

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

In the Matter of Union Electric Company d/b/a)
Ameren Missouri's Requests for a Temporary)
Waiver of Various Tariffs and Commission Order)
to Delay Implementation of Certain Time-of-Use)
Rates and Related Communication Tools for)
Residential Customers, a Permanent Waiver of) File No. EE-2021-_____
Various Regulations to Cease Printing Beginning)
and Ending Readings on All Residential)
Customer Bills, for Waiver of 60-Day Notice)
Requirement, and for Expedited Treatment.)

**NOTICE OF CASE FILING, APPLICATION FOR VARIANCES,
MOTION FOR WAIVER OF 60-DAY NOTICE REQUIREMENT,
AND MOTION FOR EXPEDITED TREATMENT**

COMES NOW Union Electric Company d/b/a Ameren Missouri ("Ameren Missouri" or "Company"), a Missouri corporation, and pursuant to 20 CSR 4240-4.017, 20 CSR 4240-2.060, 20 CSR 4240-2.080, and 20 CSR 4240-13.065 submits this *Notice of Case Filing, Application for Variances, Motion for Waiver of 60-day Notice Requirement, and Motion for Expedited Treatment* ("*Application*"). First, the Company requests a temporary waiver from its electric tariffs and a Missouri Public Service Commission ("Commission") Order authorizing it to temporarily delay certain time-of-use ("TOU") rates being offered to or becoming default rates for residential customers for up to five months and to temporarily delay the provision of TOU rate-related communication tools for up to five months. Second, the Company requests from the Commission approval of permanent variances from portions of 20 CSR 4240 Chapter 13 to allow the Company to cease printing beginning and ending readings on all bills for residential customers with Advanced Metering Infrastructure ("AMI") meters. Third, the Company moves for waiver of the 60-day notice requirement under 20 CSR 4240-4.017(1)(D). Fourth, the Company moves for

expedited decision from the Commission in accordance with 20 CSR 4240-2.080(14). In support of its requests, Ameren Missouri states as follows:

INTRODUCTION

1. As part of its Smart Energy Plan, Ameren Missouri is implementing various "smart" technologies, including AMI. AMI meters will provide Ameren Missouri with more timely and granular data regarding customer usage patterns, and will allow two-way communications between the Company and each meter. These capabilities provide advantages to both the Company and the customer, such as enabling the Company to offer to customers a greater portfolio of innovative, beneficial, and efficient rates and rate structures, providing insights into customer usage in different and dynamic new ways, and potentially enabling greater utilization of smart devices (thermostats, electric vehicle chargers, appliances, etc.) within the home. AMI will also enable remote connections and disconnections and improve, among other things, outage detection and notification, voltage monitoring capabilities, meter data integrity, and revenue protection through detection of theft of service.

2. Ameren Missouri will replace its current electric meters and gas modules with AMI meters/modules over a five-year time period, from 2020 to 2025. The first AMI meters were installed in July 2020.

First Request (TOU Rate Implementation/Communication)

3. As part of the settlement of all but two issues in Ameren Missouri's last electric general rate case approved by the Commission, Ameren Missouri, the Staff of the Missouri Public Service Commission ("Staff"), the Office of the Public Counsel ("OPC"), Missouri Department of Natural Resources - Division of Energy ("DE"), Missouri Industrial Energy Consumers ("MIEC"), Midwest Energy Consumers Group ("MECG"), Consumers Council of Missouri ("CCM"), Natural

Resources Defense Council, and the Sierra Club (collectively “Signatories”), *inter alia* agreed upon a detailed residential rate design plan with new default and optional rate plans, including TOU rates designed to be implemented with the AMI phase-in.¹ More specifically, the Signatories agreed that residential customers would be transferred or defaulted to the Daytime/Overnight rate within six months after the customer receives an AMI meter if they do not select another available rate option, for an optional three-part rate with demand charge and TOU energy charges to be made available, for all customers to receive a communication regarding what their bill would have been in prior billing periods under available rate options, and for all residential customers to have access to an on-line rate comparison tool using historical usage information.²

4. The Company's compliance tariffs accordingly provided for the Daytime/Overnight rate to be available on January 1, 2021,³ and for the optional three-part rate with demand charge and TOU energy charges to also be available as of January 1, 2021.⁴

5. However, at the time the *First Agreement* was negotiated, Ameren Missouri recognized that transitioning all of its residential customers to new TOU rate options and developing tools to assist customers in doing so was a major undertaking that would affect many of its business processes and require the overhaul of its entire billing system referred to as "CSS." Because this project had not even been fully scoped, the Company knew that it could not guarantee that the timeframes could be met. To address this, paragraph 27(a)(v) of the *First Agreement* noted as follows (emphasis added):

¹ File No. ER-2019-0335, *Corrected and Non-Unanimous Stipulation and Agreement ("First Agreement")*, filed February 28, 2020, approved by Commission Order Approving Stipulation and Agreements effective March 28, 2020. Renew Missouri Advocates, d/b/a Renew Missouri, indicated that it had no objection to the *First Agreement*.

² *First Agreement*, at para. 27(a)(ii), 27(d), & 27(a)(iv)(3).

³ Ameren Missouri's Electric Service Tariff, Schedule 6, Sheet No. 54.4, Service Classification No. 1(M) R-Daynight, Residential Daytime/Overnight Service, "Availability" section.

⁴ Ameren Missouri's Electric Service Tariff, Schedule 6, Sheet No. 54.13, Service Classification No. 1(M) R-TOUUS, Residential Ultimate Saver Service, "Availability" section.

The Signatories acknowledge that Ameren Missouri represents that **substantial IT programming work is needed to be conducted to meet the timelines** of paragraph ii, iii, and iv above. **Such changes were not able to be fully scoped during the negotiation of this agreement**; however, Ameren Missouri represents that it intends to meet these timelines and will make all best efforts to do so. **If the fully defined scope results in barriers to meeting these timelines, Ameren Missouri shall communicate with the parties, and shall file any appropriate pleadings to request to adjust rate implementation timeframes accordingly. Signatories agree not to oppose a reasonable request to adjust the timeframes.**

6. Moreover, in paragraph 27(d) of the *First Agreement*, the Signatories agreed (emphasis added):

The three-part rate with demand charge and TOU energy charges as described in the direct testimony of Steven Wills will be implemented as an optional rate rather than as a pilot program. **The implementation of this rate may be delayed pending completion of IT programming changes necessary to offer it on a non-pilot basis.**

7. Making adjustments to Ameren Missouri's systems and processes to allow the migration of all of Ameren Missouri's more than 1 million residential customers to TOU billing has turned out to be more difficult and time-consuming than the Company thought it would be when the *First Agreement* was signed. Despite Ameren Missouri's best efforts, the timeframes set out in the *First Agreement* for the Daytime/Overnight default rate implementation, the optional three-part rate with demand charge and TOU energy charges implementation, a communication to customers within six months of their AMI being installed to educate customers on what their bill would have been in prior billing periods under available rate options, and the on-line rate comparison tool cannot be met. As detailed further below, the barriers to meeting the original timeframes are the additional technical and process scope of the project beyond that which was originally identified, the need for additional testing/quality assurance measures to ensure that the integrity of the Company's billing system is preserved, the virtual training needed for field personnel and across the customer-interacting departments, the difficulty of coordinating key

vendors' timeframes, and other COVID-19 pandemic impacts.

8. In accordance with the process specified in paragraph 27(a)(v) of the *First Agreement* for adjustment of original timeframes for the new options and tools, Ameren Missouri notified all the parties to File No. ER-2019-0335 via email on September 22, 2020 that barriers to meeting the original timeframes had been identified and invited all parties to participate in a to-be-scheduled Skype meeting. The Skype meeting was held on September 29, 2020 and in advance of filing this *Application* (the appropriate pleading). During the September 29, 2020 Skype meeting, the Company explained the barriers to the original timeframes and how the implementation timeframes must be adjusted temporarily. Specifically, for customers whose AMI meters are installed between July and November, 2020, the Company requests a five-month delay in transferring customers to TOU rates and providing supporting communications.

Second Request (Meter Reads Variance)

9. During the Company's Business Process Design ("BPD") sessions for the new TOU rate options rollout and other terms of the *First Agreement*, the Company realized that a further waiver of 20 CSR 4240-13.020(9), beyond the waiver granted in File No. EE-2019-0382, to cease printing beginning and ending meter readings on bills for both TOU and non-TOU residential customers is needed.

10. As explained further below, the original variance request in File No. EE-2019-0382 for printing register readings on bills contemplated only TOU customers' bills being based on interval readings. The BPD process established that, due to system constraints, the only accurate way to compare "shadow bills" for all residential customers on all eligible rate options is to generate a bill on each rate option through the billing system, which must utilize interval data to produce the bills that the customer would have experienced on the TOU options. Accordingly, all

residential bills need to be based on interval readings to accommodate the required shadow billing process in a manner that ensures the accuracy of the calculations of bills on all available rate options.

11. The analytical review as provided for in File No. EE-2019-0382 also already contemplates analyzing interval versus register read accuracy for all residential AMI customers.

Third Request (Waiver of 60-Day Notice Requirement)

12. Further, the Company requests a waiver of the 60-day notice requirement in accordance with 20 CSR 4240-4.017(1)(D).

Fourth Request (Expedited Treatment)

13. Ameren Missouri is requesting expedited treatment of this Application in accordance with 20 CSR 4240-2.080(14) and a decision to be effective by at least December 31, 2020 to adjust original timeframes set in paragraph 27 of the *First Agreement* in File No. ER-2019-0335 and to implement necessary changes to meet adjusted timeframes.

14. This *Application* has been divided into the following sections:

- I. 20 CSR 4240-4.017 — Third Request, Waiver of 60-Day Notice Requirement
- II. 20 CSR 4240-2.060(1), (A) through (M) — General Application Requirements
- III. 20 CSR 4240-2.060(4) — First & Second Requests, Variances
- IV. 20 CSR 4240-2.080(14) — Fourth Request, Expedited Treatment

I. 20 CSR 4240-4.017 — Third Request, Waiver of 60-Day Notice Requirement

15. Ameren Missouri requests a variance from the 60-day notice requirement of 20 CSR 4240-4.017, which states, in relevant part:

Any person that intends to file a case shall file a notice with the secretary of the commission a minimum of sixty (60) days prior to filing such case....

Pursuant to 20 CSR 4240-4.017(1)(D), waivers of the 60-day notice requirement may be granted for good cause shown. The rule further provides that good cause includes "... a verified declaration from the filing party ... that circumstances prevented filing the required notice and delaying the filing for sixty (60) days would cause harm."⁵ As indicated in the *Verification and Affidavit* attached as Schedule 1 to this *Application*, circumstances prevented Ameren Missouri from filing the required notice and delaying the filing for 60 days would cause harm. Accordingly, Ameren Missouri has established good cause for a waiver from the 60-day requirement of 20 CSR 4240-4.017(1). No other public utility will be affected by granting the Company a waiver from this requirement.

II. 20 CSR 4240-2.060(1), (A) through (M) — General Application Requirements

Paragraph (A) – Applicant

16. The Company is a Missouri corporation doing business under the fictitious name of Ameren Missouri, organized and existing under the laws of the State of Missouri, in good standing in all respects, with its principal office and place of business located at One Ameren Plaza, 1901 Chouteau Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri 63103. The Company is engaged in providing electric and gas utility services in portions of Missouri as a public utility under the jurisdiction of the Commission. The Company is a subsidiary of Ameren Corporation.

Paragraph (B) – Articles of Incorporation; Paragraph (E) – Fictitious Name; Paragraph (G) – Information Previously Submitted; Paragraph (H) – Character of Business⁶

17. Company previously submitted to the Commission a certified copy of its Articles of Incorporation (See Case No. EA-87-105). Company previously submitted its Fictitious Name

⁵ Pursuant to the Commission's *Order Waiving 60-Day Notice Requirement* issued on August 1, 2017, in File No. WM-2018-0023, the examples of good cause provided in the rule are not exclusive, and the Commission may find that good cause has been established by other circumstances.

⁶ Paragraphs (C), (D), and (F) do not apply to Ameren Missouri.

Registrations as filed with the Missouri Secretary of State's Office in File No. EA-2019-0181. Company attaches a copy of its Certificate of Corporate Good Standing as Schedule 2 to this pleading. These documents are incorporated by reference and made a part of this *Application* for all purposes.

Paragraph I – Correspondence and Communication

18. Correspondence and Communication — Correspondence, communications, orders and decisions in regard to this *Application* should be directed to the undersigned and to:

Thomas M. Byrne
Senior Director, Regulatory Affairs
1901 Chouteau Avenue, MC-1450
P.O. Box 66149, MC-1450
St. Louis, Missouri 63101-6149
(314) 554-2514 (Telephone)
tbyrne@ameren.com

Paragraph (K) – Actions, Judgments, and Decisions; Paragraph (L) – Fees⁷

19. Ameren Missouri has no final unsatisfied judgments or decisions against it from any state or federal agency or court that involve customer service or rates that have occurred within three years of the date of this *Application*. By the nature of its business, the Company has, from time-to-time, pending actions in state and federal agencies and courts involving customer service or rates. Company has no annual report or assessment fees overdue to this Commission.

Paragraph (M) – Affidavit

20. An affidavit in support of this *Application* by an authorized individual is included as Schedule 1.

III. 20 CSR 4240-2.060(4) — First & Second Requests, Variances

21. 20 CSR 4240-2.060(4) states that, in addition to other application requirements:

⁷ Paragraph (J) does not apply to Ameren Missouri.

[A]pplications for variances or waivers from commission rules and tariff provisions, as well as those statutory provisions which may be waived, shall contain information as follows:

- (A) Specific indication of the statute, rule, or tariff from which the variance or waiver is sought;
- (B) The reasons for the proposed variance or waiver and a complete justification setting out the good cause for granting the variance or waiver; and
- (C) The name of any public utility affected by the variance or waiver.

First Request (TOU Rate Implementation/Communication)

22. Provisions From Which Variance Sought. Ameren Missouri⁸ is requesting variances from the Commission Order approving the *First Agreement* in File No. ER-2019-0335 and certain corresponding tariffs. More specifically, Ameren Missouri requests variances from the following:

a. Under paragraph 27(a)(ii) of the *First Agreement*, the Signatories agreed for residential customers to be transferred or defaulted to the Daytime/Overnight rate within six months after the customer receives an AMI meter if they do not select another available rate option. Correspondingly, the Company's compliance tariffs provided for the Daytime/Overnight rate to be available on January 1, 2021, which was six months after the first AMI meter was installed by the Company for a residential customer.⁹

b. In paragraph 27(d) of the *First Agreement*, the Signatories agreed that an optional three-part rate with demand charge and TOU energy charges would be made available as another rate option for residential customers. The Company's compliance tariffs accordingly provided for the optional three-part rate with demand charge and TOU energy charges to also be available as of January 1, 2021 (six months after the first AMI

⁸ Ameren Missouri is the only public utility affected by the requested variances or waiver.

⁹ Ameren Missouri's Electric Service Tariff, Schedule 6, Sheet No. 54.4, Service Classification No. 1(M) R-Daynight, Residential Daytime/Overnight Service, "Availability" section.

was installed by the Company for a residential customer).¹⁰

c. Paragraph 27(a)(ii) of *the First Agreement* provides: "Within six billing months after a customer receives an AMI meter, Ameren Missouri shall communicate with the customer to educate the customer on what their bill would have been in prior billing periods under available rate options...."¹¹

d. Paragraph 27(a)(iv)(3) of the *First Agreement* provides: "Ameren Missouri shall develop an on-line neutral rate comparison tool to show a customer their bill under each available rate option based on historical usage information, and will communicate to residential customers via their preferred communication method how to access the rate comparison tool. The timing of this communication will be addressed at the meeting in March 2020 []."

23. Best Efforts. Ameren Missouri has extended best efforts and completed a great deal of work since the *First Agreement* was executed by the parties in February of 2020.¹²

a. On March 5, 2020, the Commission issued an *Order Directing Responses*, which directed "each party to respond stating if it is willing to provide an alternate stipulation and agreement that includes any or all of [three points]." The third point was identified as follows:

Submitting to the Commission timely status reports after the monthly customer engagement meetings identified in Paragraph 27 of the [Stipulation]. The status reports would detail the agreed to educational/communications programs. In addition, Ameren Missouri would present at Agenda in either June or July 2020, details of the customer outreach plans prior to their initiation.

¹⁰ Ameren Missouri's Electric Service Tariff, Schedule 6, Sheet No. 54.13, Service Classification No. 1(M) R-TOUUS, Residential Ultimate Saver Service, "Availability" section.

¹¹ *First Agreement*, at para. 27(a)(iv)(3).

¹² Commission approved the First Agreement via Order effective March 28, 2020.

b. On March 9, 2020, Ameren Missouri filed its Response to the Commission's Order Directing Responses on Willingness to Provide an Alternative Stipulation and Agreement ("*Response*"). In response to the third point, Ameren Missouri stated:

While Ameren Missouri is not willing to provide an alternate stipulation and agreement, Ameren Missouri does not believe that the Stipulation would need to be changed to accomplish point three. Instead, Ameren Missouri commits to submit status reports and present at Agenda in either June or July 2020 as described in point three of the Commission's March 5, 2020 Order.

c. Governor Parson issued an Executive Order 20-02 on March 13, 2020 declaring a state of emergency for the State of Missouri as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

d. In accordance with paragraph 27(a)(iv)(4) of the *First Agreement*, Ameren Missouri met with Staff, DE, and OPC in March, April, May, and June 2020 to discuss plans to roll out customer engagement for customers receiving AMI meters ("Monthly Stakeholder Meetings"). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic emergency, each of the Monthly Stakeholder Meetings were conducted virtually, and not in-person. And, in accordance with Ameren Missouri's commitment in *Response* to the third point, status reports were correspondingly submitted on the progress of the Monthly Stakeholder Meetings in the then-pending AMI waiver docket (File No. EE-2019-0382) as well as the rate case docket (File No. ER-2019-0335), and Ameren Missouri presented at the Commission's Agenda on July 29, 2020 on "Ameren Missouri Advancing Time of Use Rates."

e. As early as the March 30, 2020 virtual Monthly Stakeholder Meeting, Ameren Missouri explained that a significant amount of digital/IT work had been undertaken, including: assessing the scope of changes required to internal IT systems to move from billing approximately 1,900 customers using interval data to over 1 million

customers in just a few years, and overcoming the challenge of scaling up interval billing and shadow billing processes to give all customers access to TOU rates and bill comparison data for each available rate option.¹³

f. In April and May of 2020, Ameren Missouri conducted qualitative and quantitative customer research regarding TOU rate options.¹⁴ At the same time, the Company was undertaking necessary planning work for the process and system changes that would be required. This work included significant effort of the Digital team to assess the impacts to the billing system that would arise from interval billing at a large scale. Additionally, the Company was evaluating and engaging vendors with tools and capabilities necessary to help meet the requirements of the *First Agreement*. Importantly, at this time the Company engaged Accenture as its system integrator, and began working with them on defining the BPD process that would provide the deep dive into the details and identify the specific requirements of each change to Ameren Missouri's systems, department workflows, and customer interactions needed to support the default TOU rate rollout and communications.

g. Ameren Missouri's planning efforts consisted of discovery, milestone and schedule development, high-level design, system impact assessments, technical design and requirements documentation. The initial phases of this process launched in May 2020 to gather the high level initial planning timeline. Extensive BPD sessions began in June 2020 and continued through September of 2020 leading to our gathering of significant business and functional requirements driving changes to our systems. The Company conducted 34

¹³ See File No. ER-2019-0335, Ameren Missouri's Status Report on March 2020 Meeting and Customer Education and Communication Plans, submitted on April 2, 2020, Attachment 2, Slides 7 through 9.

¹⁴ See File No. ER-2019-0335, Ameren Missouri's Status Report on May 2020 Meeting and Customer Education and Communication Plans, submitted on June 5, 2020, Attachment 2, Slides 4 through 9.

detailed BPD workshops or group virtual meetings, and 41 sub-processes were reviewed in those sessions. Thirty side meetings were held to further evaluate questions from the BPD sessions. These BPD sessions included numerous personnel from across the Company, including extensive participation from the Smart Meter Program implementation team, along with representation from the Customer Service, Customer Solutions, Analytics, Credit, Revenue Protection, Customer Experience, Call Center, Customer Accounts (Billing), Field, Digital, Training, Project Management, Regulatory, and Communications functions. Each of these workgroups participated in identifying the specific impacts the TOU rollout and communications would have on each of their affected processes, and developed detailed requirements about how those processes and the systems that support them would need to be updated. At least 100 individuals participated in some or all of over 150 hours of BPD collaborative workshops. The BPD sessions identified approximately 463 unique business, functional, and process requirements to be defined, built out, and tested. Those 463 unique requirements can generally be categorized into the following categories: Customer Engagement (122 requirements), Billing & Usage (73), Data Sync (66), Rate Choice Platforms (58), Shadow Billing (40), Bill Print (37), Reporting (35), Meter Data Management/Validations Edits Estimations ("MDM/VEE") (27), and Meter Read (5). The unique requirements impact 11 different digital systems, including: the Meter Data Management System ("MDMS"), Command Center, Outage Analysis System ("OAS"), Customer Relationship Management ("CRM"), and the especially crucial CSS (billing system).

h. Many of the impacted processes have dependencies that require work to be sequenced as well. For example, some core logic changes will have to be completed and

tested in the Company's billing system before other requirements can be built — the "shadow billing" or rate comparison logic will have to follow the completion and testing of the core logic changes for each new TOU rate. The Company has endeavored to coordinate the sequential work as efficiently as possible. For example, as described above, while the BPD sessions were being set up and conducted, a parallel path was already underway to conduct customer research in the form of focus groups and surveys to help ensure that the communication and education pieces that needed to be developed would be informed by robust primary research of customer's needs and preferences for understanding new rate options.

i. While a portion of the technological work was automated, a majority of this work cannot be automated and requires substantial effort.

24. Reasons for the Variances/Good Cause/Barriers. Despite Ameren Missouri's best efforts explained above, barriers to the timeframes set out in the *First Agreement* arose and require a temporary delay of the rollout of the Daytime/Overnight default rate, the optional three-part rate with demand charge and TOU energy charges, the six-month post-AMI rate education communication, and the on-line rate comparison tool. Those barriers are as follows:

a. Additional Technical and Process Scope Beyond What Was Originally Anticipated: At the time the *First Agreement* was entered into, the Company had only been able to prepare a very high level estimates of the work that would be required to support it. The 463 unique business, functional, and process requirements identified in the BPD sessions were not identified at that time. The Company's estimates at that time were, by necessity, done at a much higher level than the analysis of the BPDs, and were based on the most significant systems that were known to be impacted, such as the billing system

(CSS) impact. Many of the secondary systems and processes would only be able to be identified through the much more granular review to be undertaken with the broad team that worked on the BPDs. For example, BPD sessions revealed the following complexities that were not known at the time the First Agreement was entered into:

- Shadow billing processes would require all residential customers to bill using interval data, including customers on the existing block rate.
- Interval billing processes would drive a number of downstream process changes impacting our system Metering, Revenue Protection, and Billing workgroups. These changes, in turn, drive increased work volume and additional technical scope to mitigate that increased workload.
- Existing residential bill formats would require significant changes to display the new rate options.
- Self-service channels to allow customer rate options selection is more complex than originally estimated.

By way of illustration, BPD sessions dove into the move-out process for rental units, which requires the creation of multiple new processes and technical scope. Through CSS, the Company will determine if a customer who is moving out is on a rental premise where the landlord has the service transferred to the landlord's name whenever a tenant moves out. Logic in CSS will trigger the succession process for account move out to the landlord's name for rental premises. Landlords will default to the Day/Night default rate on the usual timeline, and can call in to request a different rate. Changes to the Landlord Portal will allow service to be started for tenants, but landlords will not be able to choose a rate option for their tenant. A new landlord customer communication piece is being

developed to explain the special landlord/tenant processes. A tenant will receive all other customer communications.

By way of further illustration, the need to physically probe more AMI meters raised various complexities. The Company had to determine which additional field workgroups would perform physical probing of AMI meters, whether those field workgroups' labor contracts covered such work, what tools to use to probe the AMI meters, what to do with the interval data obtained through physical probing, and in what situations meter probing would be necessary. Revenue Protection and System Metering must develop back-office supporting processes to maintain interval meter data integrity for billing. Customer Accounts (billing) has to develop processes and supporting technology for manual billing adjustments in the case of meter communication failures and logic to apply the correct TOU rate to said adjustments.

These are only two illustrations of revised or new processes and/or technology identified as a part of the 463 requirements.

b. Testing/Quality Assurance: Testing or quality assurance is especially crucial in light of the complexity of, and the risk associated with, making such sweeping changes to the Company's billing system to enable the new rate structures, the multiple customer journeys, the intricacies of the default rate logic, and accuracy of the shadow billing processes. Complete regression testing against existing functionality is necessary as well to ensure current billing processes are not impacted prior to rollout of the TOU changes. Overall, upon developing a complete understanding the entire scope of the systems changes through the BPD sessions, there was a 50% increase in testing requirements relative to initial estimates in order to maintain the integrity of the billing

system.

c. Training: Through the BPD sessions, further field training was identified as necessary. Just one example is the field training needed to a broader group on the process to physically probe meters so that even residential customers who elect to stay on the non-TOU rate option will have interval metering data to calculate shadow bills upon. Also, to be able to answer customer questions regarding the new rate options and communication tools, extensive training across the Ameren Missouri organization for those who interact with customers is required. Extensive training is needed for the Billing department to support the significant CSS (billing system) changes as well. To ensure the best remote training experience under the COVID-19 pandemic work circumstances, training is more compartmentalized and broken up in smaller delivery times over more days creating a longer timeline for training delivery. Additionally, multiple training resources are needed to complete the virtual training — one trainer to deliver the material and another trainer to ensure user retention and field virtual questions and any system issues. This additional resource need for virtual training lengthens the Company's training delivery timeline due to resource availability.

d. Coordinating Key Vendors' Timeframes: Ameren Missouri also engaged a number of key external vendors to participate in various work streams and/or provide tools that will be used to help deliver TOU rates to customers. Each vendor had to align their internal resources and schedules to the project timeframes. Accenture, (the Company's system integrator), Bidgely (developing the online rate comparison tool), FiServ (developing printed communications) and HLK (assisting the Company with strategy) are key vendors for the TOU rollout, and all have been working in a remote posture due to the

COVID-19 pandemic. Negotiating agreements with, onboarding, and coordinating timing for deliverables with these vendors have been challenging while working on projects with tight time frames and critical inter-dependencies, especially while everyone works remotely.

e. **COVID-19 Impacts:** The extended changes to Ameren Missouri's work environment to support co-worker health and safety under the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the Company's efficiencies when developing technological requirements through BPD sessions and collaboration. Testing on the billing system remotely has also triggered numerous performance issues so that testing remotely has been less efficient than testing on-site. This has been an extenuating circumstance adding to the testing timeline.

25. Although not a barrier to the timeframes nor justification for the TOU rollout variances, a tangential benefit of the temporary delay may be to potentially avoid frustrating or confusing customers in 2020 and early 2021 with educational messages on what TOU means for customers and encouraging shifting energy usage to off-peak times when many residential customers may be unable to shift energy usage due to COVID-19 necessitating working from home and/or schooling children from home.

26. The Company was transparent that some of the changes provided for under the *First Agreement* could not be fully scoped during negotiation of the settlement. Indeed, the *First Agreement* explained in paragraph 27(a)(v) (emphasis added) as follows:

The Signatories acknowledge that Ameren Missouri represents that **substantial IT programming work is needed to be conducted to meet the timelines** of paragraph ii, iii, and iv above. Such changes were **not able to be fully scoped during the negotiation of this agreement**; however, Ameren Missouri represents that it intends to meet these timelines and will make all best efforts to do so. **If the fully defined scope results in barriers to meeting these timelines, Ameren Missouri shall communicate with the parties, and shall file any appropriate**

pleadings to request to adjust rate implementation timeframes accordingly. Signatories agree not to oppose a reasonable request to adjust the timeframes.

27. Moreover, in paragraph 27(d) of the *First Agreement*, the Signatories agreed (emphasis added):

The three-part rate with demand charge and TOU energy charges as described in the direct testimony of Steven Wills will be implemented as an optional rate rather than as a pilot program. **The implementation of this rate may be delayed pending completion of IT programming changes necessary to offer it on a non-pilot basis.**

28. In the May 28, 2020 Monthly Stakeholder Meeting, Ameren Missouri identified and explained key risks to deliverables under the TOU rollout and communication tools provisions in the First Agreement. Three of those risks are especially notable: 1) Ameren Missouri identified a "HIGH" risk to the "Delivery Timeline" for "Completing all requirements within the timeframe allowed will pose some pressures and challenges to our team / capabilities;" 2) Ameren Missouri identified a "MEDIUM" risk to "Scaling [the Company's] existing systems" for "[] full TOU deployment to customers will require significant system enhancements to implement interval billing and shadow billing for all rate options and across all customers;" and 3) Ameren Missouri identified COVID-19 as a "MEDIUM" risk explaining that "Existing work plans are evolving and there could be risks to our TOU rate initiative."¹⁵ Ameren Missouri further identified mitigation plans for the risks.

29. In the Company's presentation at the July 29, 2020 Commission Agenda on "Ameren Missouri Advancing Time of Use Rates," the Company again identified "[u]pgrading our systems to ensure all interval billing and 'shadow billing' requirements are completed in an

¹⁵ See File No. ER-2019-0335, Ameren Missouri's Status Report on May 2020 Meeting and Customer Education and Communication Plans, submitted on June 5, 2020, Attachment 2, at Slide14, which is attached for convenience as Schedule 3.

aggressive time frame" as a "Challenge."¹⁶

30. In accordance with the process specified in paragraph 27(a)(v) of the *First Agreement* for adjustment of original timeframes for the new options and tools, Ameren Missouri notified all the parties to File No. ER-2019-0335 via email on September 22, 2020 that barriers to meeting the original timeframes had been identified and invited all parties to participate in a to-be-scheduled Skype meeting. The Skype meeting was held on September 29, 2020 and in advance of filing this *Application* (the appropriate pleading). During the September 29, 2020 Skype meeting, the Company explained the barriers to the original timeframes and how the implementation timeframes must be adjusted temporarily.

31. Furthermore, since two of the TOU rate options will be slightly delayed, it only makes sense for the rates communication tools (communication to customers within six months of their AMI being installed to educate customers on what their bill would have been in prior billing periods under available rate options and the on-line rate comparison tool) about those rate options and the other already available rate options to be synced up and slightly delayed.

32. Temporary Delay of Only Up To Five Months. The Company seeks only a temporary delay of up to five months to overcome the barriers listed above and to make the Daytime/Overnight default rate and the optional three-part rate with demand charge and TOU energy charges available, to provide the six-month post-AMI-install education communication, and to make available an on-line rate comparison tool. The rollout will still be staggered to coincide with the staggered AMI meter installation schedule. For example, for residential customers who had an AMI meter installed in July 2020, instead of having the Daytime/Overnight default rate and optional three-part rate available on January 1, 2021, the customers would have those rate options

¹⁶ July 29, 2020 Commission Agenda, Presentation by Ameren Missouri, "Ameren Missouri Advancing Time of Use Rates," Slide 11, attached for convenience as Schedule 4.

available or default rate applied and communication tools available by no later than June 1, 2021. These temporary delays only impact residential customers whose AMI meters were/are installed in July through November, 2020, and those residential customers will still have ability to choose other already available TOU rate options. For customers whose AMI meters are installed after December 1, 2020, no waivers will be necessary.

Second Request (Meter Reads Variance)

33. Ameren Missouri notes that the meter reads variance is only for customers who have an AMI meter installed as the five-year deployment period progresses. Ameren Missouri will continue to operate under the existing tariffs and regulations, as appropriate, for customers who either have not yet received an AMI meter or who have opted out of AMI meter installation.

34. As provided for in 20 CSR 4240-13.065(2), Ameren Missouri has provided, contemporaneously with the filing of this *Application*, a copy of this *Application* to the newspaper with the largest circulation in each county within the utility's service area affected by the variance, the public counsel, and each party in the utility's most recent rate case (File No. ER-2019-0355) who represented residential customers. Due to COVID-19 pandemic impacts, however, it was not reasonably possible to mail a copy of this *Application* via first class mail to those newspapers and public counsel, and each party to File No. ER-2019-0335 who represented residential customers. Instead, the Company provided a copy of this *Application* to all required entities via e-mail. Therefore, the Company requests waiver of first class mail requirement due to the COVID-19 pandemic and allow for the alternative e-mail delivery instead. Further, as required by 20 CSR 4240-13.065(3), Ameren Missouri will reflect any and all variances authorized by the Commission pursuant to this *Application* in the relevant tariffs.

35. Provisions From Which Variance Sought. During the Company's BPD sessions for the new TOU rate options rollout, the Company realized that a further waiver of 20 CSR 4240-13.020(9), beyond the waiver granted in File No. EE-2019-0382, to cease printing beginning and ending meter readings on bills for both TOU and non-TOU residential customers, is needed.

36. Reasons for the Variances/Good Cause. The original variance request in File No. EE-2019-0382 for printing register readings on bills contemplated only TOU customers' bills being based on interval readings.

37. When the Company filed its initial request for variances in File No. EE-2019-0382, the Company had proposed to offer two optional TOU rate structures. The settlement of the rate case (File No. ER-2019-0335) months later provided for a default TOU rate and a three-part optional rate in addition to the two optional rate structures originally proposed. The settlement also specified a rate communication and education plan, including shadow billing requirements to show customers what their bill would have been under various rate options. These additional rate options and plans could not have been contemplated in the Company's original waiver request in File No. EE-2019-0382. Once the settlement was reached and approved by the Commission, the Company had to evaluate its systems and capabilities to produce shadow bills for all residential AMI customers.

38. The BPD process established that, due to system constraints, the only accurate way to compare "shadow bills" for all residential customers on all eligible rate options is to generate a bill on each rate option through the billing system, which must utilize interval data to produce the bills that the customer would have experienced on the TOU options. Accordingly, all residential bills need to be based on interval readings to accommodate the required shadow billing process in a manner that ensures the accuracy of the calculations of bills on all available rate options.

39. In addition, the analytical review as provided for in File No. EE-2019-0382 already contemplates analyzing interval versus register read accuracy for all residential AMI customers.

40. With default TOU and additional voluntary TOU options, it is expected that most customers will already be subject to interval billing under the variance already granted by the Commission with respect to the billing of TOU rates, so the addition of customers on the non-time varying rate to the variance for register readings will likely impact only a small fraction of the Company's customers.

IV. 20 CSR 4240-2.080(14) — Fourth Request, Expedited Treatment

41. Ameren Missouri moves for expedited treatment of this Application in accordance with 20 CSR 4240-2.080(14), which states:

(14) Any request for expedited treatment shall include the words “Motion for Expedited Treatment” in the title of the pleading. The pleading shall also set out with particularity the following: (A) The date by which the party desires the commission to act; (B) The harm that will be avoided, or the benefit that will accrue, including a statement of the negative effect, or that there will be no negative effect, on the party’s customers or the general public, if the commission acts by the date desired by the party; and (C) That the pleading was filed as soon as it could have been or an explanation why it was not.

Paragraph (A) – Action Date

42. Ameren Missouri requests a decision on this *Application* to be effective by at least December 31, 2020.

Paragraph (B) – Benefit

43. A decision on this *Application* regarding adjustment of the original timeframes set in paragraph 27 of the *First Agreement* in File No. ER-2019-0335 and to implement meter variances as described above will benefit customers by ensuring that the Company has the requisite time to complete robust testing/quality assurance measures, to rollout training across functions,

and avoid confusion for customers who have received their AMI meter or will receive their AMI meter in July through November of 2020. There will be no negative effect, on the Company's customers or the general public, if the Commission acts by the date desired by the Company.

44. Moreover, as explained above and related to the TOU rate implementation/communication variances, the Company was transparent that some of the changes provided for under the *First Agreement* could not be fully scoped during negotiation of the settlement.¹⁷ And in accordance with the process specified in paragraph 27(a)(v) of the *First Agreement* for adjustment of original timeframes for the new options and tools, Ameren Missouri notified all the parties to File No. ER-2019-0335 via email on September 22, 2020 that barriers to meeting the original timeframes had been identified, invited all parties to participate in a to-be-scheduled Skype meeting, and held a Skype meeting on September 29, 2020 wherein the Company explained the barriers to the original timeframes and how the implementation timeframes must be adjusted temporarily.

Paragraph (C) – Soonest *Application* Could Be File

45. This *Application* was filed as soon as it could have been, because the need for the requested variances were identified through the detailed BPD sessions that lasted through September 2020 and the Company needed to, and did, comply with the process set out in the *First Agreement* for communicating with parties regarding barriers to the original timeframes before seeking to adjust the timeframes.

WHEREFORE, Ameren Missouri respectfully requests that the Commission grant the requested variances, waiver of the 60-day notice requirement, and expedited treatment of this *Application*.

¹⁷ See *First Agreement*, at paragraphs 2(a)(v) & 27(d).

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Jermaine Grubbs

Jermaine Grubbs

Corporate Counsel

Ameren Missouri

1901 Chouteau Avenue

St. Louis, MO 63103

Phone: (314) 554-2041

Fax: (314) 554-4014

AmerenMOService@ameren.com

**ATTORNEY FOR UNION ELECTRIC
COMPANY, d/b/a AMEREN MISSOURI**

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The undersigned hereby certifies that a true and correct copy of the foregoing was served on the Staff of the Commission, the Office of the Public Counsel, Missouri Department of Natural Resources - Division of Energy, Missouri Industrial Energy Consumers ("MIEC"), Midwest Energy Consumers Group ("MECG"), Consumers Council of Missouri, Natural Resources Defense Council, the Sierra Club, and Renew Missouri Advocates d/b/a Renew Missouri via electronic mail (e-mail) on this 6th day of October, 2020.

/s/ Germaine Grubbs _____
Germaine Grubbs