

Dear Missouri Public Service Commission,

I am writing to file a formal complaint regarding an unauthorized change to my natural gas service account with Spire, **Account Number:** [REDACTED], and to express severe dissatisfaction with the Missouri Public Service Commission's (PSC) handling of my attempts to resolve this issue, including unprofessional conduct by a PSC representative.

On or about **June 27, 2025** (the date I was made aware via phone conversation with a Spire representative), my Spire account was unilaterally placed on a budget payment plan. This change was initiated due to a pledge made by a third party, specifically a church group. I wish to make it clear that **I, the account holder, never authorized Spire or this third party to alter my billing arrangements or enroll me in any budget plan.** A financial pledge is a payment, not a delegation of authority to change service terms.

My attempts to resolve this directly with Spire on **June 27, 2025** were unsuccessful. Spire representatives claimed this is "what they does" and that the "third party had a right to do it without my knowledge." Furthermore, Spire informed me that when my account was allegedly placed on this 'budget plan' because of the payment pledge, it came with terms requiring me to pay an *additional remainder* within **20 days**, or my account would be 'booted off the budget plan' and all charges would reappear. This is particularly concerning because:

1. I never consented to or was made aware of these specific terms or this 'budget plan' at the time the pledge was made. My wife and I believed the church group was paying the total bill.
2. My wife will contact the third-party church group responsible for the pledge,
3. A 20-day repayment term for a 'remainder' is inconsistent with a true budget billing plan, which is designed for averaged, predictable payments over typically 12 months. This arrangement appears to be a deceptive means of imposing immediate payment obligations under the guise of a 'budget plan' or leveraging a third-party pledge to force collections under terms I never agreed to. This directly contradicts the protective intent of the Cold Weather Rule, which aims to provide lenient payment options, not create hidden deadlines.

During my calls to the Missouri Public Service Commission on **June 27, 2025**, my attempts to seek resolution were met with unsatisfactory responses. PSC representatives repeatedly asserted that:

- This is "how pledges work."
- This action was "required for the Cold Weather Rule."
- "It's not illegal" for this to occur without my consent.
- Most notably, the PSC stated that placing me on a budget plan was 'automatic for pledges during CWR months.'

I respectfully maintain that these interpretations are incorrect and contrary to the spirit and letter of Missouri PSC regulations (e.g., 4 CSR 240-13, which requires customer consent for

significant changes to billing and service agreements). The Cold Weather Rule provides options for customers to *enter into* payment agreements; it does not permit utilities or third parties to unilaterally impose them or to automatically enroll an account holder in a budget plan simply because a third-party pledge was made.

Most alarmingly, during my last call to the PSC on **June 27, 2025** at approximately **4:28 PM CDT**, while I was attempting to seek clarification on the specific regulation that permits such an unauthorized action, **the PSC representative abruptly hung up on me**. This conduct is unprofessional and makes it impossible to resolve consumer complaints through the standard channels.

Upon reviewing my most recent Spire bill (Statement Date 06/04/25) and my online billing and payment history, there is **no visible indication or line item whatsoever** that my account (Account Number: [REDACTED]) is currently or has been placed on a 'budget plan,' 'level pay,' or any similar type of averaged payment arrangement. My monthly bill amounts, as shown in the online history, continue to fluctuate significantly (e.g., \$[REDACTED] in February, \$[REDACTED] in April, [REDACTED] in June), which is inconsistent with a budget plan. Moreover, my current bill clearly states a past due amount of \$[REDACTED] and warns of disconnection if payment is not made, which directly contradicts the purpose of a valid budget or Cold Weather Rule payment plan designed to manage arrears and prevent disconnections. This documentary evidence from Spire's own records directly refutes their claim of an authorized budget plan being in effect, as well as the PSC's assertion that it was 'automatic for pledges during CWR months.'

I request a thorough investigation into:

1. Spire's policy and practice of implementing unauthorized billing changes based on third-party pledges, especially with such deceptive 20-day terms.
2. The PSC's stated position that such unauthorized changes are permissible or required by the Cold Weather Rule.
3. The conduct of PSC staff, specifically the incident where a representative disconnected our call while I was attempting to seek a resolution.

I demand that my Spire account be immediately removed from the unauthorized budget plan. My billing should be adjusted retrospectively to reflect the charges as if this unauthorized budget plan had never been put into effect. I also expect a formal, written response from the Missouri Public Service Commission regarding the findings of your investigation and the corrective actions taken.

Sincerely,

Mr. & Mrs. Jonathan & Mandy Miller [REDACTED] & [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]