

STATE OF MISSOURI
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of the Application)
of Union Electric Company d/b/a)
Ameren Missouri for Permission and) Case No. EA-2026-0183
Approval and Certificate of Public)
Convenience and Necessity)
Authorizing it to Construct)
Renewable Generation Facilities)
and Battery Energy Storage Systems)

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

Local Public Hearing

July 28, 2026

Pike-Lincoln Technical Center

342 Vo Tech Road

Eolia, MO 63344

Volume 1

KEN SEYER, Presiding,
SENIOR REGULATORY LAW JUDGE

KAYLA HAHN, Chair, (via Webex)
MAIDA J. COLEMAN, (via Webex)
GLEN KOLKMEYER, (via Webex)
JOHN MITCHELL, (via Webex)
COMMISSIONERS

REPORTED BY: Julie K. Kearns, CCR 993 (via Webex)

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(The public hearing started at 1:25 P.M.)

REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right. Let's go on the record. Today is July 28, 2026. The time is 1:30 P.M. My name is Ken Seyer and I'm a regulatory law judge with the Missouri Public Service Commission and I will preside over this portion of the hearing.

As you know, we are here today in Eolia because the Commission has set this time for a local public hearing to give members of the public a chance to comment about the application of Union Electric Company doing business as Ameren Missouri for Certificates of Convenience and Necessity relating to three battery energy storage system projects, two solar generation facilities and related transmission facilities. The Commission case number is EA-2026-0183.

The Commission regulates the rates charged by public utility companies in Missouri to assure that those rates are just and reasonable. The Commission also regulates the quality of service and safety of the operations of public utilities.

The Commission currently has four commissioners. They are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the senate. The Commission employs a staff of engineers, accountants, attorneys, financial analysts and other

1 specialists in the field of utility regulation.

2 Today the commissioners are participating
3 online; the Chair of the Commission, Kayla Hahn,
4 Commissioners Maida Coleman, Glen Kolkmeier and John
5 Mitchell. The commissioners have not made any decisions
6 in this case and cannot answer questions today because
7 they have to remain impartial until after all the evidence
8 is presented at the evidentiary hearing in this matter,
9 should one be held.

10 Now, Commissioner Kolkmeier, if you are there,
11 would you like to make any opening remarks?

12 COMMISSIONER KOLKMEYER: Yes. Thank you, Judge.

13 OPENING STATEMENT BY COMMISSIONER KOLKMEYER:

14 On behalf of Chair Hahn and the other
15 commissioners, I want to welcome everyone here today to
16 the local public hearing. The Commission is charged by
17 law to see that customers receive safe and adequate
18 service at just and reasonable rates, as the Judge just
19 said. We have not made any decision in this case because
20 it has just begun.

21 The first step is to hear from you, the
22 customers. And even though we're not there in person, we
23 want to hear what you, the customers, have to say. The
24 hearing is being recorded, so if we want to go back and
25 view it or read the transcripts, we're able to do that.

1 So again, I want to welcome you on behalf of all
2 the commissioners and we look forward to hearing what you
3 have to say about this case. Thank you, Judge.

4 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you,
5 Commissioner. As you know, there are attorneys here today
6 representing the parties. For the record, would each of
7 you identify yourselves and state which party you're
8 representing beginning with Ameren, Missouri?

9 MR. LOWERY: Thank you, Judge. Jim Lowery of
10 JBL Law representing Ameren, Missouri. Thank you.

11 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: For the Commission
12 Staff?

13 MR. CUNNEEN: Ray Cunneen, legal counsel, Staff
14 of the Commission.

15 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: And then for the
16 Office of Public Counsel?

17 MS. VanGERPEN: Good afternoon, Judge. Lindsay
18 VanGerpen on behalf of the OPC.

19 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay. Is there
20 anyone here for Renew Missouri? Okay. All right.

21 The way we'll proceed today will be to call the
22 names of the people that have signed up on the sign-up
23 sheet in the order that you signed up. When I call your
24 name, please step up to the podium. I will place you
25 under oath, ask you to state and spell your name and then

1 you can offer your comments to the Commission. We will
2 try to limit comments to five minutes per person. And
3 then once you're finished with your comments, if you will
4 stay at the podium in case there are questions from the
5 attorneys or the commissioners.

6 So the first name I have on the list is Fred
7 Schmidt. Mr. Schmidt. Good afternoon.

8 MR. SCHMIDT: Good afternoon, sir.

9 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: You've got your
10 right hand raised. I appreciate that. Do you swear or
11 affirm that the testimony you give today in this hearing
12 shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the
13 truth?

14 MR. SCHMIDT: Yes.

15 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right. And
16 your name is Fred Schmidt.

17 MR. SCHMIDT: Fred Schmidt.

18 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: And could you spell
19 that last name?

20 MR. SCHMIDT: S-C-H-M-I-D-T. And for
21 clarification, I'm the III.

22 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Go ahead.

23 MR. SCHMIDT: I'd like to share with the
24 Commission both here and on that I have been a land use
25 acquisition expert for 30 years. I've been on the

1 Industrial Development Authority Board for St. Charles --
2 or St. Louis County. I've been on the Land Clearance and
3 Redevelopment Authority for St. Louis County. And I am
4 currently -- just for full exposure, I am currently a
5 Water Commissioner for the State of Missouri. So I have
6 worked with professional staff and I'm a commissioner
7 under the Conservation Department -- or Department of
8 Natural Resources. I'm sorry.

9 So as I was earlier, Ameren is challenged here
10 with -- they're picking this location because they're
11 playing the long game, but they're giving us the short
12 game. They're giving us, well, we're putting this battery
13 storage and switching station because there's a power
14 line.

15 Well, in a year or two years or in the near
16 future, they're going to come to you, this Commission, and
17 say, hey, we want to put this 800 acres of solar farm that
18 we have across the highway because we have a battery
19 storage here and a switching station and it just makes
20 sense that we locate a solar farm.

21 So when you're going to do these, they're
22 looking at this location because it's the closest
23 proximity to a metropolitan area where they don't have
24 planning and zoning and they're not going to be held to
25 the same standards as they would if they were in St.

1 Charles County or St. Peters.

2 And they say they're going to do similar to St.
3 Louis County, which is out in the farmlands near a power
4 plant that they already own, which is not the same as, you
5 know, pristine farmland in the area where I manage
6 property for recreational and other people spend money.
7 We even -- some people around the area use CRP, which is
8 the state money to do this to where they're taking
9 property out.

10 The other issue that we have here is that
11 they're going to just do this and you need to make them be
12 more responsible for the whole property. Though you can
13 say they're hitting the state regulations, that's a level
14 two or a three compared to what a St. Peters or St. Louis
15 County or another municipality would hold them to.

16 They say they're going to do the same storm
17 regulations -- is my time up? You know, they're not going
18 to be putting in rain gardens, they're not going to be
19 doing silt control. They're going to tell you -- and the
20 Staff and the Commission have the ability to hold them to
21 a higher standard.

22 So that's -- oh, and the other part is they're
23 paying 150 percent of what the going rate is for the
24 farmland in our area and that -- but to do that, they have
25 to downgrade the value of the adjoining properties. I

1 mean, how am I going to -- when they have their solar farm
2 up against the turn where I go to -- my recreation
3 property is 800 acres of a solar farm.

4 Now, it's not there now, but they've already
5 contracted for the property and they already have it under
6 long-term contract based on contingent, getting approval
7 from the Commission. So if you don't give them those
8 approvals, then they don't execute those contracts. And
9 we need both for the public service and for the people of
10 Lincoln County.

11 The last part that I've learned is this is not
12 in Eolia Fire District who had gotten in front of the
13 curve and they put in additional regulations for fire
14 safety. This is in Northwest or Silex who do not have the
15 same forethought to put in regulations for development
16 that the other fire department did.

17 So by picking this piece of property and putting
18 it in this corner, they get to get away from planning and
19 zoning, impact for developmental and they get away from
20 health and safety regulations that if they would have went
21 to the other side of the highway, they would have been
22 impacted with. So thank you, Judge.

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay. Are there
24 any questions for Mr. Schmidt? All right.

25 MR. SCHMIDT: Thank you.

1 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you,
2 Mr. Schmidt. All right. Next on the list is Jane House.
3 (Indiscernible speaker.) Gotcha. All right. And then
4 Cassie McGruder.

5 All right. Those are the only names I have on
6 the list. Are there others here who would -- I'm seeing
7 some hands. Yes. Let's go front to back. So, yes, you
8 first. Would you raise your right hand, please? Do you
9 swear or affirm that the testimony you give today in this
10 hearing shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing
11 but the truth?

12 MS. AUBUCHON: I do.

13 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: What is your name,
14 please?

15 MS. AUBUCHON: My name is McKenzie Aubuchon.

16 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: How do you spell
17 your name?

18 MS. AUBUCHON: M-C-K-E-N-Z-I-E, Aubuchon is
19 A-U-B-U-C-H-O-N.

20 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay. All right.
21 Go ahead, Miss Aubuchon.

22 MS. AUBUCHON: My family owns the property, it's
23 about three miles south of where the proposed battery
24 plant is going to be. Our family has owned the farm there
25 since 1854. I am the sixth generation and my children are

1 the seventh generation farmers on that property.

2 We do not buy meat from the store. We farm. We
3 harvest directly from our land. There is proof that
4 putting these systems in this area will affect our water,
5 it will affect our land. And I am not the only one that
6 does this in this area.

7 I am affected by the 200 acres on that west
8 side, but I also own land on the east side that is
9 directly beneath a solar field proposal as well, that also
10 there is proof that that causes problems with the water,
11 it leaches the water. Obviously the environmental hazards
12 with the animals, they are not going to stay there. They
13 are going to leave.

14 I am aware that we can buy food from the grocery
15 store. I do not want to. I live here for a reason. I
16 want to live off of my land. I want to continue farming.
17 I want my children to continue farming. This area does
18 not want this. I have not heard from a single person yet
19 that says, yes, let's do this.

20 My father was contacted over the course of a
21 year offering meetings to purchase our property. They
22 were told no each time and we were contacted time and time
23 and time again. I am not aware that any of the property
24 that is under contract was actually available for sale.
25 Due to, I call this harassment, people ended up signing

1 these deals. And how can you say no when they're offering
2 it a hundred percent of the going rate in this area or
3 150 percent of the going rate? You're not going to say
4 no. And this is only the start of it.

5 It starts at a battery center. It leads to a
6 solar field. And we have already established here it can
7 and I guarantee that it will lead to a data center. You
8 are destroying our properties. You are destroying our
9 livelihoods.

10 If you are for the people, I beg that you take
11 this into consideration. It's not just me. There's an
12 entire room of people that feel this way. We do not want
13 this. Thank you.

14 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right. Thank
15 you, Miss Aubuchon. Are there any questions for
16 Miss Aubuchon? All right. Yes, ma'am. Thank you.
17 You've got your right hand raised. Do you swear or affirm
18 that the testimony given today in this hearing shall be
19 the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth? I
20 think that was me.

21 MS. YOUNG: Yes.

22 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you. What is
23 your name?

24 MS. YOUNG: Andrea Young.

25 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Andrea Young.

1 Could you go ahead and spell that?

2 MS. YOUNG: A-N-D-R-E-A Y-O-U-N-G.

3 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right. Thank
4 you. Go ahead.

5 MS. YOUNG: So I was born in Pike County. My
6 family has been in Pike and Lincoln County since the early
7 1800s. The little town of Whiteside is named for my
8 ancestors. My dad is buried in the Millcreek Cemetery,
9 his mom and dad are buried there, my grandmother's mom and
10 dad are buried there, my great grandmother's mom and dad
11 are buried there and if you want to generate electricity,
12 you just go out there and tap it because you put this
13 thing in and they'll be spinning in their graves.

14 This is farm country and you are coming in,
15 you're going to try to ruin this farm country for money.
16 And we sat here this morning and asked questions and we
17 didn't get honest answers. When we asked about
18 environmental studies, they made it sound like they did
19 one and then later on it came out that they hadn't.

20 We asked about fire and we were told that the
21 fire departments had been contacted and I know personally
22 that the fire department in Silex was contacted, but not
23 Eolia and these are volunteer fire departments. When the
24 call goes out, it goes out to all of them. They all show
25 up.

1 This is sensitive farmland. That place that
2 they're buying out there is sitting on karst, okay? So
3 any runoff, any toxins, it's going to permeate through the
4 shallow clay into the limestone below which is just as
5 porous as it can be and runs off into everything else,
6 right down into the aquifer that our cattle depend on, our
7 towns depend on.

8 I read the St. Louis Post Dispatch and I read
9 all of these articles about the data centers. They're not
10 having a good time down south, so they're going to be
11 coming up here looking. And meanwhile, whatever is
12 generated from electricity is going to go to them. We
13 might get some electricity out of it, but Eolia is a town
14 with, like, less than 500 people. Where is all of that
15 electricity going go? It ain't going to go through here.
16 It ain't going to go to Silex.

17 So I'm not happy to see this land that my family
18 and families like this have spent all their lives going
19 back generations trying to protect. There is wildlife
20 here, there is a way of life here that we need to protect.
21 And we're willing to fight for that. I'm willing to fight
22 for it. I'm not a young woman anymore, but I'm willing to
23 put it out there, I will fight this. Thank you.

24 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay. Are there
25 any -- all right. Are there any others that would like to

1 testify? Yes, sir. Thank you. Do you swear or affirm
2 that the testimony you give today in this hearing shall be
3 the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

4 MR. WELLS: Yes, I do.

5 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right. What is
6 your name, please?

7 MR. WELLS: My name is Robert Wells.

8 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay.

9 MR. WELLS: W-E-L-L-S.

10 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay. Go ahead,
11 Mr. Wells.

12 MR. WELLS: Thank you. I will just reiterate
13 one of the questions that I had earlier during the comment
14 section. I have -- just as a bit of background, I have
15 spent about 50 years in the telecommunications industry in
16 the regulatory arena, so I'm quite familiar with the
17 process of regulating monopolies and Public Service
18 Commission in Missouri. I've seen the process and I've
19 never been totally happy with the interchange with the
20 public.

21 The communication with this particular meeting
22 was very lacking as far as I'm concerned. I understand
23 that it was Ameren who communicated to some of their
24 customers and as far as I'm concerned, the Public Service
25 Commission, who is representing the public in general,

1 should be the first to communicate to the area about these
2 kinds of meetings. So that's one comment that I would
3 make.

4 But I'm less happy with the fact that the
5 interchange with the public is relatively limited. There
6 are a couple of public meetings that generally happen and
7 then the communications begin to go with the Office of
8 Public Counsel, the PSC staff and then with the regulated
9 monopoly.

10 So here's the request that I would make. With
11 regards to the risks that have been mentioned, I believe
12 that in order for the public to have a confidence that our
13 Public Service Commission is doing what it says it is
14 doing, as the commissioner -- as one of the commissioners
15 said, to provide -- help us -- help the regulated entities
16 to provide safe and reasonable service, that we have
17 visibility to the potential risks that are associated with
18 solar farms, with switching systems, with the other
19 facilities, the BESS systems -- the BESS systems, yes, to
20 know that -- the specific potential risks and how those
21 risks are being mitigated in the plan that Ameren is
22 presenting to us. That information should be public.

23 As someone said earlier, the derivation of those
24 studies should be given, who paid for those studies, where
25 they came from and how they were verified. That

1 information should be published back to this -- these
2 potential stakeholders, landowners, customers of Ameren
3 and people in the general area.

4 So I would request that those things be done so
5 that we have, again, a confidence that our Public Service
6 Commission is indeed serving us and not just doing a
7 formality with having these hearings.

8 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right. Thank
9 you, Mr. Wells. All right. Yes, sir. Would you raise
10 your right hand, please? Thank you. Do you swear or
11 affirm that the testimony you give today in this hearing
12 shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the
13 truth?

14 MR. GRAY: I do.

15 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right. Thank
16 you. What is your name, sir?

17 MR. GRAY: My name is Joseph Gray, Judge.

18 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: And could you
19 spell --

20 MR. GRAY: It's G-R-A-Y, Joseph, J-O-S-E-P-H.

21 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Go ahead.

22 MR. GRAY: I'm an Ameren customer. I live about
23 seven miles north of Eolia. I'm a mechanical engineer,
24 graduate of University of Missouri Rolla or Science and
25 Technology as it's now known. I didn't have an

1 opportunity to ask questions in the previous session due
2 to the number of people asking questions.

3 So really I just wanted to kind of pose a couple
4 of questions here, things that really didn't come up.
5 There are natural gas generation stations, as I
6 understand, in both Vandalia, Missouri and Bowling Green,
7 Missouri. So my question would be how often and what
8 percentage of the time are those facilities active, in
9 other words, needed to serve the community?

10 My next question would be since data centers are
11 new to nearly everyone -- I mean, I didn't hear the term
12 data center probably until 12 to 15 months ago -- how were
13 those factored into the previous three-year review process
14 that I understand that Ameren uses to kind of project the
15 needs of the future? And I know in this day and age that
16 time table is probably just way too short because
17 technology is advancing at such a pace, it's difficult.
18 As an engineer, I appreciate that, too.

19 Next question would be do the data centers have
20 a constant demand or do they have specific peak times the
21 way other businesses do, particularly heavy manufacturing
22 and such? And I know the question came up about smart
23 metering and will Ameren be able to limit their demand,
24 i.e. the data centers to prevent home and small business
25 customers from power outages?

1 My next comment and question is windmill blades
2 have not lasted as long as projected and wind farms have
3 been destroyed by hail, complete wind farms have been
4 damaged. And again, they're large hail storms, but they
5 happen.

6 Why not consider clean coal technology? You
7 know, we have operated on coal in this country for years.
8 We export coal. We have clean coal reserves in this
9 country. So I'm not saying that we go back to coal
10 plants, but renovate what we have, upgrade what we have.
11 It's what we do in this country. We advance technology.
12 We can do it for coal the same way.

13 The last thing, I don't know how many people
14 know this. I imagine a lot of people in the audience know
15 this. This building that you're in, this Vo Tech Center,
16 it was destroyed by fire about 15 years ago and when I say
17 destroyed, it's nothing left.

18 The country -- and I know the gentleman with --
19 discussing the city and the codes and things. We don't
20 fight fires out here. You fight fires to just put the
21 fire out because there's generally nothing left because
22 these rural fire departments, these -- they're volunteers.
23 The resources, unless you've been out here and you've
24 witnessed one of these home fires or buildings and things
25 burn, it's almost unimaginable.

1 And they discuss that these other departments,
2 other volunteer departments, not from across the street or
3 down the block or -- are coming in, you know, Clarksville,
4 Louisiana, they -- mutual aid. They have very, very
5 limited resources.

6 So my question on that is this facility burned
7 down not really due to that, but that water tower, you
8 couldn't have -- the water tower that serves the community
9 is next door to this building. It ran out of water. They
10 had to go up the Highway 61 toward Bowling Green, probably
11 seven or eight miles, and haul water and set up the
12 portable tanks. It's a challenge for these small
13 communities. They do not have these resources.

14 Now, I'm going to qualify this. Now, I'm going
15 to back up and I'm just going to say I'm not against
16 technology. I'm an engineer. The previous speaker, we
17 were just discussing everyone wants everything. We want
18 phones, we want electricity, we want it now.

19 But I think, you know, you've got to balance all
20 of this and I think the communication is so important
21 because, again, the comment is I didn't get anything in
22 the mail saying, hey, there's this meeting. I get my bill
23 through the mail from Ameren. You know, the smart meter
24 comment that came up in the previous session, it wasn't
25 our choice. My meter worked perfectly fine.

1 The lady that brought the comment up earlier
2 said that it was for remote read. It wasn't for remote
3 read. You could remote read my previous meter. The new
4 meter is so that you can exercise control over my usage of
5 electricity, which I kind of have a problem with. As long
6 as I'm paying my bill -- but there might be events where
7 you need to do that. I don't know.

8 But it's -- it's getting to be big brother and
9 the fact that -- if you're not going to have taller fences
10 around the station that you discussed and cameras -- I
11 kind of question the comment about no cameras on this
12 facility for security. I think that was somewhat
13 disingenuous, so I'll leave it there. And I appreciate
14 the time and everybody's patience.

15 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Are there any
16 questions for Mr. Gray?

17 MR. GRAY: Thank you for your time.

18 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you. All
19 right. You've got your right hand raised. Thank you. Do
20 you swear or affirm that the testimony you give today in
21 this hearing shall be the truth, the whole truth and
22 nothing but the truth?

23 MR. DORR: I do.

24 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you. What is
25 your name, sir?

1 MR. DORR: My name is Aaron Dorr. I live on
2 Duckett Road, just about ten miles away from here and I
3 think it's telling just to get this out of the way
4 first --

5 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Mr. Dorr, before
6 you get into that --

7 MR. DOOR: Sorry about that.

8 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: -- is it Aaron,
9 A-A-R-O-N?

10 MR. DOOR: I'm sorry. Yeah. It's a good German
11 name, A-A-R-O-N, last name D-O-R-R, one O, two Rs.

12 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you. Go
13 ahead.

14 MR. DORR: I think it's telling that we've all
15 come here on a workday, taking time off from work and,
16 unfortunately, none of our Public Service Commissioners
17 are here in person. So I know you're all watching online,
18 but that's frustrating to me, living nearby.

19 I'm not paid to be here. I believe you folks
20 are paid to be here. We have very grave concerns about
21 this and we have to look at a camera to make any kind of
22 comment to you. I find that frustrating. I wanted to get
23 that clarified.

24 Nevertheless, I'll ask you to vote this down. A
25 couple of reasons, no particular order. This will damage

1 land values. One of the proposed locations not in this
2 immediate block, but the next one coming per Ameren is
3 about a hundred yards away from my property line on
4 Duckett Road and I'm going swap rolling hills and trees
5 and creeks and grass for an endless array of solar panels
6 that will definitely damage the property value of my home
7 where I live. If I wanted to live by that, I'd have moved
8 to a place that had that. I didn't, which is why I came
9 to rural Lincoln County and now this is going to come here
10 and damage my property values.

11 Number two, we have no idea what the actual
12 environmental impact will be. I asked Ameren half an hour
13 ago what the study was, who funded it and how we could see
14 it and what I was told was they're not even sure a study
15 was actually done. It might have been done, but they
16 weren't sure if it was done and there was no way for the
17 public to get a copy of that.

18 That is, at best, disingenuous and, at worst,
19 just fraudulent. There's no way to know what the impact
20 will be. The study hasn't even been made public to us, if
21 it ever existed at all. That should be dealt with.
22 Otherwise, we're going to have deer hunting kind of grind
23 to a halt on my property.

24 My boys hunt. If we throw a six-foot-tall
25 fence, they're telling me, around the adjacent property,

1 those deer aren't going to be there anymore. It's gone.
2 That's my quality of life going down. I want grandsons to
3 hunt this land, not just my sons. It's going to be done
4 if this happens.

5 I had concerns with the security -- the
6 surveillance of these things. Ameren says there's no
7 cameras and no AI technology to guard these, to watch
8 these. I find that very hard to believe. A camera costs
9 five bucks on Amazon. So I have a hard time believing
10 that Ameren can throw down \$24,000 an acre for land, 2X
11 the going rate and then not have a camera.

12 My family walks past this -- the proposed area.
13 We walk out there at night. We love doing that. I don't
14 want to be on camera every time we do that. That should
15 be a reason alone to shut this thing down.

16 And, lastly, it's just going to continue to
17 destroy the quality of life in our entire region because,
18 as Ameren already said, data centers are coming. This
19 entire thing and the way it sounds to us in the cheap
20 seats is more or less designed to facilitate the actual
21 data center.

22 They need the batteries, they need the
23 transmission lines, they need the increased storage to
24 make that possible. It seems very obvious to all of us
25 behind me what's going to happen and we don't want that

1 here. We don't want that in our backyard.

2 And, finally, this is not a free market
3 decision, just to be clear either. I'm all about free
4 markets. But when Ameren takes money that we have to pay
5 them from our monthly utility bill and goes out there and
6 bids 2X for property values -- and they wouldn't admit
7 that, I'll just be clear, but I got neighbors, I got a
8 bunch of neighbors, they've all been approached by Ameren,
9 23,000, 24,000, \$25,000 an acre for land that usually is
10 in the 12 to \$14,000 an acre range.

11 That's not free market. No one here can compete
12 with that. This just destroys the idea of family farms,
13 destroys the quality of life that we have and for those
14 reasons and many others, I urge you to vote this thing
15 down. Thank you.

16 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Yes, ma'am.

17 MS. BYRNES: Hi. My name is --

18 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Would you raise
19 your right hand, please? Thank you.

20 MS. BYRNES: Yes, sorry.

21 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Do you swear or
22 affirm that the testimony you give today in this hearing
23 shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the
24 truth?

25 MS. BYRNES: Yes.

1 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you.

2 MS. BYRNES: My name is Tricia Byrnes. I'm
3 currently a state representative. I represent District
4 63. I'm hoping to represent Senate District 10, but I've
5 been following the data centers since August of 2025 where
6 I've been focused on learning more about them and each one
7 seems to have its own little nuance.

8 I've been concerned about the transparency and
9 some of the spin and I've heard some of the spin today.
10 One of the things that I find that we need some clarity on
11 is our Ameren representatives talked about how they'll
12 have contracts where the data centers will pay their full
13 rate, but I actually talked to an Ameren representative
14 myself directly about Google in Montgomery County and they
15 told me that that contract was a 15-year contract.

16 But I knew a little bit more to ask a few more
17 questions than the general public and I said, but how much
18 of that 15-year contract is required? And it was only
19 80 percent. And because I spoke out against the one in
20 St. Charles City, I -- after learning a little bit from
21 Ameren, I found out that their contracts would be prorated
22 because they wouldn't come online using the amount of peak
23 electricity that their facilities would eventually have.
24 So these contracts are not just a full amount, they're
25 prorated. And so they increase in how much they're going

1 to have to pay based on how much they're under contract
2 for.

3 My concern with that is because we passed SB4,
4 which I adamantly voted no against, that construction work
5 in progress, when they go and create these plants, which I
6 believe one of them is going to go in next to Sioux plant
7 and they're already bringing gas to the coal plants that
8 they shut down. One of the conversations was we had to
9 shut down all those plants. They already know they're
10 bringing those back online. So I think that information
11 should have been forward.

12 When they build these plants, if they're
13 prorating the data centers, are they only going to build
14 their power plants based on their usage and what they paid
15 for? My bet is probably not. That's when the
16 representative no longer would answer any questions, but
17 he said if the contract was public, he would e-mail it to
18 me. And as of last night, it still hasn't arrived to my
19 house account.

20 The concern that I have is you're dealing with a
21 lot of taxpayer money and if it's not taxpayer money, they
22 presented it as if it's a private company. It's a
23 monopoly-owned utility with shareholders and I'm the
24 ratepayer taking on the investment where the shareholders
25 should be taking that on.

1 The other thing that concerns me and maybe you
2 guys could -- whatever this -- these answers look like, as
3 far as I know, Ameren is a -- is a cost-plus business. So
4 the more they drive up the cost, the more money they're
5 entitled to. And that's paid for by ratepayers.

6 The other thing that I want to talk about is
7 they talked about making sure they wanted to keep rates
8 low, but I don't know why they didn't mention they're
9 currently asking for more money as we speak from the PSC.
10 They are asking, again, for another rate increase, they
11 asked for one last summer and I think there was just two
12 years before that. So in a very short time, they're
13 quickly coming to the PSC.

14 I have yet to see a case they've ever lost.
15 While we're at it, let's talk about all the lobbyists they
16 have in the blue line spending where they don't have to
17 report to the ratepayers. They have about 80 lobbyists on
18 their team at the capitol. I think ratepayers have a
19 right to know that they're being lobbied against.

20 When they came to SB4, one of the things that
21 they said to all the representatives, I know because I was
22 one of them, they said they didn't have enough for all the
23 customers they have. But now all of a sudden there's
24 multiple data centers coming in.

25 So I think we're kind of really spinning the

1 message to the public and I really would like somebody to
2 just get these answers and make sure the contracts that
3 they're signing with my ratepayer money, it needs to be
4 open to the public. And with that, I appreciate the time.

5 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right. Thank
6 you. All right. Is there anyone else who would like to
7 testify? Yes, ma'am. Would you raise your right hand?
8 Thank you. Do you swear or affirm that the testimony you
9 give today in this hearing shall be the truth, the whole
10 truth and nothing but the truth?

11 MS. HUGHES-BROWN: Yes, I do.

12 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: And what is your
13 name, please?

14 MS. HUGHES-BROWN: My name is Donna Hughes,
15 H-U-G-H-E-S, hyphen, Brown, B-R-O-W-N.

16 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay. Go ahead.

17 MS. HUGHES-BROWN: So I had brought up
18 earlier -- I was the person that brought up the smart
19 meters. PUC (sic) said it was okay for Ameren to
20 install -- or PSC said it was okay for Ameren to install
21 them. PSC has said it's okay for Ameren to raise their
22 rates. Ameren sat right here and said to us, well, the
23 whole reason -- we want to try and get your rates lowered.
24 You wouldn't have to try and get our rates lowered if you
25 would not allow them to raise our rates.

1 There are systemwide issues with Ameren's
2 technology, with their transmission lines, with their
3 ability to correct issues. But they're looking for the
4 big money and we don't have it. We're tapped out. We
5 don't have the money that Ameren wants.

6 I'm not familiar with Ameren as a corporation,
7 okay, so forgive me if I speak on something that
8 doesn't -- that I don't know. But if they're a publicly
9 traded commission, then the public has the right to know
10 what that company is doing. We have the right to know
11 that our homes, our properties, our kids are not going to
12 be damaged by the all mighty dollar that Ameren is looking
13 for.

14 They want to make more money. Who doesn't? We
15 all want to make more money, okay? So you can't fault
16 that business model. But what you can fault is Ameren
17 being -- given carte blanche to basically do whatever they
18 want and I'd like to know why.

19 I'd like to know from the Public Service
20 Commission why you are allowing companies such as Ameren
21 to be able to just do basically, in essence, whatever they
22 want? Why are you allowing them to not do impact studies?
23 Why are you allowing them to not do environmental studies?
24 Those are the questions that I'd like some answers from
25 from the PSC.

1 I would like you to be able to put your thought
2 processes into the big picture and not just the immediacy
3 of the need. We need to be proactive, not reactive. This
4 is -- we just are seeing it again and again and again.

5 Our cost of living has gone up in this area.
6 You can't touch any -- any property, even to rent. Our
7 young families can't afford their light bills. You see it
8 all the time in this area, people begging for help with
9 their light bills, people begging for help with a water
10 bill, people begging -- you know, we were talking about
11 the fire departments.

12 I lived in Maine. Lots of rural volunteer fire
13 departments. It kind of became a slogan, "We haven't lost
14 a cellar yet." So they haven't lost a basement yet, okay?
15 Which means people's entire homes have been destroyed by
16 fire.

17 The gentleman that sat up here with Ameren
18 stated that, well, it could happen that there's a fire.
19 There's a likelihood that it won't. Well, there's a
20 likelihood that I'm going to get hit by a bus jumping over
21 61 tomorrow, probably won't happen, but there's still a
22 likelihood that it could. So does that mean that I stop
23 looking left and right? No, it means that we really need
24 to be proactive in looking at the big picture, not just
25 the tale that Ameren wants to spin to every one of us.

1 Thank you.

2 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: All right. Thank
3 you. All right. Is there anyone else who would like to
4 testify? Yes, ma'am. All right. Thank you. You've got
5 your right hand raised for the sake of the record. Do you
6 swear or affirm that the testimony you give today in this
7 hearing shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing
8 but the truth?

9 MS. HAMMETT: Yes, I do.

10 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you very
11 much. What's your name, please?

12 MS. HAMMETT: Debbie Hammett.

13 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Could you spell
14 that last name?

15 MS. HAMMETT: H-A-M-M-E-T-T.

16 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: You know what, I'll
17 ask you to spell your first name as well.

18 MS. HAMMETT: Debbie, D-E-B-B-I-E.

19 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay. Thank you.

20 MS. HAMMETT: Okay. I live right in the middle
21 of all of this stuff. We're going to be devastated. We
22 ain't going to have nothing. Our property value is going
23 to go down and, you know, the county ain't going to lower
24 our taxes. And, you know, you just got to consider that.
25 What is this solar stuff going do to us? The batteries

1 are going to be on the other side of the highway, but
2 we're going to have solar all the way around us. We're
3 right in the middle of these three farms. We're done and
4 I don't want to move. You guys are screwing us. It's
5 devastating. Thank you.

6 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you. All
7 right. Is there anyone else who would like to testify as
8 to an issue that's not yet been discussed? Yes. Go
9 ahead, ma'am. I apologize if I've been overlooking you.

10 MS. BALLARD: No, no, that's okay.

11 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: You're in the front
12 row.

13 MS. BALLARD: This is a first.

14 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Could you raise
15 your right hand, please? Thank you. Do you swear or
16 affirm that the testimony you give today in this hearing
17 shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the
18 truth?

19 MS. BALLARD: Yes, I do.

20 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Before you get
21 started, can I ask you to carefully lower that down.
22 Thank you. Afraid that's going to fall off of there. All
23 right. What is your name, please?

24 MS. BALLARD: Delena Ballard.

25 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay.

1 MS. BALLARD: D-E-L-E-N-A B-A-L-L-A-R-D.

2 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay. Go ahead,
3 Ms. Ballard.

4 MS. BALLARD: To add to what Mrs. Byrnes was
5 speaking to earlier as far as rates, I also understand
6 some of these companies negotiate for bulk rates in which
7 case at the end of the day, they end up paying less per
8 kilowatt hour than the residents do.

9 And to the last lady that just spoke, I
10 understand. I have family that's been displaced by data
11 centers in Texas, in Louisiana, my family that has been
12 there since the city was established is losing property
13 through eminent domain because we refuse to accept a value
14 of the property less than half its market value.

15 So when you say we're screwed, forgive the
16 language, but everywhere we turn around, it's being thrown
17 at us, it's being shoved down our throats, whether we like
18 it or not. I don't feel like our voices are being heard.

19 And on this one I'm just going to rip the
20 Band-Aid off and go for it. Are there any nondisclosure
21 agreements, confidentiality clauses or nonpublic
22 agreements with the developer, utility or landowner that
23 restrict what the Staff or elected officials can tell the
24 public? If so, would you be willing to release a redacted
25 version or at least summarized copy of those restricted

1 topics and in so doing, can you please explain what
2 statute or ordinance allows you to withhold it from the
3 public that you allegedly represent? Thank you.

4 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you,
5 Ms. Ballard. All right. Is there anyone else who would
6 like to testify to something that has not yet been
7 discussed? All right. As the auctioneer might say, going
8 once, going twice.

9 I do appreciate all of you being here today.
10 I -- again, as was mentioned, I want to -- the speakers to
11 take time out of your day and potentially miss work is --
12 does -- is not lost on the Commission.

13 If after we leave here today you have comments
14 that you would like to let the Commission know online, you
15 can go to the Commission's website at PSC.mo.gov. On the
16 right side of the home page there is a link that says
17 Submit Comments and you can write your comments in there
18 as long -- and it would be helpful to us if you would
19 reference this case number which is EA-2026-0183.

20 Also, if you would like to contact the Office of
21 the Public Counsel, you can e-mail them at
22 mopco@opc.mo.gov. And before we end the hearing today,
23 Commissioner Kolkmeyer, would you like to make any closing
24 remarks?

25 COMMISSIONER KOLKMEYER: I believe the Chair is

1 going to, Judge.

2 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Oh, I apologize.
3 Chair Hahn.

4 CHAIRPERSON HAHN: Thanks, Judge Seyer.

5 CLOSING STATEMENT BY CHAIR HAHN:

6 Good afternoon, everyone. Chair Kayla Hahn of
7 the Public Service Commission. I just want to take a
8 minute to say how much we appreciate your input this
9 afternoon. I listened diligently to all of the comments
10 and really impressed with the amount of research that you
11 conducted prior and the questions that you're asking.

12 I think they're good questions. I think it's
13 really helpful to understand how you're thinking about it,
14 so when we -- as the case does develop, we can further try
15 to make sure we get the information we need to make
16 informed decisions.

17 I want to address Mr. Dorr's comments about why
18 we're not there because it's a really fair question. We
19 had scheduled a commissioner to be in person today. We
20 have these hearings all over the state and life happens
21 and the rest of us are two hours away. So instead of
22 scrambling, we all decided to log in and make sure that we
23 could cover all the hearing.

24 So I completely understand. I -- you know, I
25 know that this is a very important matter. I see moms in

1 the background with their babies at this meeting and
2 that's really impactful, also, for me as a mom to take
3 time out to do something like this.

4 And so just want to say, again, that we really
5 appreciate your input here. We take it to heart and no
6 decisions have been made and we look forward to the rest
7 of the Local Public Hearings in this case later tonight in
8 Vandalia. We also have one in Advance and then we have
9 two Webex local public hearings.

10 So if other folks that you know or your
11 neighbors also have comments, we're willing to take them
12 that way. So again, thank you all very much and we'll
13 take this information into account in any decision.
14 Thanks, Judge.

15 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Thank you, Chair
16 Hahn. And again, thank you all for your participation
17 today. The hearing is now adjourned and we are off the
18 record.

19 (Proceedings concluded at 2:17 P.M.)
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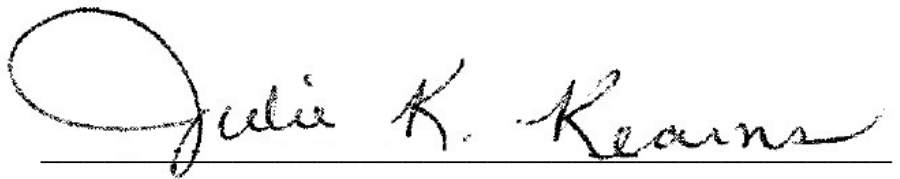
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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I, Julie K. Kearns, Certified Court Reporter (MO), Certified Shorthand Reporter (IL), Registered Professional Reporter and Certified Realtime Reporter within and for the State of Missouri, do hereby certify that I was personally present at the proceedings had in the above-entitled cause at the time and place set forth in the caption sheet thereof; that I then and there took down in Stenotype the proceedings had; and that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of such Stenotype notes so made at such time and place.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Julie K. Kearns". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

Julie K. Kearns, CCR #993, CSR, RPR, CRR

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