027
Commission Number: 15207377


Notary Public

Amy L. Eichholz

Education and Employment Background

I am Research/Data Analyst of the Energy Resources Department, Industry Analysis Division of the Missouri Public Service Commission. Prior to my current position, I was employed at the Missouri Department of Natural Resources as an Environmental Program Analyst from January 2022 through December 2022.

I received a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration in December 1997, and a minor in Marketing, all from Lincoln University, Jefferson City, Missouri.

Prior to first joining the Commission, I worked in various positions within three state agencies of the State of Missouri. I was employed as an Executive II for the HIV, STD, and Hepatitis Section of the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services; as a Deputy Clerk for the Supreme Court of Missouri; as a Game Accounting Executive, Administrative Office Assistant, Inside Sales Representative, and a Licensing Specialist for the Missouri Lottery. From September 1999 through December 2017.

Case Participation History			
Case Number	Company	Issue	Exhibit
ER-2022-0337	Union Electric Company d/b/a Ameren Missouri	Low-Income	Rebuttal & Surrebuttal Testimony
EO-2023-0180	Union Electric Company d/b/a Ameren Missouri	Interest Calculation	Staff Report
EO-2023-0407	Evergy Missouri Metro	Customer Bills	Staff Report
EO-2023-0408	Evergy Missouri Metro	Customer Bills	Staff Report
EO-2024-0053	Union Electric Company d/b/a Ameren Missouri	Customer Bills	Staff Report