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BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

STATE OF MISSOURI

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

LOCAL PUBLIC HEARING

In the Matter of the Application)
of Union Electric Company,)
d/b/a Ameren Missouri, for) File No.
Permission and Approval and) EA-2024-0237
Certificates of Public Convenience)
and Necessity Authorizing it to)
Construct a Simple Cycle Natural)
Gas Generation Facility)

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2024

12:43 PM to 1:40 PM CST

Jefferson City, MO 65101

via WebEx

VOLUME 2

RILEY FEWELL, Presiding

REGULATORY LAW JUDGE

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KAYLA HAHN, Chair,
MAIDA J. COLEMAN,
JASON R. HOLSMAN,
GLEN KOLKMEYER,
JOHN MITCHELL,
COMMISSIONERS

Reported by:
Melody Stephenson, MO CCR 406

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A P P E A R A N C E S

ON BEHALF OF AMEREN MISSOURI:

JIM LOWERY

UNION ELECTRIC COMPANY

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ON BEHALF OF COMMISSION STAFF:

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ON BEHALF OF THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC COUNSEL:

NATHAN WILLIAMS

CHIEF DEPUTY PUBLIC COUNCIL

PO Box 2230

Jefferson City, Missouri 65102

P R O C E E D I N G S

1 JUDGE FEWELL: Good afternoon, everyone.
2
3 It's September 20th, and the current time is
4 12:43 p.m. The Missouri Public Service Commission
5 has set this time for a local public hearing to
6 give members of the public a chance to comment
7 about the application in File Number EA-2024-0237
8 which is captioned as in the matter of the
9 application of Union Electric Company, doing
10 business as Ameren Missouri for permission and
11 approval and certificates of public convenience
12 and necessity authorizing it to construct a simple
13 cycle natural gas generation facility.

14 The Missouri Public Service Commission
15 regulates investor-owned utility companies in
16 Missouri and ensures that their rates are just and
17 reasonable. The commission also regulates the
18 quality of service and the safety of the
19 operations of investor-owned utilities.

20 The commission is made up of five
21 commissioners: Chair Kayla Hahn, as well as
22 Commissioners Maida Coleman, Jason Holsman, Glen
23 Kolkmeyer, and John Mitchell. The commissioners
24 are appointed by the governor to fixed terms and
25 confirmed by the senate. The commissioners employ

1 a staff of engineers, accountants, attorneys,
2 financial analysts, and other specialists in the
3 field of utility regulation.

4 With me today are all five commissioners.
5 And, again, those are Chair Hahn, Commissioner
6 Coleman, Commissioner Holsman, Commissioner
7 Kolkmeyer, and Commissioner Mitchell.

8 And, Commissioners, if you have any
9 questions at any time, please feel free to
10 interrupt me and ask them.

11 My name is Riley Fewell, and I'm the
12 regulatory law judge presiding over this hearing.
13 This is an official hearing with the Missouri
14 Public Service Commission, and the statements and
15 testimony of witnesses will be recorded by the
16 court reporter and must be given under oath or
17 affirmation.

18 The commission has not made any decisions
19 in this case and neither the commissioners nor
20 myself can answer the questions about the issues
21 of the case today because the commission must
22 remain impartial until after all of the evidence
23 is presented at the evidentiary hearing in this
24 matter scheduled to take place next month.

25 As we want to provide all attendees an

1 appropriate opportunity to speak today, we will
2 limit the time for testimony to only five minutes.
3 I would ask that everyone remain muted, unless you
4 are directed to speak, so that everyone can be
5 heard and understood for the court reporter. The
6 court reporter's transcribing this hearing so the
7 commission may review and read the comments.

8 Commissioners, would you like to make any
9 opening remarks? Hearing none.

10 OPENING REMARKS

11 COMMISSIONER JASON HOLSMAN: Judge, I'll
12 make some remarks on behalf of the entire
13 commission. We just want to thank everybody for
14 taking their time to share their thoughts on this
15 important matter. We have not made any decisions,
16 but we will take their opinions into advisement
17 and thank them for their time today.

18 JUDGE FEWELL: Thank you, Commissioner.

19 Now, we can have the parties enter their
20 appearances starting with Ameren Missouri.

21 MR. JIM LOWERY: Thank you, Your Honor.
22 Jim Lowery appearing on behalf of Ameren Missouri.
23 My contact information's part of the case file.

24 JUDGE FEWELL: Okay. Commission staff?

25 MR. VANDERGRIFF: Good afternoon, I'm Eric

1 Vangergriff representing the commission staff.
2 Our address is the Governor Office Building, Suite
3 800, 200 Madison Street, Jefferson City 65102.

4 JUDGE FEWELL: Thank you.

5 The Office of Public Counsel?

6 NATHAN WILLIAMS: Nathan Williams, Chief
7 Deputy Public Council, PO Box 2230, Jefferson
8 City, Missouri 65102.

9 JUDGE FEWELL: Are there any intervenors
10 present who would like to make an entry of
11 appearance? Hearing none.

12 For those who would like to provide
13 comments today, I'm going to call the names listed
14 as they appeared in the chat. When I call your
15 name, please unmute yourself. I will then place
16 you under oath and ask you to state and spell your
17 name, and then you can offer your comments to the
18 commission.

19 As I previously stated, we are limiting
20 comments to five minutes today so that everyone
21 present has an adequate chance to be heard. Also,
22 please remain available after your remarks until
23 you've been excused because the commission may
24 have some questions to ask you. If the attorneys
25 have any questions, they can let me know at that

1 time as well.

2 Would Dana Gray unmute herself? If you
3 could, raise your right hand.

4 DANA GRAY: There you are.

5 JUDGE FEWELL: We can hear you.

6 All right. Can you please state your --
7 state and spell your last -- state and spell your
8 name.

9 DANA GRAY: Yes. Dana Gray, D-a-n-a
10 G-r-a-y.

11 JUDGE FEWELL: Thank you.

12 And can you raise your right hand.

13 DANA GRAY,
14 first duly sworn or affirmed to comment
15 truthfully, commented as follows:

16 JUDGE FEWELL: Thank you.

17 What would you like to tell the
18 commission?

19 DANA GRAY: As a resident of Missouri, I
20 am concerned about the creation of a new power
21 center that would be burning natural gas. My
22 understanding is that this is mostly burning
23 natural gas, it's made mostly of methane, and
24 methane emissions trap over 82.5 times more heat
25 than carbon dioxide emissions and that that would

1 pose a health risk for Missourians, and I would
2 like for our electric utility to find cleaner ways
3 to generate energy.

4 JUDGE FEWELL: Do you have anything else
5 you wanted to bring to the commission?

6 DANA GRAY: That's all. Thank you.

7 JUDGE FEWELL: All right. Thank you.

8 Jen Jaynes. I apologize if I'm
9 pronouncing your name wrong.

10 JENNIFER JAYNES: No. You've actually got
11 it right, which is very unusual. Good job.

12 JUDGE FEWELL: I wasn't sure if there'd be
13 a stress vowel or not.

14 Can you please raise your right hand for
15 me.

16 JENNIFER JAYNES: Oop. That's my right.

17 JENNIFER JAYNES,
18 first duly sworn or affirmed to comment
19 truthfully, commented as follows:

20 JUDGE FEWELL: Can you please state and
21 spell your name for the court reporter.

22 JENNIFER JAYNES: Jennifer Jaynes.
23 J-e-n-n-i-f-e-r, last name J-a-y-n-e-s.

24 JUDGE FEWELL: Thank you.

25 What would you like to tell the

1 commission?

2 JENNIFER JAYNES: I'm a Missouri homeowner
3 and an Ameren customer, and I'm here to urge the
4 Public Service Commission to vote no on the
5 proposed Castle Bluff Energy Center.

6 I receive regular mailers asking me to
7 voluntarily pay a higher electricity rate to help
8 fund renewable electricity generation projects for
9 Ameren. Ameren is a for-profit company that pays
10 its executives handsomely and will use any
11 new-generation facilities for profit, yet they ask
12 ratepayers to fund the building of renewable
13 energy facilities while also seeking approval for
14 this fossil fuel plant.

15 The Castle Bluff proposed facility relies
16 on methane gas of fossil fuel. Ameren alleges
17 that the center will be reliable, but methane is a
18 volatile compound that needs to be piped to the
19 center, unlike wind or solar generation.

20 Methane gas costs are extremely variable,
21 and it is a finite resource, unlike wind or solar.
22 These reasons make methane gas a poor backup
23 energy-generation method. Utility scale solar and
24 wind power are among the cheapest and most
25 reliable energy sources on the market today.

1 Ameren speaks about their commitment to
2 clean energy, but methane gas is not a clean
3 energy source. As mentioned, when burned, methane
4 gas releases methane into the atmosphere which has
5 over 82 times more heat in our atmosphere than
6 carbon dioxide. Solar and wind power generation
7 do not produce greenhouse gas emissions.

8 Ameren has theoretically committed to
9 reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2045. With
10 cheaper, more reliable, and cleaner energy sources
11 available, the proposed Castle Bluff energy center
12 is not the right facility to build.

13 I respectfully urge the PSC to vote no on
14 this proposal. Thank you for your time and
15 consideration.

16 JUDGE FEWELL: Thank you for your comment.
17 Elyse Schaeffer?

18 ELYSE SCHAEFFER: Hello.

19 JUDGE FEWELL: Hello. Can you please
20 raise your right hand.

21 ELYSE SCHAEFFER,
22 first duly sworn or affirmed to comment
23 truthfully, commented as follows:

24 JUDGE FEWELL: Thank you. Can you state
25 your name and spell it for the court reporter?

1 ELYSE SCHAEFFER: Elyse, E-l-y-s-e,
2 Schaeffer, S-c-h-a-e-f-f-e-r.

3 JUDGE FEWELL: What would you like to tell
4 the commission?

5 ELYSE SCHAEFFER: Good afternoon. My name
6 is Elyse Schaeffer, and I am here testifying on
7 behalf of Missouri Coalition for the Environment.
8 We are a nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy
9 organization that seeks to empower Missourians to
10 protect their environment and their health.

11 Ameren's proposed Castle Bluff Energy
12 Center will be detrimental to the environment and
13 to the health of all Missourians. Additionally,
14 the proposal is a reckless use of ratepayer
15 dollars when there are renewable alternatives that
16 are more cost effective and more forward-thinking.
17 For these reasons, I urge the public service
18 commission to vote no on this proposal.

19 Ameren's planned center relies on methane
20 gas or, as the company refers to it, natural gas.
21 Methane gas is a fossil fuel composed mostly of
22 methane and some smaller amounts of carbon dioxide
23 and water vapor. The plan also includes carbon
24 capture sequestration, or CCS, which is an
25 expensive and completely unproven technology

1 required by the EPA for all new methane gas
2 facilities.

3 Ameren says the center will be, quote,
4 reliable as a source of energy that positions the
5 company as, quote, leading the transition to a
6 resilient clean energy future, end quote. In
7 reality, it does neither. Methane gas is an
8 extremely volatile commodity that must be piped to
9 the center rather than being produced on-site.

10 Between June of 2020 and August of 2022,
11 for example, costs of methane gas spiked by nearly
12 20 percent. What's more, Ameren claims to create,
13 quote, permanent jobs with this proposal. Methane
14 gas is a limited resource. Jobs created by this
15 plant will not be permanent. Utility scale solar
16 and wind power, including utility scale battery
17 storage, however, are renewable, reliable
18 resources that would actually create permanent
19 jobs.

20 Solar and wind power are also among the
21 cheapest and most reliable energy sources on the
22 market today. Moreover, solar power has shown a
23 reliable decrease in costs for utilities and for
24 ratepayers.

25 Further, methane gas is not a clean energy

1 source. When burned, methane gas releases carbon
2 dioxide and, primarily, methane into the
3 atmosphere. Methane traps over 82 1/2 times more
4 heat than carbon dioxide. Solar and wind, on the
5 other hand, do not produce any greenhouse gas
6 emissions.

7 The Castle Bluff Energy Center stands to
8 exacerbate the ongoing public health and racial
9 justice inequalities of global warming. Heat
10 kills more Americans every year than any other
11 natural disaster. We continue to see more extreme
12 heat, heat waves, drought, tornadoes, and flooding
13 in St. Louis. 2024 is expected to be the hottest
14 year on record, beating the last record breaking
15 year 2023.

16 The adverse effects for a changing climate
17 are not experienced the same by everyone. Damage
18 to health, property, and livelihood can be doubled
19 by the extenracial [sic] and economic inequalities
20 in our community.

21 Finally, Ameren's proposition includes
22 required measures for carbon capture
23 sequestration, or CCS. Despite over 50 years of
24 research and development, this technology has
25 never been proven effective at significantly

1 reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Renewable
2 energy sources not only avoid creating greenhouse
3 gas emissions in the first place, but also avoid
4 this added cost extracted at the ratepayer's
5 expense.

6 Ameren should be forward-thinking and
7 invest in renewable energy infrastructure that
8 will be effective in both cost and producing
9 reliable energy. Ameren has theoretically
10 committed to reaching net zero carbon emissions by
11 2045. With cheaper, more reliable, cleaner energy
12 sources available, the proposed Castle Bluff
13 Energy Center is not a sound step toward this
14 goal.

15 If this plan is approved, Missourians will
16 be asked to pay \$800,000,000 to exacerbate the
17 climate crisis. Instead of investing in methane
18 gas, Ameren should be investing ratepayers'
19 dollars into renewable energy sources.

20 As such, I respectfully urge the PSC to
21 vote no on this proposal. Thank you for your time
22 and consideration. I'm happy to answer any
23 questions.

24 JUDGE FEWELL: Okay. I wasn't sure if
25 Mr. Coleman had a question or not. I saw her pop

1 up a couple times.

2 Thank you for your comment.

3 Laura Turner?

4 LAURA TURNER: Hello.

5 JUDGE FEWELL: Hello. Can you please
6 raise your right hand?

7 LAURA TURNER,
8 first duly sworn or affirmed to comment
9 truthfully, commented as follows:

10 JUDGE FEWELL: Thank you.

11 Can you please state and spell your name
12 for the court reporter.

13 LAURA TURNER: Laura Turner. L-a-u-r-a
14 T-u-r-n-e-r.

15 JUDGE FEWELL: What would you like to tell
16 the commission?

17 LAURA TURNER: Thank you for taking the
18 time to hold this meeting. I'm the director of
19 advocacy for Missouri with the American Lung
20 Association. I want to focus my efforts on the
21 effects of greenhouse gases and other emissions on
22 human health and why it is imperative we must move
23 forward with actions to reduce the combustion of
24 fossil fuels for energy, such as the methane
25 natural gas that will power the Castle Bluff

1 Energy Center.

2 As the oldest voluntary public health
3 organization in the United States, one of the
4 American Lung Associations for strategic
5 imperatives is to champion clean air for all.

6 The American Lung Association supports the
7 phase-out of fossil fuel combustion due to the
8 myriad health and climate impacts posed by
9 combustion. Extraction, transportation, and
10 combustion of methane releases harmful pollution
11 that will contribute to climate change and
12 directly harm health.

13 Simply put, climate change is a health
14 emergency. Air quality is significantly impacted
15 by the effects of climate change in the form of
16 extreme heat, drought, extreme weather patterns,
17 like tornadoes, which we see here, and wildfires,
18 which amplify our public health burdens.

19 Poor air quality contributes to a wide
20 range of negative health impacts, including
21 childhood asthma attacks, impaired lung function
22 and development, lung cancer, heart attacks and
23 strokes, and premature deaths.

24 Methane, which we're referring to here, a
25 natural gas, is a highly potent greenhouse gas,

1 over 80 times more warming than carbon.

2 Extracting and processing methane leads to
3 emissions and leaks of other dangerous pollution
4 at the same time.

5 Volatile organic compounds, VOCs, are
6 released alongside methane and carry immediate
7 health harms. Some are known carcinogens. In
8 addition to being toxic, VOCs contribute to the
9 formation of ground level ozone.

10 Getting exposed to ground level ozone,
11 also known as smog, can cause irreversible damage
12 to the lungs and significantly increase the chance
13 of premature death. It impacts asthma attacks and
14 aggravates other chronic lung diseases and
15 preexisting heart problems. Ozone is also linked
16 to premature birth, which, with low birth weight,
17 is a leading cause of infant death, and we are
18 rating high in those in Missouri.

19 Burning methane gas in a power plant leads
20 to harmful additional emissions, including
21 greenhouse gases and nitrogen oxides, which are
22 dangerous on their own and can also react to form
23 ozone pollution.

24 The American Lung Association's 25th
25 Annual State of the Air Report revealed St. Louis

1 received failing grades for air quality. And this
2 is concerning because the St. Louis area has one
3 of the highest in the country for asthma-related
4 deaths. Breathing air pollution can cause asthma
5 attacks, respiratory and cardiovascular harm,
6 including heart attack and stroke, and even early
7 death.

8 The American Lung Association supports the
9 transition from fossil fuel-based electricity
10 production to clean, renewable, noncombustion
11 technology, like wind and solar, to secure a
12 healthier and more resilient future for Missouri.

13 The American Lung Association does not
14 support the development of new natural gas
15 infrastructure that interferes with the
16 development of noncombustion resources.

17 Our organization supports the protection
18 of all people from the harm of air pollution,
19 especially those who suffer disproportionate
20 exposure from local sources of emissions.

21 We recognize that major sources of air
22 pollution are often located near where large
23 numbers of people, especially communities of color
24 or lower income, live and work, which means their
25 exposure to air toxics emitted can be more

1 immediate and disproportionately harmful.

2 Communities living closest to oil and gas
3 sites are disproportionately harmed by the impacts
4 oil and gas have on air quality and climate
5 change. And these communities are often lower
6 income and/or communities of color that have long
7 experienced disadvantages, such as systemic
8 racism. So the impacts of gas pollution often
9 make existing inequities in health conditions
10 worse.

11 No communities should continue to bear the
12 burden of air pollution levels that harm public
13 health. Communities in St. Louis are already
14 facing health harms from both unhealthy levels of
15 air pollution and from the changing climate. In
16 transitioning away from burning fossil fuels for
17 electricity and toward a clean energy future, it
18 is crucial for health. Thank you.

19 JUDGE FEWELL: Thank you for your
20 comments.

21 Eva Kappas? She's still -- Ms. Kappas,
22 you're still muted.

23 EVA KAPPAS: Hi. Sorry. I was having
24 some connectivity problems.

25 JUDGE FEWELL: You're okay. Can you

1 please raise your right hand? If you don't have
2 video, just let me know if it's raised.

3 EVA KAPPAS: Yes.

4 JUDGE FEWELL: All right. I trust you.

5 EVA KAPPAS: Can you see me now? It's
6 raised.

7 JUDGE FEWELL: I can see you now.
8 Perfect.

9 EVA KAPPAS,
10 first duly sworn or affirmed to comment
11 truthfully, commented as follows:

12 JUDGE FEWELL: Thank you. Please state
13 and spell your name for the record.

14 EVA KAPPAS: Eva Kappas. E-v-a and then
15 Kappas, K-a-p-p-a-s.

16 JUDGE FEWELL: Thank you.
17 What would you like to tell the
18 commission?

19 EVA KAPPAS: Okay. Yes. So here is my
20 comment. Thank you for letting me speak today.
21 My name is Eva Kappas. I'm 20 years old. I have
22 lived in Missouri my whole life, as has my family
23 for over four generations.

24 Is my sound okay? I just want to check.

25 JUDGE FEWELL: Mm-hmm.

1 EVA KAPPAS: Okay. Thank you. Growing
2 up, I saw rivers flood, fish die off, crops wither
3 due to rising carbon dioxide pollution. All the
4 while, Ameren has raked in profits from building
5 new natural gas plants instead of investing in
6 proven solutions, which I will describe in a
7 second, to satisfy energy demand, lower rates, and
8 protect the health of Missourians, all of which
9 fall under the mandate of the Public Service
10 Commission.

11 The PSC wants to ensure energy reliability
12 at the lowest cost. The cheapest and most
13 reliable energy is energy we don't use. Instead
14 of undertaking a massive new capital investment
15 propped up on the backs of ratepayers, Ameren
16 should expand their existing demand response and
17 net metering programs to frivolously [sic] lower
18 energy demand.

19 I also want to direct attention to the
20 carbon capture association part of the Castle
21 Bluff project. CCS projects have historically
22 surpassed their budget and diverted vast amounts
23 of time and money from actually reducing prices
24 and emissions.

25 In 2021, nearly 500 environmental

1 organizations sent an open letter to President
2 Biden saying, despite the billions of taxpayer
3 dollars spent -- quote, despite the billions of
4 taxpayer dollars spent by governments in both the
5 United States and Canada are uncovering carbon
6 cycle solution [sic]. Over the last 10-plus
7 years, the technology has not made a dent in CO2
8 emissions. Chevron's Gorgon Project provides a
9 chilling example of the lack of accountability on
10 CCS projects that cost millions only to fail.

11 Located in Australia, Gorgon is a liquid
12 natural gas facility that promised to capture and
13 store an average of 24 metric tons or 80 percent
14 of carbon dioxide emissions released during
15 production. However, over six years later, the
16 Gorgon Project has only captured 5.5 metric tons
17 while releasing an additional 20.4 metric tons of
18 carbon. That's 20.4 million tons of carbon,
19 metric tons of carbon, released into the
20 atmosphere that was supposed to be captured but,
21 instead, will go to intensify storms and increase
22 temperatures.

23 To compensate, Chevron was forced to buy
24 carbon credits costing even more money to
25 citizens. The plant -- the CCS plant is still

1 only working at 1/3 capacity after over three
2 years of delay. This is the future that awaits us
3 if the Castle Bluff plan continues.

4 I have two younger brothers who are 16 and
5 14. I have a grandmother in her 80s. I want my
6 family to be able to live with affordable rates
7 and a healthy environment. I want to be able to
8 take my children to the river, where we spend
9 every 4th of July, and to not find dead fish in
10 the water and to have the dock that my uncle built
11 by hand not be destroyed again by a flood due to
12 more intense storms.

13 Ameren has preferred to bleed Missourians
14 dry while poisoning their air and water and
15 pocketing a profit. It does not have to be this
16 way. I implore the commission to vote no on this
17 proposal. Missouri does not need or want this
18 plant. Instead of exploiting ratepayers, Ameren
19 can more actively recruit businesses to
20 participate in their demand response program.

21 Ameren can reduce barriers to net metering
22 in households and Ameren can drive economic
23 development and empower families to prosper by
24 lowering energy costs through these two solutions.
25 Again, I would just like to say that the cheapest

1 and most reliable energy is energy we don't have
2 to use. Thank you for your consideration.

3 JUDGE FEWELL: Thank you for your
4 comments.

5 And, Grace Iverson --

6 GRACE IVERSON: Here.

7 JUDGE FEWELL: -- you can unmute yourself.

8 GRACE IVERSON: Here. Ready when you are.

9 JUDGE FEWELL: Good. Thank you.

10 Would you please raise your right hand.

11 GRACE IVERSON,
12 first duly sworn or affirmed to comment
13 truthfully, commented as follows:

14 JUDGE FEWELL: Thank you.

15 Can you please state your name and spell
16 it for the record.

17 GRACE IVERSON: Grace Iverson. G-r-a-c-e
18 I-v-e-r-s-o-n.

19 JUDGE FEWELL: You may proceed with your
20 comments.

21 GRACE IVERSON: Awesome. I'm here today
22 as a St. Louis resident and as a ratepayer to urge
23 the Public Service Commission to reject the
24 certificate of convenience and necessity and
25 reject the Castle Bluff fossil gas project.

1 You know, speaking as a resident, I see
2 this project as an insult to the St. Louis
3 community. We have dealt with the local and the
4 global environmental and health hazards, the
5 climate impacts generated by Ameren from its coal
6 and other fossil fuel plants. One from Ameren
7 earlier in the question section mentioned, you
8 know, the extreme summer and winter weather that
9 we're experiencing. And the reason that we're
10 experiencing that is, in part, Ameren's one of our
11 top fossil fuel climate change contributors here
12 locally.

13 So to be proposing in this moment -- when
14 we're in a climate emergency, when people have
15 been dealing with these impacts from Ameren's
16 fossil generation over years and years, to propose
17 a new fossil plant with this Castle Bluff project
18 is, frankly, quite insulting when we have plenty
19 of other options to reduce energy usage as well as
20 pursued renewables energy storage.

21 Ameren wants to claim that it's necessary
22 for grid reliability, and we know that they have
23 other options. They have more affordable options,
24 better options for our community. Really, it is
25 just convenient for them for generating profit.

1 We've got lots of smart people who -- you
2 know, I used to work in the energy industry. I
3 know energy systems are complex. Ameren always
4 wants to present it like this is the only option,
5 but we have a lot of smart people. We have a lot
6 of money to invest in alternatives. So, you know,
7 we kind of see through that front as community
8 members. And we know that it is a false narrative
9 that fossil gas is claimed to be more
10 environmentally friendly than coal.

11 Ameren, I saw, on visiting their website
12 about this project, they're showing a decrease in
13 CO2 emissions but neglected to mention the impacts
14 of methane, which this is a methane gas plant, and
15 we know that that is a very, very potent warming
16 gas.

17 And there's also a lot of federal clean
18 energy funding available for them to pursue these
19 alternatives. So, again, it's really
20 disappointing to see them not taking advantage of
21 those opportunities in this case and still
22 proposing more fossil fuel generation.

23 As to the claim about reliability, we've
24 seen global markets, including, you know, markets
25 disrupted by the Russia/Ukraine conflict, means

1 that fossil gas supply can be turbulent. When we
2 talk about any energy source, there are different
3 aspects to that, but it's not that gas is more
4 reliable than sun or wind that's always there. So
5 that's, you know, another false narrative.

6 And fracked gas also isn't reliable when
7 it poisons water, triggers earthquakes, so
8 domestic and international markets don't make it a
9 reliable fuel source.

10 So we know how this works. Whatever
11 Ameren builds, we, as ratepayers, foot the bill.
12 Executives and shareholders profit. And if we're
13 going to have to foot the bill for Ameren's
14 profits, we should at least not to have pay for it
15 doubly, triply, quadruply in the climate,
16 environmental, and health impacts that we all
17 still have to face as a community as a result of
18 their actions.

19 So I'm urging the PSC. We are in a
20 climate crisis. We have so many local health and
21 environmental issues here in St. Louis. I'm
22 urging you to do your job and to regulate this
23 utility. This is not an appropriate plant for us
24 in Ameren's territory. Thank you.

25 JUDGE FEWELL: Thank you for your comment.

1 Jim Stites [sic]. I think you're next.

2 JENNA RIDEOUT: Did you mean Jenna
3 Rideout?

4 JUDGE FEWELL: He raised his hand. I
5 assumed he wanted to comment. He raised his hand
6 a while ago.

7 JENNA RIDEOUT: Oh, I see.

8 JUDGE FEWELL: Mr. Stites, are you there?

9 COMMISSIONER HOLSMAN: Judge, if they're
10 going by phone, you may have to remind them to
11 push *6 to unmute.

12 JUDGE FEWELL: Oh. Thank you. Sorry.
13 Yes, you would need to push *6, if you are by
14 phone, in order to unmute yourself.

15 Ms. Rideout, I think we can have you go,
16 and I'll circle back to Mr. Stites. Would you
17 raise your right hand for me.

18 JENNA RIDEOUT: Yes.

19 JUDGE FEWELL: Thank you.

20 JENNA RIDEOUT,
21 first duly sworn or affirmed to comment
22 truthfully, commented as follows:

23 JUDGE FEWELL: Can you please state and
24 spell your name for the record.

25 JENNA RIDEOUT: Jenna Rideout, J-e-n-n-a

1 R-i-d-e-o-u-t.

2 JUDGE FEWELL: You may proceed with your
3 comments.

4 JENNA RIDEOUT: Hi, everybody. How are we
5 doing? I hope we're doing wonderful on this very
6 balmy 90 degree September day. I'm here as a
7 life-long resident of Missouri and a local
8 ratepayer to Ameren. Basically, today, I would
9 just like to advocate on behalf of my family, my
10 friends, and the children that I work with at a
11 local youth clinic who many of whom have asthma,
12 breathing difficulties, and other, essentially,
13 lung issues that have been caused and exacerbated
14 and just made life difficult through ground level
15 ozone pollution.

16 As pointed out in earlier testimonies, a
17 lot of the compounds that get released from the
18 combustion of methane can result in the formation
19 of ground level ozone, which is wreaking havoc on
20 the lungs of the young people that I work with,
21 and it is getting exhausting and making my job
22 more difficult. And, yeah, it is just -- it is
23 really sad to see people have to avoid the
24 outdoors because of air quality alerts.

25 And I think someone said it earlier, it is

1 kind of insulting for this to be proposed,
2 especially in a year where St. Louis has had a
3 record terrible year for air quality.

4 Yeah, I -- I personally have had to avoid
5 the outdoors several times when we have reached,
6 like, yellow and orange level alerts for air
7 quality, and I'm just tired of that. It would be
8 nice to go outside during the summer and the fall
9 and just not have to worry about long-term effects
10 on my lungs.

11 Again, there are the environmental impacts
12 of this plant as well. I think natural gas for
13 years has been touted as a bridge fuel, but it
14 seems that we're no longer interested in crossing
15 that bridge but, instead, to become dependent on
16 the bridge -- methane, fossil fuels, whatever it
17 is -- and none of them are clean, none of them are
18 efficient, whether that's pricing, whether that's
19 supply. It is just frustrating to see the
20 continued efforts to try to build facilities like
21 this while we're in the midst of a climate crisis.

22 I would like to essentially encourage
23 Ameren to invest in creative solutions to our
24 power problems and our needs and to new
25 implementations of renewables, but, also, I would

1 at this time like to encourage the commission to
2 vote no on this proposal. Yeah.

3 JUDGE FEWELL: Thank you for your
4 comments.

5 Mr. Jim Stites or maybe Steets? And if
6 you are by a cell phone, it's *6 to unmute
7 yourself or -- would you like to give a comment?

8 (No response.)

9 Okay. Is there anyone else who would like
10 to make a comment today, to offer a comment? And,
11 again, it is *6 to unmute yourself if you are by
12 phone. There's a little mute button, if you're on
13 your computer or other device.

14 Okay. Would any of the commissioners like
15 to make any closing remarks?

16 CLOSING REMARKS

17 COMMISSIONER HOLSMAN: Judge, this is
18 Commissioner Holsman again. We just want to thank
19 everybody for taking their time to testify. I
20 know these issues can be emotional in some cases
21 and -- and we all want what's best for our state.
22 So we do appreciate you, every single one of you
23 who -- who took a minute to share your thoughts
24 with us. Like I said, there have been no
25 decisions made, but we do value your opinion and

1 we appreciate you very much. So thank you.

2 And thank you, Judge, for running the
3 meeting. Have a good day.

4 JUDGE FEWELL: Thank you, Commissioner
5 Holsman. And I also want to thank all the
6 participants today for their testimony. If you
7 have any additional comments or if you know of
8 someone who could not be present but would like to
9 comment, there is a consumer comments tab that can
10 be reached via the commission's website at
11 psc.mo.gov. On the right side of the home page,
12 there is a link titled "submit comments." You
13 would just click on that link to submit your
14 comments. And make sure that you reference the
15 Case Number EA-2024-0237. This hearing is
16 adjourned, and we can go off the record.

17 Thank you, everyone.

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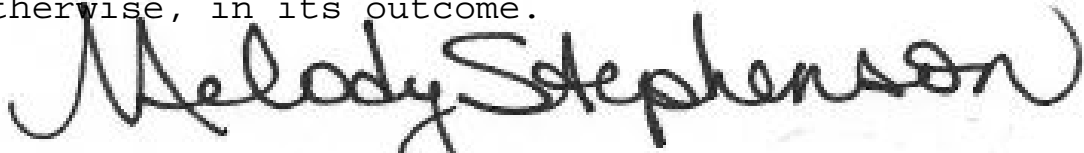
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2 I, Melody Stephenson, the officer before
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4 do hereby certify that the foregoing transcript is
5 a true and correct record of the record made; that
6 said record was taken by me stenographically and
7 thereafter reduced to typewriting under my
8 direction; and that I am neither counsel for,
9 related to, nor employed by any of the parties to
10 this case and have no interest, financial or
11 otherwise, in its outcome.

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15 FCRR, CRR, CRC, RPR, RSA, MO CCR 406, IA CSR 974
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