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

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In the Matter of the Request of Liberty Utilities (Midstates Natural Gas) Corp. d/b/a Liberty to Implement a General Rate Increase for Natural Gas Service in the Missouri Service Areas of the Company

Case No. GR-2024-0106

## LIBERTY MDSTATES' NOTICE REGARDING NOTIFICATION OF LOCAL PUBLIC HEARINGS TO E-BILLED CUSTOMERS AND PROPOSAL TO HOLD ANOTHER VIRTUAL LOCAL PUBLIC HEARING

COMES NOW Liberty Utilities (Midstates Natural Gas) Corp. d/b/a Liberty ("Liberty Midstates" or the "Company"), by and through counsel, and for its Notice to the Missouri Public Service Commission ("Commission") states as follows:

1. On February 9, 2024, Liberty Midstates filed tariff sheets designed to implement a general rate increase for its gas service territory, together with supporting testimony.

2. On June 21, 2024, the Commission issued an *Order Setting Local Public Hearings*, which included the following directive in ordering paragraph 3: "No later than ten days before the virtual public hearings, Liberty shall provide notice of the hearings to each of its customers."

3. The Company provided the required notice of the local public hearings or "LPHs" with the July 2024 bill cycle — more than ten days prior to any of the LPHs.

4. However, the Company recently learned that the required notification language for the LPHs was sent to all paper-billed customers (which is approximately 73% of the Company's customers) but was not sent to approximately 13,590 e-billed or paperless billing customers. Of these paperless billing customers, 5,019 are in the Northeast Missouri ("NEMO") rate district, 987 are in the Western Missouri ("WEMO") rate district, and 7,584 are in the Southeast Missouri ("SEMO") rate district. 5. On Friday, August 30, 2024, while the Company was confirming whether the required notice of the LPHs was sent to e-bills customers, out of an abundance of caution, the Company sent an email with the required LPH notification language to all customers within the Company's SEMO rate district for whom the Company had an email address associated with their account (17,071 customers in total), which included the e-billed SEMO customers. A copy of that email is attached as **Attachment A.** The SEMO area LPHs (in Kennett, Sikeston, and Cape Girardeau) are scheduled for September 10 and 11, 2024. Therefore, SEMO e-billed customers were provided the LPH notification language more than ten days before the SEMO area LPHs are scheduled to be held.

6. Unfortunately, the error resulted in an estimated 6,006 e-billed Liberty Midstates customers in the NEMO and WEMO districts not receiving any of the required LPH notification language from the Company.

7. The Company apologizes for the error and proposes that an additional virtual LPH be scheduled in an effort to mitigate the error.

8. If the Company's proposed additional virtual LPH is approved, the Company commits to sending a separate email to all Liberty Midstates Missouri customers for whom the Company has an email address associated with their account any required LPH notification language ten or more days in advance of that additional virtual LPH.

**WHEREFORE**, Liberty Midstates requests that the Commission accept this Notice, its apology for the error, and its proposal to hold another virtual LPH as set out herein.

Respectfully submitted,

<u>/s/ Jermaine Grubbs</u> Jermaine Grubbs MBE #68970 Liberty Utilities (Midstates Natural Gas) Corp. d/b/a Liberty Utilities

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## **CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I hereby certify that the above document was filed in EFIS on this 6th day of September, 2024, and sent by electronic transmission to the Staff of the Commission, the Office of the Public Counsel and counsel for intervenors.

/s/ Jermaine Grubbs