

Exhibit No.:
Issue(s):
Witness/Type of Exhibit:
Sponsoring Party:
Case No.:

Customer Experience
Mantle/Direct
Public Counsel
ER-2024-0319

DIRECT TESTIMONY

OF

LENA M. MANTLE

Submitted on Behalf of the Office of the Public Counsel

UNION ELECTRIC COMPANY
D/B/A AMEREN MISSOURI

CASE NO. ER-2024-0319

December 3, 2024

DIRECT TESTIMONY

OF

LENA M. MANTLE, P.E.

UNION ELECTRIC COMPANY d/b/a AMEREN MISSOURI

FILE NO. ER-2024-0319

1 **INTRODUCTION**

2 **Q. Would you please state your name and business address?**

3 A. My name is Lena M. Mantle and my business address is P.O. Box 2230, Jefferson
4 City, Missouri 65102.

5 **Q. By whom are you employed and in what capacity?**

6 A. I am employed by the Missouri Office of the Public Counsel (“OPC”) as a Senior
7 Analyst.

8 **Q. On whose behalf are you testifying?**

9 A. I am testifying on behalf of the OPC.

10 **Q. Would you describe your experience and qualifications?**

11 A. I began employment with the OPC in August 2014 as a Senior Analyst. In this
12 position, I have provided expert testimony in electric, gas, and water cases before the
13 Commission on behalf of the OPC. I am a Registered Professional Engineer in the
14 State of Missouri.

15 Prior to my employment with the OPC, I worked for the Staff of the Missouri
16 Public Service Commission (“Staff”) from August 1983 until I retired as Manager of
17 the Energy Unit in December 2012. During the time of my employment at the
18 Missouri Public Service Commission (“Commission”), I worked as an Economist,
19 Engineer, Engineering Supervisor, and Manager of the Energy Unit. I was
20 instrumental in the development and application of the Commission’s fuel adjustment
21 clause (“FAC”) rules and the establishment of the FACs of the electric utilities in

1 Missouri after the Missouri Legislature passed Section 366.266 RSMo. in 2005,
2 enabling the electric utilities to request a FAC.

3 Attached as Schedule LMM-D-1 is a brief summary of my experience with
4 OPC and Staff and a list of the Commission cases in which I filed testimony,
5 Commission rulemakings in which I participated, and Commission reports in rate
6 cases to which I contributed as Staff.

7 **Q. What is the purpose of your direct testimony?**

8 A. In this testimony, I recount a recent experience I had with Union Electric Company
9 d/b/a Ameren Missouri (“Ameren Missouri”) as a customer. I offer this testimony
10 regarding my experience to support the direct testimony of OPC witness Dr. Geoff
11 Marke.

12 **Q. What recommendations to the Commission do you make in this testimony?**

13 A. I recommend that when an email notice is sent to customers about a change in their
14 service or rates, instead of a link to the customer support page on Ameren
15 Missouri’s website, the email should state that the customer should call the service
16 number on the customer’s bills or that the customer should go to Ameren Missouri’s
17 website to get the number. This would enable customers that have questions about
18 an email sent by Ameren Missouri to quickly contact Ameren Missouri and
19 eliminate any concerns the customer may have about the email being a phishing
20 attempt.

21 **Q. Would you please describe for the Commission your recent customer
22 experience with Ameren Missouri?**

23 A. Ameren Missouri installed an advanced meter infrastructure (“AMI”) smart meter
24 on my home on December 19, 2023. In May 2024, we received notice from Ameren
25 Missouri that we had a choice of what rate schedule we would like to be charged
26 on. That notice is attached as Schedule LMM-D-2. That notice states that Ameren

1 Missouri would automatically begin to charge me on the Evening/Morning Savers
2 rate after July 10, 2024. If I wanted to stay on my current flat rate, the Anytime
3 User Rate, all that I needed to do was send a card to Ameren Missouri. I filled out
4 the card, but before I mailed it on May 25, 2024, I made a copy of the card with the
5 date that I mailed it written on the copy. This copy of the card is attached as
6 Schedule LMM-D-3.

7 **Q. What happened next?**

8 A. I did not hear from Ameren Missouri about the rate I was being charged¹ until I
9 received an email from Ameren Missouri on October 22, 2024, almost five months
10 after I had mailed my choice to Ameren Missouri. That email stated that my “recent
11 rate request [] was successful.” That email is attached as Schedule LMM-D-4.

12 **Q. Did you know what this email was referring to?**

13 A. I thought that it might be referring to my request that I had mailed almost five
14 months earlier, but I thought that I needed to make sure since I do not consider five
15 months to be “recent.”

16 **Q. What did you do next?**

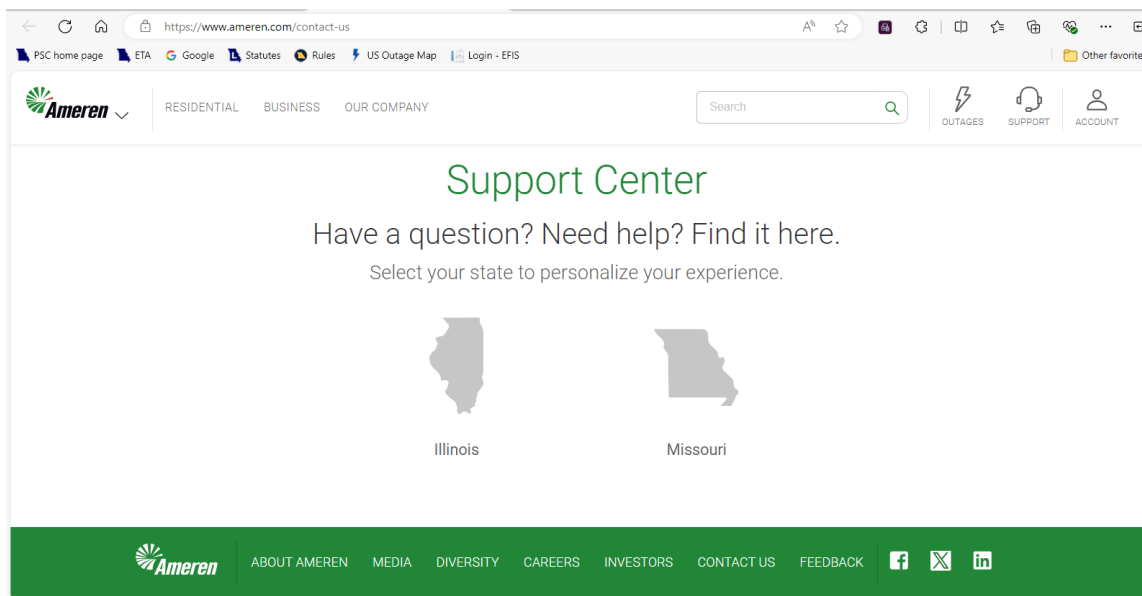
17 A. The email contained the sentence “If you did not take this action, please contact
18 us.” The words in the email “contact us” were hyperlinked. Because my request
19 had been almost five months earlier, I thought that I needed to check to see what
20 the email was referring to. I clicked on the words “contact us” in the email.

21 **Q. Where did this link take you?**

22 A. It took me to the Ameren website Support Center page. A screen shot of this page
23 is below as Figure 1.

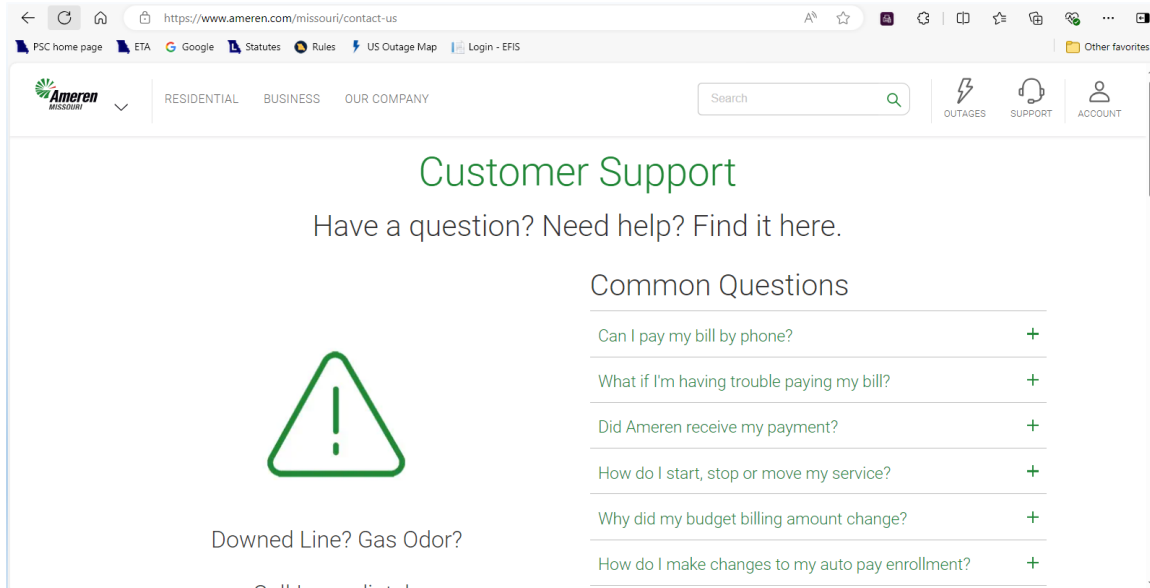
¹ I had noticed that my bills said that I was on the Evening/Morning Savers Rate. I was not concerned that I was not on the rate I requested because, according to the letter Ameren Missouri sent me, my bill would be \$0.14 less on the Evening/Morning rate.

1 Figure 1: Ameren Missouri Support Center Webpage Screenshot



- 2
- 3 **Q. Could you find anything on that page that would answer your questions about**
- 4 **your rate change request, which the email referred to?**
- 5 A. No, I could not. I then clicked on the map of Missouri on that page. The website
- 6 then took me to the customer support page. A screen shot of that page is provided
- 7 below as Figure 2.

1 **Figure 2: Ameren Missouri Customer Support Webpage Screenshot**



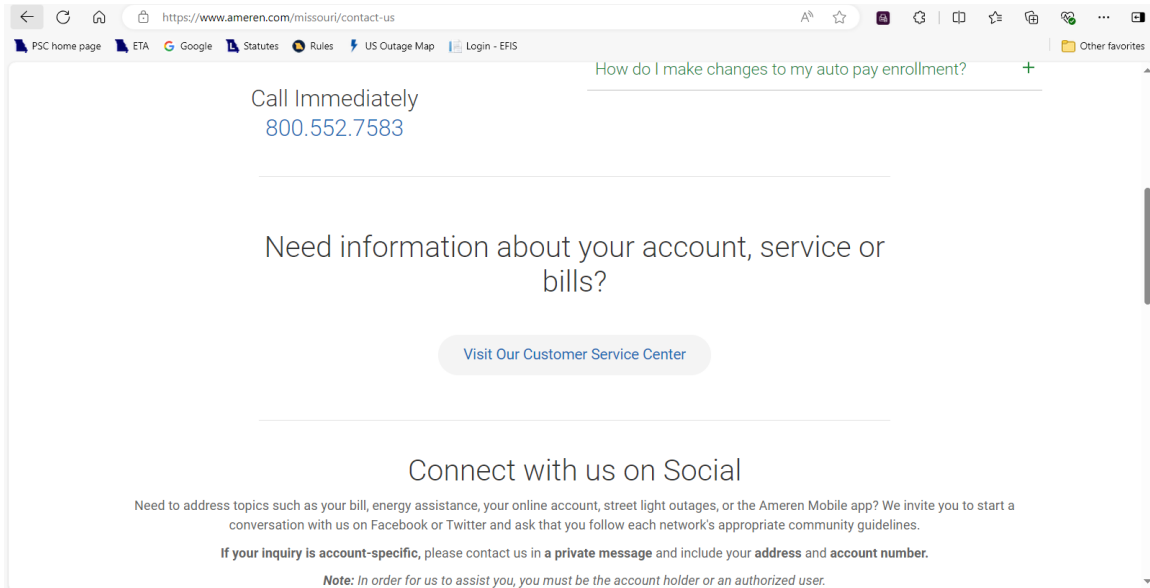
2

3 **Q. Could you find anything on this page about your recent rate change request?**

4 **A. No.** However, further down on that page, shown as Figure 3 below, there was a

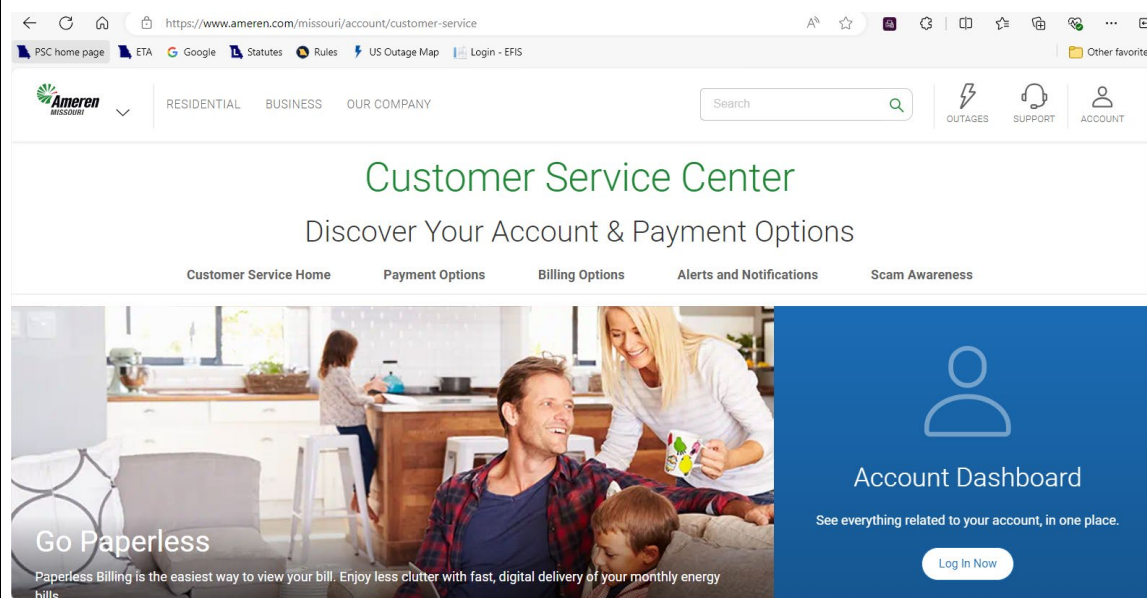
5 button to click to “Visit Our Customer Service Center.”

6 **Figure 3: Ameren Missouri Customer Support Webpage Screenshot**



1 I clicked on this button. It took me to the “Discover Your Account & Payment
2 Options” page that is shown as Figure 4 below.

3 Figure 4: Account & Payment Options Webpage



4
5 I had a password and user ID that I had used to set up my online account years
6 before, so I tried to log in to my online account with them. However, the system
7 told me that my user ID or password was invalid. Because Ameren Missouri had
8 sent me the email that started all of this, I thought my email was correct. When I
9 entered the email address and clicked on “Forgot Password?” I got a message that
10 my email was incorrect. This seemed odd since Ameren Missouri had sent me an
11 email at that email address.

12 I then decided to call the “Contact Us” phone number for residential
13 customers that is located at the bottom of the Customer Support webpage. I talked
14 with a customer service representative named Lilly. The system recognized my
15 phone number, and she pulled up my account. She told me that the email was
16 referring to a change from the Morning/Evening Savers Rate to the Anytime Users
17 Rate. I asked her if this was referring to the request that I sent on May 25, 2024.

1 She said that it probably was. When I asked her why it took so long, she said that
2 my request must have been lost in the mail.

3 I then asked her why when I clicked on “contact us” on my original email,
4 it did not take me to a site that would directly provide information on my “recent
5 rate change” that the email was describing. She told me the intent was for me to
6 call the residential support number at the bottom of that webpage to find out about
7 my recent rate change.

8 I then asked why I could not log into my account. She could not answer
9 that question but transferred me to IT help to get an answer to this question.

10 **Q. What happened next?**

11 A. I talked to Carol in IT. She told me that the reason that I could not login was
12 because I did not have a username and password. When I told her that I thought
13 that I did, she informed me that Ameren had changed who it contracted with to
14 provide the user portal and when that happened none of the prior usernames and
15 passwords were valid. She then told me that I would have to create an online
16 account to see information regarding my account.

17 I was concerned about setting up an online account because of some
18 arbitration language in Ameren’s online account terms and conditions that I had
19 heard about at work.² I asked Carol if I would have to agree to Ameren Missouri’s
20 Terms and Conditions in order to create an online account. I also let her know that
21 I worked at the OPC. She told me that there was no way to get an online account
22 without agreeing to Ameren Missouri’s Terms and Conditions. I thanked her for
23 her help and her kindness to me and ended our conversation.

24 Both Carol and Lilly were very polite and quickly provided answers to me.

² Dr. Geoff Marke addresses this arbitration language in his Direct Testimony.

1 **Q. Why again are you providing this testimony about your recent experience?**

2 A. To support the general customer experience direct testimony of OPC witness Dr.
3 Geoff Marke.

4 **Q. Do you have any recommendations to improve Ameren Missouri's customer**
5 **experience?**

6 A. Yes. The Commission should order Ameren Missouri to be clearer on its emails to
7 customers. Specifically, if there is a concern the customer should call the customer
8 support number provided on the customer's most recent bill or go to the website to
9 find the number. This is the safest way to provide information to customers, assure
10 customers that the email is not a phishing attempt, and clear up any confusion of
11 the customer about a change without requiring the customer to wander around
12 Ameren Missouri's website.

13 **Q. Does this conclude your direct testimony?**

14 A. Yes.

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


In the Matter of Union Electric Company d/b/a)
Ameren Missouri's Tariffs to Adjust Its)
Revenues for Electric Service) Case No. ER-2024-0319

AFFIDAVIT OF LENA M. MANTLE

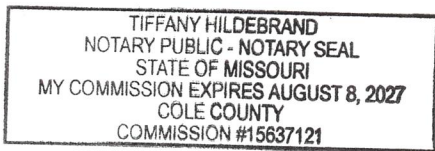
STATE OF MISSOURI)
) ss
COUNTY OF COLE)

Lena M. Mantle, of lawful age and being first duly sworn, deposes and states:

1. My name is Lena M Mantle. I am a Senior Analyst for the Office of the Public Counsel.
2. Attached hereto and made a part hereof for all purposes is my direct testimony.
3. I hereby swear and affirm that my statements contained in the attached testimony are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.


Lena M. Mantle
Senior Analyst

Subscribed and sworn to me this 2nd day of December 2024.



My Commission expires August 8, 2027.


Tiffany Hildebrand
Notary Public