

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

In the Matter of the Determination of Special )  
Contemporary Resource Planning Issues to be )  
Addressed by Ameren Missouri in its Next ) **Case No. EO-2025-0077**  
Triennial Compliance Filing or Next Annual )  
Update Report. )

**AMEREN MISSOURI’S RESPONSE TO PROPOSED  
SPECIAL CONTEMPORARY ISSUES**

COMES NOW Union Electric Company d/b/a Ameren Missouri (“Ameren Missouri” or “the Company”) and, pursuant to 20 CSR 4240-22.080(4), submits to the Missouri Public Service Commission (“the Commission”) the following Response to Proposed Special Contemporary Issues:

1. 20 CSR 4240-22.080(4) requires Missouri’s electric utility companies to consider and analyze “special contemporary issues” in their Integrated Resource Plan (“IRP”) triennial compliance filing and in their annual IRP update reports.
2. On September 13 and 15, 2024, the Office of Public Counsel and the Sierra Club, respectively, submitted proposed special contemporary issues.
3. The language of 20 CSR 4240-22.080(4) describes the purpose of the special contemporary issues list as “...to ensure that evolving regulatory, economic, financial, environmental, energy, technical, or customer issues are adequately addressed by each utility in its electric resource planning.” In addition, the rule provides that “[e]ach special contemporary issues list will identify new and evolving issues but may also include other issues such as unresolved deficiencies or concerns from the preceding triennial compliance filing.” 20 CSR 4240-22.080(4).

4. In making its decision about what specific issues a utility must address, the Commission should consider the significance and urgency of issues and the resources available to address them, both individually and in the aggregate. As a basic test, such issues must be “special,” they must be “contemporary,” and they must, in fact, be “issues.” This means that the issues must not only meet a threshold of significance in terms of their potential effect on resource decisions, but that the potential effect must also be imminent. The Commission should carefully consider whether inclusion of certain special contemporary issues provides added value or diverts resources away from the analysis of other special contemporary issues, and important resource planning generally.<sup>1</sup>

5. The Commission should also bear in mind the cost to the utility company (and ultimately, to rate payers) of analyzing each issue and whether or not certain special contemporary issues, which may necessitate hiring a consultant(s), are worth the cost of the utility's analysis.

6. Ameren Missouri has reviewed the proposed special contemporary issues lists proposed by the other parties and, as set forth in Attachment A, believes there is merit to a couple of the issues proposed by the parties to be treated as special contemporary issues. Ameren Missouri believes, however, that the remaining suggestions fall outside of the scope contemplated by 20 CSR 4240-22.080(4).

7. A previous order on special contemporary issues for Ameren Missouri’s 2012 IRP Annual Update in Docket No. EO-2012-0039 included language clarifying the Commission’s standards for determining what issues should be addressed. In particular, the Commission noted

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<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., *Order Establishing Special Contemporary Resource Planning Issues* at p. 3, File No. EO-2012-0039 (Oct. 19, 2011) (“... the Commission must choose the identified issues wisely to allow Ameren Missouri an opportunity to thoroughly address the chosen issues. Requiring the company to address every issue proposed by the various parties within the available time would only result in a superficial analysis that would be less helpful than a more detailed analysis of appropriately limited issues.”).

that because Ameren Missouri would be filing an annual update rather than a triennial compliance filing in 2012, the Company was “only expected to address ‘changing conditions since the last filed triennial compliance filing or annual update filing.’”<sup>2</sup> In its Order, the Commission noted “the requirement to examine special contemporary issues should not be allowed to expand the limited annual update report into something more closely resembling a triennial compliance report.”<sup>3</sup> As Ameren Missouri filed its triennial compliance filing last year, the same standard should be applied in this case.

8. Ameren Missouri asks the Commission to carefully consider which proposed issues are truly special contemporary issues as contemplated by 20 CSR 4240-22.080(4). Otherwise, the IRP process is subject to hijack by special interests, which would fail to capture the stated intent of the Commission's IRP regulations.

9. Attachment A to this pleading contains Ameren Missouri's responses to all proposed Special Contemporary Issues. Within the list there are two proposed issues, as modified within the attachment, that the Company agrees are appropriate to analyze as part of the Special Contemporary Issues process.

- a. OPC 1 - Ameren Missouri does not object to studying how other utilities' integrated resource plans account for the addition of data centers and how to minimize the risks posed by data centers and their high load demands.
- b. OPC 2 - Ameren Missouri does not object to analyzing whether or not Ameren Missouri can reasonably accommodate loads brought by new data centers within its service territory.

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<sup>2</sup> *Id.* at p. 2 (quoting 20 CSR 4240-22.080(3)(B)).

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

10. As indicated in Attachment A, several of the other proposed Special Contemporary Issues are included within the scope of resource planning that Ameren Missouri has and will continue to undertake as required by 20 CSR 4240-22.

11. Ameren Missouri looks forward to continuing to work with stakeholders to address the issues presented in this docket.

WHEREFORE, Union Electric Company d/b/a Ameren Missouri submits its attached comments on the proposed list of special contemporary issues and requests, pursuant to 20 CSR 4240-22.080(4)(C), that the Commission issue an order identifying only the issues listed herein at paragraph 9 as special contemporary issues.

Respectfully Submitted,

*/s/ William D. Holthaus, Jr.*

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**ATTORNEYS FOR UNION ELECTRIC  
COMPANY d/b/a AMEREN MISSOURI**

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I do hereby certify that a true and correct copy of the foregoing document has been hand-delivered, transmitted by e-mail or mailed, First Class, postage prepaid, this 1st day of October 2024, to counsel for all parties on the Commission's service list in this case.

*/s/ William D. Holthaus, Jr.*

William D. Holthaus, Jr.

**2024 Special Contemporary Issues  
Ameren Missouri Comments**

**Issues Proposed by the Parties and the Company's Assessment**

**OPC Issues:**

**OPC Issue 1:** Perform a literature review of best practices from around the country on how other utilities are accounting for the addition of data centers in their IRPs and on how risks can be minimized.

**Ameren Missouri's Assessment and Recommendation:** Ameren Missouri agrees this issue should be included as a special contemporary issue.

**OPC Issue 2:** Include an analysis of new data center loads, whether or not Ameren Missouri can reasonably accommodate aforementioned loads, and the impact data centers will have on ratepayers if the additional load growth materializes in neighboring utilities within MISO instead of within Ameren Missouri.

**Ameren Missouri's Assessment and Recommendation:** Ameren Missouri agrees that data center load growth within Ameren Missouri's service territory should be included as a special contemporary issue without the specific MW levels OPC has suggested. This allows Ameren Missouri to reflect its latest assessment of potential demand and ensure the analysis provides results and insights that are material to its resource planning. Regarding the impact of data center load growth occurring outside of Ameren Missouri's service territory but not within it, this should not be a special contemporary issue. Such an analysis, even if it theoretically could be done, would be extremely complex and far-reaching, and would depend on many assumptions and permutations of those assumptions (such as where within MISO the growth occurs, when the growth occurs, the size of the new loads, and the transmission system impacts, to name just a few). Ameren Missouri is uncertain that it would have the capability to conduct such a study, but it is certain that such a study would be extremely time-consuming and costly.

**OPC Issue 3:** Provide a review of the technology and methods currently available as well as the dollar impact for relevant and projected resources to be compliant with the laws promulgated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

**Ameren Missouri's Assessment and Recommendation:** This issue is a regular resource planning item as the Commission's IRP rules require the utility to include probable

environmental costs in its analysis, which the Company did in its 2023 IRP; therefore, it should not be considered a special contemporary issue.

**OPC Issue 4:** Investigate the option of a supercritical carbon dioxide power cycle plant as a resource candidate in future supply-side generation planning and modeling scenarios.

**Ameren Missouri's Assessment and Recommendation:** The technology cited by OPC seems to be a research project partly funded by the DOE and have a high cost for only a limited capacity of 10 MW. While Ameren Missouri does follow technological improvements and developments, it cannot investigate every research project that is being funded; investigating this specific technology would most likely have no impact to utility resource decisions in the near or medium term. If such technology at some point appears commercially feasible with reasonably favorable economics, it might be worthy of consideration at that time, but it is premature to investigate further at this time and it should not be considered a special contemporary issue.

**OPC Issue 5:** Model low, medium, and high interconnection cost estimates supported by historic costs by fuel type in MISO, and articulate the estimated project length for all generation resources.

**Ameren Missouri's Assessment and Recommendation:** Evaluation of interconnection costs is covered as part of the resource planning rule 20 CSR 4240-22.045 and should therefore not be considered a special contemporary issue, but instead should be addressed in triennial filings, as the rule contemplates. Modeling is not, has not been, and should not be, required to be performed as part of an annual update.

Moreover, the Commission's resource planning rule requires consideration of 'generic' costs for various resource types. Ameren Missouri works with its Transmission Planning Group to get more site-specific interconnection costs when applicable and to the best of its ability and has included these costs in its total project costs in the 2023 IRP, as it has done in its previous IRPs. Additionally, Ameren Missouri anticipates that costs associated with the integration of renewables, and implemented through MISO's Long Range Transmission Planning (LRTP) process will be shared across MISO rather than being allocated to specific projects. As a result, these costs are common to all alternative plans and therefore have no impact on their relative economics.

The second part of this suggested issue is a regular resource planning issue and is already covered under resource planning rule 20 CSR 4240-22.040. Ameren Missouri has included estimated time for permitting and notice-to-proceed to commercial operation in its 2023 IRP analysis as it has done in previous IRPs; therefore this should not be considered a special contemporary issue.

**Sierra Club:**

**SC Issue 1:** Analyze net present value of continuing to operate each coal generating unit including consideration of known and potential compliance costs.

**Ameren Missouri’s Assessment and Recommendation:** As it did when the Commission rejected this issue in File No. EO-2023-0099, the Commission should reject this issue as a special contemporary issue in this case as well. This issue is a regular resource planning item as the Commission's IRP rules require the utility to include probable environmental costs in its analysis, which the Company did in its 2023 IRP. The Company also regularly evaluates alternative retirement dates for its coal-fired energy centers as part of its IRP analysis of alternative resource plans pursuant to 20 CSR 4240-22.060.

**SC Issue 2:** Generate, analyze and evaluate plans using a capacity expansion model.

**Ameren Missouri’s Assessment and Recommendation:** This is a planning *tool* suggestion, not a planning *issue*, meaning this should not be considered as a special contemporary issue. Moreover, the Company agreed to evaluate various capacity expansion models as part of the 2023 IRP Joint Filing, one of the signatories of which was the Sierra Club. The Company will be evaluating whether a capacity expansion model is compatible with, and whether it is likely to add value to, the process the Company's management team uses to identify and analyze options to meet its planning objectives while at the same time addressing concerns provided in stakeholder comments. It bears mention that the Commission declined to accept this same issue as a special contemporary issue in File Nos. EO-2023-0099 and EO-2024-0042.

**SC Issue 3:** Study the use of grid-enhancing technologies holistically on its system.

**Ameren Missouri’s Assessment and Recommendation:** This issue is already addressed as part of the Commission's resource planning rule 20 CSR 4240-22.045 and should not be considered a special contemporary issue. In its 2023 IRP, Ameren Missouri has included a discussion of advanced technologies and its Smart Energy Plan that aims to employ smart grid technologies and modernize the grid.