

BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
STATE OF MISSOURI

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS  
LOCAL PUBLIC HEARING

In the Matter of Spire                     )  
Missouri Inc. d/b/a Spire's            )  
Request for Authority                    )  
to Implement a General Rate            )  
Increase for Natural                    ) File No. GR-2025-0107  
Gas Service Provided in                )  
the Company's Missouri                )  
Service Areas                            )

June 04, 2025  
6:00 p.m.

GREGG/KLICE COMMUNITY CENTER  
1600 EAST 17TH TERRACE  
KANSAS CITY, MO 64108

VOLUME 6

KEN SEYER,  
REGULATORY LAW JUDGE

KAYLA HAHN, CHAIR,  
MAIDA J. COLEMAN,  
GLEN KOLKMEYER,  
JOHN MITCHELL  
COMMISSIONERS

Reported by:  
Colin Wallis, Lexitas Legal, St. Louis, MO 63101

\* \* \* \* \*

(Starting time of the hearing: 6:55 p.m.)

REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right then. Let's go on the record. Today is Wednesday, June 4th, 2025. The time is 6:55 p.m. My name is Ken Seyer. I'm a regulatory law judge with the Missouri Public Service Commission. I will preside over this portion of the hearing.

The Commission has set this time for a local public hearing here in Kanas City to give members of the public a chance to comment about Spire's application to adjust its natural gas rates, and it is commission file number GR-2025-0107.

The Commission regulates the rates charged by public utility companies in Missouri to ensure those rates are just and reasonable. The Commission also regulates the quality of service and the safety of the operations of public utilities. The Commission is normally comprised of five commissioners, however there is currently a vacancy on the Commission, so there are currently four commissioners. The commissioners are appointed by the governor and

1 confirmed by the Senate. The Commission  
2 employs a staff of engineers, accountants,  
3 attorneys, financial analysts and other  
4 specialists in the field of utility regulation.

5 With me tonight, is Commissioner Glenn  
6 Kolkmeier and Commissioner John Mitchell. Also  
7 participating online is the chair of the  
8 Commission, Kayla Hahn, as well as Commissioner  
9 Maida Coleman. The commissioners have not made  
10 any decisions in this case and cannot answer  
11 any questions today because they have to remain  
12 impartial until all the evidence is presented  
13 at the evidentiary hearing in this matter that  
14 is scheduled to take place beginning  
15 August 4th.

16 At this time, Commissioner Kolkmeier,  
17 would you like to make opening remarks?

18 COMMISSIONER KOLKMEYER: Yes, thank you,  
19 Judge. Well, welcome. On behalf of Chair Hahn  
20 and the other commissioners, I want to welcome  
21 you here tonight to the local public hearing.  
22 As the judge said, we have not made any  
23 decisions on this case at all. This is kind of  
24 the start of the process, and we're starting it  
25 with you, the ratepayers and the customers. So

1 that's why we're here tonight to hear your  
2 comments. Your comments are very important to  
3 us when we make our decisions. So, again,  
4 thank you, and I hear we have a hard 9:00  
5 deadline; we have to be out here. And I  
6 apologize for that, so we're going to speed  
7 things up just a little bit then we normally  
8 do, but it's not under our control, but  
9 we're -- it has -- so it would be that we have  
10 to vacate, so thanks again.

11 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,  
12 thank you. There are attorneys here tonight  
13 representing the parties in this matter, so for  
14 the sake of the record, would each of you  
15 identify yourselves and state which party you  
16 representing beginning with Spire?

17 MR. ARIAS: Yes, good evening. Antonio  
18 Arias on behalf of Spire Missouri, Inc.

19 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: On behalf of  
20 the Commission Staff?

21 MS. HANSEN: Hi, Andrea Hansen  
22 representing the Missouri Public Service  
23 Commission. That's A-n-d-r-e-a, H-a-n-s-e-n.

24 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: And on behalf  
25 of the Office of the Public Counsel?

1 MR. CLIZER: John Clizer on behalf of the  
2 Office of the Public Counsel. Thank you.

3 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay. The  
4 way we'll proceed tonight will be to call the  
5 names listed on the sign-up sheet in the order  
6 that you signed up. When I call your name,  
7 please step up to the podium. I'll place you  
8 under oath, ask you to state and spell your  
9 name and then you can offer your comments to  
10 the Commission. I know we have quite a few  
11 people signed up tonight, so we will limit  
12 comment period -- the comment period to three  
13 minutes per person. Once you finish your  
14 comments, if you'll remain at the -- the  
15 podium, that will give me an opportunity to  
16 check with the commissioners to see they have  
17 any questions for you. So with that, the first  
18 name on the Commission (sic) is Reverend  
19 Kenneth -- is it Pegue? Pegue. All right.  
20 You can't blame me. You know, I did take a  
21 stab at it.

22 (Reverend Kenneth Pegue sworn.)

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: If you would  
24 state and spell your name.

25 REVEREND PEGUE: Kenneth, K-e-n-n-e-t-h,

1 Pegue, P-e-g-u-e.

2 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Go ahead,  
3 Reverend.

4 REVEREND PEGUE: I represent the AME Zion  
5 Church for Kansas City, Missouri, and the  
6 Missouri annual conference. And the increase  
7 that Spire is asking for will greatly affect  
8 and hamper not only my church, but six other  
9 churches that I represent here tonight. With  
10 all the job loss here in Kansas City, Missouri,  
11 Jackson County, where I live also, the Veterans  
12 Hospital, IRS, the VA, Veterans Benefits,  
13 veterans, there's been a great job loss, and  
14 for those families to be reeling from this down  
15 spiral; and then to have to not be able to take  
16 care of their bill from last winter, and then  
17 got to look toward the coming winter with more  
18 taxed on, it is a little bit of egregious, a  
19 little bit egregious.

20 I said it was 15 percent increase, 14.23,  
21 and I wrote on my notes, my statement was  
22 simply, in all caps, G-r-e-e-d. I just can't  
23 fathom, a company whose CEO president, living  
24 so good in a time like this when people are  
25 suffering, \$3.4 million, and then ask for more

1 from the ones paying, getting him that fee.  
2 That is -- that is beyond egregious. It really  
3 is. That's my statement.

4 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,  
5 and just for the sake of the court reporter,  
6 you are -- you're with AM --

7 REVEREND PEGUE: AME Zion.

8 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: AME Zion.

9 REVEREND PEGUE: Episcopal Zion Church,  
10 yes, sir.

11 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right.  
12 Are there any questions from the commissioners?  
13 All right, thank you, Reverend.

14 REVEREND PEGUE: Thank you.

15 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Next on the  
16 list is James Waldo.

17 (James Waldo sworn.)

18 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,  
19 thank you. And could you go ahead and state  
20 and spell your name?

21 MR. WALDO: James Waldo. J-a-m-e-s,  
22 W-a-l-d-o.

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Go ahead.

24 MR. WALDO: I am a disabled senior citizen  
25 on single source of income. I don't have a

1 401K or a bankroll that I can fall back on. I  
2 have a single source of income. I live on it,  
3 but I live tight. I live in Ruskin Heights.  
4 There are 1,379 homes in Ruskin Heights. Of my  
5 neighbors, I'm probably the wealthiest person  
6 in my neighborhood, and when the kids line up  
7 for the school bus, they go by my house to get  
8 snacks. When my neighbors need the grass mowed  
9 to keep from getting evicted, they come and  
10 borrow my mower.

11 Now, I'm not saying all that stuff to  
12 sound like I'm some kind of almighty neighbor;  
13 I'm saying it to let you know there ain't  
14 nobody in my neighborhood that can afford this  
15 rate increase, including myself. That's all I  
16 have to say.

17 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,  
18 thank you. Are there any questions from the  
19 commissioners? All right, thank you,  
20 Mr. Waldo. Next name on the list is Clara  
21 (sic) Hall.

22 (Carla Hall sworn.)

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,  
24 thank you. Go ahead and state and spell your  
25 name, please.



1 MS. HALL: Good evening, my name is  
2 C-a-r-l-a, H-a-l-l. And I am a life --

3 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: I'm sorry, I  
4 think I called you Clara but it's Carla --

5 MS. HALL: It's Carla, C-a-r-l-a, yes.

6 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Go ahead.

7 MS. HALL: I'm a long time customer of  
8 Spire, only because Spire is the only game in  
9 town, because it's a monopoly, and I don't have  
10 any other choice. I came directly from work to  
11 speak today because the increase that's being  
12 proposed will impact me in a negative way,  
13 making an already supertight budget even  
14 tighter. I'm also here on behalf of my elderly  
15 parents, who are Social Security. I'm positive  
16 that I know no one who has received a  
17 15 percent raise this year.

18 I'm also concerned about others in the  
19 community that will have to make some tough  
20 choices if this is pushed through. A rate hike  
21 of this magnitude would have a ripple effect  
22 potentially forcing people to cut back on  
23 essentials like food, reducing heating during  
24 the coldest months and often sacrificing paying  
25 other bills.

1           If I'm having to adjust my budget, it  
2 means spending less in my community, which will  
3 negatively impact small businesses in my  
4 neighborhood. I wonder if we couldn't do a  
5 more incremental approach or a tiered system  
6 that would take into account household income,  
7 so that people who are already struggling would  
8 not fall further behind. Or perhaps the CEO  
9 and the shareholders of Spire would consider  
10 taking a cut in their profits instead, since I  
11 see that Spire made 250 million in profit in  
12 2024, and the CEO made 3 million in profit.

13           I hope that the Missouri Public Service  
14 Commission will tell Spire no to the increase.  
15 Thank you for your consideration.

16           REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,  
17 thank you, Ms. Hall. Are there any questions  
18 from the commissioners? All right, thank you,  
19 Ms. Hall. Folks, I don't want to discourage  
20 your enthusiasm. But, two things: I've got a  
21 court report who is trying to take down  
22 testimony and when you applaud during that  
23 testimony, that makes that hard for the court  
24 reporter. And like I said, we are on kind of a  
25 time crunch here. We've got 49 people signed

1 up to testify, and we do have to be out of here  
2 by 9:00 o'clock. With all that being said, the  
3 next name on the list is Jimmy Courtice.

4 (Jimmy Courtice sworn.)

5 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: If you would,  
6 state and spell your name.

7 MR. COURTICE: Jimmy Courtice, it's  
8 J-i-m-m-y. Last name is C-o-u-r-t-i-c-e. So  
9 I'm here -- I'm a Spire customer. I lived in  
10 Kansas City for, like, 15 years. I'm here to  
11 urge the Commission to reject Spire's proposed  
12 rate hike. Spire has already raised rates on  
13 the backs of Missouri families three times in  
14 as many years.

15 Now, you're back asking for more money.  
16 You made \$251 million in profits in 2024.  
17 That's up from 217 million the year before.  
18 You are not struggling. You guys are killing  
19 it. I know that we all, everybody in this  
20 country, just lived through a period of some of  
21 the worse inflation in decades. Prices went up  
22 by ten, fifteen across the board. We are all  
23 suffering, right? You -- we're getting  
24 hammered with rising costs. People are  
25 struggling, and we shouldn't be asked to pad

1 the profits of a company that is arguably  
2 just -- you guys are doing just fine.  
3 Especially for an essential service that, like  
4 a lot of people have pointed out, we can't do  
5 without; we can't go any place else. We have  
6 to pay for gas. We can't cook our food. We  
7 can't heat our homes. We can't wash our  
8 bodies, right? We have no other alternative.

9 The increase -- this -- like -- it's --  
10 it's mindbogglingly. Because the increases  
11 that you are asking for, they're not about  
12 survival. Spire is not suffering. You guys  
13 aren't going to go out of business or anything,  
14 right? You just want -- you're asking us to  
15 maximize the returns for your investors and  
16 shareholders. And for what? Like what else do  
17 we get? We just get the opportunity to pay  
18 more money. Thanks so much. You know, it's  
19 just really infuriating. So I just ask, you  
20 know, we need this commission to put people  
21 before Spire's profits. Please reject this  
22 proposal.

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right.  
24 Are there any questions for Mr. Courtice? All  
25 right, thank you.

1 MR. COURTICE: Thank you.

2 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,  
3 next name on the list is Kashmer Kettermen.

4 (Kashmer Kettermen sworn.)

5 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right  
6 thank you. You can go ahead and state and  
7 spell your name.

8 MR. KETTERMAN: Yes, my name is  
9 K-a-s-h-m-e-r. My last name is  
10 K-e-t-t-e-r-m-a-n.

11 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right.

12 MR. KETTERMAN: Yeah, hello. My name is  
13 Kashmer. I use he/him pronouns. I'm 23 years  
14 old, and I'm a working class organizer with  
15 Sunrise Movement Kansas City. I'm here tonight  
16 to call upon the Commission to tell Spire no to  
17 this proposed rate hike. We have a president  
18 currently, President Trump, who is trying to  
19 gut our Social Security, our healthcare,  
20 climate action, you know, things that are very  
21 important to the future of working people  
22 especially all across this country. And he's  
23 using these cuts to fund tax breaks for his  
24 billionaires buddies. Working people cannot  
25 afford rent, groceries and basic necessities as

1 it is. Do you know what our communities could  
2 do with 250 million dollars? We can fund our  
3 bus system ten times over. We could provide  
4 affordable social green housing to every single  
5 homeless person in this city. We could  
6 literally fund the climate plan that was passed  
7 through city council in Kansas City in 2022  
8 that we've made zero progress on.

9 The fact that you want to steal from us,  
10 I'm going to reiterate this, you want to steal  
11 from us to recuperate your investments that you  
12 made in your systems is sickening. You guys  
13 should feel ashamed. I know you guys are just  
14 representatives of the company, but you should  
15 feel shame and you should quit your jobs and  
16 you should go do something that's actually  
17 productive for our society, instead of  
18 representing a corporation that exploits you  
19 three.

20 Just make folks aware, Spire is a monopoly  
21 that also operates in Mississippi and Alabama  
22 with a four billion dollar market cap, who's  
23 brought up -- who's brought up the gas  
24 companies and profits off of the back of  
25 working people and accelerating -- and an

1 accelerating climate crisis. Spire calls this  
2 gas, quote, unquote, natural but we all know  
3 the truth backed by science. It's dirty. It's  
4 harming our communities. Ruining our  
5 environment and making predominantly black and  
6 brown people sick.

7 If we were having a discussion grounded in  
8 reality, we would be talking about how to  
9 transition away from fossil fuels and ensure a  
10 livable future for all, but instead you guys  
11 are here begging for scraps. The Commission  
12 needs to do their jobs on behalf of working  
13 class people, despite not be elected or having  
14 no obligation to serve us at all, whatsoever,  
15 and tell these greedy corporations like Spire  
16 hell no to -- no more rate hikes. Hell no.  
17 Thank you.

18 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right.  
19 Are there any questions? All right, next name  
20 on the list is Magali Rojas.

21 (Magali Rojas sworn.)

22 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: If you would,  
23 state and spell your name.

24 MS. ROJAS: My name is Magali. It's  
25 spelled M-a-g-a-l-i. My last name is Rojas,

1 R-o-j-a-s.

2 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay, go  
3 ahead.

4 MS. ROJAS: I'm a resident of Kansas City,  
5 Missouri, and I am against Spire's 15 percent  
6 increase.

7 First of all, they operate as a monopoly,  
8 which means that they are the only ones who are  
9 operating in a large geographic area. They  
10 aren't working for solutions that move away  
11 from fossil fuels, which affect our natural  
12 environment and indoor environment. I serve as  
13 community advocate. I work in areas with the  
14 communities like Raytown, Clay County and  
15 Jackson County. And I've heard many stories.  
16 First of all dealing with their houses. Many  
17 aren't equipped or weatherized to receive these  
18 increases in charges that are affecting their  
19 homes.

20 They live amongst disparities,  
21 specifically senior citizens, people with  
22 disabilities and people who have received very  
23 low income. I am someone who lives in a  
24 three-generation household. If it wasn't for  
25 my family, who moved from the east side of



1 Kansas City to Missouri and then to the  
2 northeast side and now up north, I wouldn't  
3 have witnessed all the changes from living in  
4 poverty to living in a place that's more  
5 sustainable and friendly for my health.

6 And I've heard many stories of people with  
7 asthma, respiratory and cardiovascular issues,  
8 mental health issues they're facing right now  
9 because they're thinking of all the  
10 consequences that will come and arise from  
11 this. And that also deal with our environment.  
12 Fossil fuels are affecting our rivers, they're  
13 affecting air quality, and it's an  
14 environmental injustice based on environmental  
15 racism.

16 And, so, we need to find a better way. As  
17 commissioners, that's your responsibility to  
18 listen to us, to what we have to say and to  
19 listen to the communities. I work with many  
20 institutions. I have a seven-year background  
21 working for nonprofit organizations, and it's  
22 the same thing over and over again. It is  
23 mentally taxing for me. I've lost my job  
24 recently working in the environmental space,  
25 and there's many job losses right now. So I

1 ask you to consider all those job losses and  
2 all the things that are rising up amongst this.  
3 Thank you.

4 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you.  
5 All right, the next name on list is Joseph  
6 Jackson.

7 (Joseph Jackson sworn.)

8 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,  
9 thank you.

10 MR. JACKSON: Thank you, Commissioner  
11 Hahn, for letting me testifying today --

12 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: And before --  
13 I got to interrupt you and ask you to state and  
14 spell your name.

15 MR. JACKSON: Yes, Joseph, J-o-s-e-p-h,  
16 Jackson, J-a-c-k-s-o-n. And I'm speaking in  
17 opposition of Spire's rate request in case  
18 number GR-2025-0107. 43 percent of my natural  
19 gas bill is set before I even use one CCF of  
20 gas, and folks talking about Spire hurting.  
21 Spire's dividends have increased for the last  
22 three years. They were 274 in 2022. 2023,  
23 they were 288; and, 2024, there were 302 a  
24 share. And Spire has consistently given  
25 increasing dividends every year since the

1 company's inception in 1946, so I'm going --  
2 put in -- I can't finish my testimony, but I  
3 have a part of my testimony, that form 10, and  
4 pictures of energy reservations, energy  
5 upgrades, I did to my house. I spent over  
6 25,000 dollars doing energy res -- upgrades --  
7 I did such a great job that when I retired from  
8 the military, Spire said what did you do  
9 because my rates were 40 percent lower than  
10 anybody's else. That was 2023.

11 Fast forward now, I am paying \$120 a  
12 month, and I started out only paying \$40 a  
13 month. This community folks is going to be  
14 seeing some definitive hard times. We are  
15 getting ready to see a school binding increase  
16 that's going to increase our taxes, property  
17 taxes from 200 to 250 a year; the water company  
18 wants six percent. Our property taxes in this  
19 community have went up at least 50 percent.  
20 Now, they're going to say this year they're  
21 going to go up another 15 percent. I can say  
22 mine has went up personally 50 last year. They  
23 are going to go up another 15 percent. The  
24 milk is six dollars a gallon. Eggs is six  
25 dollars a gallon. Food is up.

1           The only thing that is not up is salaries.  
2       And where does Spire expect for us to get all  
3       this money from? If everybody wants all these  
4       other increases, we're to have to make cuts and  
5       do. And I will say this to you, that military  
6       pensions only went up 2.5 percent. Social  
7       Security went up 2.5 percent. Spire wants  
8       15 percent.

9           If they want that kind of money, we're  
10      going to have make cuts somewhere. Where are  
11      people supposed to cut? Medications? We have  
12      to have utilities to stay in our house, because  
13      in Kansas City, if you don't have water and a  
14      way in which to heat that water, then you're  
15      going to be put of your house.

16          I will say this, I'm not ashamed to say  
17      it, there was one point in time where my family  
18      was in my house with me, our gas got cut off  
19      because I hadn't done all the energy upgrades I  
20      needed to do. Spire was no help. But I will  
21      say this, thank God my stove was electric  
22      because my kids didn't have to take cold baths  
23      because my water -- my heat cut off.

24          This is going to decimate this community.  
25      It's going to impact those who are homeowners

1 as well as renters, because property tax  
2 increases are going to be passed on. People  
3 living in homes or own their homes are seniors  
4 who are going to be doing things to have to  
5 decide between medication and food and staying  
6 warm. I have a thermostat. I have put in new  
7 windows with Argon gas in the metal. Argon is  
8 the heavy gas that keeps the hot air out --

9 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: I'm sorry,  
10 Mr. Jackson, hate to interrupt you --

11 MR. JACKSON: Sure.

12 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: -- but I need  
13 you to wrap it up.

14 MR. JACKSON: Sure. I am opposed to this  
15 hearing because Spire has shown me one thing in  
16 the State of Missouri: it's not the people.  
17 Thank you.

18 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right.  
19 All right. Next name on the list --

20 MR. CLIZER: John -- pardon, did you --  
21 did you want that introduced?

22 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Yeah,  
23 Mr. Clizer?

24 MR. CLIZER: I believe there's an offer to  
25 offer this as exhibit.

1 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Do you need  
2 to take a look that? No objection?

3 MR. ARIAS: No objection.

4 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right.  
5 That was Mr. Arias. All right, Mr. Jackson. I  
6 will take that back with me, and it will be  
7 admitted as an exhibit to this hearing.  
8 (Hearing Exhibit 1 admitted onto the hearing  
9 record.)

10 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: The next name  
11 on the list is Kailee Ford.

12 (Kailee Ford sworn.)

13 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,  
14 thank you. If you would state and spell your  
15 name, please.

16 MS. FORD: Absolutely. My name is Kailee.  
17 And last name, Ford, F-o-r-d, and good evening  
18 to everyone. I am a leader and organizer with  
19 Sunrise Movement Kansas City. I have lived in  
20 Kansas City my whole 23 years of life. And I  
21 am here because, funny enough, I actually work  
22 in public utilities in customer service. So  
23 I'm glad that at least one or two people here  
24 will have maybe that experience. But for the  
25 last year, in my job, I have dealt with the

1 daily consequences of your actions with the  
2 everyday people I talk to on the phone.

3 Mothers who have to choose between  
4 childcare or paying their utility bills. The  
5 elderly and the disabled who only get Medicare,  
6 Medicaid or Social Security checks once a month  
7 who have to cope with their bills. The poor  
8 and working class families who will be forced  
9 to keep their heat low during climate crises  
10 because it's just too expensive.

11 And, yet, Spire executives and their CEO  
12 and their representatives are bent on  
13 increasing rates continually. You said you  
14 need it, but you don't need the money. You  
15 want our money. I have stories from residents  
16 every single day, Monday through Friday, who  
17 call in for help on their bills, and, you know  
18 who else they mention they have problems with  
19 without fail every day? Spire. Very real  
20 people told me this winter that they would  
21 rather risk that -- I'm sorry. That they would  
22 have their heat low than pay that expensive  
23 bill.

24 They would risk their homes and their  
25 families to freeze in minus 20-degrees, then

1 face the financial strain of your corporate  
2 greed. People will die because of your  
3 decisions, and that's not an understatement.  
4 They will freeze to death in the winter.  
5 People will starve to death because they have  
6 to pay 500-plus dollars for their gas. People  
7 will lose their homes due to eviction, just  
8 like Joseph said, for being unable to pay their  
9 bills and having their utility shut off.

10 When will the increases end? Once you  
11 drain every cent from our pockets? Once you  
12 destroy our climate in the process, using the  
13 money not for improvements, but continued  
14 fossil gas development? Because, yes, it's  
15 fossil gas, not natural gas. There's nothing  
16 natural about it. How many more people have to  
17 freeze to death in the winter to avoid being  
18 put into death with their utilities? We demand  
19 no more rate increases, and I speak to both  
20 Spire and the Commission when I say that.

21 Especially not during a time of economic  
22 hardship, and I hope that the next time you  
23 meet on the decision for this, and you meet as  
24 well, in the public commission, you will think  
25 of the people who are not here tonight because



1 they are dead due to your decisions. Thank  
2 you.

3 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,  
4 thank you. Next name on the list is Nate  
5 Morton.

6 (Nathaniel Morton sworn.)

7 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: And could you  
8 state and spell your name, please?

9 MR. MORTON: My name is Nathaniel Morton,  
10 N-a-t-h-a-n-i-e-l, M-o-r-t-o-n.

11 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you.

12 MR. MORTON: Good evening, my name is  
13 Nathaniel. I'm a resident of Independence.  
14 I'm here today to express my frustration with  
15 the rate hike and how any effort to continue  
16 this process will be in complete and utter  
17 defiance of the people of Missouri. Many folks  
18 are already struggling with the ever increasing  
19 costs of living, yet companies like Spire  
20 continue to squeeze the consumer in order to  
21 keep raking in record profits.

22 Such matters are truly disgusting and a  
23 testament that these suits do not value us and  
24 will continue to put people -- or profit over  
25 people time and time again. With that, I ask

1 the Commission to ensure that this rate is not  
2 to be passed. Thank you.

3 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right.  
4 Thank you. The next name on the list -- the  
5 last name is Yarbrough. Is it Karen? Okay.

6 (Karen Yarbrough sworn.)

7 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Could you  
8 state and spell your name, please?

9 MS. YARBROUGH: Sure, I'm Karen,  
10 K-a-r-e-n. Yarbrough, Y-a-r-b-r-o-u-g-h. You  
11 know, it just breaks my heart to stand here.  
12 We have a room full of people and all of us  
13 are broke.

14 You all make probably a whole hell of a  
15 lot more than I do. I'm retired from the  
16 military. I'm also retired from the State of  
17 Missouri, which pay horror wages. That's why I  
18 had to go back into the military at 45 years  
19 old. For you all to ask for a rate increase,  
20 that's financial rape. That's exactly what  
21 that is.

22 And shame on you, shame on you, because we  
23 make poor -- we don't make a lot of money. You  
24 know that. You got to know that. All of us  
25 came up here to stand up and speak. Weren't

1 you listening? Or are you just sitting there,  
2 not hearing us. We're begging you to lower the  
3 damn rates and not ask for increase. Now, the  
4 Commission, they proposed a what? 9.6 or 9.7  
5 increase. Hell, that's not going to help.  
6 That's like the higher increase, at 10 percent,  
7 whatever the hell you asking for, are you  
8 trying to make us slaves?

9 Or do you want to just stand up here and  
10 put a gun and shoot us? What the hell do you  
11 want from us? You want blood? And you all  
12 representing these people. What if I didn't go  
13 over into the military? What if I was in a  
14 damn war? I know you all don't give a shit  
15 about -- I'm sorry for the cursing, I apologize  
16 because I am a Christian; but it just breaks --  
17 I'm not trying to be funny. I'm not trying to  
18 be funny. It breaks my heart. Do you all have  
19 a soul?

20 I need someone to answer me. I certainly  
21 have a soul. We all were brought up in church.  
22 We all went to school. We know right from  
23 wrong. I can't afford this. These people have  
24 told you, I'm telling you, we cannot afford  
25 this. Not with every damn thing else going on,

1 especially not with Trump in office.

2 He's taking everything. I couldn't even  
3 go for mental health after he gets through with  
4 me. You just go to Fort Leavenworth and visit  
5 me in the grave, in the cemetery. Where a lot  
6 of my other family members are for serving this  
7 country.

8 Now, if you do did this rate increase, I  
9 say shame, shame, shame on you. You know  
10 better. And you can look at me with these smug  
11 faces if you want to. I am so upset with you  
12 all, I don't know what to do. What happened to  
13 mortality and goodness and grace and mercy?  
14 What happened to all of that? Did it just go  
15 out the damn window? And I'm not trying to be  
16 funny. And I don't want these people laughing  
17 at me. I want you all to hear us. We're  
18 begging -- what do you want us -- you want me  
19 to crawl to you? Do you want the whole room to  
20 crawl to you and beg you, please don't raise  
21 our rates? Because after you raise our rates,  
22 Trump has gotten rid of everything, and his --  
23 and it's all in his pockets.

24 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Excuse me?

25 MS. YARBROUGH: And don't --

1 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Ms. Yarbrough  
2 I'm sorry you are --

3 MS. YARBROUGH: Wrap it up?

4 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Yes.

5 MS. YARBROUGH: I will wrap it up, but,  
6 please, before you go to bed tonight, think  
7 about it. Just think about this whole entire  
8 room. Think about the entire Kansas City.  
9 Please, I beg you.

10 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,  
11 thank you. Next name on list is Erica Flores.

12 (Erica Flores sworn.)

13 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: If you would  
14 state and spell your name, please.

15 MS. FLORES: Sure, my name is Erica  
16 Flores, F, as in Frank, l-o-r-e-s, as in Sam.  
17 My name is Erica. I am a leader with Sunrise  
18 Movement Kansas City, and when I try to think  
19 about my future as a young person, I get really  
20 scared. I know that right now nothing is  
21 affordable, and it makes it hard to think  
22 anything will be affordable in the future. And  
23 on top of that, the climate crisis is  
24 accelerating. This tornado that we saw  
25 yesterday touched down, is the type of storm

1 that's only going to intensify and happen more  
2 and more frequently as each year passes. And I  
3 think everyone in this room has made it clear  
4 that an extra 20 dollars, an extra 30 dollars,  
5 that's pennies for your executives. That's  
6 nothing. But for us, for me, that is  
7 everything. That is the difference between  
8 life and death.

9 It's the difference between keeping the  
10 thermostat at 55 or 70 in the winter. It's the  
11 difference between cutting your medication in  
12 half or paying your gas bill on time. And  
13 given the fact that you've raised rates  
14 multiple times already in the past few years,  
15 why are you doing it again? What is this  
16 needed for? How can you justify millions of  
17 dollars in performance bonuses for your  
18 executives while not even being able to afford  
19 your infrastructure without making us pay it?  
20 When does it end? Like that's what I want to  
21 know, when does it end?

22 While you're here forcing us everyday  
23 people to pay more, your profits are  
24 skyrocketing. And you're stealing my future;  
25 you're stealing our future; you're stealing

1 your own children's futures. You're forcing us  
2 to be out here asking for the bare minimum,  
3 which is not pay more in our rates, and we  
4 don't even get a chance to talk about what are  
5 we going to do about the future? When are we  
6 going to have service that doesn't kill our  
7 planet? So called natural gas is not natural,  
8 it is a fossil fuel, and it's heating up this  
9 very planet that we live on.

10 To this commission in front of me, it is  
11 your job to stand up for people. Spire might  
12 get away with telling us, well, we're a  
13 monopoly. We only care about profits, but you  
14 cannot. It is your job to regulate them. It  
15 is your job to not just be a rubber stamping  
16 mechanism. It is your job to think critically  
17 about what this means for me, my future, your  
18 children's futures and everyone else on this  
19 planet.

20 We already heard it: you're a monopoly;  
21 Spire's a monopoly. We have no choice. We  
22 have no choice but to pay these bills. And  
23 that's why it's your job to put the interests  
24 of ratepayers first. It is your job to  
25 intervene. It is your job to speak up for us

1 and listen to us and actually put what you're  
2 telling us into action. And that's why Spire  
3 needs not one single cent more for this. They  
4 don't need a single cent. And I demand that  
5 you do so. Thank you.

6 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: The next name  
7 on the list is Ann Marie Carter.

8 (Ann Marie Carter sworn.)

9 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Would you go  
10 ahead and state and spell your name?

11 MS. CARTER: Yeah, it's Ann Marie Carver.  
12 A-n-n, M-a-r-i-e --

13 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Maybe you can  
14 bring --

15 MS. CARTER: This better?

16 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Yes.

17 MS. CARTER: Sorry.

18 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Yes.

19 MS. CARTER: A-n-n, Ma-r-i-e, C-a-r-v-e-r.  
20 Spire was granted a rate increase of 4 percent  
21 just three years ago. They state that since  
22 then, they have continued to make investments  
23 in their natural gas delivery system and  
24 technology to benefit customers. While those  
25 investments benefit customers, we know that



1 Spire has seen record profits in recent years.  
2 One could say that Spire is more than capable  
3 of paying for these projects themselves, but we  
4 have -- what we have here is a multiple billion  
5 valued company asking their customers to  
6 continue footing the bill on their routine  
7 maintenance and projects.

8 We are told by Spire that higher costs are  
9 necessary to improve infrastructure, but no one  
10 as Spire is calling attention to the fact that  
11 Missouri residential natural gas prices have  
12 been consistently higher than both Kansas and  
13 the national average for at least a decade  
14 according to the US Energy Information  
15 Administration.

16 Spire says affordability is always top of  
17 mind, and that they're thinking of their  
18 customers, that they need profits so they get  
19 loans to build and make repairs. They say it's  
20 important Spire is healthy and that to be  
21 healthy means they have to earn a reasonable  
22 return that is then used to attract capital to  
23 invest in their system. Spire has pocketed  
24 record profits in recent years while funneling  
25 funds to shareholder dividends and executive

1 pay. Their CEO, Scott Doyle, has a base salary  
2 of 800,000 dollars and considering bonus and  
3 stock options of the prior CEO, Steven Lindsey,  
4 in 2024, Doyle stands to make over 3 million  
5 dollars this year. That is over 43 times  
6 higher than the median income for a household  
7 in Missouri of \$68,920, which is 12 percent  
8 lower than our country's medium household  
9 income.

10 Spire's fiscal 2024 net income of 22 --  
11 250.9 million, which is over 33 million dollars  
12 higher than their prior year with adjusted  
13 earning in 2024 of 247.4 million, an increase  
14 over 19 million dollars from 2023, I think it's  
15 safe to say that Spire has enough of their  
16 earnings to attract the necessary capital to  
17 invest and borrow towards projects before they  
18 reach deeper into the wallets. That is a  
19 luxury that we as residents of Missouri and  
20 customers of Spire do not.

21 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you.  
22 Next name on the list is Alexandra Paul.

23 MS. PAUL: Hi, all, I'm Alexandra.

24 (Alexandra Paul sworn.)

25 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Would you

1 state and spell your name?

2 MS. PAUL: This isn't my legal name. If  
3 you want to find my legal name, I don't want to  
4 talk about it in public, but you can e-mail at  
5 alexandra.paul1511@gmail.com. Okay?

6 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right.

7 MS. PAUL: Awesome. My full name is  
8 Alexandra Paul, A-l-e-x-a-n-d-r-a, P-a-u-l.  
9 Again, if you want my legal name, you can  
10 e-mail me. Cool. This is like really hard for  
11 me to show up here. I hate meetings. I hate  
12 this kind of stuff. Testifying is not  
13 something I like to do. I honestly don't think  
14 anybody in public likes to sit here and do  
15 this, and it's embarrassing that we have to  
16 this often. The biggest thing -- this is  
17 really frustrating to me is that whenever  
18 politics and stuff happens in this state  
19 specifically, but especially in like most red  
20 states, they always try and claim to be  
21 pro-life and all this kind of stuff, but I have  
22 yet to see any kind of pro-life policy from any  
23 sort of governing body around Missouri ever.

24 And the public commission, right now, you  
25 have the opportunity to do a pro-life policy.

1 Do not allow these rate hikes to happen. They  
2 don't need to happen, period. This is a  
3 recession. Nobody has money. Everybody got  
4 fired. Everybody got reduced hours. People  
5 losing their benefits. I got friends who are  
6 not getting paid overtime. There's no --  
7 there's no public office to hold; egregious  
8 civil right violations. Like people not  
9 getting paid or this kind of stuff. To even do  
10 that kind of stuff here, like there are so many  
11 offices that are overrun and understaffed,  
12 including the little payment people at Spire.

13 And it's just disrespectful for you all to  
14 like, oh, you know just hit us for the billing.  
15 Shush. We hit you up before, and then you  
16 always say, oh, well, this is policy, and so  
17 our policy states that we blub, blub, blub.  
18 No. You don't care about us, and it's about  
19 time that a governing body in our area cares  
20 about us. So you have the opportunity to do  
21 it. Please do so. Thank you.

22 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: The next name  
23 on the list appears to be Joy Mart.

24 (Joy Mart sworn.)

25 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,

1 and could you state and spell your name?

2 MS. MART: Yeah, my name is Joy Mart,  
3 J-o-y, M-a-r-t. All righty, you guys sweating  
4 yet? I am Joy. I use they/them pronouns, and  
5 I organize with Sunrise Missouri KC. I grew up  
6 in Missouri. I live all over the state, and I  
7 truly feel at home here. Currently, I live in  
8 the Second District of Kansas City. I'm here  
9 today to demand that this commission deny  
10 Spire's request for rate hikes. Surprise,  
11 didn't see that one coming.

12 The CEO of Spire gained, as we have said,  
13 multiple times tonight over 3 million dollars  
14 in combined salary and bonuses last year, and I  
15 realize you guys got a new CEO, and he's going  
16 to make the same amount. I guarantee you both  
17 of these men are out of touch. I guarantee you  
18 they don't know what it's like to skip meals  
19 just so you could pay your utility bills. I  
20 know it all too well.

21 Kansas Cityians budget paycheck to  
22 paycheck, and we are tired. We cannot afford a  
23 15 percent rate hike or a ten percent or a five  
24 percent. We can barely afford a zero rate --  
25 rate hike. Here's the deal, guys, we can't

1 afford this. This is the third rate increase  
2 proposed in four years. If Spire wants  
3 improvements to this 200 year company, the CEO  
4 can pay for it with his own damn money, not  
5 ours.

6 What you call an investment, I call  
7 robbery. Let me ask my fellow Missourians: can  
8 you guys afford this rate hike? If you can  
9 possibly make ends meet, do you deserve this  
10 rate hike? You guys heard that, right? We are  
11 not going to stand for this. This proposal is  
12 inhumane. It is selfish, insulting, unfair and  
13 worst of all, pure greed. I'm sickened.  
14 Kansas City has shown up tonight to push you  
15 towards the moral, just decision. Spire has  
16 plenty of money from the -- from our pockets  
17 already. No more rate hikes. If you have any  
18 questions?

19 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: It appears  
20 not. The next name on list is Joseph Marchino.

21 (Joseph Marchino sworn.)

22 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Can you state  
23 and spell your name, please?

24 MR. MARCHINO: Joseph, J-o-s-e-p-h, and  
25 it's M-a-r-c-h-i-n-o.

1           REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Go ahead.

2           MR. MARCHINO: First of all, I want to say  
3 thank you for the opportunity to present -- be  
4 here in person. I've always learned that being  
5 in person and putting a face to our comments is  
6 better than just doing something online. Given  
7 that said, everything I'm getting ready to tell  
8 you now I've already submitted to both the  
9 Commission and to the OPC their records as  
10 well, because I didn't really know if I was  
11 going to be here.

12           I live in Liberty, and I have diligently  
13 and meticulously kept records of our usage  
14 costs and total costs for the last six years,  
15 ever since 2019. And I can tell you that, with  
16 a high degree of accuracy, that from 2019 until  
17 the year 2024, my usage costs have decreased  
18 34.8 percent. I should say not usage costs,  
19 just the usage itself as measured at 100 cubic  
20 feet. 34.8 percent.

21           During that same six-year period from 2019  
22 to 2024, my costs, actual cost, have increased  
23 a total 32.3 percent that was in there.  
24 Clearly, there's a disconnect between what I as  
25 a consumer am doing to keep my part of the

1 bargain and the usage costs down compared to  
2 what the total costs are that is out there.  
3 And I really can't attribute to that, where  
4 that kind of comes from, but during the QA  
5 portion earlier, I asked where this -- this  
6 cost is going to be occurred, and I was advised  
7 by Mr. Scott and -- I'm sorry, I don't know  
8 your last name, I can't remember the last name,  
9 but this is going to be most likely in our  
10 delivery and distribution costs. He also said  
11 in his opening remarks, that the delivery and  
12 distribution costs had not increased in the  
13 last three years, and I would beg to differ  
14 that, because the actual, taking the data  
15 straight off my statements, that for the  
16 12-month period that ended in February of 2023,  
17 the total percentage of my bill, which was  
18 distribution and delivery cost, was  
19 36.65 percent.

20 For that -- the 24 months, the period the  
21 bill I just got, in May 2025, for the 12-month  
22 period after that, it was 52.11 percent. A  
23 15 percent increase in two years, and that is  
24 just the delivery and distribution costs alone.  
25 Which means that more than half, more than half



1 of my bill, is the distribution -- distribution  
2 and delivery costs. It costs more for the  
3 delivery than for the actual commodity itself.

4 Just from my perspective, I'm doing my  
5 part. I think many of the people out here are  
6 doing their part to try to keep the costs down.  
7 Missouri Spire is not. They should be held  
8 accountable for what they're doing, their costs  
9 that are out there, held accountable to do  
10 their part in providing their product to the  
11 consumer in the most efficient and  
12 cost-effective methods possible, rather than  
13 just pass on those costs to the consumers.

14 I urge you, the Commission, to consider  
15 the data I have presented both here tonight and  
16 online, that Spire Missouri's proposal should  
17 be rejected as it unfairly shifts the costs to  
18 the consumers. Thank you very much, sir.  
19 Appreciate your time.

20 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you.  
21 Are there any questions for Mr. Marchino?  
22 Thank you.

23 MR. MARCHINO: Thank you, sir.

24 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: The next name  
25 on the list is Bronesha (ph.) Davis. Is

1 Ms. David here? All right. Okay. All right.

2 Then the next name is John Wells.

3 (John Wells sworn.)

4 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Can you state  
5 and spell your name, please.

6 MR. WELLS: John Wells, J-o-h-n,  
7 W-e-l-l-s, as in Sam. Thank you very much for  
8 this opportunity. I appreciate you putting  
9 down your phone, and I would appreciate that so  
10 the other people -- thank you very much. We  
11 are -- we are coming off the heels. We are  
12 coming off the heels of Evergy's recent savings  
13 for the customers that I don't know anyone that  
14 has saved any money from Evergy's savings, so  
15 this is -- this is kind of unusual in that  
16 respect. Because and I know this isn't in  
17 regards to Evergy, but it's the same thing.

18 It's all about savings, and, also, about a  
19 return on investment as well. Unfortunately,  
20 we're not seeing, as customers, we're not  
21 seeing that return on investment. Not only  
22 that, what we are seeing is that Spire is a  
23 regulated monopoly, and, as such, you all are  
24 the ones that approve the increase or anything  
25 like that. Earlier we heard that if there were

1 no alternatives that the cost would be less.  
2 This is simply not true. The reason I can say  
3 that is not true, I lived through the '70s and  
4 the '80s, and for the folks that did know there  
5 was AT&T, and look where that -- where we are  
6 now. Whenever there is not a monopoly, there  
7 is always competition. Competition will always  
8 drive prices down. It is a matter of  
9 economics.

10 We have no options other than electricity.  
11 Evergy has made that impossible as well. Spire  
12 is making that impossible now with a proposed  
13 15 percent increase. Hearing the story of  
14 someone their monthly bill just a little bit  
15 ago was \$400, and, excuse, my eyes are up here.  
16 I appreciate you looking at me. \$400 makes  
17 mine look real small. You were looking over  
18 there, sir. I appreciate your eyes on me.  
19 This rate increase would be an additional \$60  
20 for them. It makes my small increase of \$40  
21 look extremely small. Like the person a few  
22 moments ago, that is focused on efficiency, as  
23 is our family as well, yet natural gas from  
24 Spire only increases as the person, just a few  
25 moments ago said, both that person and I have

1 made the investments in efficiency. Why hasn't  
2 Spire done that?

3 When our belts tighten as customers, we  
4 tighten the things that we buy and those  
5 things. Why hasn't Spire done that? They seem  
6 want to pass those costs on to the customer  
7 rather than tightening their belt. Hearing  
8 that one of the -- I believe it was the ISRS  
9 expires, I probably have that acronym wrong,  
10 and I apologize for that, but that expires in  
11 2029. This would continue to be rolled into  
12 that, making this an effective 17 percent rate  
13 as opposed to --

14 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Mr. Wells, I  
15 would ask you to wrap it up --

16 MR. WELLS: Yes.

17 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: -- because  
18 you're past your three minutes.

19 MR. WELLS: Like, 30 seconds. As opposed  
20 to the 15 percent equates to a tax that will  
21 not go away. When we voted tax in, it doesn't  
22 go away. We're asking you to just simply say  
23 no to Spire. Thank you for your time.

24 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Next on the  
25 list, is Arianna Downard.

1 (Arianna Downard sworn.)

2 MS. DOWNARD: My name is Arianna,  
3 A-r-i-a-n-n-a, Downard, D, like David,  
4 o-w-n-a-r-d. I wanted to come up and here talk  
5 for a moment about what is it that makes up  
6 this company? Right? What makes up this  
7 company is people. We are human beings. We  
8 are standing in front of you. We asking you,  
9 please, please, do not do this. Please do not  
10 raise our rates. Please do not make it so  
11 people are going to die.

12 I agree with, I forgot her name, came up  
13 earlier and said, this -- this is going to kill  
14 people, right? This is going to make it so  
15 people will be unable to afford food, medicine  
16 and even the place where they live. People  
17 will be evicted because they can't afford their  
18 gas and because so many apartments have, having  
19 their utilities on and running, as part of the  
20 apartment agreement, and they will be kicked  
21 out on the streets with nowhere to go. Please  
22 do not do this. Please look at us and  
23 recognize that we are human beings, too, and we  
24 desperately, desperately need this to not  
25 happen. We cannot afford for this to happen,

1 if you choose for this to happen, I hope you  
2 understand, I hope you can be okay with the  
3 fact you will be killing people. Thank you.

4 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Next on the  
5 list is Rick Irwin.

6 (Rick Irwin sworn.)

7 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,  
8 could you state and spell your name, please?

9 MR. IRWIN: My name is Rick, R-i-c-k, last  
10 name, Irwin, I-r-w-i-n. Okay, first of all,  
11 I'd like to read a little segment of the e-mail  
12 that I got for this meeting.

13 For the average resident customer the  
14 proposed increase would be approximately  
15 15 percent or \$14 per month. Now, I'm not a  
16 math genius, but 15 percent of a \$100 is \$15.  
17 I don't know how many people in this room,  
18 city, state, gas bill is only a \$100. Some may  
19 be in the summertime, but you're talking about  
20 November, December, January, February, March,  
21 April, ain't nobody in this room got a \$100 gas  
22 bill, which means my bill goes from \$15 more a  
23 month, to 20, 30, 40, 50, \$60 a month more.  
24 I'm retired. I'm on a fixed income. Thank  
25 God, I have a small 401K that I draw from, and

1 my biggest saving grace is my house is paid  
2 for.

3 If this wasn't true, I'd be like a lot of  
4 people. I wouldn't be able to afford this. I  
5 know companies are not in the business to break  
6 even or go broke, but asking for a 15 percent  
7 rate hike on people that are struggling? My  
8 meds went up. My Medicare went up. Gas is up,  
9 food, everything is up. Is that y'all's fault?  
10 No. It's just a fact.

11 But adding another 15 percent on top of  
12 what we are already pay, is crippling. It's  
13 mind blowing that you could even ask for money,  
14 especially with the profits that this company  
15 makes. Now, I'm asking the Commission to turn  
16 this thing down. It's ludicrous, and it's just  
17 going to hurt and devastate too many families  
18 across this great city and this state. Thank  
19 you.

20 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you.  
21 Next is Kenneth Jones.

22 MR. JONES: Kenneth Jones, K-e-n-n-e-t-h,  
23 J-o-n-e-s.

24 (Kenneth Jones sworn.)

25 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you.

1 MR. JONES: What's the estimated cost  
2 for --

3 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Mr. Jones,  
4 could I ask you to speak --

5 MR. JONES: Yeah.

6 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: -- or bring  
7 the microphone closer --

8 MR. JONES: Yeah.

9 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: -- to you.

10 MR. JONES: What's the estimated cost for  
11 100 cubic feet to increase your revenues  
12 \$236 million a year? Spire?

13 MR. CLIZER: Sir, we -- this is John  
14 Clizer of OPC. We can't actually answer  
15 questions during this period of the proceeding.  
16 I apologize but none of us can answer questions  
17 for you.

18 MR. JONES: Okay. Any rate increases I  
19 think it would be a lot more humane for  
20 everybody to make it a fixed dollar amount on  
21 the customer charge. If you're trying to  
22 recover all of it through the delivery and  
23 distribution and the cost per 100 cubic feet of  
24 usage, that's going to get very expensive for a  
25 lot of folks. Based on the information



1 obtained in the e-mail, you know, it looks  
2 likes the increase is going to be about \$23.07.  
3 They want to get \$14 a month out of everybody.

4 So if I take my total usage for the year  
5 and multiply that times my amount, I mean, I'm  
6 going to be looking at another 5, 6, \$700 a  
7 year. You know, if you take the \$14 and you  
8 just add it to the customer charge, then I got  
9 \$168 increase for the year. So, you know,  
10 adding any increases to the cost for 100 foot  
11 of usage, is going to get very punitive for a  
12 lot people for a lot of people. That's it.

13 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,  
14 thank you. Next on the list is David  
15 Levendoll? All right. Next name is Caleb  
16 Gardener.

17 (Caleb Gardner sworn.)

18 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Would you  
19 state and spell your name, please?

20 MR. GARDNER: My name's Caleb, C-a-l-e-b.  
21 Gardner, G-a-r-d-n-e-r. I'm a customer here in  
22 Kansas City, Missouri. I'm going to read from  
23 Spire's press release for 2025, quarter 2,  
24 where they state, quote, "We remain confident  
25 in our ability to grow long-term adjusted

1 earnings per share five to seven by an expected  
2 long-term seven to eight percent annualized  
3 rate base growth at Spire Missouri."

4 So based on that, Spire is going to ask  
5 for this every two years of another 15 percent.  
6 Over the next ten years, that's a 90 to 100  
7 percent rate increase. No one here can afford  
8 that, so I -- they should only be two or three  
9 percent to cover their actual investments. Not  
10 pump up their share prices. Thank you.

11 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,  
12 next on the list is Jill Byers.

13 (Jill Byers sworn.)

14 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you.

15 MS. BYERS: My name is Jill Byers,  
16 J-i-l-l, B-y-e-r-s. I just also want to remind  
17 everyone that you are appointed and not  
18 elected, correct?

19 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Could you --

20 MS. BYERS: You're appointed not elected  
21 to this board?

22 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: The  
23 commissioners are appointed, correct.

24 MS. BYERS: Okay. And by the current  
25 governor.

1           REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: It varies.  
2           Depending upon who the governor was at the time  
3           they got appointed.

4           MS. BYERS: But over the last decade it's  
5           been a Republican governor?

6           REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: I can't say  
7           that for certainty. I don't want to get into  
8           it but, yes, but it depends upon who the  
9           governor is at the time.

10          MS. BYERS: So rate increases are, as we  
11          discussed during the question and answer  
12          session, supposed to benefit the customers.  
13          The customers. In the Q-2 earnings, when we --

14          REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Ms. Byers,  
15          I'm sorry, can you bring the microphone a  
16          little closer or you closer to the microphone?

17          MS. BYERS: Yeah. In the Q-2 earnings  
18          report, when we compare 2024 to 2025 for Spire,  
19          they had a \$17.8 million increase in revenue in  
20          earnings just in the Q-2 earnings. That's part  
21          of the coldest part of the year. When it is  
22          enough? 18 million one quarter? Twenty, the  
23          next. Okay, every once in a while, we're not  
24          going to make money. But when is it enough to  
25          benefit the customers?

1           In the 2024 SCC report, 66 percent of the  
2 revenue from Spire comes from residential  
3 customers. That's us. That's people like me  
4 and people here. I'm from Carney, Missouri, so  
5 I'm little more rural. I grew up even further  
6 out. If you're far enough out, you don't have  
7 zoning and you have the option for propane.  
8 None of those options are safe. As we've seen  
9 over the last few months in Missouri, the  
10 industry propane and natural gas is extremely  
11 unsafe. It kills people.

12           We could have them here today, but they're  
13 not -- they're not allowed. The people in  
14 Lexington, that was your industry. It may not  
15 be your company, but it's your industry that  
16 killed that little boy. It's your industry  
17 that killed the people in Excelsior Springs  
18 when they incorrectly refilled their propane  
19 tank. And it's commissions and boards in  
20 Missouri that don't hold those accountable. No  
21 one, today, when I called Jeff City was able to  
22 tell me who refilled those people's propane  
23 tanks in Excelsior Springs. That part of the  
24 report isn't done. That was last year. How  
25 many more people are we going to kill with this

1 unsafe industry that we keep needing more and  
2 more money? To clarify, it's 15.5 percent that  
3 you're requesting.

4 And when I say people that look like me,  
5 it's people like me that are paying for it, but  
6 it is not people like me that are getting their  
7 money from it. From your 2024 Spire  
8 sustainably report, 80.91 percent of your  
9 employees, including your executive board are  
10 male. And I'm not exactly sure what nondiverse  
11 means, but 70.10 of your workforce and your  
12 employees are not diverse.

13 So that's not matching of people of  
14 Missouri in Kansas City, St. Louis. It may be  
15 the rural areas, but the overall percentage of  
16 those folks that pay residential fees are  
17 non-diverse. So the people that are -- they  
18 are diverse, I'm sorry. Diversity and women  
19 and children are the ones that this is costing  
20 the most. You said -- when I asked you  
21 questions earlier, you said your average worker  
22 makes around \$100,000 a year.

23 That -- first of all, that's an average  
24 that includes the ones that, thank goodness,  
25 were smart enough to join a union, and they

1 were smart enough to negotiate their wages.  
2 \$100,000 is way more than what our law  
3 enforcement starts out here in Kansas City.  
4 Now, we would -- if we were ever able to  
5 control our own law enforcement in Kansas City,  
6 as a city, that might change but the state  
7 still has control --

8 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Ms. Byers, I  
9 would ask you to wrap it up because you're past  
10 your time.

11 MS. BYERS: Thank you. So my -- my point  
12 is this 15.5 percent, continues to harm those  
13 that all rate increase taxes harm, while it  
14 continues to help people that look just like  
15 the people on our commission. And it's not  
16 your fault. It's not your fault what you look  
17 like. It's not your fault that you only have  
18 one executive that's a woman, and no people of  
19 color. Oh, wait, that is your fault.

20 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,  
21 the next name on the list is Aden, I'm going to  
22 say Allen?

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Not here, but I am  
24 wondering -- I know Bronesha was called up.  
25 Could she go now? She is here.

1           REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Is she --  
2       yes, go ahead.

3                       (Bronesha Davis sworn.)

4           REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: And could you  
5       go ahead state and spell your name?

6           MS. DAVIS: My name is Bronesha A. Davis,  
7       B-r-o-n-e-s-h-a, B-r-o-n-e-s-h-a. Greetings to  
8       all, as you know, my name is Bronesha Davis, an  
9       indigenous woman, also melanin, who,  
10      unfortunately, is homeless due to these  
11      ridiculous increases in everyday living. How  
12      is it that working 60 hours a week with a 592  
13      credit score, I'm still sleeping in my car and  
14      being told I need a 600 credit score to be  
15      housed. You mean to tell me even the average  
16      worker of 40 hours a week is still at risk of  
17      eviction because of corrupt -- because of  
18      corporate greed?

19           This 15 percent increase in Spire energy  
20      bills is targeting us citizens and it's active  
21      saying modern day slavery is in full effect.  
22      So, these bridges of Project 2025 need to stop,  
23      and it only stops when we the people continue  
24      to organize this way and say what is right and  
25      what is wrong, the same way our ancestors did.

1 Thank you.

2 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,  
3 the next name is Julia Caldwell.

4 (Julia Caldwell sworn.)

5 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Could we  
6 lower your microphone down some? Thank you.  
7 Could you state and spell your name, please?

8 MS. CALDWELL: My name is Julia Caldwell,  
9 and it's spelled J-u-l-i-a, C-a-l-d-w-e-l-l.  
10 I'm just here to just -- I'm sorry. I'm here  
11 just to say, I've been a gas customer since I  
12 was 21 years old. That make it 62 years. I  
13 have paid my share of high utility bills. And  
14 I'm here today to state that Spire is asking  
15 for 15 more percent, and that's 15 more percent  
16 that I cannot pay. I have, in the last 20  
17 years, I have had my house insulated; I had new  
18 windows put in; I had new doors put it. I made  
19 sure the basement was -- didn't have no broken  
20 seal where air will come in or mice will come  
21 in or whatever.

22 But I just think that our public  
23 commission utilities have did the people of  
24 Kansas City an injust (sic) by not standing up  
25 for the average pay -- wage -- hourly wage



1 person, and I think -- I'm a retired person,  
2 and thank God that my husband worked for Ford  
3 so I can afford what I'm paying now for  
4 utilities.

5 But if they pay, if you all let them put  
6 that 15 percent increase on our utilities, it's  
7 going to be a lot of old people, like this 83  
8 year old mama, won't be able to pay her bill in  
9 her home, so I would be in a frozen house, I  
10 suppose. Thank you.

11 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you.  
12 You're next? So you're Belinda Shelby?

13 MS. SHELBY: I'm Belinda Shelby.

14 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right.

15 MS. SHELBY: Do I need to spell the thing?

16 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Well, I do  
17 need you to spell it for the sake of our court  
18 reporter.

19 MS. SHELBY: Okay, it's B-e-l-i-n-d-a,  
20 C-a-l-d-w-e-l-l, S-h-e-l-b-y.

21 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay. I do  
22 need to swear you in.

23 (Belinda Shelby sworn.)

24 MS. SHELBY: You've heard so many good  
25 testimonies and reasons why we should not

1 increase it. But my mom is disabled. She  
2 wears double hearing aids, and I am visually  
3 impaired, so we're the odd couple but we live  
4 in --

5 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: And -- and,  
6 again, just for the sake of the record and for  
7 the people who may not have heard you off  
8 microphone, the previous speaker was your  
9 mother, correct?

10 MS. SHELBY: Yes.

11 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay.

12 MS. SHELBY: Yes. So, we live in 64128.  
13 Many people that live in the city of Kansas  
14 City Missouri know that that area is considered  
15 the lower life expectancy ZIP code, one of  
16 them. And it's for a lot of reasons. You  
17 know, there's health reasons, but, also, we  
18 live in 64128 because it's affordable for us.  
19 We live in hundred year old houses. And my mom  
20 has done a lot of things to curb the cost of  
21 using gas service. And I live right next to  
22 her, and her gas bills were like 400 to \$500  
23 this year, and my gas bill was close to \$700 a  
24 month. And a lot of the programs -- I'm  
25 sitting next to very beautiful Spire people,

1 too, but a lot of programs that Spire has is  
2 really not for the working people, because we  
3 make too much to get something and then your  
4 credit score has to be at a certain level to  
5 get all these energy efficient supplies that  
6 you do. So we do things like supplementing our  
7 heat bill by closing of areas of the house that  
8 we don't use, like rooms. And we also use  
9 electrical heaters, and the bills are still  
10 high.

11 So, you know, just from one working person  
12 to another, who would love to have a 15 percent  
13 increase, I just don't think that this is a  
14 good deal for us to increase our utility -- gas  
15 services at all. Thank you for your time.

16 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,  
17 thank you, Ms. Shelby. All right, next name is  
18 Alec Bailey. I'm sorry before -- Ms. Bailey,  
19 if you --

20 MR. ARIAS: Ms. Bailey (sic), I just HAD a  
21 quick QUESTION for you. Did you by chance --  
22 can she hear me? Ms. Caldwell?

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Yes.

24 MR. ARIAS: Did you have a chance to stop  
25 by our desk out front? You just mentioned

1 that -- I would recommend just stepping by our  
2 desk out front. You said that you -- there are  
3 assistance programs. Okay, okay, thank you.

4 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: For the sake  
5 of the record that was Mr. Arias asking the  
6 question. And, so, Ms. Bailey. I'm sorry, not  
7 Ms. Bailey.

8 (Alec Bailey sworn.)

9 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Could you  
10 state and spell your name?

11 MR. BAILEY: Alec, A-l-e-c, B-a-i-l-e-y.

12 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right, go  
13 ahead.

14 MR. BAILEY: I have come here today,  
15 because I am using Kansas City -- I live in  
16 Raytown, and I'd like to say that you should  
17 not raise the rent (sic) hikes because, in  
18 winter, I should not have decide to either  
19 starve or freeze. I shouldn't -- I shouldn't  
20 have to do that. I should worry if I can go  
21 outside and play in the snow or see my friends,  
22 you know. And my grandmother has to lower her  
23 AC to 55 at night just to save money. That's  
24 not right. Yeah. It's just wrong as well, you  
25 know. You're just stealing money from people.

1 You're stealing money from working class  
2 citizens, like my parents. My mom was months  
3 without a job, so we were down on money. We  
4 had a hard time getting food, to pay heat.  
5 It's just wrong. That's all I have to say.

6 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right.  
7 All right. Thank you. All right, next on the  
8 list is Deborah --

9 (Deborah Topp sworn.)

10 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Please state  
11 and spell your name, please.

12 MS. TOPP: My name is Deborah,  
13 D-e-b-o-r-a-h. Last name Topp, T-o-p-p. And  
14 I'm here today just to say that we're  
15 struggling. Just, I'm retired. I work two  
16 part time jobs, and just, you know, it's going  
17 to be a hardship for a lot of people to pay an  
18 extra 15 percent. I'd also like to speak on  
19 behalf of my brother, who is disabled.

20 He lives in an apartment building that, I  
21 think there are 40 apartments. Everyone in  
22 that building pays, I think, \$24 a month to get  
23 gas into their apartment. They only use it for  
24 heat, so in the summertime, when nothing is  
25 running but maybe the pilot light for his

1     furnace, he's still paying 32 to \$36 a month  
2     for gas. And he's not using -- the actual gas  
3     usage is probably 8 to \$10, but he's still  
4     paying that large amount. So, I'm just asking  
5     you that please reject this increase. People,  
6     at this time, just cannot afford it. Thank  
7     you.

8             REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: And the next  
9     name is Kenneth Topp.

10            (Kenneth Topp sworn.)

11            REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: I might ask  
12     you to raise the microphone up a little bit.

13            MR. TOPP: Okay.

14            REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you.  
15     And could you state and spell your name?

16            MR. TOPP: My name is Kenneth,  
17     K-e-n-n-e-t-h. Topp, T-o-p-p.

18            REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Go ahead.

19            MR. TOPP: Okay. I came here this evening  
20     because I felt the need to speak for myself. I  
21     think, in many instances, people today are not  
22     speaking out for various reasons, and I felt  
23     compelled to come and speak about this  
24     increase. As my wife was saying, you know,  
25     we're both retired. We work hard all our

1 lives. We are essentially fighting skirmishes  
2 with Evergy, with Spire, Jackson County. I  
3 could name a bunch of people, but we've worked  
4 hard and it seems like people are conspiring to  
5 take things way from us.

6 I really didn't want to come up and have a  
7 long conversation about how it felt. I feel  
8 that there's no way you should approve this  
9 rate increase. No way, you know, at all. And  
10 the fact of the matter is that I came to speak  
11 for myself because I didn't want this. And as  
12 far as you commissioners are concerned, I hope  
13 somebody will come and speak for you when your  
14 time comes. I'm good.

15 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,  
16 thank you. Next on the list is Ashley  
17 Al-Shawish. I do apologize, I tried.

18 MS. AL-SHAWISH: That was perfect. That  
19 was actually the authentic way. My family and  
20 I pronounce it Ashley, A-s-h-l-e-y, A-l,  
21 hyphen, S-h-a-w-i-s-h.

22 (Ashley Al-Shawish sworn.)

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right, go  
24 ahead.

25 MS. AL-SHAWISH: My name is Ashley

1 Al-Shawish. I'm a legislative aid in Jackson  
2 County. My role involves direct casework with  
3 constituents and helping those tax payers  
4 through various county processes and applying  
5 for various programs.

6 I've seen firsthand in my role the result  
7 of the recent tax debacle both in 2019 and 2023  
8 had brought to citizens in our county. And I  
9 bring this topic up in this hearing today,  
10 because as citizens are quite literally being  
11 taxed out of our homes, they are turning around  
12 and simultaneously seeing monthly bills that  
13 are getting more and more unaffordable.

14 We've seen our electric and gas prices  
15 continue to increase. Taxes are -- taxpayers  
16 are being asked to rebudget their household  
17 incomes over and over as corporations, utility  
18 companies and local governments ask them to  
19 fund never ending infrastructure projects and  
20 capital improvements.

21 In addition to homeowners leaving the  
22 metropolitan because there is no longer  
23 sustainable cost of living, low-income families  
24 and renters and tenants are also greatly  
25 affected. The ratio of income that families



1 use to sustain rent and utility costs do not  
2 allow for reasonable budgeting to afford  
3 groceries and healthcare needs. I often hear  
4 companies like Spire calculating that these  
5 increases will only be \$10 a month, maybe \$20 a  
6 month per customer.

7 The -- what they aren't really realizing  
8 to acknowledge is that in today's economy, the  
9 average of \$15 is the exact cost of either  
10 monthly medication and appointment deductible  
11 or grocery expenses. 13 or 14 dollars per  
12 month does indeed hurt the average Missouri  
13 household.

14 According to the New York stock exchange,  
15 Spire's profit margin went from 7.6 percent in  
16 2023 to 9.1 percent in 2024. This year's  
17 figures, now in 2025, are already over at  
18 19 percent. All of these numbers are not near  
19 the low figure that was reported earlier by a  
20 Spire representative. Annual wage growth in  
21 America is just over 3 percent at best.

22 Spire has proudly reported to multiple  
23 agencies that they have initiated effective  
24 efforts to improve operational efficiency and  
25 the cost of doing business. It is

1     disappointing to them -- to me, as a customer  
2     for them to turn around and ask for a rate  
3     increase to hardworking Americans.

4             As a current customer, I would ask the  
5     company to responsibly budget for their own  
6     infrastructure improvements, rather than trying  
7     to turn to their customer base as those very  
8     customers are being asked to fund never-ending  
9     projects around this metropolitan for other  
10    millionaires, for other billionaires.

11            Lastly, I would like to note, there are  
12    several tax breaks that Spire currently enjoys  
13    for the very purpose of investing in  
14    infrastructure improvements. These include  
15    both the system replacement surcharge, as well  
16    as the Federal Tax Reform Saving Plan. And in  
17    2018, Spire actually made a really moral  
18    decision to pass those saving along to  
19    customers. So, today, tonight, I would like to  
20    ask the Public Service Commission to step in  
21    and continue in passing those savings along.  
22    Thank you for your time.

23            REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you.  
24    Next is Raymond Forstaster.

25            (Raymond Forstaster sworn.)

1 MR. FORSTASTER: Raymond Forstaster,  
2 R-a-y-m-o-n-d, F-o-r-s-t-a-s-t-e-r. I'm  
3 honestly tired of giving these types of  
4 speeches. Usually, I prepare, but I've been in  
5 this position before, so I figured I could just  
6 do it off the dome. So, what I genuinely want  
7 to know is what will it take to reject this?  
8 We have heard time and time again about how  
9 we're limited on time. How we have so many  
10 people signed up to testify. We're using every  
11 minute that we have to tell you all that we  
12 cannot afford this, and that you need to reject  
13 this for the sake of people across the State of  
14 Missouri.

15 And if we can use every bit of time that  
16 we have, every second that we are given to tell  
17 you that this cannot pass and you still pass it  
18 through, then I don't understand what it is  
19 that we can actually can do to use our voices  
20 and show you that this isn't right and this  
21 won't work for us. So, I would love to get an  
22 answer from you all, if possible, about what it  
23 would actually take to reject this, because I  
24 know again this is the third time that this  
25 would be happening in four years. I was here

1 in the other room in this community center a  
2 little over two years ago, giving testimony on  
3 the same issue, and, once again, the community  
4 showed out and the room was full and we used  
5 all the time to testify and the right -- the  
6 rate hike still passed.

7 So I would like to know, do we need to be  
8 rioting in the streets? Do we all need to be  
9 stopping paying our bills, so it actually  
10 impacts their profits and their margins?  
11 Because if we can all show up and testify and  
12 use every second that we have and send e-mails  
13 and show up to virtual hearings and say this  
14 won't pass, you know, I don't hear anybody  
15 showing up and saying that's okay for people to  
16 push this through. Every single person here is  
17 calling on you to reject this for the sake of  
18 the people of our communities.

19 And if that isn't enough, then I truth  
20 don't understand what would be. I work in food  
21 access, and the reality is, that with a fixed  
22 costs or, like, our gas bills, you don't pay  
23 that, you get your gas shut off. You don't pay  
24 your rent, you get evicted. You don't pay your  
25 car bill, it gets reposed. The option that

1 people are left with is to, you know, freeze  
2 like we've heard about or don't get groceries.  
3 Don't feed their families. Don't put food on  
4 the table for the people that need it.

5 So the impacts of raising these rates is  
6 not just going to be that people are having to  
7 deal with the cold, people having to shelter up  
8 and deal with not raising their temperatures in  
9 their homes because they simply can't afford  
10 it. It's going to mean that people are  
11 starving. It's going to mean that people  
12 aren't getting the medication they need. These  
13 impacts are going to be wide ranging across our  
14 entire communities, in many ways, beyond just  
15 gas access in our homes.

16 So, again, I would love to know what is it  
17 actually going to take to reject this outright,  
18 no smaller increase, no partial rate hike but  
19 an outright reaction, because, again, this is  
20 the third time in four years and when is this  
21 going to end and what will it take to actually  
22 stop it if clearly we can't afford it, and,  
23 clearly, it's not working for the people to  
24 actually pay into the pockets of these  
25 executives that work for these companies.

1 Thank you.

2 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,  
3 the next name on list is Lisa Baronio, Baronio.

4 (Lisa Baronio sworn.)

5 MS. BARONIO: My name is spelled Lisa,  
6 L-i-s-a. Last name is Baronio, B-a-r-o-n-i-o.  
7 I am a Spire customer living in Lee Summit,  
8 Missouri. I'm 64-years-old, and my husband is  
9 70 years old. We continue to work because of  
10 the fear of what future costs would be as we  
11 move to a fixed income and retirement. This is  
12 a frightening reality that many Spire's  
13 customers face every single day.

14 We have added insulation, done what we  
15 could to reduce costs for our future fixed  
16 income status. The rate increase proposed is  
17 exorbitant, and it's exorbitantly high at  
18 15 percent. However, if you wish to include  
19 the infrastructure system replacement surcharge  
20 that is slated to sunset in 2029, that increase  
21 actually surpasses 17 percent. The CEO of  
22 Spire's base salary last year was over 2.2  
23 million.

24 However, with the performance-based  
25 incentive plan, the CEO's salary was over 3

1 million and with stock awards, his salary is  
2 over 5 million. If Spire is more profitable,  
3 as it would be with this rate increase, the  
4 CEO's bonus would increase between an  
5 additional compensation of a bonus between  
6 75 percent and 115 percent.

7 On -- on their compensation of \$2.2  
8 million salary, plus their stock awards. The  
9 C-suite employees of Spire and stakeholders  
10 stand to gain profits due to their stockholder  
11 incentives as the price of stock increases and  
12 in their personal profits will go up.

13 Their proposed -- proposal indicates the  
14 increase will affect infrastructure investments  
15 and create conservation impacts. Spire has  
16 already indicated that they have made such  
17 investments previously. If this is the case,  
18 there are savings that they had already reaped.  
19 As for a for-profit company, they had a profit  
20 of \$251 million last year alone, and they are  
21 already making investments of this nature to  
22 increase their profits.

23 This increase is very high and should be  
24 reconsidered as -- and not imposed for the sake  
25 of the public, for those relying upon Spire to

1 heat their homes to run their driers, to cook  
2 their food, they -- we should not need to  
3 choose between putting food on the table and  
4 heating our homes. People will suffer  
5 needlessly for the sake of a for-profit company  
6 to increase their profits. Thank you.

7 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: And Ms --  
8 Ms. -- excuse me, Ms. Baronio? When you began  
9 your testimony, did you say you reside in Lee  
10 Summit?

11 MS. BARONIO: Lee Summit, yes.

12 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay, thank  
13 you. All right. The next name on the list is  
14 Tessa Lieber.

15 (Tessa Lieber sworn.)

16 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Could you  
17 state and spell your name, please?

18 MS. LIEBER: Yes, I am Tessa Lieber,  
19 T-e-s-s-a. Last name, L-i-e-b, as in boy,  
20 -e-r. I would just like to start this evening  
21 to say and acknowledge how privileged I am.  
22 I'm privileged to have white skin in an  
23 insanelly racist country. I am privileged to  
24 have been able to drive myself to the library  
25 this evening to print out the fiscal report of



1 2024 of Spire -- of the Spire company. I'm  
2 privileged to have been able to eat a large  
3 lunch before today, knowing that I would have  
4 skip to dinner to spend all of my time here.  
5 Despite that privilege, this rate increase will  
6 impact me.

7 That's not to even speak of the other many  
8 people who are on fixed incomes, who are so  
9 severely impacted by a rate increase. What I  
10 would like to mention is in this fiscal report  
11 that I printed off at my library, it shows a  
12 reduction in the volume of utility sold year  
13 over year. A 0.7 percent reduction.

14 Yet, there is a 12 percent increase in  
15 operating income. How does that happen? And I  
16 would also just like to say, because of the  
17 decrease in volume consumed, there's actually  
18 something in here that says it's because of  
19 global warming. Temperatures, this is direct a  
20 quote, temperatures in Spire Missouri's service  
21 area during fiscal 2024 were 10 percent warmer  
22 than during fiscal 2023 and 19.1 more than  
23 normal.

24 Now, I'm not sure what sort of lobbying or  
25 other interests are involved with this case,

1 and, frankly, doesn't matter, but I would urge  
2 you to not align yourselves with this type of  
3 company because, frankly, it's operating at  
4 their own detriment.

5 This is a natural gas product. It is  
6 affecting our climate, and not only that, it's  
7 affecting their business. Even their own  
8 employees, which they referred earlier as  
9 saying they typically give a 3 percent  
10 increase, even that increase will not cover the  
11 additional 15 percent rate increase. You claim  
12 this is a community investment. You claim that  
13 this is something that helps people when really  
14 you're maintaining your property. You're  
15 maintaining your property. As I am expected as  
16 the homeowner, I am expected to maintain my  
17 property.

18 I do not get paid from other people to do  
19 so, other than my job. You claim that this is  
20 for safety, but the reality is that this is  
21 really just creating a far more dangerous  
22 situation for so many people. Thank you.

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right.  
24 Next -- next on the list is Sheila Barnett.

25 (Sheila Barnett sworn.)

1           REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,  
2 could you state and spell your name, please?

3           MS. BARNETT: Sheila Barnett, S-h-e-i-l-a,  
4 B-a-r-n-e-t-t. As everybody has said this  
5 evening, nobody can afford a rate increase. I  
6 stood here about three years ago and talked  
7 about it then, and was told that the gas would  
8 be delivered more efficiency, and we would have  
9 better infrastructure. I haven't seen any of  
10 that. I don't see how you're delivering the  
11 gas more efficiency -- efficiently, and I  
12 haven't seen any infrastructure repair, and yet  
13 here you are, asking us to give you more money.  
14 And as everybody says, we're not getting any  
15 more money; where are we supposed to come up  
16 with it?

17           And the other thing is that the citizens  
18 of Missouri voted to increase minimum wage.  
19 And what is our legislature doing? They're  
20 doing everything they can to keep minimum wage  
21 from being increased. So if the Missouri  
22 legislator is going to keep minimum wage from  
23 being increased, then the Commission, you  
24 commissioners should do what you can do to keep  
25 our rates from being increased. If our minimum

1 wage people can't get what we voted in, then  
2 how can we stop you guys from raising something  
3 that we can't pay. As everybody has said,  
4 we're all making choices between food, between  
5 medicine, between heat, water. I have a family  
6 member who got in such trouble with Spire that  
7 they have a 3,000 bill that they have not been  
8 able to pay.

9 Now, she has since installed a wood  
10 burning stove in her house, because that's all  
11 she can do to be able to stay warm during the  
12 wintertime. That's not all her fault, but  
13 she's gotten all of the help that she can get,  
14 and when her house burns down, I'm going to  
15 blame Spire for not doing anything to help her  
16 keep her gas on, and for her to have to go to a  
17 wood-burning stove.

18 And if my husband or my neighbors or my  
19 other fellow Missourians have to make a choice  
20 between food and being warm, well, maybe we all  
21 have to start community living then, and that  
22 way we can have enough people in our house to  
23 be able to pay the utilities, to be able to  
24 feed each other, and maybe we can start trading  
25 prescriptions, so we can all have our

1 cholesterol medicine and our high blood  
2 pressure medicine at the same time --

3 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Ms. Barnett  
4 --

5 MS. BARNETT: -- because I'm sure we're  
6 all on high cholesterol medicine, and I'm sure  
7 everybody's blood pressure is high over this  
8 whole situation.

9 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Ms. Barnett,  
10 you are past your three minutes.

11 MS. BARNETT: Thank you. I would  
12 genuinely implore you to not do this to the  
13 Missouri people. We cannot afford it in any  
14 way, shape or especially when our legislator  
15 will not put through the minimum wage increase.

16 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right.  
17 And next on the list is Robin Humphrey.

18 (Robin Humphrey sworn.)

19 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: If you could  
20 state and spell your name, please?

21 MS. HUMPHREY: Robin, R-o-b-i-n, Humphrey,  
22 H-u-m-p-h-r-e-y.

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Go ahead.

24 MS. HUMPHREY: I'm a resident of the 3rd  
25 District, and I proudly serve as the President

1 of the Washington Wheatley Neighborhood  
2 Association.

3 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,  
4 could I ask you repeat that again just for the  
5 sake of the court reporter?

6 MS. HUMPHREY: I'm a resident of the 3rd  
7 District, and I proudly serve as the President  
8 of the Washington Wheatley Neighborhood  
9 Association.

10 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay.

11 MS. HUMPHREY: On behalf on our residents,  
12 I am here today to respectfully urge the  
13 Missouri Public Service Commission to reject  
14 Spire's proposed rate increase.

15 This increase places an undue financial  
16 burden on Missouri families, many of whom are  
17 already facing rising costs for essentials like  
18 food, housing and healthcare. A double digit  
19 rate hike for basic necessity items like home  
20 heating and cooking fuel is especially harmful  
21 for low income and fixed income households who  
22 will be disproportionately affected.

23 While we understand the need for  
24 infrastructure improvements and inflationary  
25 adjustments, utility companies must balance

1 those with needs -- those needs with  
2 affordability and fairness. It's not fair to  
3 keep raising rates when people are struggling  
4 to make ends meet. On a personal note, I've  
5 worked for a Fortune 500 company for 19 years.  
6 And over the years, I witnessed my company make  
7 hard decisions. Just this year, they required  
8 employees to take unpaid time off. And they've  
9 done this to avoid layoffs and to protect jobs.  
10 It's a sacrifice, and I respect it because they  
11 put people first.

12 I'm asking you to do the same, but I'm  
13 also asking you to seek better alternatives.  
14 Please protect Missouri families and deny this  
15 rate increase. We need affordable energy, not  
16 bigger bills. I urge the Commission to  
17 prioritize the interest of everyday Missourians  
18 and hold Spire accountable for transparent and  
19 responsible rate setting practices. Please  
20 deny this rate increase. Thank you.

21 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,  
22 next on the list is Amy Pepper.

23 (Amy Pepper sworn.)

24 MS. PEPPER: Can you hear me okay?

25 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Can you state

1 and spell your name, please?

2 MS. PEPPER: Yes, my name is A-m-y,  
3 P-e-p-p-e-r. I'm a Spire customer but not by  
4 choice. Spire has made multiple acquisitions  
5 across the natural gas pipeline sector,  
6 eliminating all potential utilities competitors  
7 in what's supposed to be a free market system.  
8 You say that this proposed increase is to  
9 recover infrastructure investments, but you're  
10 not willing to do so by capping or eliminating  
11 profits, executive bonuses or stock dividends  
12 and Spire's profitability continues to increase  
13 exponentially year over year.

14 Spire is a public utility service. The  
15 keyword there is public. You are supposed to  
16 serve the people who depend on your services.  
17 Not the executives and shareholders out to  
18 stuff their pockets, buy their third or fourth  
19 vacation homes and hoard money in offshore  
20 accounts. Why don't you tell your bosses if  
21 you don't -- if they don't think they should  
22 serve the public, then get out of the service  
23 of public utilities and stop buying out your  
24 competitors, so that we have another choice for  
25 a utility service provider.



1 I don't know how much you Spire puppets  
2 get paid, but I can imagine it must be  
3 significant enough for you walk into this room  
4 in your fancy suits and recite a bunch of  
5 corporate BS to try to convince us that Spire's  
6 success is our success. I don't know you, but  
7 I highly doubt any of you have ever known what  
8 it's like to struggle to keep the lights or the  
9 heat on.

10 You stand -- you stood here today, and  
11 announced that if people are struggling to pay  
12 bills, there are resources. So you already  
13 acknowledge that people can't afford utilities  
14 and now you want more. We don't need your  
15 resources for assistance with high gas prices.  
16 We need affordable gas prices. We're not as  
17 stupid as you think we are. We see through  
18 your deception and your lies. We don't believe  
19 a word of your empty promises and recited  
20 corporate rhetoric. I humbly ask this  
21 commission, do not allow this rate increase to  
22 pass. You are here to represent the interests  
23 of the public and the public is speaking.  
24 Listen.

25 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right.

1 Next on the list is Katie Gregory.

2 (Katie Gregory sworn.)

3 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right.

4 Could you state and spell your name, please?

5 MS. GREGORY: Katie Gregory, K-a-t-i-e,  
6 G-r-e-g-o-r-y. Good evening, I'm Katie  
7 Gregory, a master's level social worker and  
8 resident of Grandview, Missouri. I urge the  
9 Commission to reject the increase and to speak  
10 to the societal implications of this rate  
11 increase. Many Missourians are struggling to  
12 make ends meet. Those who do not pay are at  
13 risk of having their gas shut off.

14 As Spire did not directly answer a  
15 gentleman's question regarding Spire's policy  
16 regarding shutting off gas in households with  
17 minors, and not having utilities can put  
18 tenants at risk for eviction given it's part of  
19 their lease agreement, which for many can lead  
20 to homelessness. But this is only part of the  
21 problem. A study from Tang (ph.) et al. shows  
22 the correlation between foster care entries and  
23 eviction rates. They found an 8.1 increase in  
24 association between eviction and foster care  
25 entry in some demographics.

1 Missouri will need to be prepared to  
2 increase its foster care entries due to Spire's  
3 increase -- increased rates. Being without  
4 heat in the winter is a concern of its own for  
5 child welfare and wellbeing. Missouri does  
6 have LIHEAP, Low Income Home Energy Assistance  
7 Program, which helps customers once a year but  
8 often does not adequately support those in  
9 need.

10 This concern is something -- this is  
11 something for Missouri to consider as there  
12 will be an increased gap in funding due to the  
13 proposed increase. Thank you.

14 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,  
15 the next name on the list is Denna Kirkland.

16 MS. KIRKLAND: Hello, good evening,  
17 everybody. My name is Denna Kirkland.

18 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Go ahead and  
19 spell it since you --

20 MS. KIRKLAND: Okay, D-e-n-n-a,  
21 K-i-r-k-l-a-n-d, Denna Kirkland, that's me.

22 (Denna Kirkland sworn.)

23 MS. KIRKLAND: Ready? Okay, so I'm here.  
24 I'm a truck driver. I'm from Kansas City. I  
25 want to speak on behalf of my cousin, who is a

1 nurse at the VA. Her father is a veteran. He  
2 is a shut-in. I've heard lots of people speak,  
3 right, about all the various people that will  
4 be affected by this rate hike. But one thing I  
5 didn't hear are people speaking about the  
6 shut-ins who couldn't show up tonight. He is  
7 on a feeding tube. He has specialized food  
8 that costs like \$300 a day for him to have.  
9 He's on his medications, and just a whole lot  
10 of other things. She is extremely stressed  
11 out. She's been taking care of him by herself  
12 for the last three years.

13 He's been in and out of the hospital, in  
14 between there and rehab. So, one month, he  
15 literally was not home for the whole month, and  
16 he still had a \$200 gas bill. His care for  
17 in-home care is 30,000 a month. He cannot  
18 afford a rate increase. And he is not a  
19 unicorn. There are literally thousands of  
20 people that are here in Missouri that are going  
21 through something similar, maybe not that  
22 situation to where there is no help. There is  
23 no extra money.

24 And so one of the things that I was told  
25 as a child is, no doesn't mean indefinitely.

1 Sometime no just means not right now. So what  
2 I'm asking you, I get it Spire is a for-profit  
3 company. Shareholders, dividends, right? I  
4 get that. I understand maintenance and  
5 everything you guys need to make money to make  
6 a profit, right, because you're a business or  
7 you're representatives of a business. I'm  
8 asking the Commission to just tell Spire no as  
9 in not right now. Consider the shut-ins.  
10 Consider the single parents who are working  
11 with children, right?  
12 Consider the people who are really  
13 stressed out trying to figure out what is the  
14 priority. It is heat? It is food? It is  
15 housing? It is living in a car and trying to  
16 figure out how to stay warm? Every year people  
17 pass away. I mean, it's just a fact. It's  
18 just a reality. That's one of those  
19 situations. They don't have to consider that.  
20 But you as the Public Service Commission, I'm  
21 asking you to consider that. Those shut-ins,  
22 those veterans, the people who did everything  
23 that they were supposed to do to be okay in  
24 their elderly years or when they're sick. Just  
25 tell Spire not right now. Come back in two

1 years. Thank you.

2 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Next on the  
3 list is Rob Stitt.

4 (Rob Stitt sworn.)

5 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right,  
6 could you go ahead --

7 MR. STITT: My name is Rob Stitt.

8 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: -- and state  
9 and spell your name.

10 MR. STITT: R-o-b, S-t-i-t-t. I just want  
11 to comment, you know, my high bill in 2022 was  
12 about 50 percent higher than it was in 2021,  
13 and about the same in 2023. It went up  
14 20 percent, you know, 2024. A little bit lower  
15 so far this year, but, you know, the year is  
16 not over.

17 Quoting from Spire's press release on  
18 their 2024 results, says gas utility fiscal  
19 2024 adjusted earnings were 228 million and an  
20 increase of 200.5 million the prior year, the  
21 year over year improvement reflected higher  
22 earnings across all utilities. And it goes on  
23 and on about how profits are going up and  
24 everything else. Given all that stuff, you  
25 know, the rates have been -- the prices have

1 gone up already, and their profits are going  
2 up, I respectfully request the Public Service  
3 Commission to consider that in how much they  
4 allow on this rate increase and to consider  
5 trimming it down significantly. Thank you very  
6 much.

7 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you.  
8 Next is Makenna Nickens.

9 (Makenna Nickens sworn.)

10 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Could you  
11 state and spell your name, please?

12 MS. NICKENS: Makenna Nickens,  
13 M-a-k-e-n-n-a, N-i-c-k-e-n-s.

14 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Go ahead.

15 MS. NICKENS: As a Kansas resident, and as  
16 a customer who would be impacted financially by  
17 this proposed increase, I agree with the  
18 sentiments that have been shared by everybody  
19 in the room tonight about the financial burden  
20 and to the impacts on everybody's life that  
21 these rate increases do have and the deep  
22 disparity for the urban communities that these  
23 rate increases would have.

24 As a consumer and as community member, I  
25 agree with the opposition for these reasons.

1 I'm also a community outreach specialist for  
2 Missouri Coalition of the Environment. We are  
3 a statewide environmental organization that  
4 focuses on clean air, water and environmental  
5 health for Missouri's people.

6 Your operation is a hundred percent fossil  
7 fueled. Methadane traps 82.5 percent more heat  
8 in the atmosphere than even carbon dioxide  
9 does. Urban communities are already  
10 disproportionately impacted by heat, so with  
11 this rate increase, Spire is contributing  
12 significantly to green house emissions, which  
13 creates extreme temperatures and pollution and  
14 global heating, which we have to pay for with  
15 our health already. And then we have to pay  
16 you to heat and cool ourselves down. And then  
17 now you're asking us to pay for this increase  
18 to, I believe the term was, recover your  
19 investments and to continue this process when  
20 we should be moving to renewables at this point  
21 anyways.

22 I urge you, the PSC, to oppose this  
23 increase for the reasons that have been shared  
24 tonight and for Missourians' health and our  
25 environmental safety.



1 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you.

2 Next -- next on the list is Karen Baisley (ph.)

3 Karen Baisley. All right. And then the next

4 name is Jim Vanscoy, I believe.

5 (Jim Vanscoy sworn.)

6 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER:

7 COMMISSIONER MITCHEL: Could you go ahead

8 and state and spell your name?

9 MR. VANSKOY: My name is Jim, J-i-m,  
10 Vanscoy, V, as in Victor, a-n-s-c-o-y. I am  
11 here to voice my thoughts anyway. You've heard  
12 plenty of other testimonies in the negative if  
13 you want to call it. That my question is, or  
14 my statement is more on clarity of this letter  
15 that everyone has received. It talks about  
16 going into effect of October 2025, which is  
17 this fall. In the paragraph just before that,  
18 it talks about next fall. So are we saying of  
19 2025 or 2026? That's all I've got, thanks.

20 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right.

21 The next -- next up on the list is Avain

22 Brunkhorst.

23 (Avain Brunkhorst sworn.)

24 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay. And

25 could you state and spell your name, please?

1 MS. BRUNKHORST: Avain Brunkhorst.  
2 A-v-a-i-n. Last name, B, as in boy,  
3 r-u-n-k-h-o-r-s-t. Hello. I believe I'm like  
4 47th to speak tonight if I'm getting my numbers  
5 right. I normally don't give public testimony,  
6 but this is a very clear, very greedy reach  
7 from a self-proclaimed, as you all said  
8 earlier, during the QA, monopoly. Every single  
9 person that has given testimony before me  
10 deserves far better than 15 or even 1 percent  
11 increase in Spire. Everyone has said from  
12 ages, I believe, 75 to 13 that they cannot  
13 afford this. It is unreasonable to ask people  
14 to pay more. That is all I have to say.

15 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay. Thank  
16 you, and we are down to about five minutes  
17 left, and we got about four people still on the  
18 list. And I cannot really make out this next  
19 name, but last name begins with a V.

20 (Nam Vu sworn.)

21 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: What is your  
22 name, please?

23 MR. VU: Is it Nam. First name N-a-m.  
24 Last name is Vu, V, as in Victor, U, as in  
25 Umbrella. Spire's proposed rate increase is an

1 act of violence. And in this world where the  
2 rich get richer and the poor get prison, I am  
3 both surprised and not at how villainously and  
4 callous you all decided to show off. Anthony,  
5 dear, you're young and talented. You could  
6 still make a choice that is good. Have you  
7 considered social work?

8 Spire's proposed rate increase is an act  
9 of violence. And I am so deeply moved by  
10 testimonies that are shared tonight, and I'm so  
11 moved by how each has its own unique edge.  
12 Some more fact based; some more narrative  
13 based, drawing on personal truths that are held  
14 bone deep, but every single one filled to the  
15 brim with gumption, conviction, humanity and  
16 empathy, and I then find myself truly, how can  
17 you sit here and not be immediately clear on  
18 what the moral choice is? What the just choice  
19 is. Parentheses, no rate increase, lol, end  
20 parentheses.

21 But then I realize very quickly that all  
22 of this is only intelligible, only moving, only  
23 affects somebody who has a conscience. Shame,  
24 shame on you, shame on you. Spire's proposed  
25 rate increase is unconscionable. It's an act

1 of violence. Antonio, come on, dear.

2 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right.

3 Next is Ruanda McFerren. Ruanda McFerren.

4 (Ruanda McFerren sworn.)

5 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Would you  
6 state and spell your name, please?

7 MS. MCFERREN: Yes, Ruanda McFerren.

8 R-u-a-n-d-a, M-c-F-e-r-r-e-n.

9 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Go ahead.

10 MS. MCFERREN: All right. Good evening.  
11 Thank you all for being here tonight. I really  
12 do appreciate the opportunity to speak. I'm a  
13 Spire customer in Kansas City, ZIP code 64110.  
14 I'm a renter. I'm a volunteer with the local  
15 Sierra Club, and I'm a public servant.

16 In my work, I see how many of our low  
17 income neighbors struggle to pay their rent and  
18 utility bills, month and after month, year  
19 after year. Public assistance programs do not  
20 go far enough to close this gap. Spire's only  
21 assistance programs do not close this gap. I,  
22 myself, with a middle class job and a master's  
23 degree, essentially live paycheck to paycheck.

24 Science tells us that natural gas  
25 contributes to global warming. We are in the

1     midst of a climate -- climate collapse, and for  
2     a more sustainable future, we should not  
3     continue to invest in this system. This rate  
4     increase would hurt all of us, but, especially,  
5     our most vulnerable friends and neighbors.  
6     Please do not approve this increase. Thank  
7     you.

8             REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Next on the  
9     list is William Davies.

10            (William Davies sworn.)

11            REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Could you  
12     please state and spell your name, please?

13            MR. DAVIES: Yes, my name is William  
14     Davies, W-i-l-l-i-a-m, D-a-v-i-e-s. I'm a  
15     resident of Kansas City, Missouri, and ZIP code  
16     is 64131, and I'm a Spire Gas Missouri  
17     customer. I'm a lawyer by education. I went  
18     to law school because I believe in public  
19     interest work; I believe in the role of  
20     government, particularly administrative  
21     agencies as being a space where the public can  
22     interface directly with those who make  
23     decisions that impact their lives. I believe  
24     in these processes.

25            I affirm all the testimony has been

1 shared. I am ultimately asking you to please,  
2 commissioners, your Honor, Madam Chair, if  
3 she's living to reject this proposed rate  
4 increase in its entirety as it -- use your  
5 discretion to do so as is not a prudent  
6 investment of customer and ratepayer dollars.

7 The people behind me also want to believe  
8 in the work that you do and believe that the  
9 system can work. However, it only works, this  
10 monopoly system, Public Service Commission,  
11 heavily regulated utilities, only works if the  
12 regulators say no. And it's been raised at  
13 several public meetings; it's been asked if  
14 there's ever been a time where a utility didn't  
15 get something when they proposed it. No one  
16 could name a time. And this is -- and here  
17 comes Spire again already making the  
18 investments and just gives the impression that  
19 they can expect to get something. And this  
20 erodes confidence in these public processes.

21 We're in Kansas City. We're in a space  
22 where folks are trying to reduce the amount of  
23 gas they use. This incentivizes Spire, seeking  
24 profits, to try to charge the folks who are  
25 conserving, but the folks who are still using

1 gas charge them more, and this further harms  
2 people, as you heard, commits violence for  
3 folks who are struggling to afford basic  
4 necessities and erodes the ability of the state  
5 to do this important work. You can help  
6 restore that confidence by exercising your  
7 discretion to simply say, no, not right now.  
8 They don't need to get a rate increase every  
9 time. Spire has not said that they're not  
10 going to profit this year. They profited --  
11 had ample profits last year; there is no  
12 indication that they're not going to still make  
13 money.

14 As folks have said, just because you can  
15 buy a roof ten years after you install it  
16 instead of letting go its whole life, don't  
17 mean that you should. Doesn't mean that's a  
18 prudent investment. It's on you all to hold  
19 Spire accountable and show that it's -- you're  
20 not a rubber stamp. And it's important that  
21 you, especially during this time. We just --  
22 we had tornadoes in Kansas City just the other  
23 day. Hor -- devastating tornadoes in St. Louis  
24 today and last week. The people are bearing  
25 enough, and you all can use your lawfully --

1 your lawfully entitled power to hold Spire  
2 accountable and say right now. Please for the  
3 good of Public Service Commission, exercise  
4 your duty to support customers and deny this  
5 rate increase. Thank you.

6 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Last person  
7 that signed up to testify is Candra May. I  
8 apologize if I mispronounced that.

9 MS. MAY: That's okay. It's Candra May.

10 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Candra.

11 MS. MAY: C-a-n-d-r-a. Last name, M-a-y.

12 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay.

13 (Candra May sworn.)

14 MS. MAY: So, hi, my name is Candra. I am  
15 a mother of two, and a recent constituent that  
16 has moved to Kansas City. My family as four  
17 generations from the San Francisco Bay area.  
18 Something that really happened when you talk  
19 about profit and corporate greed, is my family  
20 experienced, you know, time and time again kind  
21 of being forced out, gentrification and things  
22 that have caused price increases.

23 And when I recently moved to Kansas,  
24 something I've been so privileged to be able to  
25 do is because of cost of living being so much



1 less, I have two young children; I am able to  
2 stay home with those children most of the day  
3 and only work part time. I'm, like I said,  
4 very privileged. I want to think about the  
5 moms who, unlike me, are not able to have a  
6 second person in the home or bring young kids  
7 to a place like this, and really thank the  
8 Sunshine (sic) Movement, who brought out a huge  
9 of amount of people to come out and speak,  
10 because so many people are so busy, paying  
11 bills and things like this, they probably don't  
12 even know this is occurring. They don't even  
13 know; they will just get their bill in the mail  
14 if they even have the chance to read these kind  
15 of increases and understand and just feel  
16 subject, because of the monopoly of the nature,  
17 they have to do what they have to do.

18 I think it's kind of just -- you guys as  
19 the commissioner -- the commission, I would  
20 love to see you guys are considering things  
21 with these uncertain times from the federal  
22 government decreasing things like SNAP or  
23 Medicaid or Social Security benefits and  
24 somebody had mentioned our governor fighting  
25 tooth and nail to overturn parts of Proposition

1 A so people right now will not have the ability  
2 to stay home when they're sick and receive pay.

3 So when you stay home, you lose that type  
4 of income; but you're still expected to pay  
5 increases for things that we need like a public  
6 service. I, myself, am pretty left-leaning. I  
7 would love to see Missouri as a whole do things  
8 that are just completely transitioning away  
9 from fossil fuels; but while that might be too  
10 big of an ask, I would love to see just our  
11 state commission potentially lead the way in  
12 for -- I'm in Kansas City, but not like maybe  
13 all across Missouri to lead the way in choosing  
14 people over profits.

15 And to possibly just encourage you guys to  
16 have maybe more creative ideas that not only  
17 just say no to this now, but to get more  
18 creative in thinking how we can better serve  
19 the public as a whole. Thank you.

20 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: My thanks to  
21 everyone who testified tonight. If there -- or  
22 any of you would like to enter additional  
23 comments on the Public Service Commission's  
24 website, the commission's website is p-s-c,  
25 dot, m-o, dot, g-o-v. And there's a link on

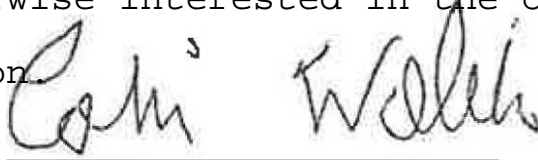
1 that homepage that says Submit Comments. You  
2 can click that link and enter your comments,  
3 and I would just ask that you reference this  
4 case number: GR02025-0107. Commissioner  
5 Mitchell -- I'm sorry. I'm -- yes, I do know  
6 there are people that read those comments. All  
7 right, Commissioner Mitchell, do you have  
8 closing remarks?

9 COMMISSIONER MITCHEL: I do. I know it's  
10 getting late, and it's -- it's been a long  
11 discussion. A good discussion and a healthy  
12 discussion. And I want you to know that we  
13 appreciate it and take your comments seriously.  
14 I'd also like to especially thank the Caldwells  
15 for being here. And thank you for taking such  
16 good care of your mother. That's all I have to  
17 say.

18 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right.  
19 Then with that, I will adjourn the hearing, and  
20 we'll go off the record.

21 (Ending time of the hearing: 9:07 p.m.)  
22  
23  
24  
25

1 I, Colin Wallis, in and for the State of  
2 Missouri do hereby certify that the witness  
3 whose testimony appears in the foregoing  
4 Examination Under Oath was duly sworn by me;  
5 that the testimony of the said witness was  
6 taken by me to the best of my ability and  
7 thereafter reduced to typewriting under my  
8 direction; that I am neither counsel for,  
9 related to, nor employed by any of the parties  
10 to the action in which this examination was  
11 taken, and further that I am not relative or  
12 employee of any attorney or counsel employed by  
13 the parties thereto, nor financially or  
14 otherwise interested in the outcome of the  
15 action.

  
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17 within and for the State of Missouri  
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