

BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

STATE OF MISSOURI

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

TOWN HALL

In the Matter of an)
Investigation into the)
Customer Service and)
Billing of Liberty) File No. 00-2025-0233
Utilities Including)
Electric, Gas, and)
Water Utilities)

THURSDAY, JUNE 12, 2025
6:00 p.m.

Missouri Southern State University
Criminal Justice Auditorium
3950 E. Newman Road
Joplin, MO 64801

VOLUME IV

Transcribed by:
Melissa Eicken

1 MARK JOHNSON: Hey. Good evening,
2 everyone. We're going to go ahead and get started
3 here. It is now 6:00 o'clock, but my name is Mark
4 Johnson. I'm the chief staff counsel and the division
5 director at the Missouri Public Service Commission.
6 We're here tonight to host a town -- town hall meeting
7 regarding Liberty Utilities. As you may know, the
8 Missouri Commission has opened up an investigatory
9 docket. It's Case Number 00-2025-0233, directing its
10 staff to investigate billing inconsistencies that
11 Liberty customers have experienced over the past year
12 or so.

13 Joining us tonight are additional members
14 of the Commission staff, representatives from the
15 Missouri Office of the Public Counsel which is the
16 state agency that represents the interest of utility
17 customers, and representatives from Liberty Utilities.
18 If you have specific concerns you'd like to raise
19 privately from one -- someone from staff, OPC or
20 Liberty will be available after the meeting or during
21 the meeting, if you would like to speak with you one
22 on one.

23 If you previously attended a PSC local
24 public hearing, this town hall is going to be a little
25 bit different. We're not going to be taking formal

1 sworn testimony tonight. But tonight's about you,
2 your voice, your experiences, and your concerns.
3 Staff and OPC are here to listen. We are aware of
4 many billing problems, but we also know that we do not
5 know everything. That's why it is essential that we
6 hear directly from you. Your input will help us
7 ensure that our investigation covers the full scope of
8 issues Liberty customers are facing.

9 As you can see, we have a strong turnout
10 tonight. So to make sure everyone has an opportunity
11 to speak, we ask you to please keep your remarks brief
12 and focused, ideally, around five minutes or less.
13 We're recording tonight's meeting and a transcript
14 will be prepared of all of the comments, so. We also
15 ask that you please be respectful of one another and
16 avoid talking over others as overlapping speech does
17 make it difficult to capture a clear record.

18 So staff is currently required to file
19 quarterly updates with the Commission on the progress
20 of its investigation. We're holding four town hall
21 meetings, this being the fourth across Liberty's
22 Missouri service territory, and the feedback we gather
23 at these events will help us inform staff's future
24 reports and any recommendations that we ultimately
25 make to the Commission.

1 At this time there is no set date for the
2 final report to be filed. However, in addition to
3 this investigation, Liberty has a pending electric
4 rate case before the Commission, and it is possible
5 that some of the issues raised here tonight could also
6 be addressed in that proceeding. Depending on what we
7 uncover, staff or the Office of the Public Counsel may
8 also choose to file a formal complaint against
9 Liberty. As you know, we had a sign-up sheet in the
10 back of the room or outside. We will call speakers in
11 the order they appear on that list. If you did not
12 sign up, but would like to speak, if we have time, we
13 will invite additional comments once we finish the
14 list. If you would prefer not to speak tonight or if
15 we run out of time, you can still share your concerns
16 with us. We have comment forms available outside.
17 You may also submit comments online by visiting the
18 PSC's website at www.psc.mo.gov. Please be sure to
19 reference the case number in those comments. And
20 again that is 00-2025-0233. There's also a handout on
21 the table outside with step-by-step instructions as to
22 how to do this.

23 Before we begin the hearing from you, I'm
24 now going to invite brief remarks from the Office of
25 Public Counsel and from Liberty Utilities.

1 GEOFF MARKE: Good evening. My name is Geoff
2 Marke. I'm the chief of economist with the Missouri
3 Office of Public Counsel. Our office represents you,
4 in cases before the Missouri Public Service
5 Commission. This town hall is part of a larger
6 investigatory docket like Mr. Johnson just described.
7 Out of that -- well, let me step back.

8 There's effectively two tracts that are
9 going on right now. Concurrently with this
10 investigation, you have the rate case itself. In that
11 rate case -- and we have literature outside that
12 describes what the -- what the overall rate request is
13 which is a sizable increase. That's going to play out
14 over the next six to seven months. Ultimately, that
15 rate request is going to be yes, no or anything in
16 between is going to be decided by the Missouri Public
17 Service Commission themselves. The information that
18 we hear today will be used in that rate case at least
19 by our office. The information that we hear today
20 will be used in the investigatory docket that we hear
21 which is why it's critically important that you're
22 clear and articulate when you get up here and speak,
23 so we can transcribe it and utilize that information.

24 Over the last three days now, we have heard
25 a number of issues regarding billing, customer

1 service, customer experience, solar, potentially
2 scams, any number of things. In each one of these
3 town halls, we've learned new things. So please,
4 please, please, you know, we want to hear from you.
5 If there are issues that you've experienced, this is
6 the opportunity to do it because we don't know what we
7 don't know.

8 In general, so there -- there is an overall
9 general argument that's effectively being made here
10 with the investigatory -- the investigation in the
11 rate case itself. However, individual accounts and
12 billing issues are also critically important, and what
13 I'm afraid is that we might have individuals coming up
14 here identifying issues that they've had with their
15 bill, and then leave. That would be a mistake. Be
16 sure after this, if you have a billing abnormality, if
17 you feel like you've been overcharged, if your bills
18 are incorrect, that you speak first with a customer
19 service rep that's out there with the company, and if
20 you're not satisfied with the answer that you get to
21 please go to the -- to the PSC table and/or the Office
22 of Public Counsel's table so we can follow up and make
23 sure that your issue is directly addressed.

24 I appreciate everybody for coming out
25 tonight, and I can't wait to hear what you have to

1 say. Thank you.

2 Oh, one last thing. I've got a set of
3 business cards with my contact information on it.
4 Please feel free to take one and guarantee that you we
5 will follow up. Thanks.

6 TIM WILSON: Ready? Thanks, Dr. Mark.
7 Thank you to the staff of the Missouri Public Service
8 Commission and to the Office of the Public Counsel for
9 inviting us to participate in this town hall. And
10 thank you to all of those of you in the audience for
11 taking time to be here as well. We value customer
12 feedback, and we look forward to listening and
13 learning and answering questions from our customers.

14 My name is Tim Wilson. I'm the president
15 of the Empire District Electric Company, doing
16 business as Liberty Utilities. I've been serving
17 Empire for 28 years. I've held every job from janitor
18 to president, and I've dedicated to -- my career to
19 make sure our communities have reliable electricity.
20 I know you expect and demand and depend on this
21 essential service.

22 I'm also here representing hundreds of
23 Liberty team employees who live in the communities we
24 serve including line workers, operators, engineers,
25 customer service reps, and many others who work

1 literally around the clock to keep the lights on in
2 your homes, schools, hospitals, senior centers, and
3 businesses. We're proud to work for Liberty, and we
4 want you to be proud to have Liberty as your service
5 provider.

6 So how did we get here? As you likely
7 know, we implemented a new software system which
8 included changes to our billing systems. This new
9 system was implemented across our entire company, not
10 just here locally. Approximately 10 percent of our
11 customers in Missouri experienced billing issues
12 following that implementation. Certain areas were hit
13 harder like Boliver, Branson, Aurora, Ozark, where we
14 have two commodities in the same community. I want to
15 start by apologizing to those who have experienced
16 issues. We know it's frustrating and certainly
17 inconvenient. And it has taken us longer than we
18 planned to complete the transition. Just being
19 honest.

20 We have had and continue to have a team of
21 people across our company working to resolve issues
22 and bring good billing and customer service experience
23 back overall. I'm pleased to share that we're making
24 steady progress. In fact, most of our 350,000
25 customer connections across a six-state region are

1 being billed as they should be. However, we still
2 have work to do so that all customers have good
3 billing and customer service experience. We are fully
4 committed to continuing to make improvements to better
5 serve all customers.

6 With me tonight I have senior director of
7 rates and regulatory strategy, Charlotte Emery. She's
8 here to help answer any regulatory and general
9 questions. I have our director of legal, Diana
10 Carter, who is here to set me straight, typically. I
11 also have Candice Kelly, our director of customer
12 service. So for specific questions on your bills, we
13 have several of our topnotch customer service team
14 members here with their computers this evening.
15 They're out front. Please take advantage of this
16 opportunity to work one on one with them, if you need
17 questions answered. They are here to help you. If
18 you are currently experiencing a billing issue, love
19 to hear from you. But the most important thing to me
20 is that you get help tonight, if you're still having
21 an issue. If you prefer, of course, you can always
22 call us or walk into one of our walk-in centers. We
23 also have Eric Larson with us. He's our senior
24 manager of capital administration and planning for our
25 water utilities. So if anyone's here that's from

1 maybe the Aurora area or somewhere else that has a
2 water question, he's your guy. I also do want to
3 emphasize that customers who received a delayed bill
4 or didn't receive bills for some time or were given at
5 least twice the length of the delay to pay the bill in
6 full, so for example, if you didn't get a bill for two
7 months, you get at least four months to pay. We want
8 to work with our customers to make this right. Thank
9 you again for having us. We're here to listen, learn,
10 and help.

11 CURT GATELEY: My name is Curt Gateley. I'm
12 also with the Public Service Commission staff with
13 Mark. A few things, if you have mobility issues,
14 we're going to bring a wireless mic to you, so if we
15 call your name and you need to -- put your hand up.
16 We'll come to you with the microphone. I don't recall
17 if it was said already, but there will be separate
18 local public hearings associated with Liberty's
19 electric rate case that's going on. So this is for
20 overarching issues, but we still have those meetings
21 that are focused on those electric rates. Those will
22 be in July. This -- if you're familiar at all with
23 any of our other local public hearings, the testimony
24 portions have been recorded and posted online. That's
25 not happening tonight. If you have any concerns about

1 being put on the Internet; such as that, it's not
2 going on. We're just hearing from you, gathering as
3 much information as we can. We are interested in more
4 than just billing. I understand that a lot of folks
5 that's -- that's the primary concern you have, but if
6 there are other operational problems, other issues
7 as -- as Dr. Mark had mentioned, we have learned quite
8 a bit of new things at some of these other meetings.
9 These folks have learned quite a bit, too. We only
10 hear it from you guys sometimes because you're the
11 ones experiencing it, and we don't have visibility of
12 that. They mentioned the customer service
13 representatives out front. If you've had trouble on
14 the phone, I have heard very good feedback from
15 customers in dealing with folks that they have out
16 there. They have done great work with folks
17 individually to help them with their accounts, and
18 their bosses are here, too.

19 So I encourage you to stop by if you have
20 an individual billing problem that you still need
21 resolved yourself. You all are going to do fine, but
22 I need to say that we have had -- whenever you get
23 hundreds and hundreds of people together with several
24 meetings, sometimes we have some issues. This is
25 about getting information from you about the problems

1 that you've been having with Liberty. If you spend a
2 bunch of time trying to engage in political debate, if
3 you showed up here to throw personal insults at folks,
4 and these folks didn't create the billing program.
5 This is something that they've been sent here to get
6 feedback from you guys as well. If your statements
7 boil down to, I hate you, that's not helpful. You
8 might. But I -- we need the evidence from you guys.
9 So we may ask to move on to the next -- the next
10 person because you're taking time away from your
11 neighbors. We need to hear from folks. It's possible
12 we won't get all through the list. We've got a lot of
13 folks. Folks are still coming in. We will be here at
14 least three hours.

15 We're not planning to break. We might
16 individually take breaks. We're going to keep going
17 to try to get through many folks as we can. And I
18 appreciate you guys being out here tonight.

19 MARK JOHNSON: All right. Well, we're
20 going to go ahead and get started with comments. We
21 have two microphones available, one in each aisle. So
22 I'm going to go ahead and call off two names at a
23 time. We'll go in order of the names called. And I
24 will say right now, I apologize in advance for
25 mispronouncing anyone's name.

1 All right. First up, we have Gary Powers
2 and Kathleen Burge. Okay. All right. Next --

3 GEOFF MARKE: Hold on a second.

4 MARK JOHNSON: Gary? Gary? Yes.

5 CURT GATELEY: Gary.

6 GARY POWERS: Yeah. My name is Gary
7 Powers. I lived in Joplin all my life. I've got four
8 accounts with Liberty. I really never had a billing
9 issue. They did get it squared pretty quick, that
10 there's a couple of things I want to highlight on.

11 My electric bill in the last five years on
12 all four accounts has went up double. I had an
13 engineer from Liberty look at it. He said, well, you
14 don't have really any problems. Why your bill is up
15 is because of the rate hikes.

16 And this one really gets me wound up. But
17 they say on the news your average rate will go up \$7
18 per thousand kilowatts. They make it like the average
19 person uses a thousand kilowatts. That's an absolute
20 lie. The average person uses 2,500 to 4,000. Another
21 thing is, electric heat is not hot. It's lukewarm.
22 Last but not least is, I found this out, 30 years to
23 pay for that mess-up at Asbury Plant is in sane.

24 MARK JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Powers.

25 CHARLOTTE EMERY: I might just jump in. I

1 do appreciate your comments, but I do want to make
2 sure that we -- we set the record straight that the
3 Asbury and the Storm Uri is 15 years, up to 15, not
4 30.

5 MARK JOHNSON: All right. I think next was
6 Kathleen Burge. Or Burge. Okay.

7 Next up we have Richard Hamilton and
8 Cheryl -- Sharon Lillard. And I'd recommend -- if a
9 name is even close to it, yeah, I'm dealing with
10 reading signatures and probably mispronouncing, so.
11 Again, I apologize.

12 SHARON LILLARD: Okay. We ended up with
13 eight bills on March -- on March the 25th, and of
14 course, it says zero balance. But then it had a
15 different number, too. And then on April the 22nd, we
16 got a bill for \$620.40, and it was only 5,251, but
17 then we got another -- and my husband went to go pay
18 it, they turned and told him we owe another bill
19 that's got due in two days, and it's April the 25th,
20 and it's another \$616, and it was only -- and it was
21 5,669. And why 15 years for Asbury? Can you answer
22 me that?

23 GEOFF MARKE: Kathleen, before they answer
24 the Asbury question, what's your -- what is your
25 typical average monthly bill?

1 SHARON LILLARD: Well, the last few months
2 we've been getting \$600, and we have A solar system,
3 and back in -- I was just looking at my papers. In
4 January '24 to January '25, we were only paying \$19.
5 So why are we paying \$600 a month now? And why are we
6 getting less on solar system than what we used to get?

7 GEOFF MARKE: So let me -- let me address the
8 solar issue. That was a relatively new issue that
9 we've discovered through some of these town hall
10 meetings, if you do have solar issues, in the -- the
11 rate case currently in front of you right now, there
12 is an intervenor that's focusing on just solar issues.
13 So I'd ask that you go back to it, after you get your
14 questions answered, to be sure to touch base with our
15 office outside there because we're redirecting those
16 comments to that advocate because they -- they're
17 asking for it, and they'd like to go ahead and address
18 your specific issue.

19 SHARON LILLARD: We had the solar back in
20 '24, and like I said, that's all we was paying, and
21 now we're paying \$600 plus we have to pay for the
22 solar every month.

23 GEOFF MARKE: Right.

24 SHARON LILLARD: So we're paying higher
25 bills now than what we did before that -- what's the

1 15-year Asbury thing?

2 TIM WILSON: First off, I would really
3 encourage you to go talk to our customer service reps
4 if you're -- if you're wondering about your bills;
5 okay? Secondly, the general assembly passed a law --
6 and -- and Charlotte can jump in -- called
7 securitization. Securitization was passed for items
8 like Storm Uri and for items like Asbury. It was
9 literally done for that. It was -- it was -- some
10 people didn't like it, but it -- it got support, and
11 it was passed into law. The reason it was passed into
12 law was for extreme and extraordinary events. Storm
13 Uri in less than a week, we spent \$205 million on
14 natural gas to run our generators to keep the lights
15 on. We have fought at FERC for price gouging and for
16 folks getting out of the penalties. I think we were
17 the only utility to do that to fight for our
18 customers, but it's either that or shut the lights off
19 when it's negative 20. Can't do it. We have a
20 responsibility, legally, to provide electric service.

21 What that resulted in, just to give you an
22 idea, \$205 million is -- just about what we typically
23 spend in a year, a little bit less. What that did
24 was, it saved -- although, it's over 14 -- 15 years
25 believe me, I don't want it on your bill for 15 years

1 either because we're going to hear about it for 15
2 years. I don't like it either. But that was the
3 method that we all agreed to in order to recover the
4 extreme and extraordinary costs associated with Storm
5 Uri, and it saved our customers. We -- we calculated
6 \$32 million over regular recovery mechanisms.

7 SHARON LILLARD: So in other words, if
8 something else happens, we're going to end up being
9 billed for that, too; you're trying to tell me?

10 TIM WILSON: Anytime weather comes through
11 and -- and you consume energy, we're actually working
12 with Dr. Mark on the value of a loss load study. At
13 some point is there a pricing point where people
14 just -- even if it's really cold, you don't want our
15 service, that's something that we're working on trying
16 to get to, but yes, we have an obligation. I don't
17 have the choice to not pay that to keep the lights on.
18 But that was an extreme extraordinary event once in --
19 I don't know -- how many years, they say, but cold
20 weather events are becoming increasingly, you know.

21 MARK JOHNSON: To clarify the question,
22 though, mentioned Asbury, in particular, just --
23 although, it's the same mechanism idea, but you
24 mentioned Uri --

25 TIM WILSON: So the general assembly also

1 passed that to -- for -- for coal plants that were
2 uneconomic for customers, where they weren't fully
3 depreciated; okay? And, so we had some money on the
4 books because Asbury wasn't fully depreciated, but
5 because it wasn't fully depreciated doesn't mean we
6 shouldn't do the right thing because it was costing
7 our customers more money to keep it online than it was
8 to shut it off, and the reason for that was, it was
9 built in 1970. It was anomaly 190 megawatts. And it
10 just was not running. It was just setting there.
11 And, so the general assembly passed that law for
12 securitization, for not only stranded assets, but that
13 we use what the law provided for us to do what we felt
14 was best for our customers.

15 SHARON LILLARD: Then why don't they up --
16 make it more modern?

17 GEOFF MARKE: I'm going to go ahead and --

18 SHARON LILLARD: So you're trying to say
19 modern is what costs so much?

20 GEOFF MARKE: These are really good
21 questions, and this is a -- a thing we've heard in a
22 number of different public hearings, so I'm going to
23 give it a stab at explaining that specific surcharge
24 in your bill. So that specific surcharge in your bill
25 that you're going to be paying for the next 15 years

1 includes two things. The Storm Uri cost; right?
2 Which was -- in 2001 was an awful storm. It hit
3 Missouri, it hit Arkansas, it hit Kansas, it hit
4 Oklahoma, Texas. Effectively, what happened is, for
5 two days, the price of fuel just skyrocketed because
6 wind farms froze, solar farms had snow over them, coal
7 plants had the coal plants froze, and the national gas
8 pipe plants, the distribution system broke. There
9 were issues where they weren't properly weatherized
10 because Texas and Oklahoma weren't used to having that
11 strong of a storm come through.

12 As a result, you think about the -- that
13 entire wholesale market. There was a big demand for
14 energy because everybody was freezing, and all of
15 these units started going offline. So that supply and
16 demand got out of whack. Now, to cover those costs,
17 those fuel costs -- and I can't stress enough, like,
18 how big of an issue this was. We had multiple
19 municipal utilities have effectively got a bill for
20 three days of use, that exceeded their entire annual
21 budget. That meant that municipality couldn't pay for
22 cops or potholes or anything else.

23 Now, Missouri General Assembly's answer to
24 that was effectively to create a credit card in the
25 form of what we call securitization. And that's

1 what's being paid off.

2 Now, this company deserves whatever they
3 deserve out of this town hall, but on that specific
4 issue, I will defend them. They're the one
5 investor-owned utility here in Missouri that did go to
6 bat and attempt to go ahead and claw back funds for
7 their customers at FERC. FERC ultimately said no.
8 But, you know, at least they tried.

9 Now, the Asbury issue -- again, this is a
10 coal plant that was built in the '70s, but over the
11 course of that time, there was a number of investments
12 that was made into it to make it more modern including
13 scrubbers. Now, at that time it was not an
14 economically dispatchable investment at that time, and
15 that's that key phrase.

16 Now we don't have foresight. We can't
17 predict the future, and for what it's worth, our
18 office argued against shutting it down. We lost.
19 Now, reality of the situation is that coal plant went
20 down and the demand across the SPP, across the United
21 States, quite frankly, has increased. And that is a
22 real issue that we're dealing with today is that
23 demand is out stripping supply.

24 And what does that mean for you? What does
25 that mean moving forward? Well, there is a fear of

1 price volatility moving forward. You know, I can tell
2 you that based off of the company's resource planning
3 efforts over the next 20 years, they are committed at
4 least today to investing more into fossil fuel and
5 reliable generation. Well, that is the plan moving
6 forward, but again, what we're the -- the reality of
7 the situation is, we're also going up against just
8 market demand over it.

9 Think of it this way. There's only so many
10 natural gas engineers out there. And if Kansas is
11 looking for gas plants, and Arkansas is looking for
12 gas plants, and right on down the line, there is a
13 long line of people that want to build, and that
14 supply and demand is basically increasing the cost
15 that we're experiencing right now. So this is -- this
16 is a real reality that -- that across the United
17 States people are dealing with, and there's a lot of
18 strong issues to -- to address.

19 Unfortunately, the general assembly, the
20 securitization, like Mr. Wilson described, the initial
21 bill was designed around uneconomic coal plants. This
22 last session your general assembly approved in part a
23 larger omnibus bill. Embedded within that bill was a
24 commitment or a requirement for utilities to have
25 reliable, dispatchable generation. For anything that

1 gets retired, they have to have at least an equivalent
2 amount moving forward. And that's the idea is to
3 rectify Uri-like situations in the future. Now, no
4 doubt more needs to be done, but that's where we are
5 presently.

6 MARK JOHNSON: All right. Well, I think
7 we're up to Richard Hamilton. And folks, I'm going to
8 go to just calling one name at a time. So
9 Mr. Hamilton, would you like to make comments? All
10 right. Next we have Sharon Lillard. That was you.
11 Okay. Okay. Next we have Merna Mosier.

12 MERNA MOSIER: Sorry, I'm climbing over my
13 (inaudible).

14 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: That's okay.

15 MERNA MOSIER: First of all, I'd like to
16 thank all of you for being here and hearing our voices
17 today. I really appreciate it. I, too, have always
18 lived in Joplin, and I'm 74 years old, and I just like
19 to speak on part of the elderly community like myself
20 that live in Joplin, and since Liberty bought Empire
21 out, I, too -- my gas bill -- I mean, my electric bill
22 has doubled in those years. I have always had gas
23 heat and electricity, and my utilities used to kind of
24 balance each other out in the fact that during the
25 summer my gas bill would go down, electric would come

1 up, and then in the winter, it would kind of rotate,
2 but that's not the case anymore. My electric bill
3 always stays high. For example, in April, my electric
4 bill was 14 percent of social security.

5 Now I'm fortunate in the fact that I have
6 other income, but a lot of my friends do not. And
7 I've never spoken at a town hall. I've just taken the
8 rate increases. But for a customer just looking at
9 the electricity, you know, it seems like they've spent
10 a lot of money in expenditures on a new building,
11 on -- everybody drives a new pickup. Everybody has
12 new trucks, and for a customer, that makes me think,
13 well, that's why my bill is high is because they're
14 not doing their best to keep the expenses down, and I
15 understand expenses going up.

16 My husband and I ran a truck dealership for
17 25 years, so I understand, and our expenses would go
18 up, too, but before we would raise the rate, we would
19 try to cut expenses to keep the price down for our
20 customers.

21 So my concern, for example, one month this
22 last winter when it was cold, I paid 500 -- I paid
23 \$250 in electric, and \$250 in gas, and I live in a
24 very modest house, not large at all, good insulation,
25 and most of my friends would never have been able to

1 pay that much, you know. And there's a lot of us that
2 are trying to stay in a single family home and pay the
3 utilities and all of that, so.

4 Going forward, I would just like to say
5 that when you're considering rate increases, you need
6 to remember that some of us, we can't earn more money.
7 We're just kind of in a place here, and on the other
8 hand, maybe we should look at expenses and try to cut
9 those as well when we're thinking about utilities.

10 GEOFF MARKE: Thank you, Merna Mosier.

11 MARK JOHNSON: All right. Next, we have
12 Mr. Ron Peterson.

13 TIM WILSON: Can I say something just real
14 quick?

15 MARK JOHNSON: Oh, absolutely.

16 TIM WILSON: Ms. Mosier, first off, thanks
17 for speaking. I know you said you're not used to
18 speaking in public, and -- and it's pretty brave of
19 you to do that. So, thank you.

20 I can assure you not only from my team, but
21 those folks over there look at our expenses. I wake
22 up every day thinking about expenses. You may -- you
23 know, you may disagree and -- but I can assure you, we
24 look forward. That's why we're set up the way we are.
25 That's why we're regulated. We hand over our full

1 books to the Office of Public Counsel and staff, and
2 believe me, they pour through them, and we argue about
3 expenses every time, so. You've got advocates on both
4 sides.

5 MERNA MOSIER: Well, thank you.

6 TIM WILSON: Yeah.

7 MERNA MOSIER: I have to look at expenses
8 every month as well. Thank you.

9 TIM WILSON: Thank you.

10 MARK JOHNSON: All right. Ron Peterson.

11 RON PETERSON: Set up here. Okay. I have
12 a small rental unit here in Joplin, and in -- in
13 March, I received an electric bill. Ran out of
14 paperclips for how many bills I received, but five,
15 six, seven, eight, nine -- nine copies of the same
16 bill. Some of them came in -- four of them in one
17 day, three in one day, two in one day over the course
18 of a week. The April bill came shortly after that.
19 You can leave those there. The April bill came -- the
20 April bill came and -- with a due date of April 22nd,
21 and the other one came the next day for a due date of
22 April 25th, two different amounts due, the same
23 billing dates, balance -- previous balance forward,
24 different amounts. I don't even know what I owe on
25 that.

1 And I understand something about billing
2 systems. I've been around the block a few times.
3 Typically, somebody puts in a job, it's called a job
4 in my world, to generate bills. So I'm just awfully
5 curious, how did somebody enter a job nine times and
6 not know they did it? What about the mailroom? Did
7 they say, my gosh, we've got 50,000 bills going out,
8 and we only do like, 5,000 a day, what's going on?
9 Nobody said, maybe because they charge by the bill,
10 your third party, so they didn't say anything because
11 they would get paid? I -- I don't know. Can you
12 explain that?

13 TIM WILSON: I can. I -- I -- we had a few
14 people experience that. I think we had about 8 to,
15 10,000 people. I'll do my best to explain it. I'm
16 not the IT or the billing expert, but just a little
17 bit. So you're right. We do have a third-party
18 vendor that handles those bills. We have two systems
19 that interface together, SAP which generates the
20 invoice or generates the bill, KUBRA prints the bill.
21 We have a subsection of customers. There's about 35
22 to 37,000 of them that are called collective
23 customers. They're ones that generally have multiple
24 premises. You would fit in that category.

25 What happened was, there was an error in

1 one of the bills. And, so that batch -- we call them
2 batch, like your jobs, and that batch got held back;
3 okay? Whenever it went to print, there is a handshake
4 between KUBRA and between SAP that puts a print date
5 on it, so SAP knows it was printed. Something
6 happened in the system that did not put the print date
7 on it for customers like you. And, so it would go
8 back, and it didn't have a print date on it, so it
9 would send it, and over the course of four or five
10 days, which we found out we had a key control missing,
11 someone should have caught that before nine bills;
12 okay? But I'm just being honest with you and telling
13 you what happened. They found out what it was.
14 That's how it happened.

15 I can tell you, personally, I had a
16 customer who had nine bills just like you. Their
17 first seven were zero dollars, their eighth one was
18 for \$272, and their ninth one was for zero dollars. I
19 had them all, nine on my desk for a month --

20 RON PETERSON: You can have these.

21 TIM WILSON: -- to remind me -- hey, I
22 appreciate the harmony. I am trying to be honest with
23 you and be serious; okay? But I'm --

24 RON PETERSON: Well --

25 TIM WILSON: -- just telling you. I took

1 it personally as a reminder what our customers went
2 through, and I'm sorry that you had to go through
3 that. That is unacceptable.

4 RON PETERSON: Did anybody lose their jobs
5 over that?

6 TIM WILSON: How many of you were in our
7 organization that know the answer to that? None of
8 you. I cannot discuss personnel issues, but I can
9 assure you things have been handled.

10 RON PETERSON: Well, for my -- for my
11 business, I -- I have my bank auto send just an auto
12 draft that goes out every month the same amount. I
13 pay over the highest bill during the year just to
14 maybe get a bit of a credit balance or keep from going
15 negative to make sure the bill's paid every month.

16 But last fall I got an October bill with
17 the typical monthly charges, I paid it, and five days
18 later I got another bill for five or six or seven --
19 five or seven -- a smaller amount. (Inaudible) some
20 changes. Maybe I'll get another bill for the other 25
21 days. I'll just -- I'll just keep paying my same
22 amount every month. Never was late. Never was
23 underpaid. I thought, oh, everything's great.

24 Well, November -- the November bill came
25 for a thousand dollars more than what I've ever paid.

1 It was a \$4,000 bill. And nobody could explain that
2 to me. I'll visit with your folks out here to ask
3 about that. But in February, I just gave up and just
4 paid the thousand. Just to shut everybody up. This
5 is awfully frustrating especially when you know our
6 margins are thin where we work, and I never could
7 figure it out. What is the fuel adjustment surcharge
8 on our bills?

9 CHARLOTTE EMERY: Yeah. So that represents
10 fuel costs that we pay outside of the base rates, so
11 the base rates there that -- that run about 13¢ or 11¢
12 and there's a \$2 or 2¢ credit that can't -- that
13 contains a base level of fuel cost and cent -- so
14 twice a year we go in and we evaluate how much actual
15 fuel cost we have incurred for a six-month period. We
16 compare that back to that base amount and that if
17 it's -- if we have incurred less fuel costs, then we
18 will give you a credit, and if we have incurred more,
19 then there's an additional charge.

20 RON PETERSON: Is that fuel for your trucks
21 or fuel for your plants?

22 CHARLOTTE EMERY: It's for the generation
23 units.

24 RON PETERSON: Okay. Got it. What do the
25 facilities charge?

1 CHARLOTTE EMERY: The facil -- it's a type
2 of part of the rate design to collect, and it's
3 charged to certain classes of customers.

4 RON PETERSON: But what -- what does that
5 go to? The --

6 CHARLOTTE EMERY: It helps cover the cost
7 of service to provide to that class of services, class
8 of customers in a year.

9 RON PETERSON: Okay. One of my other
10 questions here have been addressed. Seems -- it seems
11 like Liberty just expects businesses to absorb the
12 arbitrary increases. Our bills have gone up well over
13 60 percent since the Asbury Plant shutdown. But I'm
14 just wondering, you know, I've had to cut hours from
15 my staff. I've had to lay people off. Has Liberty
16 ever laid off anybody?

17 TIM WILSON: Yes.

18 RON PETERSON: Okay. Well --

19 TIM WILSON: It's not easy. Yeah, I
20 understand.

21 RON PETERSON: Google is our friend here.
22 And, so is ChatGPT so is Grok. I looked at all three
23 of those platforms. I didn't see any major press
24 announcements or any kind of widespread layoffs from
25 Algonquin or from Liberty. Were you going to say

1 something?

2 DIANA CARTER: I was just waiting for the
3 question if there was a --

4 RON PETERSON: I just -- you know, you say
5 you have. I don't -- I don't recall that in the news.
6 And it's not on the Internet as a --

7 DIANA CARTER: If there had been employee
8 terminations in the history, yes. Yes, there have.

9 RON PETERSON: In the history. How about
10 in the last five years?

11 DIANA CARTER: Employee terminations, yes.

12 RON PETERSON: Widespread, a riff,
13 10 percent reduction, that kind of thing. Has there
14 ever been anything like that?

15 DIANA CARTER: There are various reductions
16 in our workforce, yes.

17 RON PETERSON: Well, like you said --

18 DIANA CARTER: Some conditions, part of
19 Liberty coming in, in the merger was certainly to make
20 sure we stayed involved with the Joplin community.
21 That was very important for the Joplin community to
22 keep the jobs here and to keep the workforce at a
23 certain level. So we have maintained that condition
24 and those requirements. The City of Joplin fought
25 really hard for that when Liberty came in. So

1 certainly, we complied with that requirement and have
2 kept the jobs here in Joplin as promised.

3 RON PETERSON: Okay.

4 TIM WILSON: So Diana is probably going to
5 get on to me here. Last May and this January, our
6 entire organization had two rounds of layoffs. Might
7 not have been in the paper. We don't like to
8 publicize that. I'm sorry.

9 RON PETERSON: Okay. How many coal plants
10 does Liberty currently operate?

11 TIM WILSON: We operate zero.

12 RON PETERSON: Zero.

13 TIM WILSON: We own parts of three power
14 plants. I attend Unit 1. I attend Unit 2. We're
15 12 percent owners of those. They're up north of
16 Kansas City in Plum Point, which we are 7.51 percent
17 owners and 7.51 percent PPA. We have a total of about
18 180 megawatts of coal fire generation that we own.

19 RON PETERSON: Has the U.S. government
20 mandated that you move away from coal?

21 TIM WILSON: Not directly.

22 RON PETERSON: I know what government has.
23 And it's the Canadian government. You're Canadian ESG
24 environmental policy, sir. And you're basing that
25 cost on us. That's why our bills have gone up since

1 the Asbury shutdown, 60, 70 -- double -- a hundred
2 percent for a lot of the people here. And if Asbury
3 was so economical to operate, why did our bill -- why
4 didn't our bills go down?

5 TIM WILSON: Our last rate case was
6 adjudicated in May of '22. And the average base rate
7 increase was, what? 7 percent is what I recall. So
8 I'm not sure about that. And what was your question
9 about Asbury?

10 RON PETERSON: Why didn't our bills go down
11 if Asbury was so un --

12 TIM WILSON: In a vacuum -- in a vacuum, if
13 that was the only thing that we owned and operated,
14 they would have, but we have other substations,
15 transmission lines, distribution lines, other
16 facilities that go up. So it net saved us money. But
17 it's not going to reduce your bills because we have
18 other things that we own and operate, about \$3 billion
19 worth.

20 RON PETERSON: Well --

21 CHARLOTTE EMERY: I hate to try to jump in
22 here and mention that --

23 TIM WILSON: Call center.

24 CHARLOTTE EMERY: -- we have roughly having
25 about a 23-megawatt -- \$23 megawatt hour base rate

1 that was included in the 2019 rate case, and then when
2 we came out of the '21 rate case, that went about
3 \$8.70. So that -- that's fuel. That's a huge drop in
4 fuel, and then we -- we -- through that FAC that I was
5 chatting about, that -- that -- actually, we went back
6 up to around somewhere -- we danced between 12 to \$14.
7 So there has been a pretty dramatic drop in prices as
8 it relates to the fuel cost that run our generating
9 units.

10 RON PETERSON: Well, there's seven --
11 there's seven executive in your C suite. Looked up
12 their salaries. Seven people make \$13.29 million a
13 year with Algonquin in Ottawa, Canada. (Inaudible) et
14 cetera. That's 172 million that these seven people
15 will make with zero inflation, by the way or zero cost
16 of living allowance.

17 DIANA CARTER: And Mr. --

18 RON PETERSON: And we're on the hook for --

19 DIANA CARTER: -- Peterson --

20 RON PETERSON: Yes.

21 DIANA CARTER: -- I just want to make
22 sure -- because I would like to safely get to my car,
23 we represent the Empire District Electric Company.
24 I'm not sure which entity you're speaking of, but
25 those are not the Empire District Electric Company

1 officers that he's referring to. That -- that's a
2 parent -- a parent company and not this utility. I
3 urge you to come back for the rate case.

4 RON PETERSON: I will.

5 DIANA CARTER: It -- and give that -- that
6 sort of testimony to the commissioners.

7 RON PETERSON: Well, in closing here, I
8 just see that we're paying facilities costs, we're
9 paying fuel costs, we're paying Asbury, and -- and a
10 storm cost. I would like to see a line in our bill
11 for CEO pay. Why not? I think that should be
12 included. So I hope you can fix yourself.

13 GEOFF MARKE: Mr. Peterson? Something you
14 said -- well, it was a lot of things you said that --
15 that piques my interest, but one in particular, you
16 said, that you were -- you paid an excess of a
17 thousand dollars that you were questionable. Just to
18 end this --

19 RON PETERSON: Yeah.

20 GEOFF MARKE: -- could you expand a little
21 bit on that?

22 RON PETERSON: Well, it was the miss
23 charges -- I think they were double counted kilowatt
24 hours in November. And we couldn't resolve it in
25 December, then the holidays hit, and then January

1 didn't get anywhere, so come early February, I just
2 paid it.

3 GEOFF MARKE: Okay. That right there is the
4 second stream. Like, that is why this investigation
5 is so important, and that's what I'm afraid of is
6 happening right now is that effectively customers are
7 just paying it.

8 RON PETERSON: Okay.

9 GEOFF MARKE: So here -- hold on. Here --
10 here's the thing about that. If you have concerns
11 over -- now, if you have a large excess payment due
12 to, you know, estimated bills or you didn't get a bill
13 for multiple different months, that's -- that's
14 understandable. You need to pay for what you use.
15 And the company will set up payment plans. However,
16 if you feel like those are abnormalities that were
17 incorrectly charged, please do not give up on that;
18 all right? That's -- it's critically important that
19 you follow up with the PSC or the OPC and that we help
20 you get that money back, if it's warranted; okay?

21 RON PETERSON: Okay.

22 GEOFF MARKE: Thank you.

23 RON PETERSON: All right. Thank you.

24 CURT GATELEY: Ladies and gentlemen, for
25 those of you who are -- for those of you who are

1 standing in the back, this is going to be a long
2 meeting. This is pretty informal. You can come on
3 down, take a seat, and as always, there's room in the
4 front pew. There's lots of chairs.

5 MARK JOHNSON: All right. Next, we have
6 Sheeba Louis.

7 SHEEBA LOUIS: First, I just want to
8 apologize, because I do not like public speaking.
9 I've lived in Joplin for 40 years, 22 of those I've
10 been on my own. For 22 -- for 22 of those years, I've
11 lived on my own, and I had Empire for my electric. I
12 can honestly say I feel like Empire had a soul. If I
13 called, a supervisor would get on line and made sure I
14 could afford my payments when I was in crisis.

15 Three years ago -- or excuse me, last
16 summer, my husband, the electric company -- our
17 electric bill is in his name. We did not receive a
18 bill the whole summer. My husband called. Now remind
19 you, I pay the bills. My husband called you guys,
20 stated we're doing an update, we don't have your
21 amount. This happened for three months. I had a bill
22 for \$3,000 come Christmas. I bat -- Mr. Wilson, I
23 did, too, I promise you I did.

24 TIM WILSON: (Inaudible).

25 SHEEBA LOUIS: Okay. I was like, I -- I

1 promise you, Mr. Wilson, I did. I'm a mother of nine.
2 We -- my husband made -- made \$6,000 each month. Last
3 year, he ended up getting his hours cut, and he's a --
4 he does his own business. I ended up having to go
5 back after 22 years of being a stay-at-home mom and
6 work two jobs.

7 You also stated that you never turned the
8 power off during the winter. My mother's power was
9 turned off when that big storm hit two years ago for
10 at least 15 minutes.

11 And then another issue is that I -- like I
12 said, I work two jobs now. I'm also a park manager,
13 and I'm based off of Commission. I cannot get my
14 rentals rented because when they ask who's the
15 provider, I state it's Liberty, and they say they
16 don't -- they'll go to Carthage or they'll go to
17 new-Mac.

18 So my issue is, sir, Mr. Wilson, is how
19 many more jobs are we going to have to work to be able
20 to afford because I guarantee you, my nine kids, I pay
21 2,000 a month in food for them, and that's not junk
22 food. That's not steak. That's not lobster. That's
23 hamburgers, hot dogs, things like that. So my bill
24 for my monthly payment because of the three months is
25 almost a thousand dollars a month. How many more jobs

1 am I going have to take or my husband going to have to
2 take to be able to pay?

3 TIM WILSON: Ms. Louis, first of all,
4 thanks for coming down. I know -- like I said, to
5 them, it's hard to speak in public. I -- if you have
6 questions about your bill, we'd love to help. We have
7 Mr. Nate Hackney here who has programs that -- he's
8 back there. He's -- he'll wave at you, if you want to
9 talk to him. He is probably the nicest guy I've ever
10 met.

11 SHEEBA LOUIS: Okay.

12 TIM WILSON: And with respect to -- to the
13 outage your mom -- I just want to be clear that
14 what -- when I was talking about the storms, we don't
15 want to shut people off on purpose. I'm guessing she
16 had an outage that was weather related.

17 SHEEBA LOUIS: No. It was scheduled.

18 TIM WILSON: Or -- or --

19 SHEEBA LOUIS: Scheduled for that
20 15 minutes.

21 TIM WILSON: During that storm, we had --
22 we're part of the Southwest Power Pool, and the entire
23 power pool had to do rolling blackouts. And, so
24 that's what it was. It wasn't, you know, something
25 that we did on our own. It was -- it was -- we were

1 mandated to do it, but. So I apologize for that.

2 SHEEBA LOUIS: Okay.

3 TIM WILSON: Thank you. Yeah.

4 MARK JOHNSON: Next up we have Randall
5 Barker.

6 RANDALL BARKER: I'll try to keep this
7 short. You already stated my name. And I'll get a
8 little off topic, but it's related to Liberty and who
9 they use PSC, slash, OPC. I come on in
10 September 2023, bought a different home, and since
11 that time, I've got another home on a different
12 electric company, and my bill is double and triple,
13 and it's totally electric, and this home is not, and I
14 use it very electively. I'm a firefighter. I get
15 hot. I've had heat exhaustion, heat stroke, since I
16 was a kid, and I can't even run my electric -- my --
17 my air conditioner more than about 4:00 o'clock
18 peak -- in the afternoon until about 10:00 o'clock
19 without having a thousand-dollar bill.

20 When Asbury got on there, my first bill was
21 460 bucks, and I about crapped. But this all started
22 when I moved in there. I didn't realize things until
23 I'm settled, and it all started with frequent power
24 outage, consistently. I've been there -- so a year --
25 we're talking a year and a half. Four to six times a

1 month on an average, and this is not -- it's for a few
2 seconds. And I've -- I've lost a freezer from it,
3 freezer meat. It's right after the power outage
4 happens. The -- I call it flashes before, but I call
5 it an outage now. And it's consistent power outages,
6 and everyone around me has it.

7 I'm an advocate for the area. They call me
8 and text me now every time it happens. From Neosho to
9 Seneca and up to Joplin. This has happened repeatedly
10 and still happening now. Three times in January, two
11 times in February. I don't have the list with me. I
12 do have it in my notebook, but I don't want to keep
13 your time. It's still happening. And it's ruining
14 people's appliances. It takes me about 30 minutes to
15 reset all my systems. And I've had trouble with my
16 systems and luckily got my Culligan back, and my
17 freezer back -- my -- my refrigerator freezer --
18 refrigerator going back again, but I lost the meat
19 that took me two and a half years to grow and the
20 meat, besides the cost and the time, and then got the
21 freezer going -- it was that power flash, I call it,
22 power outage. It -- it didn't let the freezer come
23 back on, and as soon as I turned it on and discovered
24 it, the stuff is ruined. It came on and worked great.
25 Worked great for two or three months, but we had

1 another power outage. Right after the little flash of
2 the short seven seconds.

3 You know, Alexis Rogers have been over this
4 stuff with Mr. Justin, fried the freezer all the way.
5 And -- and I said -- like I said, it's -- it affects
6 all -- I'm sure there's plenty of people in this room,
7 and when I went to the Aurora one, everywhere around,
8 they're losing appliances and systems to the short
9 power outages that happen, and you've had Adam
10 Rockmiller come to my place. I've had my place
11 checked out three times. My stuff's all good. It's
12 your substations, your infrastructure. It is not my
13 problem, and it's not a squirrel or a bird or a cow or
14 Superman.

15 So I started contacting the PSC kind of
16 getting off my -- I tried to write this out. I'm not
17 good at reading and writing, and I'm not great at
18 speaking, but. I called the PSC repeatedly. I'm just
19 going to go off -- off here. It's in my head. I
20 can't even read off this paper to you guys. I called
21 the PSC because that's who you send us to. I was
22 failed at the PSC. I was hoping Ms. Kahn was here
23 tonight, but I have got a -- ongoing e-mail comment
24 list going now that I've sent, so they've got part of
25 my message, but they've dropped the ball on the front

1 lines of the people that answer the phones.

2 Ms. Jordan finally got frustrated. I probably called
3 30 to 40 times to make a public comment because I'm
4 not good with computers and writing, typing, spelling,
5 all of the above. So I let them take my statement,
6 and they're usually fairly lengthy. There was nothing
7 there but two comments. And it was nothing of
8 substance. And Ms. Nancy looked it up, and there was
9 three quick hits she found which is nothing. So my
10 message never got across to anyone.

11 I finally had more problems go on. I
12 contacted Ms. Jordan. I specifically started asking
13 for her because she's the head over that group that
14 takes the calls. She got frustrated, irritated
15 because I kept calling, and -- and I called Liberty
16 also every time this happens. I have it all on
17 recording. She got irritated, and she transferred me
18 to Mr. Eastlake (phonetic) because she was tired of
19 it. Mr. Eastlake and me had a nice discussion. We
20 had a very measured and in-depth discussion. And I
21 told him about the power outages, and we spoke about
22 the Asbury Plant which is one of my topics on here. I
23 tried to do a bullet point. Like I said, I suck at
24 this, so. Speaking with Mr. Eastlake, he said that --
25 I said that plant should have never been destroyed.

1 And it shouldn't have, and he agreed. And you're
2 charging us -- I don't care if you call it the storm
3 or not. You're charging us because you blew up your
4 own plant. You could have saved that plant and
5 repurposed it or used it as a backup when things were
6 better, and you're charging us for it.

7 And I've called you out already. It's in
8 documentation to the PSC and to the attorney general,
9 and I spoke with the fire marshal that's considered
10 theft and fraud. But you guys somehow got a lobbyist
11 or someone in there to pass this into law and get your
12 securitization. And make us all pay for what is your
13 problem. You blew up the plant, made the decision,
14 Liberty, and you should be paying for that. And if
15 you didn't have the money -- as a business owner myself
16 before and other businessowners, I'm -- they have to
17 go borrow money, and you can borrow money instead of
18 taking it from us customers or going through the
19 government and taking it from the customers. Some
20 lobbyist coming in there talking representatives into
21 doing this. That's my angle on that. But that's what
22 my understanding is, is theft and fraud just like the
23 solar panels where you're not giving the credits back
24 to them with your meter problem. You're stealing
25 money from customers. So that's enough on that.

1 It's already kind of been hashed a million
2 times, and it's in record, and I will come and testify
3 or the -- on this official. And -- but after speaking
4 to Mr. Eastlake, he won't return my call now because
5 I've upset him with comments I've made and possible
6 insinuations, but.

7 Trucks were everywhere. Liberty trucks
8 were everywhere after I called Mr. Eastlake about the
9 power outages. They were -- it was like bees down
10 racing, and they -- and it's never happened before.
11 But once I got ahold of him, people show up now, not
12 just because of a short power flash, the -- the power
13 outage. They will say that's an emergency and we have
14 to come out. It's not an emergency. It's happened
15 for a year and a half while I've lived here, and all
16 my neighbors that call me and talk to me as an
17 advocate said it's happened for eight to 10 years or
18 ever since you've took over. Worse than when it was
19 Empire directly instead of as -- doing business as
20 Liberty. And they said that -- they just have become
21 complacent and not calling you, and I've been scolded
22 by your service people. Like, you need to turn that
23 in. Well, it was Sunday at 8:00 o'clock or people are
24 having somebody else call or we don't -- we can't see
25 that on our record. People have to go to work. Some

1 people it's on Sunday, so they're going to church.
2 But I usually call, but I was scolded because I
3 didn't -- you should have called that in yesterday.
4 I'm like, I can't sit around. I don't get paid by you
5 all, and I don't get paid for my time resetting my
6 equipment and checking my freezers now. I've got more
7 meat and have to go check my freezers and make sure
8 all running again now, so. I don't have thousands of
9 dollars. I'm down \$2,000 at least besides my time in
10 freezer meat and freezer at this point. And, so I
11 digress.

12 GEOFF MARKE: Mr. Barker --

13 RANDALL BARKER: I'm sorry, yes.

14 GEOFF MARKE: -- are you still experiencing
15 the frequency issues?

16 RANDALL BARKER: Yes.

17 GEOFF MARKE: And do you know if your
18 neighbors are as well?

19 RANDALL BARKER: Yes. I call them or they
20 call me. Yep. And it's between -- from Adam
21 Rockmiller, it's between the Neosho and the Seneca
22 substation. So, you know, it goes all the way through
23 there. And sometimes towards Joplin, so. I have
24 Joplin -- people towards Joplin that calls me also.
25 But -- so other than that, I just -- I finally got

1 through with getting an actual documentation. Like I
2 said, with the PSC, they have failed me. And I -- I
3 was -- when I started this, I started doing it for --
4 for myself, I did it for me. I mean, because I didn't
5 like the rate increase, and the problems with the
6 outages. But I started talking to people, and I take
7 care of an old lady, and she's on a limited income.
8 She can barely get by. I help her out, and she can't
9 hardly afford her electric bill, and she has them same
10 issues. And, so I started talking to the neighborhood
11 and becoming an advocate, and I'm going around. I'm
12 passed out attorney general forms. I started sending
13 them to Andrew Bailey, and I would send them to PSC,
14 and said here -- it's on your bill, but it's on a
15 sheet also besides this form for the AG, call that
16 number. And have him document that you're having
17 outages or whatever you're -- your issue is, your
18 grievance with Liberty.

19 So they probably -- I probably put out 50
20 to 100 of these driving around. Like, I'm campaigning
21 on my own money and time for the people, for everyone.
22 And I don't think that it probably ever has got
23 documented at PSC. I don't know that. And I'm just
24 saying that I sent that many people your way, and with
25 my experience of what happened, when they're not

1 asking you questions or making sure it's documented
2 and putting it in there, you're -- you're wasting our
3 time. It's not work -- it does -- that doesn't work.
4 It -- it obviously hasn't until I finally got a year
5 and a half later. I have it in my phone, and it's
6 re -- fairly recent. Ms. Kahn should be aware of it.
7 Mr. Eastlake, everyone in there. I kind of called out
8 and -- and related Ms. Jordan and all -- Ms. Jordan,
9 et cetera.

10 So I'll finish on that. Yeah. Your
11 plant could have been decommissioned and reused. We
12 should not be paying for this. You should get a loan
13 or -- I have a question for you. Who is your CEO? Is
14 it Christopher Huskilson up in Canada or wherever he's
15 at or Mr. Steven, who is your CEO? Who do you answer
16 to?

17 TIM WILSON: Rod West.

18 RANDALL BARKER: Okay. He's from where?

19 TIM WILSON: He's new. He started March
20 the 7th, I believe.

21 RANDALL BARKER: Okay. And is Chris
22 Huskilson still involved?

23 TIM WILSON: Chris Huskilson is back on our
24 board of directors. He -- he went from the board of
25 directors to the interim CEO until they could find a

1 permanent one.

2 RANDALL BARKER: Okay. Is this Liberty
3 Electric? This is kind of what happens at the house.
4 Except for it goes all the way off.

5 TIM WILSON: Good timing, so.

6 RANDALL BARKER: This happens in church and
7 people think that God's coming.

8 TIM WILSON: Think God's coming, yeah.

9 RANDALL BARKER: It's not cool.

10 TIM WILSON: The last time I was at church
11 with my dad, the lightning hit pretty good, and it may
12 have been for me, but I think you -- you asked the
13 question regarding where is he out of? Rod West.

14 RANDALL BARKER: Based. Yeah. I don't
15 need --

16 TIM WILSON: He's out of New Orleans.

17 RANDALL BARKER: Okay.

18 TIM WILSON: We have a U.S. -- the U.S.
19 president now.

20 RANDALL BARKER: Okay. And Christopher is
21 where? Ballpark.

22 TIM WILSON: Nova Scotia.

23 RANDALL BARKER: Nova Scotia. Yeah. Okay.

24 TIM WILSON: But he's not our -- it's Rod
25 West now.

1 RANDALL BARKER: Very good.

2 TIM WILSON: Thanks, Randall.

3 RANDALL BARKER: Let's see here. We
4 already addressed that getting passed. I think it
5 should be overturned. I think it should be revisited
6 and overturned, and you all get a loan or have your
7 CEOs take a haircut or somebody take a haircut. They
8 can afford it. And I know Christopher is braggingly
9 put out that he's went from 3 million to -- 3 billion
10 to 300 billion. You know, when I pulled up his face
11 the first time online, you guys have the money to take
12 care of this yourself. And pay for your own fuel.
13 I -- I need 10 bucks from -- coming from Aurora the
14 other night for fuel. I was getting low. You -- will
15 you all give me some money?

16 TIM WILSON: Randall, as we stated
17 earlier -- and I appreciate you showing up again.
18 That fuel is to power our power generation facilities
19 to generate electricity. It's not for our trucks.

20 RANDALL BARKER: Yeah. Well, my fuel is
21 trying -- you know, work on you guys and work with
22 these people and try and help address these issues
23 with the citizens that's being harmed all across the
24 state. Because of you. And the PSC somewhat.

25 So, okay. All right. I'm just going to

1 wrap it up. I look forward to the new analog meters,
2 and I hope that works out. Because all this is going
3 to get addressed, and everything's been addressed.
4 And I thank you for your time.

5 MARK JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Barker. All
6 right. Ladies and gentlemen, we are just over an hour
7 into this, and we still have quite a list to get
8 through. Next up on the list I have Gary. No last
9 name was provided.

10 CURT GATELEY: Who's on deck?

11 MARK JOHNSON: After Gary, we have Maurice
12 Filson (phonetic).

13 GEOFF MARKE: While Gary's coming down, if
14 any other customers are experiencing irregular
15 harmonics or bad harmonics, so you think of it as
16 flickering lights, you know, please bring it to our
17 attention. Thank you.

18 GARY FILSON: I just wanted to see how
19 beautiful you all were. I will do my best to not keep
20 you until midnight.

21 I objected to the putting in of the wind
22 farms up north unless our country goes the direction
23 that I think it's going to go, those could turn into
24 white elephants. I have not turned my heat on, nor my
25 electricity, my cooling '21, '22, '23, for the very

1 reasons that you people have talked about this cost,
2 that went up. The list goes on. I'm not going to pay
3 for that. I can't pay for it, and I don't think these
4 people are going to help me pay for it because they're
5 having problems.

6 And I live alone. I've done everything to
7 my house that I think to do. I've got top
8 installation, I put in all new windows. And guess
9 what? It doesn't do me any profit. So I'm just
10 letting you know what I am going through. I don't
11 think this is going to do any good. I don't think
12 we're going to see any benefit out of it for one
13 reason. Your cost keep going up. And who's going to
14 pay you out? We are, and I'm not pleased with that.
15 Because these people back here ain't going to help me
16 because they need help. Is it midnight yet? I'm
17 going to take that with me.

18 MARK JOHNSON: All right. Would Mr. Filson
19 like to make a comment or was that Mr. Filson? All
20 right. Would Gary like to make a comment? Apologies,
21 Mr. Filson.

22 Okay. All right. Next up, we have Eddie
23 Johnson. And then after that Stafford Griff, Junior
24 or Senior. Apologies for the mispronunciation.

25 EDDIE JOHNSON: Like you said, my name is

1 Eddie Johnson. I lived here in Joplin. Just built a
2 new home, and everybody knows that when you get into
3 certain stages of the work, you have to rely on other
4 contractors. So at the time we were down for a little
5 while, a couple of weeks. HVAC wasn't even in at the
6 time. We were running on two outlets, one in the
7 kitchen, one in the laundry, running on about six
8 temporary lights, which we were shutting off with
9 breakers, and we ran into a spike of 7,500 kilowatts
10 in 17 days. And nobody there.

11 So I don't understand. We've had Liberty
12 came out, had two or three people come out. They've
13 checked the meters. We had our electrician checked
14 everything that they could check. HVAC -- I'm not
15 going to mention the name. They came out. They
16 checked their unit. Everything's fine. But at the
17 same time we were left with a \$900 electric bill.
18 They said it went through our meter, and you know --
19 and they're wanting us to pay it.

20 So these spikes we were also told happened
21 between 5:00 p.m. and 2:30 a.m. I don't know anybody
22 that works those hours. And -- but at the same time
23 there was nobody working at that house at the time.
24 We're now living in the home. But we're no
25 appliances, nothing. Like I said, we had just

1 finished the Sheetrock. We were waiting on the
2 painters and the other crews to come in to set doors
3 and cabinets and all that stuff, and then appliances
4 came in after that, so. We're living in the home now.
5 Total electric home except for gas fireplace. And our
6 last bill was like 120 bucks. So, you know, I don't
7 see how -- can't generate that kind of wattage.
8 Nobody can explain it either. Neither can I, but
9 they're still wanting \$900, and I -- I've been told
10 that there are computer generated, but we've received
11 three shut-off notices.

12 CURT GATELEY: Sir, can you help me -- when
13 was the -- the spike again?

14 EDDIE JOHNSON: I don't have the exact
15 dates. They got it.

16 CURT GATELEY: Like, what months? Was it in
17 February?

18 EDDIE JOHNSON: In February, yeah.

19 CURT GATELEY: Okay. We'd like to be able to
20 follow up on --

21 EDDIE JOHNSON: Sure.

22 CURT GATELEY: -- specific situations like
23 this. We have this unexplained use.

24 EDDIE JOHNSON: We talked to everybody
25 about it. You know, so far -- I'll pay the electric

1 bill, you know, but I'm not paying that 900 right now.

2 CURT GATELEY: Correct.

3 EDDIE JOHNSON: That's not happening.

4 CURT GATELEY: If you're willing to -- if
5 you'd be willing to provide us with your -- your
6 contact information --

7 EDDIE JOHNSON: We have. We have.

8 CURT GATELEY: You already have. Thank you.

9 EDDIE JOHNSON: We have a case going on
10 with you. Again, I just wanted to bring it to your
11 attention. We did have some billing issues, those
12 have been rectified. We got several bills, you know,
13 and they were all different amounts, and blah, blah,
14 but that's all been rectified, but the situation here
15 tonight is the spike and the time --

16 CURT GATELEY: Right.

17 EDDIE JOHNSON: -- of the spike. You know,
18 like I said, nobody works 5:00 p.m. to 2:30 a.m. so.

19 TIM WILSON: Just to be clear, first of
20 all, I appreciate you --

21 EDDIE JOHNSON: Go ahead.

22 TIM WILSON: -- Eddie. Thanks for coming
23 down, and you're running drop cords?

24 EDDIE JOHNSON: No.

25 TIM WILSON: No drop cords.

1 EDDIE JOHNSON: Not during the -- there was
2 nobody in the home --

3 TIM WILSON: Yeah.

4 EDDIE JOHNSON: -- at the time. We were
5 having contractors, and the contractor didn't come in
6 until two days after this so-called spike took place.

7 TIM WILSON: Yeah. But we did send someone
8 out to check your meters.

9 EDDIE JOHNSON: Oh. Yeah. Yeah. There's
10 been a number of people out there. Nobody can --
11 nobody can explain it.

12 TIM WILSON: And they got your hourly data,
13 and that's how you knew when the spike was and
14 everything.

15 EDDIE JOHNSON: Oh, yeah.

16 TIM WILSON: You got a meter tech.

17 EDDIE JOHNSON: We had multiple people, and
18 you know -- and we've done everything we can, but at
19 the same time you guys are still wanting -- you're
20 still wanting \$900. And I --

21 TIM WILSON: Yeah.

22 EDDIE JOHNSON: I can't justify paying
23 that.

24 TIM WILSON: If there's anything I can do
25 to help you, we've got people here. I -- I --

1 EDDIE JOHNSON: Yeah. They say it went to
2 the meter, but I don't --

3 TIM WILSON: Yeah.

4 EDDIE JOHNSON: When you're only running
5 two outlets and you you're shutting the lights off
6 with breakers, it was only three breakers in the whole
7 box --

8 TIM WILSON: Right.

9 EDDIE JOHNSON: -- at the time in the
10 panel. So I mean, I just don't understand it.

11 GEOFF MARKE: And just to be clear,
12 Mr. Johnson, it looks like you're looking for a refund
13 of \$900.

14 EDDIE JOHNSON: Well, I haven't paid it.

15 GEOFF MARKE: Well, that's good.

16 EDDIE JOHNSON: I haven't paid it, no. I'm
17 not -- I have -- no, no, no, no. Because it couldn't
18 have been. I don't mind paying my electric bill, and
19 I have. And -- but the \$900 is still outstanding, and
20 like I said, there's still sending us shutoff notices.
21 Like I said, they say we -- they're computer generated
22 because of the amount --

23 GEOFF MARKE: Sure.

24 EDDIE JOHNSON: -- and past due, blah,
25 blah, blah, but you know, at the same time I just want

1 it to bring to everybody's attention that this is
2 something else that's taken place. You know,
3 everything seems to be on the up and up now. I mean,
4 we're running good. You know, total electric home,
5 it's -- so I don't know.

6 TIM WILSON: Mr. Johnson, I just want to be
7 clear, too. We are -- we're not shutting people off.

8 EDDIE JOHNSON: Oh, no.

9 TIM WILSON: We haven't for a year, and I
10 appreciate you bringing that up, though, because
11 that's been a point of confusion that I want to make
12 sure I clarify.

13 EDDIE JOHNSON: No.

14 TIM WILSON: We're sending out shut-off
15 notices for people that can -- they need those to file
16 for assistance to the programs --

17 EDDIE JOHNSON: Sure.

18 TIM WILSON: -- that we support.

19 EDDIE JOHNSON: I understand.

20 TIM WILSON: So if you receive a shut-off
21 notice, it's, A, to remind you of your bill, but B, so
22 if you need to get mutual assistance from the programs
23 that we support that you can have that --

24 EDDIE JOHNSON: I understand.

25 TIM WILSON: -- proof for that.

1 EDDIE JOHNSON: I'm disputing this in
2 totally -- you know --

3 TIM WILSON: Yeah. Okay.

4 EDDIE JOHNSON: -- that's all I'm doing on
5 this one.

6 TIM WILSON: Thank you.

7 EDDIE JOHNSON: You know, if I used it
8 since I moved into the home, everything seems to be
9 fine. And it was fine after those 17 days. It was
10 just the 17-day spike that generated 7,500 kilowatts
11 to an unoccupied half built home. You know, I mean,
12 we wasn't even -- there was nobody even working there
13 at that time. So that's -- that really -- and even if
14 you did have just two outlets and six lights, you
15 can -- you couldn't use that much wattage in that
16 period of time. So there has to be something wrong
17 somewhere. I think -- I think it was the meter
18 myself. I don't know if the meter was ever changed.
19 I don't -- you know, we weren't there. So I don't
20 know what's taken place at certain times whether
21 Liberty came in and changed the meter.

22 TIM WILSON: I can follow up with you to
23 see if someone changed a meter. I will -- I can do
24 that if --

25 EDDIE JOHNSON: Yeah.

1 TIM WILSON: -- you want us to do that.

2 EDDIE JOHNSON: I have no idea. We -- you
3 know, like I said, we weren't there.

4 GEOFF MARKE: Can you give us your name and
5 address? And we'll double check for you.

6 EDDIE JOHNSON: Sure. Yeah. Okay.

7 TIM WILSON: I want to get to the bottom of
8 it as well.

9 EDDIE JOHNSON: I don't know what's taken
10 place, but that's -- that's where we stand today, and
11 it's just a spike issue. And I think it needs -- you
12 know, something really needs to be done about it.
13 There's just no way it could have happened.
14 Appreciate your time.

15 TIM WILSON: Yep. Yes. Yeah.

16 MARK JOHNSON: Stafford.

17 STAFFORD GRIFF: Yeah. I don't want to
18 bore you going over the same routine about high bills
19 and not getting my bills out on time and whatnot like
20 that. So, you know, it's the same thing everybody
21 else is having tonight. Same problem, you know.

22 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: (Inaudible) say that.

23 STAFFORD GRIFF: So that's basically it.
24 That's what brung me out here tonight is the high
25 bills, and you know, customer service is good, don't

1 get me wrong, but the high bills and stuff like that,
2 you know, I'm -- I'm just struggling just like
3 everybody else. And I get the bills late sometimes,
4 and then they do the duplicate bill -- billing me like
5 that all the time, too, so. Yeah. That's -- that's
6 pretty much it.

7 MARK JOHNSON: Well, thank you for those
8 comments. Next, we have Christine Shote.

9 CHRISTINE SHOTE: I have a few -- hello. I
10 have a few statements along this. Since this is in
11 regards to the money, I'll start with that part first.
12 I also have multiple outages for short periods of
13 time. It can go anywhere from five to 10 seconds to
14 seven to 15 minutes. I have lost a refrigerator
15 freezer, and the wonderful food that was in it. And I
16 know that's not your worry, but when I'm paying your
17 electric bill plus buying a \$2,500 refrigerator, that
18 gets expensive, and that's how come I worry about, can
19 I pay my bills? I can be gone for two weeks at a
20 vacation. I mean, my husband and myself, we have a
21 small dog that goes with us. So there is nothing in
22 that house. I mean, the refrigerator is going, and
23 the usual utilities are going, but my bill won't
24 change. I'm gone and not watching TV. I'm gone not
25 washing clothes. I'm gone, and my bills the same or

1 maybe five or \$10 more than when I'm there. It
2 doesn't make sense to me. It irritates me. But I pay
3 my bill on time, and if you look at my record, the
4 only time I've been late is when I get late bills.

5 And in regards to the man who had nine
6 bills, in that short period of time, I got six. Other
7 than the one I got late made me worry. I ran down to
8 the company. I didn't even -- I live in between
9 Neosho and Joplin. So I have to come into town to pay
10 my bills. Because your automated phone system and the
11 people I try to get on for an actual person on the
12 phone, when I'm trying to pay a bill, neither one of
13 them understand why I can't pay my bill. And I say,
14 here's the -- the -- the account number you guys have
15 given me, and that doesn't suit. Here is my phone
16 number that it always asks since you can't get the
17 correct account number, which I have it written down,
18 and I read, we need your phone number. Well, your
19 phone number doesn't work either. Try another day. I
20 love it.

21 You want your money. I want to give it to
22 you, but nobody wants to take it. So I come in town
23 now, and I pay it in town because nobody wants it.
24 Not -- they don't want to make it easy on me and let
25 me pay it over the phone. They want me to travel for

1 it. Now I got a surcharge on my gasoline, too.

2 Okay. So when it comes to the spikes, I
3 never thought of it until I listened to these other
4 people, but when I have those outages and stuff, some
5 reason my bills are higher the more outages that I
6 have that month, the higher my bill is that month.
7 Totally doesn't make sense to me unless when it comes
8 back on that rush of electricity back to the house,
9 makes me pay more which really isn't my fault, because
10 I didn't turn the electricity off -- I'm not saying
11 you cut it off. I'm just saying I had a loss of
12 power. I -- so I don't understand.

13 CANDICE KELLY: Ms. Shote, you mentioned
14 you lost a refrigerator and freezer.

15 CHRISTINE SHOTE: And a nice-sized TV,
16 about the size of that sign behind you.

17 CANDICE KELLY: Was that recently?

18 CHRISTINE SHOTE: It was expensive. It was
19 within the last six months.

20 CANDICE KELLY: Okay. Did you reach out to
21 us and let us know that, that took place?

22 CHRISTINE SHOTE: Yeah.

23 CANDICE KELLY: And did somebody know?
24 Okay.

25 CHRISTINE SHOTE: I actually called

1 Frigidaire. And, so I called Frigidaire and said, you
2 know, this one's not that old. You know, I don't --
3 other than I had a power loss --

4 CANDICE KELLY: Uh-huh.

5 CHRISTINE SHOTE: -- I'm having problems
6 with it. And they said the compressor was going out
7 of it. I had it checked. So I -- I bought a brand
8 new one. Well, that's not true. I got another one.
9 And then I had a power outage, so now it's no -- the
10 second one is no good. Then I went and bought a brand
11 new -- brand new one which is expensive.

12 TIM WILSON: Ms. Shote, you may not want to
13 say it in public, but I know that they're wanting
14 addresses. If we can get your address, I have no
15 problem sending someone out --

16 CHRISTINE SHOTE: Yeah.

17 TIM WILSON: -- to check your situation out
18 to make sure that -- you know, sometimes in high
19 demands is when, you know, your electricity might
20 be -- I want to make sure we double check where you're
21 at.

22 CHRISTINE SHOTE: If you can look those
23 charges, I mean, those -- the power boosts back up, I
24 think it's killing something. I mean, I don't know.
25 I'm not an electrician, but I lost my beautiful TV and

1 my --

2 CANDICE KELLY: We definitely --

3 CHRISTINE SHOTE: Plus the food that was in
4 it, that I replaced because Frigidaire didn't want to
5 replace it. You guys didn't replace it. I still had
6 to eat because I love food. And, so I replaced it.

7 CANDICE KELLY: Do you mind coming up and
8 giving me your address?

9 CHRISTINE SHOTE: No. I don't mind at all.
10 And then along with an Asbury billing, I have brought
11 up -- I believe you were at the desk when I brought
12 that up, but when it comes to customer service, I was
13 really disappointed because I was having bills that
14 were going up and down, and someone -- sometimes it
15 would be \$300 more than I ever paid, so. I finally
16 called electric, and they're like, nothing's wrong.
17 And, so I got ahold of the attorney general and wrote
18 them a letter and showed them my bills on how, you
19 know, it might be, for an example, 300 one month and
20 600 the next month, and then it's down to 200, and
21 then it's back up to 400, and I don't understand when
22 it's the same two people, same amount of clothes, same
23 TV shows, and the -- and the amounts are going wild.
24 Always paying them on time, though. I'll tell you.
25 I'm good about that. And, so I wrote a letter to the

1 attorney general. And he wrote a letter or made a
2 phone call, whatever they do, and got ahold of
3 Liberty, and said, this is the complaint that she's
4 processing, and I got a letter back from the attorney
5 general. I brought it in with me today, and they
6 said, well, we contacted Liberty. Liberty says they
7 don't see any problems and everything is fine. And,
8 so the attorney general told me everything is fine.
9 And I'm like, okay, but that doesn't tell me why I'm
10 having power outages, why my bills aren't halfway
11 close to each other. And I'm not talking about winter
12 versus fall, and fall versus summer. I'm talking
13 about summer versus summer. Month after -- month by
14 month. So those things were very irritating.

15 Now, when it comes to the Asbury thing, as
16 a -- as a responsible homeowner, I have always -- I'm
17 insurance poor. I literally am insurance poor. I
18 have everything insured including my dog, who just had
19 surgery which was another bill. But the thing is, is
20 I have insurance on my home. If I get hit by a
21 tornado or a bad storm or a guy wants to be crazy and
22 drive into the house or something, I have insurance.
23 Why did you guys not have insurance on the Asbury
24 building, that way the insurance could have paid for
25 your Asbury problem instead of me paying for your

1 Asbury problem?

2 DIANA CARTER: So the phrase Asbury problem
3 has been used and -- and maybe --

4 CHRISTINE SHOTE: Well, the building being
5 destroyed or whatever you did to it.

6 DIANA CARTER: Well, it was demolished.

7 CHRISTINE SHOTE: Yeah. It was.

8 DIANA CARTER: Because it wasn't being
9 used. The -- for safety reasons, it was demolished at
10 the end.

11 CHRISTINE SHOTE: Okay.

12 DIANA CARTER: The purpose couldn't be
13 repurposed. There wasn't an insurable loss. There
14 wasn't any --

15 CHRISTINE SHOTE: That's because you guys
16 did it to your own building which means when you were
17 discussing your losing on it, it's not being helpful.
18 It's not being used appropriately. This building or
19 this facility is not doing what our company needs it
20 to do. You guys should not -- you, personally, your
21 company should have made the decision if we bring it
22 down, we need to pay for it, not we need to make
23 everybody else pay for it. That's called a business
24 loss. You take it off your taxes. But it's not a
25 business loss to me. It shouldn't be -- it is a

1 business loss to me because I'm paying because you
2 guys who decided this particular facility was not
3 appropriate for your usage. It's not my fault.

4 TIM WILSON: Ms. Shote.

5 DIANA CARTER: Ms. Shote, I understand
6 you're just wanting to share that, and we very much
7 want to listen and for everybody who just wants to
8 share that. So just -- just let us know if you have a
9 question and want us to response --

10 CHRISTINE SHOTE: The question is, why did
11 your company not take its own responsibilities on or
12 carry insurance?

13 DIANA CARTER: There -- it's not something
14 that could be insured.

15 CHRISTINE SHOTE: Then why didn't you take
16 care of your own problem instead of asking us to take
17 care of the problem?

18 DIANA CARTER: We -- we utilized the proper
19 procedure that was established by law.

20 CHRISTINE SHOTE: Okay.

21 DIANA CARTER: We went to the Missouri
22 Public Service Commission through the proper procedure
23 established by law --

24 CHRISTINE SHOTE: Okay.

25 DIANA CARTER: -- went through an entire

1 proceeding with the staff --

2 CHRISTINE SHOTE: Thank you.

3 DIANA CARTER: -- the Public Service
4 Commission and various intervenors obtained
5 approval --

6 CHRISTINE SHOTE: Okay.

7 DIANA CARTER: -- from the Missouri Public
8 Service Commission, and then acted according to the
9 order of the Missouri Public Service Commission.

10 CHRISTINE SHOTE: Thank you so much for
11 that because that did exactly what I wanted it to do.
12 It throws it on to you guys. You guys approved it,
13 and thank you very much for not taking care of your
14 city and your workers, instead you passed it right on
15 to us because you're right along with them. Thank
16 you, Joplin.

17 GEOFF MARKE: Ms. Shote, I got a couple of
18 questions for you. And just for the record, we
19 opposed it. We just lost. But, I'm sorry.

20 CHRISTINE SHOTE: They lost to Liberty.
21 Liberty didn't want to pay for it. They said, I
22 don't -- we don't want Joplin to pay for it. Liberty
23 says, too bad. So somehow that became the law.

24 GEOFF MARKE: But, Ms. Shote, what I really
25 am interested in hearing is three quick things here.

1 Would you happen to know just a brief estimate of out
2 of pocket expenses, your -- the frequency you had? I
3 heard, you know, a TV, I heard a refrigerator,
4 ballpark.

5 CHRISTINE SHOTE: I'd say just over 5
6 grand.

7 GEOFF MARKE: Over 5 grand.

8 CHRISTINE SHOTE: Because the refrigerator
9 freezer cost me just over 2,000. The food I lost,
10 it's the meat alone -- I only took pictures. I took
11 pictures of it and everything to show, you know, that
12 it was really spoiled. I wasn't just saying it and
13 making up a story. So I took pictures of it and
14 everything else, and just the meat alone I lost over
15 \$300, not counting the stuff that was in the
16 refrigerator area.

17 GEOFF MARKE: I've got a number of other
18 questions to follow up with that, but my colleague
19 Mans Zelpaines (phonetic) right over there, he's going
20 to hand you a business card. I'd like to follow up
21 with you after the fact.

22 CHRISTINE SHOTE: Yeah.

23 GEOFF MARKE: Thank you for your comments.

24 CHRISTINE SHOTE: And our TV was over
25 2,000, so.

1 CANDICE KELLY: Ms. Shote, to clarify, you
2 did not notify Liberty that you lost all of that?

3 CHRISTINE SHOTE: Yes, I did.

4 CANDICE KELLY: Okay. Because I asked that
5 earlier and you --

6 CHRISTINE SHOTE: Oh, I'm sorry.

7 CANDICE KELLY: That's okay.

8 CHRISTINE SHOTE: I said, yeah, I had
9 contacted -- because they were the first person --
10 when I say I am insurance poor --

11 CANDICE KELLY: Yes.

12 CHRISTINE SHOTE: -- I took out the extra
13 warranty.

14 CANDICE KELLY: Okay.

15 CHRISTINE SHOTE: I really am insurance
16 poor on everything.

17 CANDICE KELLY: And again, could you please
18 provide me with your address?

19 TIM WILSON: Yes. So we can go back and
20 check.

21 CANDICE KELLY: Thank you.

22 CHRISTINE SHOTE: I'll be glad to.

23 MARK JOHNSON: All right. Thank you,
24 Ms. Shote.

25 Next we have Mike Sword.

1 MIKE SWORD: Hi. I have something just a
2 little bit different than what everybody else is
3 talking about. Over a year ago, I started this
4 process of building a garage that I was going to put
5 power in, so I could work on my trucks and my cars. I
6 still don't have power. I keep getting -- because the
7 recent storms, because of this, well, we've got to
8 figure out this. This all started back in June, and
9 then all the way -- well, actually, clear up into
10 February when they said, well, okay, we've got all
11 this stuff, we're coming out with underground boring,
12 we're going to get it in there, we'll put a -- have
13 your city inspector come out, inspect what all your
14 electric. The box I put on the side of the garage,
15 got everything done, still no power, haven't heard
16 from them.

17 TIM WILSON: One year --

18 MIKE SWORD: I've been waiting for a year.

19 TIM WILSON: To be clear, this is a new
20 meter set?

21 MIKE SWORD: Yeah.

22 TIM WILSON: Okay. Can you come over here
23 and give me your phone number? I will call someone
24 personally.

25 MIKE SWORD: Because I've been waiting, and

1 I've got a light pole at the back with the light on
2 it. The fiber optic guy knocked it out two years ago.
3 It's still not fixed. Now the one in the front yard,
4 it's out. It just went out last night. Can't get
5 nothing fixed. Can't get nothing done. Write the
6 number?

7 CURT GATELEY: And while that's the first
8 time that's been mentioned here, our staff has been
9 aware of complaints from homeowners and such on meter
10 sets for quite some time. When the company deployed
11 the new billing system, it wasn't just billing. It
12 changed all of their managing their work orders
13 internally and such. We received complaints from a
14 lot of folks about delays in meter sets for the home
15 builders. Of course, they were used to a certain
16 routine, and then getting their work done and moving
17 on to the next house. But other incidents like this,
18 it -- I have never heard of someone who was still
19 waiting a year.

20 MIKE SWORD: Yeah. I'm waiting a year. If
21 I would have known it was going to take this long --
22 because, see, I checked with Liberty -- oops -- before
23 I did anything because I had two acres out of town,
24 that I could have built my garage on, already had
25 electric on it, already been going. But I checked

1 with Liberty if I needed to do anything before I had
2 this built before I sold my house to build this
3 garage, and they said, nope, call us when it's done.
4 Now I get from the guy that's coming out and looking
5 at it, you should have contacted us before. Yeah. So
6 it's a little irritating. I spent money on getting --
7 everything done like he's wanted, and he keeps telling
8 me, oh, two weeks, we're going to do it. Nope. Here
9 it is. A year later. I've had the building permit
10 for a year.

11 CURT GATELEY: If you're willing to take one
12 of my cards or remarks, if you -- if you don't have
13 resolution of this within the next week or two, I'd
14 appreciate to follow back up, if you're willing.

15 MIKE SWORD: Yeah, I am.

16 CURT GATELEY: Thank you.

17 MIKE SWORD: I really want to get this
18 done. Thank you.

19 MARK JOHNSON: Next on the list is Sid
20 Davis.

21 GEOFF MARKE: Jeremy Nelson on deck.

22 SID DAVIS: Good evening, everybody. Okay.
23 First of all, without having to rehash a bunch of the
24 stuff that's already been said, all those issues, I
25 have experienced. However, that's not my number one

1 concern. When the solar program began and Liberty
2 Utility started in that program, we were in it year
3 two. I put in a big enough system that could generate
4 electricity for my house. For years, our electric
5 bill year round was \$19 a month because we generated
6 sufficient extra electricity. Now I received a letter
7 that said that what -- what the utility company was
8 going to pay me was going to be reduced per kilowatt
9 hour. Now, so we have called the office, and their
10 phrase is directly laid on you, and their response
11 every time is, I am sorry this happened, but it's the
12 Missouri Public Service Commission who approved the
13 decrease in rate. You see, it's not them. They're
14 getting electricity at the old original price, if you
15 will, and paying me less. And, so I have called up
16 and said, hey, that's just not right because, see, I
17 am an electric producer. I am just like they are, in
18 that if they can raise their rates, I can raise my
19 rates, to them. But -- but do you think they say yes?

20 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 1: No.

21 SID DAVIS: No. They blame you guys right
22 here, and you cannot say we lost the argument because
23 it's coming out of our wallets; okay? Now, I did not
24 come up here as a whiner or a crier. I came up here
25 because our family has been in business since before

1 1960. Big John's Heavy Equipment. We have figured
2 out how to succeed, but this is one problem we've got
3 to have your help on. We've got to get paid what
4 we're selling in electric production, and that's
5 basically all I got.

6 DIANA CARTER: Excuse me, sir? And I'm
7 sorry, I didn't catch your name. Possibly Mr. Davis?

8 SID DAVIS: Yes. Sid Davis.

9 DIANA CARTER: Sid, you may want to contact
10 Renew Missouri. Are you familiar with Renew Missouri,
11 the organization?

12 SID DAVIS: I will be.

13 DIANA CARTER: Okay. Or -- or someone who
14 advocates for solar. You got it for him?

15 MARK JOHNSON: Mr. Davis, I'm going to give
16 you the contact information. Thank you.

17 SID DAVIS: Okay. So does that mean that
18 you guys are not on our side?

19 DIANA CARTER: Most of you all would hate
20 me personally. I'm a -- I'm a --

21 SID DAVIS: We don't hate you personally.

22 DIANA CARTER: No. I mean, I -- I am a --
23 I am an environmentalist. I'd be all for your solar,
24 but. We do have to charge the rates that are in our
25 tariff, and for that to be changed, that has to go

1 through a rate case, but Renew Missouri is in our rate
2 case. And, so they can possibly be an advocate for
3 you there.

4 GEOFF MARKE: -- my advocate who is going to
5 advocate on the solar.

6 MR. NELSON: I think this summed up what
7 everyone feels and I feel is frustration and lack of
8 trust. My journey again started back when everything
9 changed. I own over 80 properties in Joplin and the
10 surrounding area that use Liberty. And my bills were
11 going all over the place. So what do I do? I call
12 customer service. Try to figure out what's going on.
13 And runaround after runaround, after run around.
14 Bills changing. Why are they changing? Why am I
15 getting billed? They said, why don't we put all your
16 stuff on one account; okay? So I put it all on one
17 account. That took five months. Every time I called
18 in, oh, sorry, you've got to talk to someone in
19 business. Oh, wait, they're busy. They can't talk to
20 you. They'll call you back. They never call you
21 back. A month later, I get my bills again. I'm
22 frustrated. I call in, hey, someone's going to call
23 me. Nobody calls me. After the fifth month, I
24 threaten to go to the utility Commission. I got a
25 return phone call. So went through that process.

1 That wasn't fun. They wanted an additional, I don't
2 know, 15, \$1,800 all up front, so I could get
3 everything on to one bill. So I could try to track to
4 find out where my costs are and why my costs are and
5 why they're changing and why I -- again, I don't
6 trust; right? I don't know.

7 GEOFF MARKE: Mr. Nelson, can you clarify?
8 You attempted to try to consolidate these bills?

9 MR. NELSON: Yes. So I could have one
10 bill.

11 GEOFF MARKE: Right.

12 MR. NELSON: So I could one time see what
13 all my expenses are.

14 GEOFF MARKE: And they wanted an additional
15 1,500?

16 MR. NELSON: They wanted everything to be
17 paid current.

18 GEOFF MARKE: Uh-huh.

19 MR. NELSON: -- at a set time in order for
20 them to move it to a single billing --

21 GEOFF MARKE: Okay.

22 MR. NELSON: -- which I did. Which I did.
23 So we kind of got that sorted out. Very painful.
24 Then I get bills, and I'm trying to figure out, like,
25 well, wait, this isn't my name. This is a tenant's

1 name. Why is it back in my name? I got some landlord
2 stuff.

3 It's a great service when it works. Come
4 to find out, what -- these are bills from September of
5 last year. Or from August or from July or from -- so
6 trust, I don't know what I'm paying for; right? I go
7 to Walmart, and I buy a dozen eggs for whatever, and I
8 know I've got a dozen eggs. I'm trusting them that
9 they're delivering that power to my house, tenants
10 lights whatever. I don't have any trust; right? And
11 this -- I mean, I can go on and on. I mean, then,
12 okay, you're going to charge me late fees for bills
13 that I never received. And you expect me to pay them.
14 Took me three phone calls over the course of, I think,
15 three different months here where I'm on the phone
16 with the rep for a good 30 minutes, 45 minutes. Oh,
17 we'll take care of it and get back to you. I never
18 get a phone call back. I never get a credit. And
19 some of these are stupid. They're 20 cents, but you
20 know what? It's principal; right?

21 Here, recently, I called back again because
22 I didn't get any of those credits. And the nice lady
23 on the phone spent 45 minutes on the phone with me,
24 putting me on hold, numerous times, and maybe in my
25 next bill, I'll have a credit. I don't know. I hope

1 I do. But it's just -- I think what -- it says to me
2 is, if I'm paying for a service, I shouldn't question
3 it; right? I shouldn't question if I -- I received it
4 or not. I have solar, too, and that's jacked up in my
5 house, too. I don't have time to screw with this
6 stuff. I really don't; right?

7 GEOFF MARKE: Mr. Nelson, I've got a couple
8 of quick questions for you.

9 MR. NELSON: Yeah.

10 GEOFF MARKE: I didn't mean to interrupt,
11 but.

12 MR. NELSON: No.

13 GEOFF MARKE: One thing I'm hearing
14 continuously, you know, throughout this evening and
15 other sessions that we've held, and I -- honestly, I
16 should have brought it up earlier, but there's a bit
17 of time tax; right? There's -- there's an amount of
18 time to --

19 MR. NELSON: Absolutely.

20 GEOFF MARKE: Can you give me a ballpark
21 figure of how many -- over the past year, how many
22 times you've called this utility?

23 MR. NELSON: I probably spent 10 hours at
24 least.

25 GEOFF MARKE: 10 hours?

1 MR. NELSON: Yeah.

2 GEOFF MARKE: Okay.

3 MR. NELSON: Because I'm at work I --
4 unfortunately, I have a lot of downtime.

5 GEOFF MARKE: And you're a businessowner?

6 MR. NELSON: I own rental properties.

7 GEOFF MARKE: Rental properties.

8 MR. NELSON: And I work full-time.

9 GEOFF MARKE: Is there -- do you have this
10 experience with any other --

11 MR. NELSON: No.

12 GEOFF MARKE: Okay.

13 MR. NELSON: None. I say the last thing
14 that's frustrating is for me as a -- as a landlord
15 with tenants. My goal has been for the last 17 years
16 to provide quality homes and fair values to blessed
17 families. And it makes me sick that they're paying
18 half of their rent in electricity; right? So you have
19 an 800-dollar place that they're renting, and they're
20 paying over \$400 a month in utilities. I don't know
21 how they survive.

22 GEOFF MARKE: I don't either.

23 MR. NELSON: Right. So again, it comes
24 down to frustration, and it's them pinning it to us,
25 and it's trust. I can't trust that you guys are

1 providing a service to me that I'm -- that you're
2 providing me that service. I will gladly pay it.
3 But what I used to pay a couple of hundred bucks a
4 month are now thousands. And it varies, and it's all
5 over the place. But I mean, I'm sorry, your customer
6 service people are great. Your systems are horrible.
7 And you guys should be responsible for it. Not us.

8 GEOFF MARKE: Thank you.

9 MARK JOHNSON: Next, we've got Dustin
10 DeMier and on deck we have Virginia Armstrong.

11 DUSTIN DEMIER: Good evening. My name is
12 Dustin DeMier, that's D-E, capital M, I-E-R. My
13 background's in manufacturing. We also build real
14 critical little components, so I'm going to make a
15 statement followed up by a couple of questions. I
16 also have worksited material that I'm going to give
17 you guys because I understand that some of my
18 information might be a little on the higher end.

19 So there's what's called in these smart
20 meters a current sensor, uses a magnetic field to
21 detect current and generate a proportionate output.
22 If the current sensor fails, it can lead to inaccurate
23 readings. There's also what's called a shunt low
24 resistor. It's precisely caliber rated for current
25 measurement. Current flows through the shunt creating

1 a voltage drop. Smart meters measure this drop and
2 calculates the current drop using Ohm's Law. If the
3 shunt resistor is not precise, the voltage drop
4 across, it will not accurately represent the circuit's
5 total current. This will lead to inaccurate readings
6 of the AM meter. So I know that these digital meters,
7 they're made by Itron, Inc., and that's out of Liberty
8 Lake, Washington. It's an American technology-based
9 company. So I know that at least a warranty coverage
10 on these digital meters. Itron smart meters are under
11 warranty, and Itron will repair and replace them at no
12 charge, if the failure is due to components or
13 workmanship. Warranty on Itron smart meters is
14 generally provided to the utility company, not the
15 individual homeowner.

16 So question one is, how many of these smart
17 meters are you guys actually seeing getting warrantied
18 out? Question number two is going to be, if my
19 home -- if my smart meter that you guys put on my
20 house, if that is defective, how are you guys going to
21 calculate -- what mathematical formula are you going
22 to calculate to reimburse me for over charges? Those
23 are my questions.

24 GEOFF MARKE: Thank you.

25 TIM WILSON: Mr. DeMier, we'll definitely

1 have to follow up with you. I'm not our meter expert,
2 but to my knowledge, I don't know of any we've had a
3 warranty out. Our person in charge of meters is here.
4 I don't know if there's anything -- get him a
5 microphone. He acts like he don't want to talk, but
6 he does.

7 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 2: So when we deployed
8 the meters, we did have some that were bad, that
9 didn't fire up. They didn't warranty because they
10 weren't accurate. When we get in all the meters,
11 they're all tested from the factory, and we get the
12 test results, and they're all loaded in. Missouri
13 state standards is 102 to 98 percent. At Empire we
14 test ours to 101 to 99, so we have a 50 percent more
15 stringent than -- than the state requires. If -- if
16 we have a meter that somebody calls in or we see a
17 spike that's not explainable in the system, it'll
18 error, and we'll go out and test those meters. Our
19 test equipment that we use is Radiant. Radiant comes
20 out once a year. We pay them to come out and
21 independently test all of our test equipment, so. So
22 we ensure that accuracy. We test about -- we sample
23 test and complaint test about 2,500 meters a year to
24 ensure the accuracy across the system.

25 DUSTIN DEMERE: Okay.

1 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 2: So to my knowledge,
2 and you know, I don't see every one of those tests,
3 but to my knowledge, we've had two that have tested
4 high. And we send those in to customer service and
5 billing, and then they -- they get ahold of the
6 customer.

7 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Everybody told you
8 (inaudible) we all --

9 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 2: Yeah. If you want
10 your meter tested, you call into customer service,
11 tell them you think your meter is not -- not being --

12 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: -- test everybody in
13 (inaudible).

14 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 2: No. There is no
15 cost. It's Missouri statute that there's no cost.
16 The Missouri statute actually says you can have a test
17 every 12 months.

18 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 3: (Inaudible) why can't
19 I go back to my old (inaudible) meter.

20 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 2: So -- so you --

21 MARK JOHNSON: Excuse me, I'm going to --
22 insofar as, the whole point of this is to get a
23 transcript to build the record. We can't hear
24 anything, so.

25 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 2: So you can opt out.

1 MARK JOHNSON: Could you please repeat the
2 question?

3 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 2: Oh. Here you go,
4 sir.

5 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 3: On mine, I want to
6 know why I'm mandated to use your smart meter, so
7 called, where I used to be able to read my own meter
8 and send it in because there is a trust factor that I
9 don't really trust what you guys are -- are getting,
10 and what you send to me, you know, as a bill, where I
11 can read my own numbers. I used to be able to and
12 send it in, and I knew for sure what I was using in --
13 and compare it that way, and now, no, everybody's
14 using this smart meter.

15 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 2: You don't have to use
16 a smart meter. You can opt out. There's a lot of
17 people say, hey, I want my old analog meter back.
18 There -- there is not a major manufacturer of analog
19 meters anymore.

20 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 3: (Inaudible).

21 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 2: You do have a choice.
22 There is an opt out. There is a new Missouri bill
23 that just came out. It's Senate Bill Number 4. It
24 says you can opt out, and you can have a traditional
25 meter which not a mechanical. It's an -- it's a

1 digital meter, but it has no communications on it.
2 It's not an AMI meter with the network turned off.
3 It's just a plain digital meter. They've been around
4 for 40 years, since the mid '80's or so. And the opt
5 out fee is \$15 a month, and that -- that is a Missouri
6 law that -- that just came out.

7 GEOFF MARKE: So I'll try to clear that up.
8 This past general assembly is a part of larger only
9 novus bill. There was a provision in there to allow
10 customers to opt out of AMI meters. That law goes
11 into effect in August. However, that specific
12 provision doesn't effectively -- we need to -- there's
13 a rulemaking process, but also, just an implementation
14 process that needs to be filled out, so the law
15 effectively doesn't go into effect for that specific
16 issue until next July. But at that point you have the
17 option of getting a digital meter, and at -- you would
18 be required to self-report. So you would -- you would
19 read your -- you would be able to read exactly how
20 much you're using. You would report that back to the
21 utility, and you could effectively have a meter reader
22 coming out. At this point we've contemplated twice a
23 year on a biannual basis just as a sanity check to
24 make sure that you're reporting correctly. But that
25 process, like I said, is probably a year out.

1 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 2: But -- but just
2 because you opt out doesn't mean you have to self
3 read. We can put you on a read route where a manual
4 reader comes out. I don't want you to think just
5 because you opt out, and we don't have to wait for
6 that law. We have a current tariff. We have an
7 opt-out tariff we have had since we deployed the
8 meters.

9 GEOFF MARKE: And all of that is true.
10 The -- really, the uncertainty there is just the cost
11 that's associated with it.

12 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 2: Yeah. That cost does
13 change in August --

14 GEOFF MARKE: Right.

15 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 2: -- to the cheaper.

16 GEOFF MARKE: Right. That's the key there,
17 so.

18 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 2: But we -- you don't
19 have to wait until August. We do have an opt-out
20 program now.

21 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 3: So there is no extra
22 cost besides the \$15, there's some more cost involved.

23 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 2: There -- there is a
24 cost inside that -- that tariff that -- or that bill
25 that just got passed.

1 GEOFF MARKE: Passed.

2 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 2: And I believe it's
3 \$125 fee. Yeah. It's a one-time fee. It pays to pay
4 the -- change out the meter.

5 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 3: So there's
6 (inaudible) guaranteed you're not going to have any
7 spikes anymore.

8 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 2: It -- it's --

9 GEOFF MARKE: No.

10 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 2: No. I mean, it still
11 is -- it's still an electric meter.

12 GEOFF MARKE: Yeah.

13 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 2: But I would tell you,
14 as the guy that's over the metering, I mean, I -- I
15 haven't -- these meters are testing well. I haven't
16 seen an issue where they're not testing well. Our
17 equipment is certified. I have the same meters at my
18 house. I have two. I'm an Empire Liberty customer.
19 I have the same AMI meters at my house. I'll be quite
20 honest with you. My wife pays the bill. I don't.
21 And -- and I will be quite honest with you. In this
22 billing issue, I -- I missed a few bills myself, and I
23 didn't have to answer to customers. I had to answer
24 my wife when I came home. So I mean, I do understand
25 what you guys are going through.

1 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: (Inaudible) analog
2 instead of digital.

3 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 2: There is not a
4 main -- a major main manufacturer that makes analog
5 meters anymore. They're just not out there on the
6 market. You can find some on eBay or a refurbished
7 meter company, but there is not a socket.

8 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: (Inaudible).

9 CURT GATELEY: Sir, we really need to work
10 through the list, but we --

11 DUSTIN DEMERE: My last statement is, if
12 you homeowners are seeing irregular spikes in your
13 billing, that may be due to your meter, so. I would
14 maybe suggest to warranty that out.

15 VIRGINIA ARMSTRONG: Good evening. My name
16 is Virginia Armstrong, and I have not been here very
17 long, but I have a couple of questions, and they may
18 not be as significant as some of these others, but. I
19 would just like you to -- I have some questions I'd
20 like to find some answers for. In our May bill, April
21 and May bill, we -- they have a section that's called
22 usage charge, and we have two charges by that same
23 thing, and I had -- I couldn't understand why we had
24 two usage charges, and then the Asbury concern has
25 already been covered, so that's fine, but I just want

1 to know why we have that charge, and then why that we
2 keep getting, like, every so often they're sending
3 information that says we're going to raise your rates,
4 and we're going to -- because of other people have
5 mentioned this, too, because of certain laws or
6 because of certain rulings that you have that you're
7 raising the bill.

8 I'm living with my sister and I am helping
9 pay with the bills, and I am a retired teacher, and I
10 do not -- I did not make a lot of money when I was
11 teaching. I came from California. I -- I taught in a
12 private school. So I -- I don't have a lot of funds
13 to work with. And, so I just wonder about these two
14 things, and then why the -- the charges keep going up.

15 DIANA CARTER: So ma'am, I think Candice is
16 going to address your question on the usage charge.
17 You mentioned that you keep receiving things about the
18 bill going up.

19 VIRGINIA ARMSTRONG: Yes.

20 DIANA CARTER: I'm not sure exactly what
21 you're referencing. You may have recently received
22 notice of the public hearings coming up about the rate
23 case.

24 VIRGINIA ARMSTRONG: Yes, ma'am. And I --
25 I plan on attending that and finding out what's going

1 on there.

2 DIANA CARTER: That should -- that should
3 be the only thing from us here recently.

4 VIRGINIA ARMSTRONG: Oh. Okay. And
5 then --

6 TIM WILSON: Customer charge.

7 CANDICE KELLY: No. The usage charge. So
8 you will -- if you use over a certain amount of
9 kilowatts, you're going to see two usage charges on
10 your invoice because they're charged different rates.
11 The first 600 should be a cheaper rate, and then
12 anything over that, you're going to see that different
13 rate.

14 VIRGINIA ARMSTRONG: Yes. That's --

15 CANDICE KELLY: It depends on the number of
16 kilowatts that you use in a month.

17 VIRGINIA ARMSTRONG: Okay. But -- well,
18 never mind. Okay. Thank you. I appreciate that.

19 CANDICE KELLY: Thank you.

20 TIM WILSON: Thank you, Virginia.

21 MARK JOHNSON: All right. Next up we have
22 Melissa Graham and on deck is Rex Rohelson.

23 MELISSA GRAHAM: I don't have to point out
24 how short I am. I'm okay with it. We're good. So
25 this isn't where you want to have to have these

1 conversations because it feels like when the point's
2 gone this far, we've long exceeded where differences
3 are going to be felt by the people who are
4 experiencing this. Tim, earlier, you said that nobody
5 has been shut off in the last year. That --

6 TIM WILSON: Not for non-pay.

7 MELISSA GRAHAM: That is not a true
8 statement. That is an absolute lie.

9 CANDICE KELLY: We have not actively done
10 disconnects since before April 2024.

11 MELISSA GRAHAM: I was disconnected October
12 31st of 2024.

13 CANDICE KELLY: I would like to take a look
14 at your account, if that's okay --

15 MELISSA GRAHAM: You --

16 CANDICE KELLY: -- because we are not
17 actively doing any disconnects for nonpayment.

18 MELISSA GRAHAM: So October 31st, 2024, I
19 was disconnected. The previous year in 2023, I had
20 gotten behind on my bill. And you know, things
21 happen. But summer had come, and I want to point out
22 that you -- you know, say, how you've reached out to
23 help people, because in the winter, you don't shut
24 people off. But that program is predatory. People
25 get behind, they can't catch up, and once you get

1 behind with Liberty, there is no catching up. You --
2 you put the bill in the bag, and you put so much on
3 each new bill. Now the bill that they couldn't afford
4 to pay before, it's exponentially higher because they
5 put the back bill on top of it. And then when you see
6 this, and they say that you've done this program to
7 help them, they ask something like, can I pay off just
8 the back balance so I can get back to my regular bill,
9 and the answer is no. You have to pay it off
10 100 percent before you can start seeing your regular
11 bill, and you start to drown. You choose things like
12 food. You choose things like comfort in your own home
13 over having regular electricity.

14 This past winter we've seen an average
15 electric bill of over \$600 per month. It was
16 disgusting. And while we know that there's always
17 that opportunity that we can get on the payment plan
18 once you're on it, it's worse. It is so hard to
19 discern that of understanding and the -- the thing is,
20 you're sitting here saying, we didn't know. Every
21 single person in this room, I guarantee you, has had
22 heard the words, we are recording this call for
23 customer assurance and training purposes. You have
24 heard us cry. You've heard us beg. You've heard us
25 say, we don't know what to do anymore. And the sad

1 thing is, I used to work with you. I used to be a
2 contracted administrator over all of your new
3 developments. And never once does the amount that you
4 need to raise to keep running reflect what I seen in
5 those contracts. I am confused. And now you're
6 asking for another 30 percent? How are we going to
7 pay that? We're just people. We have families.

8 Now I asked you in the hall, Tim, if you
9 took over for Bradley Beecher, and you said there was
10 a few people in between. Bradley ran it for 29 years.
11 And then in the course of the last 10 years, there's
12 been multiple people in that place. Bradley left with
13 an average salary of \$1.36 million, base salary. That
14 is before stock auctions, that is before bonuses.
15 What are you making at the cost of these people in
16 this room?

17 TIM WILSON: It's actually public
18 information. It's not even close to what Mr. Beecher
19 made. I can tell you that. Not even remotely close,
20 and I will tell you this.

21 MELISSA GRAHAM: You can search it on your
22 own then.

23 TIM WILSON: You run the company for 29 --
24 yeah. It --

25 MELISSA GRAHAM: Benefits and compensation

1 packages.

2 TIM WILSON: He ran the company for less
3 than eight or nine years, not 29 years. He might have
4 worked there 29 years.

5 MELISSA GRAHAM: You think that makes us
6 sleep better at night?

7 TIM WILSON: I'm just trying to make sure
8 the record is straight.

9 MELISSA GRAHAM: I got -- I now work in
10 POE, so. If you know electricity, you know that POE
11 lights can run for three hours on what it takes to run
12 a toaster one time. Why aren't we pushing things like
13 that? Why aren't you asking, you know, what you can
14 do for the people in the area? Why aren't we pushing
15 common sense things? Why aren't we looking for where
16 the tax breaks come in because, obviously, there has
17 to be a place. Something. Because you're starving
18 us, and we're hurting. And it's at the point where
19 it's easier to be off the grid than it is to live in
20 the city. You can go out, and for the price of -- I
21 don't know -- maybe less than a million dollars, I
22 think is what it is, buy a hydrogen and solar micro
23 grid that can power 40 different houses and have --
24 and have a homestead. That's a scary thought that we
25 can't live like humans in our own homes because we

can't pay electric, so.

No. You have shut people off. You have hurt us. You taped the calls. If it comes -- you know, I understand you guys are researching this, and we want to believe everything that is good. Is there any way we can have a third-party research company go through all of this? And, so that way we know that someone who had absolutely nothing to do with this state would look into it and say, hey, this is bad, and just not say, they're going to find anything, but if they do, and if they been overcharged, what are your plans for paying back these people?

TIM WILSON: We're going to -- we need your name and address, so we can look up and verify if you were shut off, because if that's the case, that's unacceptable. We have not shut off people for nonpayment. We're struggling to find you right now.

MELISSA GRAHAM: Okay. I'm going to go in there -- it's under my husband, Christopher.

TIM WILSON: Thank you.

MELISSA GRAHAM: And it's [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]. It's a business address. Anybody can have it if they looked it up. Have a good night. Westin, sorry.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE 2: (Inaudible) laws,

1 not you, your company, permission for all these
2 charges and -- and (inaudible) law has passed
3 (inaudible).

4 MARK JOHNSON: It would be the Missouri
5 state legislature.

6 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE 3: (Inaudible) I've
7 been told (inaudible).

8 MARK JOHNSON: It -- the entire congress
9 votes on it. We do need to move along. I believe Rex
10 Rohelson, I'm -- apologies for the pronunciation.

11 GEOFF MARKE: Gary Potter on deck. Monica
12 Dixon in the hole. All right. Mr. Potter, go ahead.

13 GARY POTTER: My comment this evening will
14 be about the billing and just general billing
15 practices. I started to have to deal with the Joplin
16 office last year when you ended up changing your
17 billing procedure. We started getting bills from two
18 different systems. And they were not -- they were not
19 consistent between the two. We have two properties or
20 two meters there in northwest Joplin, and the bills
21 are combined, but look, for a while, there was one on
22 one bill, and another one was on another bill, and
23 we'd get bills from both of them. I went into Joplin
24 office to talk to the staff, and I was told by the
25 person that they couldn't do anything for us. They

1 didn't have access to the accounting program. And
2 they didn't have anybody that I could talk to.

3 GEOFF MARKE: I'm sorry, Mr. Potter. I need
4 to understand that a little bit more. So you -- you
5 approached the company about --

6 GARY POTTER: Yes. I went in June --

7 GEOFF MARKE: Okay.

8 GARY POTTER: -- to -- to the desk where
9 you end up paying at, and I talked to the staff member
10 there.

11 GEOFF MARKE: Uh-huh.

12 GARY POTTER: This was in late June, and I
13 said, I have these two bills. They said, well, we
14 have two billing systems going on. And they're not
15 reconciling. They're not talking to each other. And
16 I said, well, do you have anybody in accounting I can
17 talk to? They said no. Now, she was very -- very
18 sympathetic, comforting, and basically said, we don't
19 have anybody to talk to. I asked, I said, where's
20 county office? Where's the general -- your general
21 office? They said, we don't know. And finally, I had
22 to go out and search considerably out on the Internet
23 to find out it was in Toronto to find out it was a
24 Canadian because nobody knew where Liberty would --
25 came from. Well, I had previously, before going in

1 talking to them, I had written a e-mail that described
2 the situation, the problems we were having. When I
3 went in and talked to her, they said, no, we never saw
4 that e-mail.

5 So anyway, we got a bill about a week or so
6 later. So I went back in and talked again to the
7 office. This was in July, so a couple of weeks later.
8 That person was even more brain dead than the other
9 one. She -- she said the bill is valid. There's
10 nothing I can do about it. And the -- there's --
11 basically, told me to go away. So it became quite
12 obvious I was not going to get any satisfaction out of
13 this office.

14 My wife had called repeatedly to -- during
15 this same period talking to the phone -- to whoever
16 she could end up talking to, and they said, we will
17 get it taken care of. We never heard anything. So
18 basically, it became a waste of time.

19 Now, the kind of bills we're getting still
20 are inconsistent and that we end up getting a bill the
21 first week of the month, but it's due the 10th of the
22 following month, but on that bill is what we were
23 charged the previous month, but we have a receipt that
24 has already been paid. So basically, if we paid our
25 bills based upon the paper that we're receiving, we'd

1 be double paying. Now, it didn't make any sense to
2 us, so we go ahead and pay the actual bill that we
3 know that is due, and things seem to be working, but
4 that's consistently been happening for the past year.
5 So the billing system that you all have, it just does
6 not work. You have apparently more than one, and
7 they're not talking to each other. Okay. Thank you.

8 TIM WILSON: No. I actually would like to
9 try to address your issue if that's okay.

10 GARY POTTER: Okay.

11 TIM WILSON: Are you on auto pay or are you
12 not on auto pay?

13 GARY POTTER: There's no way I would be on
14 auto pay with you.

15 TIM WILSON: Okay.

16 GARY POTTER: Absolutely no way.

17 TIM WILSON: Touche. We would love to try
18 to help you. If you're still having billing issues,
19 if you want to --

20 GARY POTTER: Well, my wife did tell me
21 this morning or last the day or two preparing for this
22 is that things are beginning to straighten out. And
23 almost my comment was, is it because of this hearing?

24 TIM WILSON: No.

25 GARY POTTER: These things are occurring,

1 but anyway, she's still getting bills, and she gave me
2 a copy of a bill here where, again, it is the previous
3 month is on there, but she has receipts that she's
4 paid that bill.

5 CANDICE KELLY: So it could be a timing
6 issue on when the payment was received, if you're
7 mailing the payment in. I don't know how you're
8 sending that in, if you're paying it through online or
9 by phone.

10 GARY POTTER: But she has the receipt she
11 paid the bill.

12 CANDICE KELLY: In the office?

13 GARY POTTER: Due date.

14 CANDICE KELLY: In the office?

15 GARY POTTER: No. She mails it in.

16 CANDICE KELLY: Okay. So that's what I'm
17 saying. If the payment is mailed in, we have no
18 control over the post office. So I -- I'm not sure
19 how long it's taking.

20 GARY POTTER: No, no, no, no, no, no.

21 CANDICE KELLY: No.

22 GARY POTTER: Because the other problem --

23 CANDICE KELLY: Let me finish, please.

24 GARY POTTER: Yeah.

25 CANDICE KELLY: I'm not sure how long it's

1 taking to get the payment, but if it happens to cross
2 with when the new invoice's created, you will still
3 see that charge on the bill until the payment gets
4 posted.

5 GARY POTTER: Well --

6 CANDICE KELLY: It really just depends on
7 the timing of when that payment hits your account and
8 when the new charge is generated.

9 GARY POTTER: They're paid three weeks
10 before the due date. And if -- if -- if you cannot
11 verify that within the three weeks, then, again, your
12 processes are broken.

13 And the other issue that we have is when
14 you go out online and try to read it, the information
15 online makes no sense. And you can't figure out --
16 the dates aren't in the right place. You just have
17 numbers. You have codes in the thing. It's almost
18 impossible to read. And I -- I had -- it took my wife
19 five times to explain what was happening with her, and
20 I still don't quite understand everything.

21 CANDICE KELLY: Yeah. And -- but you said
22 that it is getting better.

23 GARY POTTER: Well, she thinks it might be.
24 It's hard to tell because it's been maybe three weeks
25 now.

1 CANDICE KELLY: I know it doesn't seem like
2 it, but over the last eight, nine, 10 months we've
3 made a lot of changes to the system trying to fix some
4 of these issues you guys have experienced. There's a
5 lot of things still happening that we're doing to try
6 to make it better.

7 GARY POTTER: Where is this initiated out
8 of? Is it initiated out of Toronto?

9 CANDICE KELLY: Where --

10 TIM WILSON: When you say --

11 GARY POTTER: When you have --

12 TIM WILSON: -- initiated.

13 GARY POTTER: A accounting change -- when
14 you change your accounting system, and you know,
15 obviously, SAP is a real problem in itself, but
16 however, if you're trying to reconcile with SAP,
17 who -- who goes through and makes those changes and
18 then who validates it that it works for the customer?

19 TIM WILSON: So there was a team -- we have
20 multiple utilities across the United States, Bermuda,
21 and Chile; okay? Every single one of them were
22 acquired. Empire was acquired. Each and every one of
23 them were on a different billing system, a different
24 accounting system, a different finance system which
25 made it almost impossible to reconcile your accounts

1 for your books; right? And, so there was a team in
2 Oakville that said we need to be on the same system.
3 So, yes, you are correct in that regard, that the team
4 that decided to pick where we -- and the --
5 implemented with IBM was a team there, yes.

6 GARY POTTER: Okay. But it's -- this has
7 been going on with us for a year now, and it's still
8 not reconciled.

9 TIM WILSON: It has. I can tell you --

10 GARY POTTER: And when will it be
11 reconciled? Because right now the -- the only way
12 that we can deal with it is to ignore the bill. The
13 information's coming across the bill and pay the
14 most -- what we think is right, that seems to be
15 working. If we followed the bill, it wouldn't work.

16 GEOFF MARKE: Mr. Potter, I want to follow up
17 with a comment that you made. You said you had some
18 difficulty with the online app.

19 GARY POTTER: Yes. The online app is
20 difficult to read and understand what's been paid and
21 when things are being paid.

22 GEOFF MARKE: So did you happen to cross
23 reference your hard copy bill with what's on your app?

24 GARY POTTER: I can't answer that. Again,
25 I'm -- I'm in the same situation as other people. My

1 wife takes care of those bills.

2 GEOFF MARKE: Just a show of hands, does
3 anybody else have any problems with their online tool
4 or the web page itself? Thank you.

5 GARY POTTER: A few times I went to look at
6 it. I couldn't understand it.

7 MARK JOHNSON: All right. Next, Monica
8 Dixon and Ashley Finmore is next up.

9 MONICA DIXON: I have a two-pointer here
10 on -- on the bill and service; okay? If everybody
11 remembers on the 15th of February was when we had that
12 really bad snow storm, and they were telling people to
13 go to the store and get prepared because businesses
14 are going to be closing; okay? So on February the
15 15th, which was on a Saturday, I got my utility bill.
16 And it was due February the 27th. And because it
17 was -- on a Saturday, the office is not open, and I'm
18 a person that if I can go pay my bill in person, I do
19 that the day I get the bill. I -- the minute it comes
20 out of my mailbox, I write the check, and I take it to
21 the office to pay it; okay? This particular time in
22 February, I could not do that because of the weather.
23 So I took a chance and put it in the mail. And the
24 postal system is not your problem. It's not my
25 problem until it takes 31 days for them to get my

1 bill -- my payment to Liberty. And I've got proof of
2 it on my bill and my bank statement. It took 30 days
3 for the post office to get my payment to you.

4 So when I got my -- my next bill, it showed
5 that the -- the balance was \$78.31 on -- on February
6 the 6th. Payment was received on March the 7th for
7 the full amount showing the balance forward was zero.
8 But then when I get down here at the bottom, there was
9 a late fee of 20 cents. Now 20 cents may not seem
10 much. It's nothing. But it was the principal of the
11 thing. So I took my bill into the office, and I said,
12 you know, I have never been late on my bills. I
13 always pay them on time. And I get this 20-cent late
14 fee. It's not my fault that, that payment was late.
15 I refused to pay the 20 cents. I want it taken off of
16 my bill. And I was right there at the office which is
17 what they did. And I have my receipt showing that
18 open balance is zero; okay? April, I get my -- my
19 bill, and it shows that my bill was \$54.56, but it
20 should not have been 20 cents higher; okay? It shows
21 on this bill that they reissued that late fee of 20
22 cents; okay? I paid it because I knew -- because the
23 woman told me at the office, she says, you know, we
24 can scratch that 20 cents off, but that's only a
25 one-time thing. You can't have late fees constantly

1 taken off. I said, okay, but we want to take it off.
2 The minute she took it off, I said, now I can go pay
3 my bill and -- and have it reduced by 20 cents, and
4 she said yes. And that's what happened. And I have
5 the receipt to prove it, but then when I got that next
6 bill, that 20 cents was on there. So I thought, okay,
7 20 cents is 20 cents. I'm not going to fight that
8 one, but you can better be sure that I will be looking
9 at every penny on my bill from now on; okay? And I
10 will question everything.

11 Another thing that I have a problem with is
12 not the bill, it's the transformers. I live in a
13 neighborhood that has a vacated alley. Everybody in
14 the neighborhood has either a chain link or wooden
15 fence, front and back; okay? There is a utility pole
16 in my backyard that is attached -- the power goes to
17 the guy that lives across the fence from me. The --
18 the pole that my -- that brings power to my house is
19 in the corner of my next-door neighbor; okay?
20 Whenever a squirrel or -- or wind, rain takes out the
21 transformer, they have to bring that utility truck
22 through my yard. I had to take out my front fence in
23 order for them to get their truck in so that they can
24 replace that transformer. And then -- redoing the
25 lines on north Florida and Salem, I -- I asked the

1 guys that were working there because they were in my
2 neighbor's yard working on the pole, I said, can you
3 guys tell me how to get safety for my home because the
4 guy has a walnut tree that grows up along -- his side
5 of the chain link fence over my house and over the
6 line that connects my house to the pole that they're
7 working on the poles. Says, no, that's private
8 property, we can't touch it, blah, blah, blah, blah,
9 blah. So now this guy won't take out the fence. I
10 can't -- he won't take out the tree. And I can't use
11 the size of the house -- the size of the tree and the
12 size of the limbs that come over into my property, if
13 I were to even attempt to cut it down, if I had a
14 ladder and tried to cut it, it would all fall on to
15 that line. It -- it goes -- it goes like this, and
16 the line's right here. And every time the wind blows,
17 my lights flicker; okay? I can't afford \$3,000 to
18 have that man's tree pulled out, and he doesn't want
19 it taken out because his father planted that tree over
20 70 years ago. This tree has got to be at least
21 50-feet high. Okay. So I need help from Liberty to
22 get those limbs off of my line, and you're going to
23 have to go through his property in order to get to the
24 tree. You're going to have to go through my property
25 to get to the tree. And my house -- I've lived in

1 this house for over 30 years, and my side yard is full
2 of ruts because of your utility trucks. I can't
3 reroute the lines because the way the house is built.
4 The house was built in 1928. It doesn't have
5 insulation in it. Out of the 21 windows, four of them
6 have been replaced. I do a lot of quilting and
7 crocheting and knitting to make afghans to keep warm.
8 You know, but I -- I need Liberty's help to get that
9 tree trimmed. There's got to be a way to help him get
10 that tree trimmed or taken out. Because I can't
11 afford to do it, and he can't afford to do it, but it
12 is a -- it's a safety hazard for my house, and for
13 those two -- I live on a double lot, so one utility
14 pole's over here, and one's over here. One's in my
15 yard. And one's in my neighbor's yard. I -- I don't
16 want my house to catch fire.

17 GEOFF MARKE: Can you and I have a discussion
18 with her now to where we can move on with the next --

19 MONICA DIXON: Okay.

20 TIM WILSON: Sorry, I was waiting for you
21 to get that -- I want to get your address and see if
22 we can't get your limbs cut.

23 MONICA DIXON: But I'm done. I just wanted
24 to -- you know, when I got that lousy 20 cents late
25 fee, you know, how many other people during that time

1 frame who do have large utility bills what were their
2 late fees like? Because that was beyond their
3 control. It was beyond my control. I mean, I don't
4 have a problem paying the 20 cents, but I'm worried
5 about the others that can't afford it.

6 My husband and I live on social security,
7 so we get paid once a month. So we're doing our bills
8 as we can. You know, and we just need your help and
9 I'm just getting tired of looking out my bedroom
10 window where that tree is. I'm just waiting for it to
11 come right through the backside of my house because
12 it's going to take it out. It will take it out.
13 Thank you.

14 MARK JOHNSON: Thank you, Ms. Dixon. Earl
15 Higgins on deck.

16 ASHLEY FINMORE: Hello. So my name is
17 Ashley. I'm going to come this at kind of a different
18 perspective tonight. I'm a property manager. I
19 manage about 180 rental properties for prop -- or
20 owners all across the United States. I've been doing
21 this -- my team and I've been doing this for about 15
22 years. We have a really good procedure in place.
23 We've worked really closely with Empire and Liberty
24 this whole time until you guys changed, and it is
25 becoming a nightmare. One of the things that we kind

1 of pride ourselves on for our owners is, when they use
2 our services. One of the things that they do is, they
3 set us up as a point of contact with Liberty and
4 Empire as the property manager. They set up a
5 landlord revert. They -- their first piece of
6 homework is to call Liberty, set up their landlord
7 revert. Have us in the system, so that whenever a new
8 tenant moves in or moves out, we can call them and
9 make sure that the bills -- that the -- the electric
10 goes back into their name without any lapse. That's
11 like their first thing.

12 Somehow when -- when the systems changes,
13 you guys lost all of my owners' information. All of
14 it. It's gone. For me to have to go back to my
15 owners and be like, sorry, guys, you guys, all 50 of
16 you, now have to call them back and provide all of
17 your information again. I don't know. It's a pain,
18 and my owners, we've had to do -- try to do three-way
19 calls. I even had some of your guys' customer service
20 representatives demand that I provide a deed. I'm not
21 providing your customer service agents a deed to a
22 property for anything. Nothing. I've had them hang
23 up on me. And tell me that they're not going to help
24 me. Some of the agents will -- are really nice and
25 they'll go back in the system and find the old

1 landlord revert information. Others will just flat
2 out tell me that they don't have access to the system,
3 and they just won't do it. So it's really difficult
4 to -- to get things done now.

5 I've had -- recently, the biggest thing is,
6 I'll start getting bills for owners when there's still
7 tenants in the house. They'll just automatically
8 revert back to my owners. And the tenants have been
9 living there for a year or better. I don't know why,
10 and when I call in, I can't get an answer. Or they
11 just will refuse to talk to me. I also had an owner
12 that got sent to collections by you guys because the
13 bill just didn't get sent. So I got a collection
14 letter, and when I called to find out what was going
15 on, they were, like, oh, we don't know. We sent it to
16 collections. You guys cashed the check that I had
17 been sending for her utility meter for the light pole.
18 I had to actually physically bring the check into the
19 local office and show that you guys had cashed it.
20 But you still sent her to collections. That was A
21 really embarrassing phone call for me to have to
22 provide to my owner, and let her know that she was in
23 collections. So it's been pretty awful.

24 GEOFF MARKE: Ms. Finmore, if you haven't
25 already -- well, I'm -- I'm asking on -- on my behalf

1 if you can please go ahead and give your contact
2 information to the PSC and OPC out there, so we can
3 follow back up on this.

4 ASHLEY FINMORE: Great.

5 GEOFF MARKE: There's a lot of more questions
6 we need to follow up on.

7 ASHLEY FINMORE: Sure.

8 CANDICE KELLY: And I apologize. I did not
9 catch your name.

10 ASHLEY FINMORE: Ashley Finmore.

11 CANDICE KELLY: Ms. Edward {sic}, my
12 manager is one of the managers for the customer
13 services back there in the back, if you wouldn't mind
14 talking to her as well, please.

15 ASHLEY FINMORE: Sure. Absolutely.

16 CANDICE KELLY: Thank you.

17 MARK JOHNSON: Earl Higgins is next with
18 Joe Airheart on deck.

19 GEOFF MARKE: Charles Snider in the hole.
20 All right. Next after Charles would be Josh Horton.
21 Joe Airheart?

22 JOE AIRHEART: I'm the accounting manager
23 for a College Heights Christian Church, and that's who
24 I'm really representing today. We had -- last year
25 would have been in July, I -- we did not receive a

1 bill in July. And, so our bookkeeper called Liberty
2 and asked for a -- a -- for the amount for the bill
3 for that month because we didn't get one. So they did
4 not give us a -- or they said they didn't have a bill
5 so we would have to wait until it was generated before
6 we could get one. We waited for that, and we called
7 again, and they -- the bill so -- because we don't
8 want to get behind. And, so we volunteered to go
9 ahead and pay it, but they said, well, you can't pay
10 it because there's no bill. It's zero. So we just
11 did -- we didn't do that. So we did it the next
12 month. It happened again. So this happened about
13 four months in a row, I think, four or five.

14 Finally, I -- let's see. And we also
15 volunteered to do it online. And of course, if you go
16 online, we did not have a bill online. So we didn't
17 have anything to pay that -- didn't have any way to
18 pay that. We were -- we would -- definitely would
19 have paid our bill during that period of time, and we
20 were willing to pay even -- just a flat amount, like,
21 an average bill, if we could have. But they said they
22 couldn't do it because it was a zero bill.

23 So I guess, I'm just -- I -- what I'm
24 really concerned about is, just the fact the
25 billing -- that the people wouldn't do it. And

1 there -- we actually had some pretty good customer
2 service people. Now, one of them I think they said
3 they just didn't know -- they weren't very
4 cooperative, and it was okay. It was not that good.
5 But then we had some after that, I think the last two
6 or three, that our bookkeeper talked to was real nice
7 and understood what happened, and they said it was
8 because of the system changing, so I -- I guess, I'm
9 just wanting to make sure you know that your -- that
10 the customer service was not -- it was okay, but it
11 was not what we needed, and we would like to have paid
12 our bill. So we got a bill at the end for five
13 months, and it was -- we -- our bills were pretty big.
14 So it was a lot of money when we did that, so. Then
15 the final level on that, though, is when we finally
16 got that bill for the five months, and we paid it, and
17 we paid it -- well, we've always paid our bill on
18 time. We paid the bill, but then they charged us a
19 late fee, and we waited -- so we -- we called them
20 after we -- and we paid it. We went ahead and paid
21 the late fee, but then we called then the following
22 month and said we -- well, I don't -- I can't remember
23 if I told her to call that same month or not.

24 But anyhow, we called customer service. We
25 have a late fee, and we asked if we were going to get

1 a refund on that because we knew we had already paid
2 it. We paid it on time. But because the bill came
3 out late, I -- I guess that's why the -- we had the
4 late fee. I'm not sure, but.

5 CANDICE KELLY: And when you asked about
6 having it removed --

7 JOE AIRHEART: We did ask about having it
8 removed, and they said it would, and I've got a recent
9 bill, and we still don't have a refund on it.

10 CANDICE KELLY: And it's College Heights
11 Christian Church.

12 JOE AIRHEART: Yes.

13 CANDICE KELLY: Okay.

14 JOE AIRHEART: And we have --
15 unfortunately, we have two meters on our facility --

16 CANDICE KELLY: Uh-huh.

17 JOE AIRHEART: -- main facility, and we
18 also have three separate houses that are -- separate
19 residences, too.

20 CANDICE KELLY: And my apologies, I didn't
21 catch your name.

22 JOE AIRHEART: Joe Airheart.

23 CANDICE KELLY: Have you talked to one of
24 the ladies or gentleman out front?

25 JOE AIRHEART: No. But again, my -- our

1 bookkeeper had called the office.

2 CANDICE KELLY: I want to make sure we get
3 that removed before you leave because it should have
4 already been removed from the account.

5 JOE AIRHEART: Okay. Okay. And also, I'd
6 like to make a statement. I'm an accountant, and I
7 know business. I understand business, and you know,
8 if a business doesn't make enough money to cover their
9 expenses, they go out of business, and they can't
10 continue to operate. And I know I've heard a lot of
11 complaints today, and I understand they're complaints
12 because I have the same one, the one about February
13 storm, and for -- and Asbury, but you know, somebody's
14 got to pay that bill, but you guys did have the
15 expense. And, so Liberty had the expense, and they
16 have to be able to operate. If they don't have the --
17 if something -- if they don't have some way to recover
18 that cost, you're going to go out of business. And
19 then we're not going to have electricity. I mean,
20 that's the -- that's the fact. I -- I realize it's a
21 law. You have to provide it, but I'm just saying,
22 somewhere along the line you have to be willing to pay
23 the -- to recover your cost. So I appreciate what you
24 guys do. Okay. Thanks.

25 MARK JOHNSON: Next up is Charles Snider

1 with Josh Horton next.

2 GEOFF MARKE: Megan -- Megan Dolley in the
3 hole. Oh.

4 MEGAN DOLLEY: I'm messing with three
5 Liberty accounts that all have issues. The main
6 concern is our personal home. I have solar, and we
7 are getting \$800 bills. I have not seen no \$19 bill
8 like these other people, \$800, and my roof is covered
9 in solar. There's something wrong. My solar company
10 has come out three times. They've sent three third
11 parties, so I know my solar is working correctly.
12 This is a Liberty problem, but they won't see it.
13 They sent a tech out last week. I have a video of
14 him. He was rude. He was supposed to come check my
15 meter, but when I questioned him and said, I wanted to
16 watch him do it, he told me, no, he didn't have to do
17 that. And I said, well, if you're not here to help
18 me, why are you here, and he got in his truck and
19 left. I have all that on video. I would be willing
20 to show anybody.

21 TIM WILSON: I just want to tell you that's
22 not acceptable. So if you have a person's name, I
23 would love to follow up on that myself.

24 MEGAN DOLLEY: I don't have his name, but
25 you can probably recognize him on the video.

1 TIM WILSON: Okay.

2 MEGAN DOLLEY: When you call customer
3 service, I'm actually surprised nobody else has really
4 complained about this. They are rude. They don't
5 care. They don't care if you're getting shut off.
6 They're not getting shut off. So why does it matter?

7 My second account is my sister's, and I
8 will say that the not shutting people off after a
9 certain time is a lie because she was shut off
10 March 2024. After she passed away, her electric was
11 shut off for nonpayment. She died in February. I
12 took my estate papers, her death certificate, her
13 obituary to the office. They copied all of it, told
14 me I would be receiving a thousand-dollar check
15 because that was her deposit. It's a year and four
16 months later. I still don't have her deposit back.

17 And then our rental -- I used to do a
18 thousand dollars a month, all bills paid. I had to
19 tell my tenants, I can't do this anymore. You're
20 going to have to pay your own electric. It's just too
21 expensive. And I -- same problem with the last girl.
22 I can't get tenants in there because they don't want
23 Liberty. And -- and nobody wants to help. Liberty --
24 like, his snarky comment earlier about -- when
25 somebody was -- when everybody said, no, and he's

1 like, does anybody work there? That's how they treat
2 you on the phones all the time. Nobody's polite,
3 compassionate. Tonight, they've been short, rude.
4 They could care less. They don't care about any of
5 these people. There's people in here that don't eat
6 to pay their electric. That's ridiculous. But having
7 solar and paying 8, 900-dollar bills is crazy. They
8 say I used 8,000 kilowatts in my house. There's no
9 way I could run everything in my house, and I wouldn't
10 use 8,000 kilowatts. It's ridiculous, but again, the
11 tech, so.

12 GEOFF MARKE: Ms. Dolley, there's a couple of
13 different threads here, so.

14 MEGAN DOLLEY: Uh-huh.

15 GEOFF MARKE: As far as the solar issue,
16 that's a serious issue. I'm going to hand you a card.
17 In the back is --

18 MEGAN DOLLEY: He gave me one, yeah.

19 GEOFF MARKE: Did you get the solar advocate?

20 MEGAN DOLLEY: Yes.

21 GEOFF MARKE: Okay.

22 MEGAN DOLLEY: Yeah.

23 GEOFF MARKE: That's going to be key to any
24 video you send. The second one is the down payment,
25 the deposit, you know, from -- from your sister.

1 MEGAN DOLLEY: Uh-huh.

2 GEOFF MARKE: It's my understanding you still
3 have not received that.

4 MEGAN DOLLEY: I still do not have it.

5 GEOFF MARKE: That needs to be reconciled
6 immediately; all right? So if -- if it is not -- if
7 it isn't, please follow up.

8 MEGAN DOLLEY: Okay.

9 GEOFF MARKE: As far as the customer service
10 and the comments there, we got it on the transcript
11 and appreciate it. Thank you.

12 MEGAN DOLLEY: Thank you. Uh-huh.

13 MARK JOHNSON: Next we have Paul and Blenda
14 James. After that, Samuel Kanotson (phonetic). I
15 apologize, sir.

16 BLENDA JAMES: We have a mobile home park
17 in Neosho, Missouri. I'm Blenda James, and this is my
18 husband, Paul. We have owned the mobile home park now
19 for nearly five years. And it's always had Liberty
20 electric, and when we first started getting the bills,
21 it was great. You got one bill. It came in a little
22 letter-size envelope. It was printed on both sides,
23 very efficiently. The only things that we pay for in
24 the mobile home park is the electric lighting for
25 outside, which is like street lights. We have a water

1 treatment plant for our sewage in the back and that
2 has motors and things that has to be run. We have
3 a -- an empty mobile home that we use for storage and
4 for tools and things like that. And we pay for that.

5 So on the bill, the way it used to come,
6 there was like a line, and it would say, lot number
7 such and such, and here was the bill and all the
8 breakdown on it, very efficient. Now, with the new
9 billing, I get an envelope that is this big with a
10 page per or two pages per a thing, whatever that
11 you're charging for, and which is not really
12 efficient. We get paper bills because of our taxes,
13 and the way we file them, we need the documentation.
14 So when I get a paper bill, I go into our account
15 online at the bank, and I pay it within 24 hours, if I
16 get a bill. With the new billing system, the first
17 bill I got was \$69. Well, I knew that wasn't right
18 because our bill is usually, you know, \$300 or to
19 \$400, if we have a revert to landlord on a tenant or
20 something like that. So I go up to the office, they
21 can't do anything about it because all the billing
22 comes out of somewhere else. So she said, just pay
23 the bill. You'll probably get another bill
24 eventually. Well, we've been playing this game now
25 for well over a year, since whenever your billing

1 changed. Then this year just -- just an example. So
2 the bills have been Helter Skelter and a mess, but
3 just an example, in March, we got a bill for zero,
4 said we owed zero. In April, we got a bill that said
5 we owed zero. So I'm thinking, okay, typical.
6 They'll get it fixed eventually, and we'll get a
7 1,200-dollar bill. So then I get a letter from your
8 accounting people that we haven't paid our bill for
9 months -- for March, and we haven't paid our bill for
10 April, well. Those bills that I got that I received
11 said zero. So in typical fashion, I'm thinking you
12 all will get your act together eventually, and I'll
13 get a bill, but I got a letter that said I was past
14 due. So I call, and I did get a very nice efficient
15 young lady on the phone, and I said, I don't get this.
16 The last two bills I have received in my hand, in my
17 mailbox said I owed you zero, but now you're saying I
18 owed \$260.92 cents for March and \$209.55 cents for
19 April, but I never received those bills.

20 And, so she -- I said, I have no problem
21 paying the bill, but I need a paper bill and I'll pay
22 you through my bank, and the bank pays you
23 electronically, within 24 hours. So I got those, and
24 she was gracious enough to e-mail me the pay -- a
25 bill, so I had something for my tax records. But my

1 question is, when is this going to be fixed? Because
2 the last bill I got was 200-some-odd dollars, and I
3 paid it on May 15th, and now we're in -- almost the
4 12th of June. I have not received a bill yet, so it
5 may be the same thing over again. I -- I don't --
6 I -- I don't plan how I have to pay you. Luckily, I
7 can -- I have the funds to pay you, but we have
8 tenants that are going through this very same thing,
9 and I got to tell you, folks, they have been late and
10 behind on their rent because they've had to pay your
11 electric bill, and that's not fair to them, and
12 they're not here to speak for themselves tonight, but
13 there's been a whole bunch of other people saying that
14 same thing. So indirectly, I'm not getting paid
15 because of your billing, so.

16 CANDICE KELLY: Ms. --

17 PAUL JAMES: We have --

18 CANDICE KELLY: Ms. James, is that in your
19 personal name or is there a business name I need to be
20 looking for?

21 BLEND A JAMES: I can show you. It's in our
22 LLC.

23 CANDICE KELLY: Yes, please, that would be
24 great.

25 BLEND A JAMES: -- name, but I -- I just --

1 you know, if you all send me a bill, I'll pay you
2 gladly, but I -- I don't want to know how you make
3 your watch. I just want you to tell me what time it
4 is. Because I don't have -- I don't have time to
5 go -- like, the guy, you know, that went through all
6 your public information and all that, I don't care.
7 Send me the freaking bill, and I'll pay it.

8 GEOFF MARKE: That's fair.

9 CANDICE KELLY: All right. Thank you.

10 PAUL JAMES: And one other thing, just one
11 of our tenants, two brothers, they do the same thing,
12 month to month. They've been behind and paying 300 a
13 month for at least six months, and all theirs changed
14 a year ago, and just a month ago, they got a
15 1,500-dollar bill on top of everything else, and these
16 type of people are going to go under. They're going
17 to lose everything, and it's all because the
18 accounting.

19 MARK JOHNSON: All right. So Mr. Horton.

20 JOSH HORTON: Hi. So like, quite a few
21 people here, I'm also on a fixed income. I get paid
22 once a month. I'm a 100 percent disabled veteran. My
23 wife is a full-time student, getting some money off of
24 my VA benefits, for what she does in school. We --
25 when it rains it pours. We have issues like everybody

1 else, and we got a letter in the mail saying that the
2 payment arrangement we were on was going to be
3 cancelled if we didn't pay by a date that had already
4 past the day I got the letter by like two weeks. So I
5 called, spoke to a rep, and she said, no, you're still
6 good, go ahead and pay it. So I made the payment
7 right then and there, and not too long after I got
8 another disconnect notice, and I called and spoke to
9 somebody named Laura, who kindly told me that all the
10 problems were my fault because I don't check my mail
11 often enough, and I'm supposed to read all of that
12 even though I do. I asked her specifically, because I
13 looked things up, what can I do to get on a cold
14 weather rate agreement? She had no clue what that was
15 and told me I had to pay \$1,200 to not get
16 disconnected so. When you guys say, you don't
17 disconnect your customers, you might want to let your
18 reps know that, and when I asked her, okay, how long
19 do I have to pay this \$1,200, she said, quote, that's
20 your prerogative.

21 So instead of the month I was behind on
22 rent or the 2,000-dollar surgery my dog needed for his
23 cancer, which we were going to pay for because I still
24 had a little bit left from our tax return, we paid the
25 electric bill, and I now have an urn with my dog's

1 ashes. So you can apologize, but that's not going to
2 bring my dog back. It's not going to help the late
3 fees I paid in rent. I even called back later and was
4 lucky enough to speak to Laura again, who still had no
5 clue what she was doing, even though I spoke with a
6 manager before her, made a complaint about her, and I
7 also filed a report with these guys who launched an
8 investigation, sent me a letter and gave me a phone
9 call saying they investigated that call, and you guys
10 should get dinged for it.

11 TIM WILSON: Well, first of all, thank you
12 for your service.

13 JOSH HORTON: Thank you.

14 TIM WILSON: We have Lauras. We want to
15 get your name and address back there. She's waving at
16 you.

17 JOSH HORTON: Okay.

18 TIM WILSON: We want -- I'm sure Dr. Mark
19 will be following up on it, but we certainly want to
20 follow up as well.

21 JOSH HORTON: Thank you.

22 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 4: Sorry about your dog.

23 JOSH HORTON: Thank you.

24 MARK JOHNSON: Okay. Next up we have
25 Samuel Kanotson, and after that, Dale Denman.

1 SAMUEL KANOTSON: A lot of the issues that
2 I've been through are similar. I do all of my billing
3 through the electronic system, and it won't even --
4 now it's weird because I looked today, and it's got
5 the bills credited on the right days, but they
6 wouldn't roll out on the correct times. There was a
7 couple of bills that didn't exist. Magically, it's
8 gone now. I don't have a record of it because it was
9 all electronic. And I don't know why it's changed,
10 but that was very odd. And frustrating, and then I
11 had a bill that was very high that I don't -- I went
12 into the office in Joplin, and they said, we don't
13 know. It's right. I -- I got no recourse and to say
14 whether, you know, what was going on, so that --
15 that's very frustrating, and then I'd like to know
16 from POC -- not POC, P -- what are you guys? LP,
17 whatever. Anyway, is it accurate that this is -- that
18 they're not monopoly -- utility monopolies everywhere
19 in the State of Missouri, that it's just different
20 regions?

21 And then I have seen my bill double. I've
22 tried to get utility assistance. What good is utility
23 assistance for -- through Liberty for 50 percent
24 agreement if you don't have the money for the
25 exorbitantly doubled bill to begin with, and they're

1 all the same. They're all doubled, and where are
2 these rate increases going to? What are you paying
3 for? Why are you asking for another rate increase?
4 Except it's going to the stockholders. I don't know.
5 It's very frustrating. So I'd really like to know,
6 where is this money going? What are you using it for?
7 Why do you keep asking for more money and just ripping
8 us? I'm on a fixed income. I am terrified of my --
9 every utility bill, and then it doesn't even roll out
10 on time.

11 GEOFF MARKE: Lots to unpack there. A lot of
12 questions. They are a monopoly. They're a franchise
13 agreement to effectively serve this area. Missouri's
14 a vertically integrated state, so there are
15 monopolies. They come in three flavors. There's
16 investor-owned utilities, like Liberty, Ameren, and
17 Evergy. There's cooperatives, and there are municipal
18 utilities like City of Springfield. You guys have
19 investor-owned utility. That is heavily regulated by
20 Missouri Public Service Commission.

21 Our office, the Office of Public Counsel
22 represents the public on issues before that, the
23 dollar amount that -- the price that you guys are
24 paying is reflective of the cost of that service.
25 Now, reasonable minds can and do differ and will

1 disagree as to what that price is, and that's going to
2 play out in this next rate case where they're asking
3 for a 30 percent rate increase on top of what you're
4 paying right now. That is recovering cost associated
5 with fuel, the investments made since their last rate
6 case, their distribution lines, wires, poles, meters,
7 billing software. Now, all of that stuff is up for
8 review. And we are in the process of auditing the
9 company simultaneously, while we're doing this
10 investigation on that. So we're in a position to go
11 ahead and sit there and make recommendations and say,
12 no, we don't think the customers should be charged for
13 X because of a lot of reasons. And we will be making
14 those recommendations, now at --

15 SAMUEL KANOTSON: I appreciate that.

16 GEOFF MARKE: Well, that is our job. But
17 unfortunately, at the end of the day those
18 recommendations, and there are other parties in this
19 case, so it's not just our office and the PSC and the
20 company. You've got environmental groups, you've got
21 large industrial customers, you've got everybody. And
22 all of that effectively goes in -- and that'll play
23 out over the next six, seven months, and the
24 Commission, the five appointed commissioners,
25 ultimately, make that determination. I don't know.

1 Additional questions?

2 SAMUEL KANOTSON: I was wondering one
3 thing, when I was looking at my bill, why are we able
4 to be gouged for different hours? Of service? Why is
5 that allowed?

6 GEOFF MARKE: So it -- the time of use
7 rates --

8 SAMUEL KANOTSON: Nobody's up at 2:00 in
9 the morning using their washer.

10 GEOFF MARKE: That is a fair question. So
11 the idea behind the time of use rates, so it -- if
12 you're familiar with it, it's a couple cents cheaper,
13 like 1:00 in the morning, that reflects the wholesale
14 energy market prices. In -- if you kind of all
15 appreciate this, there's a lot of wind farms that are
16 out there in Kansas and Oklahoma and Nebraska that are
17 building in energy. The reality of the situation is,
18 those wind farms are mostly operational in the middle
19 of the night because it's windy in the middle of the
20 night. Now, there's no fuel cost related to those
21 wind farms, which means the wholesale market prices
22 are lower during that time. The idea behind it is
23 that there's some people that want -- that elect to go
24 all electric and that put a larger strain on the
25 system.

1 So think about EV cars, if everybody drove
2 an electric vehicle car and was charging it at the
3 same time, that means we're firing up more and more
4 generating plants to meet that demand. Well, that
5 means it's a higher price so. We're trying to send
6 you a price signal to make it cheaper than it
7 otherwise would be. It -- it is frustrating for
8 customers, and I can absolutely appreciate that. But
9 it is -- it is a -- the utility bill is probably one
10 of the few -- few companies where you're not getting
11 billed almost immediately for that service. You're
12 getting it a month after the fact, and then looking at
13 the bill and the frustrations that we're hearing
14 tonight is largely because those bills aren't accurate
15 or you're not getting a bill. So I -- believe me.
16 We've got copious amounts of notes to -- to look into
17 that.

18 Moving forward to address the specific time
19 of use issue, that was in -- also an amendment or a
20 line item within the ominous bill that was just passed
21 which allows if you don't want to be on a time of use
22 rate, you don't have to be. But if you want to save a
23 few more cents and change how you use your energy, you
24 can. But it is an optional feature for you.

25 SAMUEL KANOTSON: But is it any cheaper if

1 you're not on that?

2 GEOFF MARKE: No.

3 SAMUEL KANOTSON: Okay. So then there's no
4 point.

5 GEOFF MARKE: Well, it's cheaper if you -- if
6 you use your energy when it's cheaper. I mean, that's
7 the long and short of it. That's true.

8 SAMUEL KANOTSON: Right. Right. It's
9 really hard to know whether we can trust those things
10 because with the energy going up so much and the
11 prices doubling, it's just -- it doesn't make sense.
12 And, so like everybody expressed an issue with
13 trusting what we're getting, so. I concur with that.

14 GEOFF MARKE: Thank you for your comments.
15 They're absolutely noted.

16 SAMUEL KANOTSON: Thank you.

17 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 5: Thank you, sir.

18 MARK JOHNSON: Next is Dale Denman. After
19 you, it is Charis Seaton (phonetic). I'll be right
20 back.

21 DALE DENMAN: All right. Thank you for
22 coming. My first question -- or I'll make a comment
23 to the Commission company in regard to -- as the lady
24 said earlier, a lot of the old -- a lot of people in
25 Jasper County are of elderly and on fixed incomes, and

1 we just got hit by a big property tax increase in
2 Jasper County under state law. So with the increase
3 of on our electric bills, it is extremely higher than
4 what the increase is on social security cost of living
5 is every year that the government gives you. So like
6 these other people said, it's going to be a decision
7 where they're going to have to sacrifice medicine or
8 food or something else if they want to keep their
9 electricity on.

10 Next point is, this all started because of
11 your billing company that you contracted of April of
12 last year. You might take into consideration in
13 changing that contract. I don't know how it reads,
14 but to eliminate a lot of this problem because of the
15 billing issue, and I have a billing issue just like
16 everybody else. First month or two didn't get
17 anything until I got a late notice saying that I
18 hadn't paid my bill. So I got caught up. July was
19 fine. August was three times higher, put me behind on
20 me paying my bill, and spending a year trying to catch
21 up and within 25 percent of -- of catching up to -- on
22 the billing, but every month I get a cut-off notice.
23 How many cut-off notices do you send out before you
24 actually cut off people's electricity?

25 CANDICE KELLY: Right now we're not

1 actively disconnecting service.

2 DALE DENMAN: Okay. Right there is a good
3 place to start saving money is to quit sending out
4 cut-off notices.

5 CANDICE KELLY: Those are -- those are sent
6 so customers can receive assistance that need to
7 receive assistance and without those, the --

8 DALE DENMAN: That's how catching --

9 CANDICE KELLY: -- agencies will not
10 provide assistance.

11 CURT GATELEY: The trouble with that, though,
12 is if they include that, then the folks who -- the
13 community action agencies and others, they have
14 limited amount of funds, and they're going to try to
15 help the folks that are imminently about to be
16 disconnected, and if -- if they put language on there
17 saying, well, it's -- it's a disconnect notice, but
18 it's not really, then those folks are putting a -- put
19 in a bind of, well, we can't really distribute that
20 kind of money that the --

21 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 6: (Inaudible) paper
22 (inaudible).

23 CURT GATELEY: It's a good point, yeah. I
24 mean, it's something we've been debating and
25 discussing of, how do we get around this?

1 DALE DENMAN: Next point. Your wind
2 turbines, I get up every day and look at them. I went
3 to schooling to become a wind turbine technician. I
4 know it takes three miles an hour of wind to get one
5 going. The wind conditions outside, you can tell
6 whether it's five miles or 20 miles an hour. A lot of
7 times when wind turbines aren't moving, when it's over
8 three, five, 10, for some reason or another, I was
9 told today that the electric load that goes from there
10 to the La Russell Power Plant stations before it goes
11 on to the power line systems can be too much for the
12 line system, and they won't allow it to put on; is
13 that true or false?

14 TIM WILSON: So what we have with our wind
15 farms, sometimes -- you're right. It's a little
16 higher than three miles an hour. But there is a --
17 what we call a cut in speed for our wind farms, and
18 generally, if there's not maintenance being performed,
19 they should be rotating, if the wind is above those
20 levels. However, there are times as part of the
21 Southwest Power Pool, if there is congestion on the
22 transmission system, they will send us a price signal
23 that tells us to -- to back them off or to shut them
24 down. So if you see an entire park out, it's due to
25 transmission congestion.

1 DALE DENMAN: Okay. How much electricity
2 to produce off those wind turbines stay in Jasper
3 County or southwest Missouri, and how much is put on
4 the line to ship back east where the ratings are
5 higher?

6 TIM WILSON: So again, we're part of the
7 Southwest Power Pool. It doesn't go east of Missouri
8 and so it's kind of -- if you think of the -- the
9 electric grid and the transmission grid, it's a very
10 good question. I get asked it a lot, so I'm glad you
11 asked it. It's like -- it's like -- take a lake;
12 okay? You don't know -- and if you scoop a cup of
13 water out of the lake, you don't know exactly where
14 that water came from, but it came from --

15 DALE DENMAN: Uh-huh.

16 TIM WILSON: -- one of the tributaries.
17 That's kind of how the -- the electric bulk system
18 power grid works. I can tell you it -- it most likely
19 stayed in the Southwest Power Pool, but it's -- it's
20 generally --

21 DALE DENMAN: You guys don't have a problem
22 if they pass a state law saying all electricity
23 produced in Missouri stays in Missouri?

24 TIM WILSON: I don't know if that's
25 technically possible.

1 DALE DENMAN: Okay. The contract on these
2 wind turbines with landowners is, they tell me is
3 about 30 years before they dismantle them, take them
4 down, take out the concrete, the roads, and
5 everything, when you -- how much percentage of your
6 electricity comes from the wind turbines for Liberty?

7 TIM WILSON: So it -- again, it's a little
8 difficult to say. Very good question. How the
9 wholesale power market works is, we bid our units into
10 the -- into the Southwest Power Pool, and they
11 economically dispatch the entire pool. So Nebraska,
12 Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, parts of Arkansas, parts
13 of Texas, parts of Louisiana, you get it. They
14 economically dispatch the entire system; okay? And,
15 so at the end of the day you don't really know exactly
16 where things are going.

17 DALE DENMAN: Okay.

18 TIM WILSON: And if I didn't address your
19 question, rephrase it. About our generation mix.
20 There you go. So -- so it's hard to tell what your
21 generation mix is. I can tell you what we generate,
22 but our consumption mix is different.

23 DALE DENMAN: Uh-huh.

24 TIM WILSON: We're between 15 and
25 20 percent generation mix on wind right now, the last

1 I looked, but it's been a while.

2 DALE DENMAN: When those wind turbines go
3 offline and you take them down, will they be replaced
4 back by coal that's a lot cheaper as our life
5 experience has been with Empire in the past?

6 TIM WILSON: So, again, we're getting into
7 the Asbury deal. Asbury was not cheaper, but Unit 1,
8 Unit 2 in Plum Point which are coal fire facilities
9 that were cheaper. We -- we perform a study every
10 three years called the integrate resource plan. And
11 it looks out 20 years; okay? And it takes what they
12 call the net present value of revenue requirement.
13 What that means is, in today's dollars, how much your
14 customer's going to pay over a 20-year period, what's
15 the most economic way to meet the energy demands that
16 you have for your customers while meeting all rules
17 and regulations? Right now, we have zero wind in our
18 20-year forecast. We have to do an annual update, and
19 if market conditions change as they do rapidly, then,
20 sorry, we may have to change, but right now, our next
21 big generator is -- is scheduled, and it's public
22 information. It is -- it is natural gas turbines.

23 DALE DENMAN: Okay.

24 TIM WILSON: Yep.

25 DALE DENMAN: The point of entry in regard

1 to earlier, you said, it doesn't take a lot of
2 petroleum or gas oil to run a wind turbine. In regard
3 to there's 30 to 50 gallons of oil up in there to keep
4 that thing cool, and it's got to be switched out about
5 every 30 -- or every three months. And the blades are
6 all hundred percent epoxy which is made from
7 petroleum-based product. So is the paint, so is --
8 there's a lot of petroleum in gas that goes into the
9 production, building them things and operating them
10 things. So it may be a green energy, but it does take
11 a lot of fossil fuel to make it work.

12 GEOFF MARKE: A hundred percent right. I
13 concur with that, yes.

14 DALE DENMAN: Thank you for your time.

15 GEOFF MARKE: Yes. Thank you. Great
16 questions.

17 CHARIS SEATON: I'd like to thank Senator
18 Carter. Are you still here? I'd like to thank her
19 first and foremost because without her, I don't think
20 we'd be here today. Okay. So my question is for --
21 and I'm sorry, I don't -- I'm not really good with
22 names, for the attorney, the attorney that represents
23 Empire that --

24 TIM WILSON: Definitely not me.

25 CHARIS SEATON: Doesn't represent Canada.

1 Represents Empire. Okay. Were you on board when I
2 got the letter as a shareholder for Empire stock that
3 told me that I had to sell my shares back to Empire?
4 Were you on this board or were you aware of that?
5 Were you present when that happened years ago when
6 Liberty and -- and Empire did whatever they did to
7 combine or merge or whatever they did?

8 DIANA CARTER: So I am a regulatory
9 attorney.

10 CHARIS SEATON: Okay. So you -- okay.

11 DIANA CARTER: I was working with Empire at
12 the time, but no, I -- I represent Empire in
13 regulatory matters.

14 CHARIS SEATON: Gotcha. Okay. So can
15 anyone guess why Empire would tell me as a stockholder
16 years ago that I had to sell my shares back to Empire?
17 Anybody want to give me a guess on why that would be?
18 I'm just -- I'm curious. Probably because they knew
19 that they could have me sell low so that their
20 executives who ARE making millions and billions of
21 dollars in salaries can -- can buy back low, and now
22 have more shares to support their retirements and
23 their benefits.

24 Okay. So with that said, it's going to
25 lead to my next question. Okay. So you're a

1 regulatory attorney; correct? And your name again,
2 I'm sorry.

3 DIANA CARTER: My name is -- is Diana
4 Carter.

5 CHARIS SEATON: Okay. So Diana, do you
6 make decisions every day that affect people like me
7 who's -- as far as re -- as far as going into
8 subrogation with insurance companies for damages that
9 Liberty has caused to its customers? Do you go into
10 subrogation at all?

11 DIANA CARTER: I do not.

12 CHARIS SEATON: Okay. Do you have
13 subrogation attorneys?

14 DIANA CARTER: Does the company?

15 CHARIS SEATON: Yeah.

16 DIANA CARTER: I imagine --

17 CHARIS SEATON: That subrogates.

18 DIANA CARTER: -- the corporate and --

19 CHARIS SEATON: Okay.

20 DIANA CARTER: -- does deal with insurance
21 companies.

22 CHARIS SEATON: So then you're admitting
23 that Liberty at some point subrogated with my
24 insurance company?

25 DIANA CARTER: Ma'am, I --

1 CHARIS SEATON: I'm just saying.

2 DIANA CARTER: I don't even have your name.
3 I have --

4 CHARIS SEATON: Well, Mr. Mark is very
5 familiar with my case. So my point is, you do have
6 attorneys that sit there every day and subrogate on
7 behalf of Liberty's interests when it comes to damages
8 but not to the customer of all these people that lost
9 their -- their appliances and stuff, and now they have
10 to go to their insurance company and ask them to
11 mitigate those damages, and Liberty is saying, not our
12 fault, even though I can prove and the Missouri Public
13 Service Commission proved that it was Liberty's
14 damages that caused my -- my -- or caused Liberty's --
15 excuse me. It is Liberty's fault that caused my
16 damages. So you guys settle with me; okay? And I
17 don't know -- well, I don't know if I can be sued by
18 this because the -- in the settlement agreement that
19 you guys gave me to settle my damages after three and
20 a half, four and a half years of trying to get this
21 mitigated, you're coming to me and saying that I
22 cannot disclose unless by law, my settlement agreement
23 with you; right? Is that correct? So essentially --

24 DIANA CARTER: Ma'am, again, I'm sorry. I
25 know they have a list of names there, but we don't

1 have the list of names. So I don't have your name or
2 your information.

3 CHARIS SEATON: Well, that's exactly what
4 happened in my case. So I file with Missouri Public
5 Commission two years after I tried to mitigate damages
6 with my insurance company, when my insurance company
7 comes back on me after paying out a measly \$1,300
8 settlement to replace all the equipment and -- and --
9 and items in my house that were damaged by Liberty's
10 failure to maintain their -- their equipment properly;
11 okay? They come back, and two and a half years after
12 they pay out that 1,300 claim, two and a half years
13 back later, they come out and say, this is AAA. They
14 come out and say, okay, Mrs. Seaton, we -- we tried to
15 subrogate, wink, wink. We tried to subrogate with
16 Liberty Utilities, and they said that they're not
17 responsible for the damages. Please send me the
18 letter from the Missouri Department -- or Missouri
19 Commission department -- public utilities Commission
20 saying that they can prove that it is Liberty's
21 damages. And we'll -- we'll mitigate your premiums
22 now that we've risen your premiums -- now that we've
23 increased your premiums by the \$1,300. So
24 essentially, my -- I'm having to pay back my own claim
25 to AAA. Okay. So I'm paying back now \$1,300 plus AAA

1 is telling me that because you didn't subrogate with
2 them in good faith, after my due diligence, they come
3 back and say, okay, now we want -- we -- the State of
4 Missouri is allowing us to charge you 30 percent on
5 that claim two years after we settle, two and a half
6 years after we settled, mind you, and we're going to
7 add that to your premiums, and oh, by the way,
8 Ms. Seaton, because you had to file this claim,
9 because of Liberty's fault, we are now going to --
10 you're going to lose your discounts.

11 So I think I figured it up with Mr. Mark
12 and my out costs after I settled with Liberty is
13 another 3 grand. Okay. Because you guys are making
14 decisions that affect me as a homeowner. So I go back
15 to department of insurance with the State of Missouri
16 under Missouri Public Service Commission, and I am
17 told that, and I quote, this is coming from the State
18 of Missouri. I quote, we do not regulate the
19 insurance industry.

20 You don't -- you don't regulate the
21 insurance industry? Really? You tell me I have to
22 have auto insurance. You put it by law that I have to
23 have at least this amount of insurance to drive my car
24 and to be licensed to drive my car and register my
25 car, but you're telling me you don't regulate the

1 homeowners insurance side of it, so AAA for --
2 essentially, put me on a bad debt list. It's called
3 a -- a high risk list, and they do it nationwide
4 because I filed this claim over Liberty's fault,
5 knowing it's not my fault. Now AAA is saying, okay,
6 not only are we going to add insult to injury by all
7 these charges and premiums, we're going to now charge
8 you over this next five-year period, but we're going
9 to put you on this list. So if you try to go look for
10 insurance elsewhere to get better rates, by a
11 better -- by an ethical company, unlike AAA, that
12 insurance company, because it happened to me, all the
13 insurance companies that I've been to since then have
14 told me they cannot insure me because I've been put on
15 this high risk list by AAA. So they can't insure me,
16 but they can insure me under a subsidiary until I come
17 off of that list, and by the way, that's going to cost
18 me three times more than what AAA is already now
19 increasing my premiums at.

20 So I'm the bad guy. And Liberty's making
21 these decisions that -- yeah. And Liberty's making
22 these decisions that affect me as a homeowner, who
23 protects my assets because the State of Missouri is
24 telling me it's not them because then they tell me,
25 oh, the department of insurance tells me go to the

1 attorney general's office. I go to the attorney
2 general's office. I give them my case number. It's
3 for both Liberty and -- and Missouri Department of
4 Insurance, and I give them my claim number, I give
5 them the settlement that you guys -- we settled on the
6 settlement document, and I give that to the attorney
7 general's office. I said, what this amounts to is
8 extortion, racketeering, and price fixing. And it's
9 between Liberty or the utility companies and their big
10 pocket influence, and it's between the insurance
11 industry, and we're the ones that are being put in the
12 middle of all of this. So if -- if somebody's trying
13 to tell you -- if Liberty is trying to tell you
14 they're not responsible for the damages, and you can
15 prove it through them, fight it. Because I'm
16 continuing to fight it. And I'm not getting any help
17 from the State of Missouri. I was told I needed to go
18 to my state rep. So, and that's what I'm trying to
19 do. Thank you. I appreciate you.

20 MARK JOHNSON: Thank you, Ms. Seaton.
21 Brent Buford or Boford. Jordan Wilson. M. Kenblock.
22 I -- I can't figure that one out. Leah or lieu.

23 GEOFF MARKE: Leigh. We're going to come
24 back to -- we're going to come back to that one. How
25 about Camille Lombardi.

1 CAMILLE LOMBARDY: I'm going to start off
2 with this. It appears that listening to everybody,
3 everybody -- thousands of customers have been subject
4 to overcharging. Now, as far as overcharging goes,
5 every time you put that bill, that false bill into the
6 mail, and you send it to that customer, that
7 entitle -- that ends up being mail fraud. Mail fraud
8 when it's thousands of customers overcharged, that's
9 racketeering, that's RICO charge. So perhaps, we need
10 to start looking -- overcharge.

11 I had the regular old meter until I changed
12 it out last year, and I got the smart meter. I didn't
13 want the smart meter. I had the option. Because I
14 live on the other side of Duquesne Road, so I'm not
15 mandated like everybody else. But they went ahead and
16 put it in. I didn't know until I got my first bill,
17 and my first bill was 33 percent higher than last year
18 even though I used less kilowatts. Three percent
19 higher with less usage. When I called up to complain
20 about my bill, because I had like a \$57 bill in
21 February, and then all of a sudden the end of April,
22 it's \$249. And the same time last year, I think I
23 paid 63. So something happened. I'm not using more.
24 I'm actually using less. The lady was very rude. And
25 told me that, well, I probably have too many

1 appliances plugged in. I said, really? I said, I
2 don't keep anything plugged in other than my
3 refrigerator, my stove, and my washer, and dryer. I
4 unplug. I use my microwave. I unplug it. Every -- I
5 unplug it. I don't leave things plugged in. So I'm
6 very low usage.

7 My air conditioning right now, I keep it at
8 82 during the day. I'm sure you'd all enjoy that kind
9 of balmy weather. But that's what I do to try to, you
10 know, afford the bills that you guys are charging me
11 for. In the winter, I have gas, and generally --
12 generally, my electric was low, but that since I got
13 your smart meter, the smart meter that everybody has
14 been talking about, I even met a lady at the electric
15 company at the office, and she had a 1,500 -- a little
16 old lady had a \$1,500 electrical bill. And she has a
17 little bitty house, and she was up there trying to
18 figure out how she was going to pay this bill.

19 And what you guys are doing, you're
20 victimizing every single customer that's on your
21 rating. Every single one of us you have made a
22 hostage to your rate increases, and as far as what
23 they did in Jeff City, kind of deregulating and
24 allowing you guys to raise the rates, you already
25 raised them. You've already raised them. They're

1 already on the billing. But you're lying and going
2 through this big circus saying, oh, we're going to
3 have town hall meetings, and we're going to get input.
4 But basically, you've already stabbed us in the back.

5 The other problem is, you're buying from
6 Canada. You don't think that's a problem? I lived in
7 Afghanistan in 2018 and 2019. I was a charitable. I
8 ran a charity, and they had rolling blackouts, kind of
9 like what we -- are going through on 20th Street.

10 Because we always have them. Not for 15 minutes. We
11 get them for a couple hours at a time. And I'll be
12 looking out thinking, what happened, did somebody hit
13 the electric pole? The last one was, like, two weeks
14 ago. We lost power for three hours. We also get
15 surges. And what these people are talking about with
16 their appliances getting ruined, it's not the outages,
17 I guarantee. It's the surges. I had a teapot,
18 electric teapot, almost blow up because the
19 electricity surged through that line. I've had things
20 that I plugged in. Like, my phone charger gets so
21 hot, because the electrical is surging. I could hear
22 it humming because I have a pole right next to my
23 house. When it's going through the surge period, you
24 hear a loud humming. It comes all the way in the
25 house. You hear it. So it's not the outages that are

1 killing people's appliances and electrical products.
2 It is the surges which is a problem with your lines.
3 You know, that's lack of maintenance. Oh, I forgot.
4 That's why you wanted to raise rates for future
5 maintenance, and you know, modernization, I guess,
6 that's what I read. You know, you want to raise them.
7 So these future costs, well, you're not taking care of
8 it right now.

9 The maintenance is problematic. I'm
10 waiting for something really bad to happen. Because
11 where I live, we get outages of hours at a time, and
12 we get surges all the time. All the time. You know,
13 a sudden surge, if it almost blows up an electronic
14 teapot, there's a problem somewhere in the line.
15 There -- there's a lack of -- I don't know if it's a
16 capacitor or whatever you call it, to control the
17 electrical current that's going through that line, but
18 you guys have problems. And you want us to pay for
19 it. And bottom line is, like I said, you're
20 overcharging us. There's proof that's racketeering,
21 and I hope you all get held to account. Thank you.

22 GEOFF MARKE: Thank you. Ms. Lombardi,
23 I'll --

24 MARK JOHNSON: Next, we got Andy Mayers and
25 Jessey Manison.

1 JESSEY MANISON: Hi. Thank you. Thank you
2 for being here. I just wanted to bring to your
3 attention billing, slash, customer service issue that
4 I've been dealing with for the last year.

5 So in June of 2024, we moved into a new
6 mobile home. We're very fortunate and that we had the
7 meter put in right away. Electricity got ran right
8 away, and it was great. But I -- I never received a
9 bill. And, so two months went by, and I was like, I'm
10 only getting charged for a service fee which was
11 because they had me open as an account, but there
12 wasn't actually any usage as being read on the meter.

13 So over the course of the last 11 months, I
14 have called seven times, I've went into the office
15 once to talk to someone in person, and every single
16 time they just kind of give me the runaround, and they
17 are like, oh, well, it needs to go to billing, there's
18 just an issue that needs to be turned on, and then I
19 call back the next month because there's not an issue,
20 same thing, oh, we have another ticket on your
21 account, I've been asked to forward it to a manager.
22 I've been forwarded to two different managers. Now
23 this issue has been taken care of as of today, so.

24 Low and behold this morning, I got a bill.
25 And as you can imagine, it's, you know, very high, and

1 I appreciate the fact that we're working with your
2 company to set up a payment plan, but I think the lack
3 of accountability and the fact that for 11 months, I
4 continued to call to try and get a bill to pay you
5 guys, and no one could help me, and no one was
6 reaching out to try to solve my problem, and to be
7 frank, my experience like a lot of people, the -- the
8 customer service wasn't amazing. And it was just kind
9 of, well, call back, and we'll try to figure it out,
10 no guarantees, and there doesn't seem to be any
11 accountability; right? If I pay my bills late,
12 there's late fees. There's late service charges, but
13 when it takes you guys almost a year to get me a bill,
14 when I -- all I want to do is pay; right? And, so now
15 I'm hit with a giant bill that I'm going to be paying
16 on top, that just doesn't seem right, and it doesn't
17 seem like there's any accountability. So I just
18 wanted to -- I know that when I spoke with some
19 customer service reps, I'm not the only one that this
20 has happened to, and they just sort of brush it off
21 and said, oh, yeah, this is happening to people, and
22 I'm like, well, I'm on month 10 now that I haven't
23 gotten a bill.

24 I'm a medical student. So I'm really busy
25 and I don't -- I'm not trying to say that my time is

1 more valuable than anyone else's, but I don't have
2 time to spend making seven phone calls and come and
3 spend three hours at meetings like this just to try
4 and pay you for the service. So that was really
5 frustrating, and I just wanted to bring that to your
6 attention. Thank you.

7 TIM WILSON: Thank you for doing so. Can
8 we get your name again?

9 JESSEY MANISON: Yeah.

10 TIM WILSON: Thank you for sharing your
11 story.

12 JESSEY MANISON: Jessey Manison. Last name
13 M-A-N-I-S-O-N. First name J-E-S-S-E-Y. Thank you.

14 DIANA CARTER: I want to say props for
15 being in med school. Super cool.

16 Also, I -- I know that's super frustrating,
17 and for everybody, I hope everybody understands we
18 know it's frustrating, and as Tim said in his opening
19 statement, we apologize. We know it is frustrating.
20 And more than anything, I wish someone could have just
21 handed you a bill, so. To me, as -- how I function
22 I'm like, can't I just write people bills, like,
23 because that to me seems how my brain works. I should
24 just be able to hand people a bill, but it -- you
25 know, it needs to be in the system, it needs to be

1 properly recorded, and accounted, and I know you don't
2 see the work going on. I don't really see the work --
3 like, it's not present to me, but behind the scenes,
4 the people on the computer end, they have been working
5 all this time and -- and they want to make sure it's
6 all fixed going forward. And, so we're just not
7 manually kicking out a bill and handing it to you.

8 So again, I am so sorry. I know that's
9 very frustrating. Hopefully, not only is it fixed for
10 you now, right now, this morning, but hopefully,
11 the -- it's taken this long, so it's now fixed so
12 there doesn't need to be manual intervention, and
13 it'll just kick out for you as it's supposed to every
14 month, and you get a nice smooth billing experience
15 from here on out which is what we hope for, for all of
16 our customers all the time.

17 JESSEY MANISON: I appreciate that. I -- I
18 think also just the fact that every single time I
19 talked to someone seven times it needed to go to a
20 different person or, oh, no, it actually needs to be
21 forwarded to the manager or, oh, no, it needs to be
22 forwarded to this billing. Like, how are you a
23 customer service representative, but no one's able to
24 solve a simple issue which is just, hey, can you turn
25 on my billing, you know? That seems a little crazy,

1 but thank you.

2 DIANA CARTER: I know, and they really
3 couldn't just turn it on because it's -- it was a much
4 bigger computer issue to be fixed.

5 JESSEY MANISON: So it took 11 months to
6 fix the computer?

7 DIANA CARTER: I wish I had a better answer
8 for you.

9 JESSEY MANISON: Okay. Thank you.

10 MARK JOHNSON: I'll -- again, it's either
11 Lee or --

12 GEOFF MARKE: Kim or Jim. If you signed and
13 you haven't spoken --

14 MARK JOHNSON: How about I try that. All
15 right. So next is Sarita Eldridge. Eldridge, pardon
16 me. Okay. Barbara Cracksburger (phonetic). Sharon
17 McConner. Or McConnan. Judith Augustanov (phonetic).

18 GEOFF MARKE: Ms. Augustanov, if you wouldn't
19 mind speaking into the microphone just so we get it
20 on -- we can transcribe that.

21 JUDITH AUGUSTANOV: Most of my issues have
22 probably been answered here. It's probably the same
23 complaints that everybody else has. I didn't
24 understand -- because my dad is -- has a very small
25 pension, and in our family, we have about \$900 a month

1 of income just from a rental and selling milk. And we
2 are starting a -- trying to, you know, have a organic
3 little farm that we're trying to start a business. I
4 just don't understand how -- okay. Maybe I should go
5 back a little bit. We bought a party -- property that
6 used to be an old rental -- had multiple units on it.
7 And, so we are renting out one unit and redoing some
8 other ones and stuff, and we live very simply. We
9 don't use heating. We use a wood stove. And we live
10 with that. Air conditioning, we only use when it's
11 absolutely -- like, 90 degrees in the house, then we
12 turn it on. We do have a lot of refrigerators and
13 freezers because we grow our own food. And I just
14 don't understand how in the wintertime, our bill, when
15 we don't have air conditioning on is -- is much higher
16 than what we have in the summertime when we do have
17 air conditioning on. And it's between like 400 to
18 almost \$800 a month, and it's just like, I don't
19 understand how we can live simply and still have a
20 bill quite that high, and when my dad -- and my dad
21 takes care of the electrical, he pays for the billing.
22 And he says, you know -- he -- he's just very adamant
23 about writing checks, and it's like, he gets a
24 check -- a thing saying that the electricity is going
25 to go out. And, so he gets all panicked you know, and

1 he does already go around shutting off lights
2 because -- when the children leave it on, you know,
3 and everything. It's a lot of stress, and he says,
4 next month it's going to be a thousand dollars, and
5 it's like, what? Dad, something is wrong. There's
6 something desperately wrong when we live simply, and
7 we pay that much money, and you're telling me that
8 we're going to have a 30 percent hike? That's --
9 that's really scary. And, you know -- and then he
10 pays the bills, and he calls and says, you know,
11 you're going to shut off our electricity, but I paid
12 you. He goes, well, that account is up to date --
13 there's no -- you have -- actually have a little bit
14 of a credit on that account, but you do have 200
15 something dollars on another one. So I just wonder if
16 there's a way of, like, getting rid of all these
17 accounts and putting everything on one electric bill.

18 And I also wanted to know, I -- to get some
19 answers about an analog. I don't -- I don't want the
20 smart meters. I want just -- I'll gladly send you
21 the -- the readings every month. I'll -- you know, I
22 don't want those smart meters. I think there's a lot
23 of lying that goes on behind it. I don't -- and I
24 know that there's a lot of, you know, truth that we
25 take care of them and that they're honest and blah,

1 blah, blah. I don't believe it. I have to think of
2 what else do I have, I think that's it.

3 GEOFF MARKE: Mrs. Augustanov, am I
4 pronouncing it correctly?

5 JUDITH AUGUSTANOV: Uh-huh.

6 GEOFF MARKE: Please be sure to go ahead and
7 touch base with the PSC and the OPC out there. I
8 would like to look over your bills and try to get a
9 better understanding of that because those prices --
10 those numbers seem very high based off of what you're
11 telling me.

12 CANDICE KELLY: And Ms. Augustanov, I would
13 also like for you, if you don't mind, to speak to the
14 manager in the back there. She's waving her hand.

15 TIM WILSON: Yeah.

16 CANDICE KELLY: Because we can look at
17 consolidating that to see if we can get you one
18 invoice instead of multiple invoices, as well as
19 looking at the account as a whole to see what else is
20 going on.

21 JUDITH AUGUSTANOV: Okay. The other
22 question I had, I just remembered is, if I request a
23 normal meter, is it a year before I get it?

24 CANDICE KELLY: So you can request for your
25 meter to be changed out. I don't know if you're

1 referring to the Bill SP-4 that we spoke about
2 earlier.

3 JUDITH AUGUSTANOV: Yeah. And \$15 a month
4 in addition, just so I can have it a normal meter. I
5 mean, it's just -- like, I don't get it. Why -- why
6 are you always tacking more and more bills for
7 something that I want simpler?

8 DIANA CARTER: So the difference between
9 the smart meters and a digital meter, having the smart
10 part turned off is how you read it. And the -- the
11 equipment involved. And if you have -- need to have a
12 person come and check it, and the labor cost involved.
13 When we switched, when the company switched to smart
14 meters, we no longer employ the number of people to go
15 and check the meters. So those costs dropped out.
16 And, so then you have to pay more money, if we're
17 going to have to rehire people to go and read meters.

18 JUDITH AUGUSTANOV: You had people going
19 out regularly and the -- the electricity bill was a
20 lot less, and now it's a lot more, and nobody's coming
21 out to read it.

22 DIANA CARTER: It's read now by -- by the
23 computer, and this is not -- the lawyer's probably not
24 the one to explain the technology on it, but from
25 hearing other people, primarily from staff explain it,

1 when you get the new meters put in, they're often
2 times much more accurate. If you had your meters for
3 a long time, they slow down over time, and -- and, so
4 some people do experience that when you get your meter
5 switched out.

6 JUDITH AUGUSTANOV: -- tons of money. I
7 mean, all that shouldn't be tons of money, still.
8 Yeah.

9 DIANA CARTER: And that is something
10 Dr. Mark had mentioned we're in a rate case. That is
11 part of one of our tariff designs is the opt-out
12 provision and what those charges are. We currently
13 have a tariff provision that allows you to opt out of
14 a smart meter, and I'm sorry, I don't recall the cost
15 offhand. It is a one-time charge to switch the meter
16 back, and then also a monthly charge, and then as
17 we've discussed, there's the new law that is coming
18 into effect, and then will be implemented that lowers
19 those charges. So our tariff will change to conform
20 to that law, but there still will be that one-time
21 charge to change out the meter.

22 JUDITH AUGUSTANOV: When you talk about 10
23 and a half million dollars paying for gas to -- to
24 have a continuous supply of electricity, you have to
25 also measure it with what your income is because you

1 can scare a bunch of people with, wow, it's such a
2 huge cost for us to supply you with continuous
3 electricity, but you're -- not to mentioning how much
4 more you are getting so that the pockets can be
5 filled.

6 DIANA CARTER: And it is a really
7 expensive --

8 TIM WILSON: I just want to be clear. We
9 don't --

10 JUDITH AUGUSTANOV: I don't understand
11 that.

12 TIM WILSON: -- make any money on fuel.

13 DIANA CARTER: Yeah.

14 TIM WILSON: It is a straight passthrough,
15 so I want to be clear on that.

16 JUDITH AUGUSTANOV: You are saying you're
17 spending a lot of money for continuous -- for fuel to
18 have a continuous supplied electricity; is that
19 correct? Am I understanding it correctly?

20 TIM WILSON: Yeah. During that storm,
21 yeah, absolutely.

22 JUDITH AUGUSTANOV: So I'm just saying
23 you're telling everybody you spent 10 and a half
24 million dollars, but you don't tell them how much you
25 are earning. So I -- I just --

1 TIM WILSON: I'm not earning on fuel. I'm
2 just getting it back. Okay.

3 JUDITH AUGUSTANOV: General, what you are
4 earning. You -- 10 and a half million dollars for you
5 guys is nothing.

6 DIANA CARTER: It -- and that is, again,
7 our rate cases that we talked about. We go through
8 this, this process, and staff and OPC and everyone
9 involved. It -- it looks at every dollar that's
10 coming in as well as every dollar that's going out,
11 and that's how the rates are established. They don't
12 look at just one side. They're not looking just at
13 expenses.

14 JUDITH AUGUSTANOV: Yeah. I don't --

15 DIANA CARTER: They look at every dollar
16 that comes in as well as every dollar that goes out.

17 JUDITH AUGUSTANOV: I don't know enough
18 about government how it runs. I don't know what the
19 commissioners do. I have no idea. I wish I could
20 understand more. But I can see that it's not helping
21 us a -- the whole situation is not helping the people
22 a lot. And for us to be spending that much money, you
23 can say 10 and a half millions, but if everybody is
24 paying 4 to \$700 or even 200 to \$400 a month for
25 electricity, you're still getting tons more because

1 you have everybody giving you that per month.

2 TIM WILSON: Yeah. I'm sorry, if I either
3 misspoke or you misunderstood. During that storm
4 event, we spent \$205 million in -- in, like, five
5 days, but I just want to make it clear.

6 JUDITH AUGUSTANOV: Which is still
7 irrelevant. I mean, it's still not -- it's not -- how
8 do you say -- it's not -- it's not what -- given with
9 other figures, you know.

10 TIM WILSON: Okay. Kelly, when you check
11 her account, can you make sure she's on the right
12 rate? If they've -- if it used to be something else,
13 it might be on a different rate and can look into
14 that.

15 MARK JOHNSON: Next, we have Mary Krish
16 (phonetic). Lynn Teedee (phonetic). Chris Richards.

17 GEOFF MARKE: After that, it's open mic
18 night, so.

19 CHRIS RICHARDS: I'll -- after I get
20 finished with open mic, I'll try to do a little
21 karaoke. You might want to leave.

22 So at the risk of rehashing some stuff
23 that's a -- been beaten until it's bloody and pulpy,
24 as the '90s called in, they want their billing system
25 back.

1 Give you a little background from where I'm
2 coming from here, I -- I've been writing software and
3 supporting systems for 40 years. And, so I have a
4 little experience with -- with this particular problem
5 set. I haven't been writing billing systems, but I've
6 written professional software for some small-ish
7 companies. You may have heard of them. Mayo Clinic,
8 Cleveland Clinic, Barnes Jewish Noble, Kaiser
9 Permanente, small outfits. Yeah. I wasn't
10 responsible for that.

11 Having a system have problems for a month,
12 okay, things happen. Two months, somebody needs to be
13 taken out behind the wood shed. A year, that's not
14 just unconscionable. That's incompetent, so. You
15 said that problem's been taken care of. I would like
16 to take your word for that.

17 As of the last couple of months, my bills
18 have been kind of sort of approaching normal. But
19 like many of the people that have spoken in here, the
20 first three months, after your system switched over,
21 two months, I didn't get a bill at all. Third month,
22 I got a bill that said I owed no money. I didn't owe
23 anything. Fourth month, I got a bill that said I owed
24 \$560, and that it was due immediately. That's not a
25 place to make me happy.

1 Since then, my bills have been erratic. It
2 finally got to the point -- at one point that I was
3 just blanket paying \$300 a month, and then when I got
4 another bill that had something on it that looked
5 approachable, I would look at it, and it would go, oh,
6 you have a credit or you -- you owe us a little bit
7 more and whatever, and I would pay the difference.

8 I shouldn't have to guess what I owe you.
9 And I'm not the kind of individual that -- that likes
10 to buy into theories about, oh, space aliens built the
11 pyramids or humanity wouldn't have been able to
12 survive if it hadn't been because of help from
13 somebody from office (inaudible) or whatever.

14 But I'm going to put on my tinfoil hat here
15 a minute and suggest that it almost seems like this is
16 designed incompetence to keep people from being able
17 to understand what their bill is, so they don't
18 realize what's happening to the rates. I'm not
19 suggesting that's what's actually happening. I'm just
20 saying it seems that way.

21 TIM WILSON: I don't blame you for feeling
22 that way. It -- I just want to be clear. We have
23 made significant progress, and we're -- we're this
24 close, but we're not completely there.

25 I'm just going to be flat out honest with

1 you. So I -- I wholeheartedly agree. It's been
2 longer than what we would like for it to. So I
3 understand your frustration. All due respect to you,
4 sir, apologies. Don't pay my bills. I appreciate you
5 making the effort, but. Actions speak.

6 TIM WILSON: Totally get it.

7 CHRIS RICHARDS: Billing cycle. When you
8 switched over to your new billing system, my billing
9 cycle -- I have my budget laid out, and unlike a lot
10 of people here, I am not on a fixed income. So I do
11 have some flexibility in the way I do things, but.
12 I'm a creature of habit. I get used to doing things
13 certain ways, and I kind of like for them to be that
14 way. When things are a certain way, it makes my world
15 happy, and then I'm happy. My billing cycle had been
16 set up so that I was normally due, I think, on the
17 12th. And, so I would get my bill around about the
18 4th or 5th. I would pay it around the 7th or 8th, and
19 everything was wonderful.

20 Now your billing system for some reason
21 decided that my bill's not due until the 20
22 something-ish. And, so in order to keep my sanity, I
23 have to go on your website, which sucks, and try to
24 figure out what my bill is, but I can't until the 10th
25 or 11th, and then I put in whatever the website says,

1 hoping that it's correct, because I don't get a bill
2 until the 21st or thereabouts, and this just creates a
3 lot of frustration on my part.

4 Now, I did speak with one of your folks a
5 while ago, and they told me that I was -- because I
6 own two properties -- well, I don't own two
7 properties. I own a single property, but I have
8 two meters. And because of that, I was somehow
9 unilaterally put onto a combined billing system or a
10 combined billing process. I get both of my bills in
11 one statement. I didn't ask for that. I didn't want
12 that. You all just decided I needed it, I guess. I
13 don't know. But they told me they could take me off
14 of that, and then that should make me go back to the
15 billing cycle that I had been on previously, so.

16 CANDICE KELLY: So Mr. Richards?

17 CHRIS RICHARDS: Yes, ma'am.

18 CANDICE KELLY: You did not receive one
19 invoice before the system change? For those
20 two meters.

21 CHRIS RICHARDS: No.

22 CANDICE KELLY: Okay. And they are taking
23 care of that for you?

24 CHRIS RICHARDS: That's what I was told.

25 CANDICE KELLY: Okay.

1 CHRIS RICHARDS: He said I should see that
2 on my July bill.

3 CANDICE KELLY: Okay. And I'm -- I'm going
4 to take a look at that as well because it should have
5 stayed the same --

6 CHRIS RICHARDS: Okay.

7 CANDICE KELLY: -- but I will definitely be
8 looking into that, so. I appreciate you coming and
9 talking this evening.

10 CHRIS RICHARDS: Now, having said that, the
11 old Empire bill was a thing of beauty. It was simple.
12 It was concise. I could read it. I could understand
13 it. I didn't have to have a freaking CPA to interpret
14 it. Could we please go back to a simple bill that I
15 know how to read?

16 I'm not a stupid man. I was trained as an
17 electrical engineer. I understand fairly complex
18 topics. I know how to do calculus. I have a
19 readable command in the English language. This bill
20 reads like sand script, so. I don't know -- I don't
21 know how to get at that problem.

22 TIM WILSON: I don't disagree. There are
23 certain things that we're required to put on the bill
24 that the third parties have agreed to whether it's
25 different line items for different things, but

1 phonetically, one thing we've heard in all four of
2 these is that this bills are complicated.

3 CHRIS RICHARDS: Well, I mean, you know,
4 okay, fair enough. There's things that you have to
5 put on there. It seems needlessly complicated.

6 TIM WILSON: I -- I've actually mentioned
7 it to staff and OPC yesterday that let's work together
8 on simplifying our bills.

9 CHRIS RICHARDS: Okay.

10 TIM WILSON: I literally said it yesterday.

11 CHRIS RICHARDS: I would love to see some
12 improvement there.

13 Having said that, with respect to your
14 personnel, I feel like a whiner now because I'm going
15 to complain about the fact that my electricity goes
16 out three or four times in the spring, when we have
17 thunderstorms, and maybe once a year, otherwise. Some
18 of you all, you're having your electricity go out
19 every day. So I feel like a whiner, but.

20 You all came out and chopped down my trees
21 to make my electricity more reliable. It's less. So
22 I'm kind of confused on that. But be that as it may,
23 the times that I've had your people out to my house,
24 they have always been polite, very helpful, done what
25 they could to -- to solve my problem, so. From that

1 standpoint, I got no gripes there. I have asked on
2 multiple occasions to have a tree taken down. The
3 tree is dying, and well, at this point it's dead.
4 I've been asking now for two years. It's going to
5 fall over, and when it does, it's going to take down
6 my neighbor's power line. I'm not qualified to jack
7 around taking down a tree over a power line. And I --
8 I kind of thought that's what you guys were for. Am I
9 misunderstanding it?

10 TIM WILSON: Well, we want to certainly get
11 your address. I just want to be clear on -- on your
12 neighbor's power line. Are you saying that their
13 power line with respect from the transformer to the
14 weather head?

15 CHRIS RICHARDS: From the main line to the
16 transformer.

17 TIM WILSON: Okay. We should be able to
18 help you there.

19 CHRIS RICHARDS: Okay.

20 TIM WILSON: Yep. Can we make sure --
21 Kelly's going to take your address and see if we can't
22 get that tree taken care of for you.

23 CHRIS RICHARDS: Okay. That --

24 TIM WILSON: I don't blame you. Because I
25 work for an electric company, and I won't mess with my

1 trees.

2 CHRIS RICHARDS: Yeah. That's -- I have a
3 healthy respect for 220. I've been hit by it enough
4 times.

5 TIM WILSON: I have once.

6 CHRIS RICHARDS: Meters. I mentioned that
7 I was trained as an electrical engineer. I have
8 electronic meters on my property. To kind of echo
9 what some other people have been saying here, I get
10 the idea of having an electronic meter. I get the
11 idea of you being able to ping it with a radio signal
12 and pick up the meter reading off of it. I think
13 that's wonderful. Makes things a lot simpler for you
14 from an administrative standpoint, less overhead, all
15 that. I can't read the bloody thing. Why can't we
16 have a digital display on the meter that you can also
17 read with your radio? Why is that so complicated? I
18 just want to see how much power I used.

19 CANDICE KELLY: So the meter does flash
20 with the read, and there is a -- it'll give different
21 criteria.

22 CHRIS RICHARDS: Therein, lies the problem.
23 I don't know which of the 14 sets of numbers it gives
24 me are the ones that I want.

25 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: So D1 is your delivered

1 power. If you're a solar customer, R1 which is a
2 second screen is your received power.

3 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE 1: (Inaudible) bills.

4 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Huh?

5 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE 1: Can you put that
6 legend on bills, so we can understand that?

7 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I -- I don't know if
8 they can put that on the bill or not. I -- I'm not
9 that guy.

10 TIM WILSON: That's something for clarity.
11 We're trying to get our current billing issues fixed,
12 but maybe there's something we can do to put on our
13 website we can consider.

14 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Yeah. Now, one thing I
15 would tell you what you can't see on the face of your
16 meter is your TOU. You can't see whether it's peak or
17 off peak.

18 TIM WILSON: Time of use.

19 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: That -- that would --
20 that would be the only thing I would tell you, you
21 can't see, but your cumulative received is the R1 or
22 D1, and then the R1 is if you have solar, and you're
23 pressing back. But if you just watch the screens,
24 you'll see it cycle. It's the first screen.

25 CHRIS RICHARDS: Yeah. I've watched it

1 cycle.

2 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Yeah.

3 CHRIS RICHARDS: But I didn't know what the
4 numbers actually meant. Because --

5 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: That's what it is. And
6 it's read in kilowatt hours.

7 CHRIS RICHARDS: Okay.

8 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: So, you're welcome.

9 TIM WILSON: Mr. Richards, I expect other
10 people have that problem, and we'll -- we will address
11 it in the rate case.

12 CHRIS RICHARDS: Okay. Good. Thank you.
13 Final comment, and this is not directed so much of you
14 as it is at the audience at large. I don't know if
15 our senator is still here. Oh, hi. Thank you for
16 being here. But I'm going to cast some shade on you.
17 There have been questions asked here about, well,
18 where do these laws come from? Who passed them? Who
19 made them law? Talk to those folks. You voted for
20 them.

21 TIM WILSON: I'll actually stick up -- huh?
22 I'll actually stick up for -- for Senator Carter on
23 Senate Bill 4. She voted no.

24 GEOFF MARKE: Yeah. I'll stand up, too.
25 Most of the bills predate Senator Carter.

1 CHRIS RICHARDS: Fair enough.

2 TIM WILSON: Got to be honest.

3 CHRIS RICHARDS: Fair enough. But just
4 remember, we have electric representatives who vote
5 for our laws. So if you have a problem with the laws
6 that got passed, talk to them. Right. So anyway,
7 thank you all for your time.

8 CHARIS SEATON: I forgot to add. After my
9 conversation with Mr. Mark on this insurance deal, I
10 had a power outage, a power surge in my house. I call
11 Empire, Liberty, I call Liberty, I tell them my
12 address, tell them what happened. They said, well,
13 we've not had anybody else call from your
14 neighborhood. Excuse me. But how is that relevant?
15 I'm calling you. Are you calling me a liar? Oh.
16 Well, let me see if anybody -- I said, whom am I
17 speaking with? Am I speaking with somebody here
18 locally or am I speaking from a call -- to somebody at
19 a call center? Oh. Well, we're here, but at this
20 other location, but we represent Joplin. Because we
21 have different units that -- and I'm like, oh, okay.
22 But I'll make sure we get a truck out there. I said,
23 what good is that going to do? They're all going to
24 look at each other, look at my smart meter, that I
25 didn't know that was installed and without my

1 permission, by the way, and I was not given any offer
2 or option, otherwise. And they'll come out, and
3 they're just going to look at each other and go, oh,
4 well, we checked your meter, and nothing is wrong.
5 You know what they did? I said, don't even bother
6 sending them out. I'm sure they got more pressing
7 issues to address, like fires and stuff caused by
8 power surges. So just make sure you note it on my
9 account that I called, and you're telling me that no
10 one else from my area has called, so that's somehow
11 relevant just to get on the record so that when I talk
12 with the Missouri Public Service's Utility's
13 Commission again, I can tell them we're having more
14 problems after you guys said you fixed it with the
15 project that you put in place, that you're charging us
16 for.

17 And then I also have a -- a friend who is a
18 disabled veteran that I was speaking with last week at
19 the local VA clinic, and he said he got his bills,
20 were the same thing (inaudible) sad. At one point he
21 got a bill, and when he went in to try to mitigate
22 that bill, to find out why he was being charged this
23 charge, and why it had the name of the previous owner
24 of the house on his bill for his use, come to find out
25 you guys were charging him for the previous owners'

1 delinquent bill; okay? Now I said to him, and I gave
2 him Mr. Mark's number, and I said, if you do not call
3 them and tell them what I'm telling you now -- right
4 now, then it's on you. Because you need to make sure
5 that the Missouri Public Service Commission knows.
6 You need to make sure that Liberty knows what's being
7 done. I mean, how does that happen? Seriously. How
8 does that happen? So I don't know, Mr. Mark, if he's
9 contacted you. I'll check with him when I see him at
10 the VA again on Wednesday.

11 GEOFF MARKE: Please do. Thank you,
12 Ms. Seaton.

13 CHARIS SEATON: Thank you.

14 GARRETH: My name is Garreth. I'm kind of
15 a newer homeowner. We moved up to Missouri in
16 February of last year, at the end of February to
17 March, and at first our bills made a lot more sense to
18 what I was used to as an adult having to pay for
19 bills. Like, the water and electric made sense. I
20 think in May it was around 180, and then all the
21 problems started when they did their whole billing
22 switch through, like the April area. For -- I think
23 it was June or July, our total on our account jumped
24 from the -- 180 from the previous month up to like
25 \$700 which put us, like, way under for the rest of the

1 year.

2 I mean, we just bought a new home. And I'm
3 going to pay mortgage before anything else. And, so
4 then there was the whole thing where in July, I
5 mentioned earlier, where they were going to cut us
6 off, and we had to borrow money. So we were destroyed
7 last year, financially. We haven't been able to pay
8 for her medicine for Crohn's Disease because of all of
9 this. And, so we lost that.

10 And then the electricity finally started
11 calming down in the winter months, like you would
12 hopefully expect; right? But during those -- those
13 months that they supercharged us, like, it was, like,
14 700, like 500, then, like, 450 or something like that,
15 but it's really vague because. Just like everyone
16 else, the bills were a mess. I got different amounts
17 on different things. The app was a mess. We didn't
18 know what we owed half the time, so we were just
19 trying to pay whatever we could to keep the lights on.

20 And those three months that were super
21 high, conveniently, their app did not have data and
22 could not tell us the usage for it for months, and
23 when we would call and ask, they didn't have the info
24 either and every time we got anything on the app or
25 anything, it was always blank for those three months.

1 Up until this year, we didn't even know what the
2 cost -- or the usage was for those three months. We
3 just knew that we apparently had to pay 700, 500, 400,
4 whatever it was. And, so throughout last year, a lot
5 of people -- no one's really talked about the water
6 this whole time. Yeah.

7 CANDICE KELLY: The water is a separate
8 company.

9 GARRETH: Well, I get billed through
10 Liberty for the water. And --

11 CANDICE KELLY: Are you in -- I'm sorry.

12 GARRETH: -- I'm in Noel.

13 CANDICE KELLY: Okay. Yes.

14 GARRETH: Yeah.

15 CANDICE KELLY: So you do have Liberty
16 water and electric, yes.

17 GARRETH: Yes. And, so we only -- we use
18 around 6,000 gallons or less, like a standard home or
19 whatever, and in the middle of summer, you would
20 expect -- we have a garden. We use -- we would expect
21 to use more during the summer, but it stayed even in
22 those months, under 6,000. And then come November to
23 December, December shot up to 24,000 gallons of usage.
24 Then January, shot up to, like, 49,000 gallons of
25 usage. Then in February, says 52,000 gallons of

1 usage, and we're like, okay, maybe there's a leak or
2 something. But then March drops all the way down to
3 30,000. And then April dropped down to around 19,000,
4 and then May dropped down to like -- looks like --
5 their chart is by sixes instead of fives. I don't
6 know why. But it looks like it's around 8,000. So
7 clearly, there's not a leak if the usage is going
8 down.

9 So we went up -- because last week we got a
10 notice that we were going to be cut off. We didn't
11 know that, that wasn't a thing that they were doing
12 right now. So I had to take a day off of work on --
13 on Wednesday last week to drive up to Joplin, and we
14 talked with them, and they said that they're not
15 shutting it off or whatever, but the mail that we got
16 on July -- I think it was July 3rd, literally said,
17 oh, you're going to be cut off today on July -- June,
18 sorry. June. They said, you're going to be cut off
19 June 3rd, and we got the mail that same day.

20 So it was like, okay. So what was I
21 supposed to do if that was literally -- if that was
22 going to be cut off, I got it the day of. So there
23 was nothing I could have done. But we went up. We
24 talked to the lady. She seemed helpful and nice or
25 whatever. She thought there was something weird. And

1 we had mentioned to her as well our electric issues.
2 She tried to use the computer. We weren't able to do
3 levelized billing until we've been there for a year,
4 which we wanted the whole time anyway because of how
5 crazy the prices jump all over the place. And, so
6 whenever we went, she couldn't get the computer to
7 calculate it because it was so bugged out. So she
8 manually calculated it by hand and said that we are
9 levelized billing, should be around 220 a month. So
10 that means if -- for that 700 or whatever last year,
11 that's like three times more than we should have been
12 paying for electricity.

13 And then our water is insanely -- I mean, I
14 think we are over a thousand dollars that they say we
15 owe in water, and I don't -- we don't have a leak
16 because our yard -- I mean, you would see
17 50,000 gallons of water in a yard. There is no way
18 you wouldn't see that. And we -- so she sent out a
19 tech to check last week, supposedly. I -- I never saw
20 the tech. Because our thing's out on the road. So
21 they went and pulled it up out of the ground and
22 checked it. It's just a little white box attached to
23 the pipe that I can't -- I don't think it had a meter
24 on it that I can read or anything. It's just digital.
25 The tech said it was all good, basically, and that

1 it's on us, and if we find a problem, they can
2 possibly back credit us for three months or whatever,
3 but basically, it's our problem to deal with, and we
4 have to pay someone to figure it out.

5 CURT GATELEY: So when a person comes out
6 dealing with the water meter, when a person comes out
7 to assess a meter to see if you have a leak --

8 GARRETH: Uh-huh.

9 CURT GATELEY: -- they can't tell that unless
10 they actually communicate with you and -- and work
11 with you on that, just -- just to -- you know, do a
12 drive by on its own. They need to be able to
13 communicate with you what they're actually looking at.

14 GARRETH: Uh-huh.

15 CURT GATELEY: If you shut off your water in
16 your house, if you have a whole house shut off --

17 GARRETH: Uh-huh.

18 CURT GATELEY: -- you can tell if that meter
19 is still spinning that then water is leaving
20 somewhere, perhaps, in the yard, if you are there and
21 are not using any water, but still have it turned on,
22 and you can see if the tech is looking at the meter
23 and sees a slow amount of usage, it could possibly
24 indicate like a -- a bad -- flapper valve, for example
25 would, be going down the sewer system when -- then you

1 wouldn't see anything in the yard. Those kinds of
2 things are --

3 GARRETH: Our house is --

4 CURT GATELEY: -- are done with a -- with the
5 tech there with you communicating with you, so.

6 GARRETH: Uh-huh.

7 CURT GATELEY: If you weren't able to -- to
8 be there when they were there, that was a -- a
9 tremendous missed opportunity to have more of that
10 discussion and more of that assessment.

11 GARRETH: My wife was there the whole time.
12 No one ever came to the door.

13 CURT GATELEY: They never came and knocked on
14 the door or anything. Uh-huh.

15 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE 2: He actually worked
16 (inaudible) so he was home the next day. He said most
17 likely unless (inaudible) weather was bad, which it
18 wasn't that day. He -- the tech should be there that
19 day.

20 GARRETH: No one ever came to the door.

21 CURT GATELEY: Uh-huh.

22 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE 2: Earlier this week,
23 because I only got the voicemail from her yesterday
24 that she called me back and told us this, I was home
25 every day. I get up when he gets up in the morning.

1 I'm up the entire time. You know, no one stopped by.
2 No one knocked on the door, so. No one stopped to try
3 to talk to me or him.

4 CURT GATELEY: And as far as the erratic
5 meter reports, you're not the only customers who have
6 said about --

7 GARRETH: Uh-huh.

8 CURT GATELEY: -- water as well. It's not
9 just electric.

10 GARRETH: Yeah. And then the quality of
11 the water, too, there was, like, a report that they
12 sent with one of these that was saying, like, the
13 water quality is fine or whatever, but there is -- in
14 Noel -- I don't know about other areas, but in Noel
15 especially, we get like -- like, right now,
16 specifically the last two or three days, the water
17 smells so strongly of sulphur that the kitchen stinks,
18 and you can't even get near the sink without -- yeah.

19 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE 2: (Inaudible) vouch
20 for this, too, because there's been plenty of times
21 (inaudible) people complaining about this, and I've
22 seen (inaudible) Liberty saying, we try to get them to
23 come out here, and either they're told it's not their
24 problem, talk to the city hall (inaudible) this has
25 nothing to do with us. It's Liberty.

1 GARRETH: So you just get the runaround in
2 a circle.

3 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE 2: They will say
4 someone will come out and check and not really do
5 much, and then no one really ever hears anything.

6 CURT GATELEY: So besides -- I would
7 encourage you to contact the company and -- and stay
8 in touch with us, but. There isn't a -- a water
9 quality standard for sulphur, in particular for -- for
10 drinking water from -- from the feds or from DNR.
11 There is, however, requirements for what's called
12 taste in odor.

13 GARRETH: Uh-huh.

14 CURT GATELEY: It's more of a general DNR,
15 would also be an avenue because they would also be
16 investigating, you know, not only is there a
17 compliance issue, but then what -- what construction
18 needs to be done --

19 GARRETH: Uh-huh.

20 CURT GATELEY: -- if additional treatment is
21 necessary because if -- if something happens once,
22 well, then is it a good expense to install additional
23 treatment and such. If it happens over and over, just
24 about all the -- all the regulatory folks are going to
25 agree something needs to be done as far as treatment.

1 GARRETH: Yeah. And then as far as our
2 water as well, I know you mentioned sewer, but we're
3 supposed to be on septic. So I don't know if you can
4 fill a septic tank with 50,000 gallons that quick.

5 CURT GATELEY: I didn't want to try to mess
6 around on the phone and listen to you, but you can
7 also figure out pretty quick how much water,
8 physically, can go through a five-eighths inch meter
9 in a day, and I've dealt with some customers where --

10 GARRETH: Uh-huh.

11 CURT GATELEY: -- I mean, it was called an
12 improbable billing amount where a manual meter read
13 was -- was incorrect. It was, you know, millions of
14 gallons in a month. That math is pretty simple to do.
15 But as far as filling up a septic tank, then, yeah,
16 there's certainly a problem. You would see certain
17 (inaudible) from the (inaudible) field.

18 GARRETH: Uh-huh. Oh, yeah. And then we
19 also -- one more note on that as well. We had our
20 main waterline to inside the house that's next to our
21 washer and dryer, we were changing the water heater,
22 and it got broken, and that was in August. And, so we
23 had our basement flood; right? And in August, even
24 with the flooding, was still under 6,000 gallons, like
25 you're saying -- we lost a ton of water. It took us a

1 little bit to try and figure out how to get it off.

2 And, so even with all that flooding, we were still
3 under 6,000. But then, apparently, for several months
4 in a row, it just skyrocketed, so.

5 GEOFF MARKE: So I want to -- do you have a
6 balance today?

7 GARRETH: Yeah. Our outstanding balance is
8 like a \$1,700, and we don't even know how it's broken
9 up.

10 GEOFF MARKE: There's a lot to unpack here.
11 There's multiple issues. You absolutely -- this
12 warrants a formal complaint. I apologize you've got
13 to go through that process. I'll give you a card. We
14 can talk through how to do that. There's honestly --
15 at 10:00 o'clock tonight we probably need to hear from
16 some more people, but --

17 GARRETH: I agree.

18 GEOFF MARKE: -- let's talk.

19 GARRETH: Yeah. And then the last part of
20 that was just she's been trying to fix this on the
21 phone all last year, and it was always just, well, the
22 computer says it, so it's right. So we were just
23 ignored, basically.

24 GEOFF MARKE: I'm sorry.

25 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 7: Garreth, when you're

1 done, if I can get your address and -- and
2 information, we're going to look into this. These
3 numbers don't sound correct to us either. And, so if
4 I can get your -- your name and address, I'd
5 appreciate it.

6 MARK JOHNSON: Yep. Go ahead.

7 MR. SEATON: I'll keep it brief. When she
8 was talking about AAA and the insurance thing, I'm a
9 fixer, so. That \$1,300 could have been 10 to \$12,000
10 dollars. In other words, instead of replacing the
11 oven and the stove, I went and bought the brain box
12 off Amazon for 150 bucks. I replaced it myself. I'm
13 a good consumer. I don't put my -- my -- I don't try
14 to take advantage of the company and make them pay for
15 my mistakes. But that wasn't my mistake. That was
16 Liberty's mistake. You know, we got the brain box for
17 the HVAC system. I could have had that replaced. But
18 now we're being punished by AAA because of what
19 Liberty did to our -- our systems.

20 Luckily, the television was still under our
21 five-year warranty with the Best Buy, so they came out
22 and put a new motherboard in. They fixed it. And we
23 got a couple more years out of it.

24 I'm a responsible consumer. We pay our
25 bills, and we also take care of things, and when

1 something's broke, I don't call you up because, gee, I
2 need you to come out and fix something. I'm going to
3 try and fix it myself. I'm going to try to be a
4 responsible person.

5 With that being said, I just feel like now
6 we are paying for next, what, five years -- five years
7 we're going to be paying through the nose because of
8 insurance because now I'm considered a high risk even
9 though I've had insurance since 1974. Never had any
10 claims, but that doesn't weigh anything that -- my
11 good behavior didn't weigh in that decision. You
12 know, I don't understand why I'm being punished
13 because of that kind of stuff. That's all I have to
14 say.

15 GEOFF MARKE: Thank you, Mr. Seaton.

16 UNIDENTIFIED MALE 7: I didn't sign up
17 because I really didn't intend to say anything here,
18 but. We've noticed 80 percent of the folks have left,
19 obviously. And I believe that most of them, like
20 ourselves, are fixed income individuals. So every
21 increase, every rate, any problems or fluctuations
22 Affects us drastically.

23 I am luckily married to a very frugal
24 woman. When she gets a bill and it's way different
25 than before and there's great fluctuations, somebody's

1 going to tell her why, so she calls until she does get
2 to somebody that's going to give her an answer. And
3 what we've got several times that we've received from
4 that is, it's an estimated bill. We have been
5 estimating through this time. So we're not getting
6 our meters read or whatever. Well, we're estimating.
7 So for a period of time, it's going to be an estimated
8 bill. Well, it's estimated \$90 this time, \$300 this
9 time. So, and we're the same usage or less, but.
10 Anyway, that's that issue.

11 I do want to say when the big snow we had
12 last year and the lines were all out, we were out of
13 service for about a week, but. When the line guy's
14 there, they did a great job. They work hard. I
15 appreciate them. They're fit. I know they've got a
16 dangerous job. And they work very hard. Bad
17 conditions, all that, but my concern, there was six
18 trucks showed up, not pickups. We're talking about
19 big trucks, booms, everything. One person per truck,
20 and two guys working. I was like, you know, I'm
21 waiting to see that there must be some major thing
22 that the rest of them are doing. No. They watched,
23 and I guess, maybe it's a safety issue. I don't know.
24 Maybe it is. But anyway, I appreciate the line guys.
25 And their work. I know it's dangerous. They do a

1 great job. I'm sure they're paid well for it.

2 But I do want to say this. I did find out
3 something that I wasn't aware of, but I thought, so.
4 You guys are a monopoly; right? That's what you are.
5 So it doesn't matter that we're all fixed incomes, and
6 we only make this much money. You're going to give a
7 rate increase anyway whether we want it or not. We
8 don't get a rate increase on our checks. But our
9 bills are going to keep going up. So anyways, just a
10 statement. So thank you for your time.

11 GEOFF MARKE: Thank you, sir.

12 TIM WILSON: So I'll try to answer that, if
13 that's okay. Our -- when Empire District put itself
14 up for sale, a lot of people bid on it. A company
15 called Algonquin Power & Utilities bought them out.
16 So effectively, they bought all of the shareholders of
17 Empire, voted to sell at X price, and what -- I -- I
18 got that feeling. But, so that's how that happened.
19 And, so they -- so they bought Empire.

20 Our parent company is based out of -- out
21 of -- based just out of Toronto, Canada. But we --
22 people say that we're Canadian owned. I just want to
23 make clear. We're shareholder owned. I'm a
24 shareholder, so I'm a part owner. Our largest
25 shareholder is out of New York City, and we're traded

1 on the New York Stock Exchange. I do understand that
2 some folks don't like the fact that our parent company
3 is in Canada. But at least I wanted to -- to address
4 that for you. Absolutely. Thank you for the
5 question. I would have to have our land folks -- but
6 the answer is yes, I'm pretty sure. Jordan, do you
7 know what he's talking about? I don't. Okay. We
8 don't have a time frame on that. I'm sorry?

9 MARK JOHNSON: All right, everyone.

10 TIM WILSON: Whenever there is a need,
11 yeah.

12 MARK JOHNSON: I think we're going to wrap
13 it up. We are after 10:00 o'clock. We greatly
14 appreciate everyone's participation and your comments.
15 And for all of you that stuck around 'til the end.
16 Thank you very much.

17 GEOFF MARKE: Thank you.

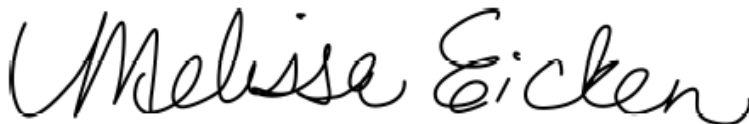
18 MARK JOHNSON: If you would like to make
19 additional comments or if you did not get a chance to
20 make a comment, you can make comments online. We have
21 paperwork in the atrium, but again, thank you very
22 much.

23 (Audio ended.)
24
25

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Melissa J. Eicken, CCR, CSR, RPR

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