

1 BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

2 STATE OF MISSOURI

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4 TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

5 Public Hearings

6 January 3, 2007

7 Columbia and Rolla, Missouri

8 Volume 4

9 _____

10 In the Matter of Union Electric Company)
11 d/b/a AmerenUE for Authority to File) Case No.
12 Tariffs Increasing Rates for Electric) ER-2007-0002
13 Service Provided to Customers in the)
14 Company's Missouri Service Area

15 In the Matter of Union Electric Company)
16 d/b/a AmerenUE for Authority to File) Case No.
17 Tariffs Increasing Rates for Natural) GR-2007-0003
18 Gas Service Provided to Customers in)
19 the Company's Missouri Service Area.

20 _____

21 COLLEEN M. DALE, Presiding
22 CHIEF REGULATORY LAW JUDGE.
23 CONNIE MURRAY,
24 STEVE GAW
25 ROBERT M. CLAYTON, III,
 LINWARD "LIN" APPLING,
 COMMISSIONERS.

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 JUDGE DALE: In that case, we're on the
3 record. My name is Colleen M. Dale. I will be conducting
4 this hearing this evening in the Case ER-2007-0002 and
5 GR-2007-0003 in the matter of Union Electric Company d/b/a
6 AmerenUE for authority to file tariffs increasing rates for
7 electric and natural gas service provided to customers in the
8 company's Missouri service area.

9 To begin with, I'll ask the Commissioners in
10 Columbia to introduce themselves.

11 COMMISSIONER GAW: Steve Gaw.

12 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: Robert Clayton, member
13 of the Commission.

14 JUDGE DALE: And the Commissioners here in
15 Jefferson City.

16 COMMISSIONER MURRAY: Connie Murray.

17 COMMISSIONER APPLING: Lin Appling.

18 JUDGE DALE: Thank you. Are there any counsel
19 present?

20 MR. POSTON: Ms. Dale, this is --

21 JUDGE DALE: Please go ahead, Ms. Shemwell.

22 MS. SHEMWELL: Good evening. Lera Shemwell
23 representing the Staff of the Missouri Public Service
24 Commission. Also Steve Dottheim representing the Staff is in
25 attendance in Jefferson City.

1 MR. LOWRY: Ms. Dale, from Columbia, this is
2 Jim Lowry appearing on behalf of AmerenUE.

3 MR. POSTON: Mark Poston appearing on behalf
4 of the Office of Public Counsel.

5 JUDGE DALE: Thank you. With that, we will
6 begin. We're going to take a witness from Columbia, then a
7 witness from Rolla and back and forth and back and forth.
8 When you come to the podium, I will swear you in. Please wait
9 until you're finished being sworn in to testify to give your
10 remarks.

11 Remember that when there is a teleconference,
12 there is a significant delay. People might pause for thought.
13 If you do that, that's okay, but please remember when you're
14 finished with your remarks, to say that you're finished so
15 that we know you're just not pausing to move on to another
16 aspect of your comments.

17 With that, then we will take the first person
18 on the list in Columbia.

19 MR. OCHOA: Virginia Bzdek.

20 JUDGE DALE: Could you spell your last name
21 for me, please?

22 THE WITNESS: B-z-d-e-k.

23 (Witness sworn.)

24 JUDGE DALE: Thank you. Please proceed.

25 VIRGINIA BZDEK testified as follows:

1 THE WITNESS: I'm presenting a prepared
2 statement from GRO, Grass Roots Organizing to the Missouri
3 Public Service Commission.

4 Missouri Public Service Commission last
5 September gave the big utility companies what they dreamed of
6 for years. The PSC passed a rule that now allows companies to
7 automatically raise the rates for their electric customers
8 when fuel costs increase.

9 In the past, any fuel-related electric
10 customers -- I'm sorry.

11 In the past, any fuel-related electric rate
12 increase had to be reviewed by the PSC to see if it was
13 justified and reasonable. But now in this current
14 just-trust-us philosophy of the utility companies, the rates
15 go up without any say-so by the people or customers and
16 without any inspection by the Public Service Commission.

17 The automatic fuel adjustment is a misguided
18 policy. It is not fair to any consumers and has even more
19 severe consequences for Missouri families of low-income. We
20 encourage the PSC to revisit and rescind this unfair policy.

21 Utility companies are more powerful in the
22 executive, legislative and judicial branches of our government
23 than they ought to be. They clearly represent their own
24 multi-billion dollar interests. The people have too little
25 protection from Missouri utility monopolies. When a company

1 like AmerenUE treats us unfairly, we cannot change companies
2 and buy our utilities somewhere else. We need the PSC and the
3 Office of the Public Counsel to rise up, be the voice of the
4 people and firmly protect our interests.

5 GRO recommends that the PSC make rate changes
6 based on the customer's ability to pay. There is real benefit
7 for utility companies and their customers to keeping all
8 Missouri families' services connected and on the grid.
9 Moratoriums, forgiveness and percentage of income programs
10 would help prevent homelessness, health problems, crime and
11 learning disabilities and in some cases, prevent unnecessary
12 death of customers.

13 Currently, AmerenUE proposes an 18.3 percent
14 increase in residential gas and 17.7 percent for electric
15 utilities. In Columbia, we only buy gas from AmerenUE, but we
16 are mindful that many GRO members and families of low-income
17 and other Missouri communities are forced to buy both gas and
18 electric from them.

19 We come to you tonight appreciative that the
20 PSC Staff has recommended no electric rate increase in
21 AmerenUE rates based on their audit. We also know that our
22 Office of the Public Counsel, who is mandated to represent
23 Missouri consumers, is recommending no electric increase until
24 AmerenUE comes up with a plan for reliability.

25 However, since an audit by the PSC Staff shows

1 that AmerenUE over-earned between 136 and 168 million dollars
2 in electrical charges, the PSC Staff and Office of the Public
3 Counsel opposition to increase is not enough.

4 No one likes to be overcharged for goods and
5 services, and our families of low-income can least afford to
6 be cheated of their limited income; therefore, GRO believes
7 that a mandated decrease in the electrical rates is the only
8 fair solution.

9 We also request that you rescind the September
10 2006 electric automatic fuel adjustment clause decision. Gas
11 bills have already increased due to the cost of fuel being
12 automatically passed on to the customer. We need your efforts
13 to lower the gas rates and make gas affordable.

14 We want reassurances that the Commissioners
15 will all vote for a decrease in the rates. This is what would
16 be reasonable for Missouri residential customers and is a step
17 in the right direction toward fair treatment for all families.
18 Again, our members and families of low-income cannot afford
19 any more rate increases.

20 We ask the PSC to work diligently to create
21 programs to provide service based on residents ability to pay
22 and also strive to decrease the energy costs to all Missouri
23 customers. Our Public Service Commission and the Office of
24 the Public Counsel must be more vigorous in protecting our
25 citizenries' interests and ask the big utility companies,

1 their CEOs and stockholders tough questions.

2 The PSC should require them to practice good
3 business ethics in our state, hold them accountable to provide
4 efficient and quality services to Missourians and to be
5 prepared even in time of crisis or weather emergencies. The
6 PSC and the Office of the Public Counsel should use their
7 watchful eyes and scrutinize all AmerenUE expenditures so
8 Missouri customers are not overpaying and are getting what
9 they paid for. This is the completion of the statement.

10 JUDGE DALE: Thank you. Are there questions
11 from the Bench?

12 MR. OCHOA: Ma'am, in case they have any
13 questions.

14 JUDGE DALE: Are there questions in Columbia
15 from the Bench?

16 COMMISSIONER GAW: Thank you very much, ma'am,
17 for coming. Appreciate your assistance.

18 THE WITNESS: You're welcome.

19 JUDGE DALE: Questions here?

20 COMMISSIONER MURRAY: No questions, but thank
21 you.

22 COMMISSIONER APPLING: No questions from Lin
23 Appling.

24 JUDGE DALE: Thank you. Then we'll proceed
25 with a witness from Rolla.

1 MR. WARREN: We don't have any witnesses
2 signed up to testify here.

3 JUDGE DALE: Oh, I'm sorry. I misunderstood
4 earlier. In that case, we'll move right along to the next
5 witness from Columbia.

6 MR. OCHOA: Christine Carrier.

7 THE WITNESS: I'm Christine Carrier. I'll be
8 really brief because I really didn't prepare a statement.

9 JUDGE DALE: Okay. Wait, wait, wait.

10 COMMISSIONER GAW: She may want to swear you
11 in.

12 JUDGE DALE: First of all, could you spell
13 your last name for me?

14 THE WITNESS: C-a-r-r-i-e-r.

15 JUDGE DALE: Thank you.

16 (Witness sworn.)

17 JUDGE DALE: Please proceed.

18 CHRISTINE CARRIER testified as follows:

19 THE WITNESS: I didn't come with a prepared
20 statement, but I've been thinking about it all afternoon and I
21 have a burden of a friend who lives in low-income housing down
22 the street. She spent her holiday in hospital and in nursing
23 home. When she returns to her home, it's really scary to
24 consider. Six dollars a month is the way it seems to have
25 been presented. Sounds like it's not that much. To some

1 people, it's a lot. It's whether you can put gas in your car
2 that week or not.

3 Really there are some people that are really,
4 really hard pressed to keep up with it, even with the budget
5 billing system. They're not the people that are capable of
6 absorbing increases. And I really think that we don't have
7 the choice -- I concur with what was said before by GRO, the
8 statement that they made about, you know, not having input,
9 not having the ability to switch.

10 And people in low-income housing -- my friend
11 could end up getting home and if she couldn't pay her bill,
12 they -- it gets shut off and you get kicked out. And it can
13 be a spiral. And there are real human beings that suffer
14 losses that way. There are families that have to make really
15 hard choices. I don't think it needs to be made any harder.

16 And I don't think -- this is a for profit. It
17 seems to me that the infrastructure should be the burden of
18 the stockholders to not necessarily gouge for anything more
19 than what is absolutely essential.

20 I think that they should prove to us what's
21 essential and what's our responsibility. Because I would love
22 to have a business that somebody else pays for my expenses.
23 It seems to me that they make a lot of money and they need to
24 give some people a break because we're already getting gouged.
25 Thank you. That's all I had to say.

1 JUDGE DALE: Thank you. Are there questions
2 from Columbia from the Bench?

3 COMMISSIONER GAW: I don't have any. Just
4 thank you very much, ma'am, for taking the time to come out.

5 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: Judge, may I ask a
6 question?

7 JUDGE DALE: Certainly.

8 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: Thank you.
9 Ms. Carrier, is --

10 THE WITNESS: Yes.

11 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: -- that your name? And
12 I wrote it down C-a-r-r-i-e-r.

13 THE WITNESS: Yes.

14 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: It's right.

15 THE WITNESS: Like the air conditioner.

16 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: Sure, sure.

17 THE WITNESS: I don't run it much, but --

18 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: Not the heater, but --
19 not the furnace, but the air conditioner. I wanted to ask, do
20 you provide assistance to this friend that's low-income? You
21 help them in any way? I mean, do you --

22 THE WITNESS: As a neighbor, as a friend,
23 giving her transportation sometimes, bringing her over meals
24 when she's too infirm to cook. A lot of people have helped
25 her that way just --

1 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: Are you aware of
2 whether your friend has been able to access any programs for
3 assistance?

4 THE WITNESS: She has got a lot of stilts
5 holding her up right now and I don't think she needs anything
6 to kick her down. What little she has is very limited. And
7 she was a registered nurse, a hard worker and she's ill, she's
8 too ill to work now.

9 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: What kind of house or
10 apartment she in? Is it --

11 THE WITNESS: It's on Park Avenue.

12 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: -- an efficient type of
13 house or is it an old, drafty --

14 THE WITNESS: No, it's a pretty nice place.

15 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: It is. Okay.

16 THE WITNESS: Yes, it is. Very neat, tidy and
17 warm. It's nice. It's just, you know, I hate to think about
18 what could happen to her.

19 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: So she wouldn't be in
20 need of assistance in weatherization or needing to cover up
21 windows that are 100 years old or something?

22 THE WITNESS: No. The housing downtown is in
23 a lot better shape than maybe some of the media has been
24 seeing. And I've also been out on that too to oppose the
25 demolition. But I really oppose this because this hurts

1 everybody, but I think it hurts the low income the worst
2 because these are the people that -- these are people working
3 two 5.25 -- well, 6.50 now, thank goodness, but working two
4 jobs for what used to be -- 20, 30 years ago, you could get by
5 on one income. Now you got couples that are both working a
6 job and a half, two jobs. There's only so many ways you can
7 burn that candle.

8 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: Sure. I understand. I
9 don't have any other questions. Thank you.

10 THE WITNESS: Is that it?

11 JUDGE DALE: Thank you. Are there questions
12 here? Thank you. We're all finished. Thank you.

13 MR. OCHOA: Millie Brickner.

14 JUDGE DALE: The next witness from Columbia.

15 THE WITNESS: I don't know if I'm going to do
16 this very good because I've never done anything like this
17 before.

18 COMMISSIONER GAW: You'll do just fine.

19 THE WITNESS: My name is Millie Brickner.

20 JUDGE DALE: Could you spell your last name,
21 please?

22 THE WITNESS: B-r-i-c-k-n-e-r.

23 (Witness sworn.)

24 JUDGE DALE: Thank you. Please proceed.

25 MILLIE BRICKNER testified as follows:

1 THE WITNESS: What I'm mixed up about is this
2 budget. I got my bill and I was so proud because I had
3 160-some dollars paid up. And then when I got my next bill,
4 well, it had just went down to \$115. I couldn't understand
5 that because I couldn't -- I thought, well -- I didn't feel
6 like I used that much gas because we always turn it down, you
7 know, at night and stuff.

8 And I called and she said, Well, it might be
9 lower in January, but she didn't know. So that's what -- I
10 just don't understand the budget like I should. My husband,
11 he put it on budget when he was living, but he's dead now.
12 And a lot of things I just don't understand like I -- you
13 know, I'm not trying to act like I'm dumb, but I just -- a lot
14 of things I don't understand like I should.

15 COMMISSIONER GAW: Ma'am, you don't have to
16 keep your hand up, but -- do you want questions?

17 JUDGE DALE: Go ahead.

18 COMMISSIONER GAW: Ma'am, can you tell me --
19 you just have Ameren Gas. Right?

20 THE WITNESS: Yes.

21 COMMISSIONER GAW: Not electric?

22 THE WITNESS: No, I don't.

23 COMMISSIONER GAW: And this is all for your
24 house, for your residence that you have Ameren Gas? Gas heat
25 and gas water heater, things of that sort?

1 THE WITNESS: Yes, sir.

2 COMMISSIONER GAW: Did you talk to anybody
3 here before we started to ask questions about your budget bill
4 and -- did you have a chance to do that?

5 THE WITNESS: I did a little bit.

6 COMMISSIONER GAW: Do you know who you talked
7 to?

8 THE WITNESS: No, I don't.

9 COMMISSIONER GAW: Is it possible that you
10 still -- so you still have some questions about it, I take it.
11 Right?

12 THE WITNESS: Well, I was just kind of -- I
13 couldn't see how it could go down so quick because I was
14 really proud that I had, you know -- and I have a couple
15 different people that live with me and I try to keep them nice
16 and warm too.

17 COMMISSIONER GAW: Yes, ma'am. Did someone
18 from Staff visit with her?

19 MS. BERNSEN: I did briefly. And she wanted
20 to put some comments out about budget billing and I suggested
21 we could talk more.

22 COMMISSIONER GAW: So after you finish with
23 your testimony, you can get back, if you would, with Debbie in
24 the back and she can answer some of those questions. Now,
25 you've been on budget billing for quite a while. Right?

1 THE WITNESS: Yes. My husband put us on
2 budget billing and I just left it like that. And he's been
3 dead 13 years.

4 COMMISSIONER GAW: I'm sorry, ma'am. The
5 budget bill that you've had during the last few years, have
6 you had difficulties with it in the past? Have there been
7 issues that have come up with the budget billing that you've
8 noticed?

9 THE WITNESS: Well, they're always nice to
10 talk to me, but I just -- something about it I just couldn't
11 understand how it could go down so quick. They said they
12 thought I had used more gas, but it's just hard for me to
13 understand some things. And I think when you get older, it is
14 hard for you.

15 COMMISSIONER GAW: Well, I have trouble now so
16 I may be in real trouble. But what I'd like for you to do is
17 if you could talk to Debbie some more --

18 THE WITNESS: Okay. I'll do that. I'd be
19 glad to.

20 COMMISSIONER GAW: And then afterwards if she
21 can tell us that this has been worked out to your
22 satisfaction, that would be helpful. And if you have any more
23 questions, we'll be here a little while longer and if you have
24 some more comments you want to make after you do that, we'll
25 have you come back up if you want to.

1 THE WITNESS: Thank you so much. Thank you
2 for being so kind. I really enjoy when people are kind to an
3 older person.

4 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: Yes, ma'am.

5 THE WITNESS: Because when I call on the phone
6 and someone bawls me out, then it just ruins my whole day.

7 COMMISSIONER GAW: It does mine too. I
8 understand exactly.

9 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: Wait a minute. Now,
10 you've just said something that makes me a little concerned.
11 Has anybody associated with this budget bill bawled you out
12 like that?

13 THE WITNESS: No. But some people do, honey.

14 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: Well, if somebody
15 bawled you out from the utility, this is the place where you
16 let us know.

17 THE WITNESS: I will. I sure will.

18 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: Thank you very much for
19 coming.

20 THE WITNESS: But I do love the gas heat and I
21 love the nice warm heat. Thank you, all.

22 COMMISSIONER GAW: Yes, ma'am. Thank you.

23 Did anybody have any questions there? I'm
24 sorry, Judge.

25 JUDGE DALE: No. We don't have any questions.

1 Thank you.

2 MR. OCHOA: Judi Schoendorf.

3 JUDGE DALE: Could you please spell your last
4 name?

5 THE WITNESS: S-c-h-o-e-n-d-o-r-f.

6 (Hearing interrupted.)

7 (Off the record.)

8 JUDGE DALE: Okay. Great. Then
9 Ms. Schoendorf, if you'll please go ahead and proceed with
10 your remarks.

11 COMMISSIONER GAW: She has not been sworn in.

12 JUDGE DALE: I'm sorry. If you'll please
13 raise your right hand.

14 (Witness sworn.)

15 JUDGE DALE: Thank you. Please proceed.

16 JUDI SCHOENDORF testified as follows:

17 THE WITNESS: I also am on a fixed income and
18 I can attest to what Millie said about \$6 hurting. It doesn't
19 hurt me personally because, fortunately, I don't use gas.

20 But I was lucky enough last fall to watch them
21 re-lay some of the gas pipe. And actually my dog and I take
22 very long walks and we walked all the way down and we talked
23 to the guys and we got to know them pretty well.

24 And the company that was out drilling under
25 Hinkson Creek on Providence Road was supposed to be finished

1 and gone by the first of November. They didn't get out of
2 there -- with the entire three-mile stretch. They didn't get
3 out of there until December and they only did a third. And
4 then AmerenUE hired another company to come. And they'd work
5 one or two days and then they'd be gone for a while and they'd
6 come back and they'd go away because they had to drill through
7 the rock to lay the pipe.

8 But it took probably three times as long as it
9 was supposed to take, which means when it goes over budget,
10 somebody pays for it. And I don't think it's fair that we
11 should have to pay for their capital improvements when they
12 don't oversee them very well.

13 I really think that -- I was in business for
14 myself for a while and I know that when I did business and I
15 had to make capital improvements, whether it was buy something
16 small or buy something big, I had to pay for it. And that's
17 what profits are for.

18 I don't think we should have to pay,
19 especially when they come and they do things -- I don't even
20 understand. Equipment breakdowns and then there was rain and
21 then there was no rain. It was just as bad to have no rain as
22 it was to have rain apparently. So I just don't think we
23 should pay for that. Thank you. That's the end of my
24 remarks.

25 JUDGE DALE: Thank you. Questions from the

1 bench in Columbia?

2 COMMISSIONER GAW: Ma'am, this project that
3 you're talking about, give me the time frame again, would you?

4 THE WITNESS: I believe they started the
5 beginning of October in 2005. And the project was actually
6 complete -- it was supposed to be completed by December 1st,
7 the entire project, three-mile stretch.

8 COMMISSIONER GAW: Okay.

9 THE WITNESS: The project was actually
10 completed in March of 2006.

11 COMMISSIONER GAW: So it took longer than what
12 you understood it was going to take?

13 THE WITNESS: Oh, yeah. Because I talked
14 to -- we talked to the guys. They were real nice.

15 COMMISSIONER GAW: And you think that -- well,
16 you don't know whether the price that they actually were
17 charged for the work is more than what they anticipated or
18 what was prudent or not?

19 THE WITNESS: Well, I know the company that
20 did the initial work probably went broke because they were
21 held to their contract. And then they had to hire somebody
22 else to come in and finish the job.

23 COMMISSIONER GAW: Was this the only place
24 that you know of that they were doing this kind of work? Was
25 it just in that stretch?

1 THE WITNESS: It's the only place I saw. I
2 don't go very far. I can't afford the gas.

3 COMMISSIONER GAW: I understand. Believe me.
4 So when you get to the point where you're looking at the
5 number, did you say about three miles?

6 THE WITNESS: Three miles. It was three miles
7 of pipe between Hinkson Creek on Providence up through just
8 beyond Green Meadows.

9 COMMISSIONER GAW: Okay. I think that's all I
10 have. Thank you very much.

11 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: I don't have any
12 questions. Thank you for coming.

13 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

14 JUDGE DALE: Thank you. thank you. There are
15 no questions here in Jeff City.

16 MR. OCHOA: Eugene Elkin.

17 JUDGE DALE: Mr. Elkin, could you please spell
18 your last name?

19 THE WITNESS: E-l-k-i-n. First name is
20 Eugene, E-u-g-e-n-e.

21 (Witness sworn.)

22 JUDGE DALE: Thank you. Please proceed.

23 EUGENE ELKIN testified as follows:

24 THE WITNESS: i being another person that had
25 an unprepared speech. I arrived this evening and I made some

1 rough notes which I'll have to read from.

2 I am a person of disability from 1981. I am a
3 gentleman who came to Boone County and I often referenced the
4 Habitat for Humanity, if you've ever heard of it here in Boone
5 County, specifically Columbia, Missouri. We have more than
6 70 houses standing. In that effort, I put the name Show Me in
7 front of the group and I always err on the side of the poor
8 and now I live the poor.

9 I received Ameren assistance for 2005 and
10 2006. I'm about to own up to a lot of things I've never
11 talked about. I've been burning candles, lanterns, electric
12 space heaters this winter. 20 cents for every dollar is
13 something the poor can understand, not 18.3 percent as it's
14 being presented. The poor do know what 20 cents for every
15 dollar is.

16 I meet more and more disabled persons waiting
17 for their disability with no resolve. This only brings on
18 more burden to those who are already struggling. I have sleep
19 apnea and I've had that since 2002, which requires me to wear
20 a breathing machine every night. I have now been diagnosed
21 with diabetes, which was in October '06. I have recently lost
22 20 pounds and am very cold as a result of this weight loss,
23 but I can't afford to turn up the thermostat.

24 Please understand I'm only one person, but
25 there are thousands who are already suffering through the

1 cold. I recently did a door-to-door survey in the fall in
2 mobile home courts. I was surprised to see how many mobile
3 homes had candles burning in them with no lights on. I didn't
4 realize how that was going to impact me this winter because I
5 just had no idea.

6 This gas increase also affects hot water for
7 the poor. I have been using electric hot water device to get
8 hot water for washing myself, laundry and dishes. This real
9 struggle started back at Katrina for myself when I refinanced
10 my home to keep from losing it. Now I face another gas
11 increase, which is really getting out of hand for us, the
12 poor.

13 Again repeating, I'm one disabled individual.
14 And this was not a very easy task standing before you to talk.
15 Thank you.

16 JUDGE DALE: Thank you.

17 COMMISSIONER GAW: I think she wants to know
18 if we have any questions. First, let me -- thank you,
19 Mr. Elkin, for coming and telling us about your circumstances.
20 I appreciate it very much.

21 I want to ask you just a couple of things.
22 First of all, you are a gas customer, I take it, of Ameren --

23 THE WITNESS: Of AmerenUE.

24 COMMISSIONER GAW: -- not an electric
25 customer?

1 THE WITNESS: Not electric.

2 COMMISSIONER GAW: When you're talking about
3 using these other means of heating, the space heating and any
4 other things, is that due to your inability to utilize the gas
5 service?

6 THE WITNESS: The inability to face -- I have
7 been given two energy -- I think they're called grants. And
8 when they're gone, then it's on my back. And I'm trying to
9 hold on until the money runs out.

10 COMMISSIONER GAW: So what you're telling me
11 is that you do have gas service turned on right now --

12 THE WITNESS: It's on.

13 COMMISSIONER GAW: -- but you're very
14 concerned that you --

15 THE WITNESS: I'm very conservative.

16 COMMISSIONER GAW: Yeah. And you're trying to
17 hold the amount of your bill down --

18 THE WITNESS: I'm doing my part.

19 COMMISSIONER GAW: -- as much as you can?

20 THE WITNESS: I'm doing my part.

21 COMMISSIONER GAW: Okay.

22 THE WITNESS: And after a while, it gets a
23 little old because the smell of candles is not a pleasant or
24 kerosene lanterns is not either. It's as if I'm stepping back
25 about 150 years ago and it's not a real pleasant scene. Until

1 you hit the bottom, you don't know what I'm going through.

2 And I always thought I knew what it would be like. Nope.

3 COMMISSIONER GAW: Yes, sir.

4 THE WITNESS: And now that I'm facing diabetes
5 it may be what -- this emotional side, but it's just --
6 everything is just really piling up. Thank God for the warm
7 weather we're having right now so we don't have to have the
8 gas.

9 COMMISSIONER GAW: Yes, sir. I think there
10 are a number of people that are glad that we're not in bitter
11 cold right now. Thank you very much again for coming.

12 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: Mr. Elkin, I don't have
13 any questions. Thank you for coming.

14 COMMISSIONER APPLING: No questions from
15 Jefferson City.

16 MR. OCHOA: Willie Green.

17 JUDGE DALE: Hello.

18 (Witness sworn.)

19 JUDGE DALE: Thank you. You may proceed.

20 WILLIE GREEN testified as follows:

21 THE WITNESS: My name is Willie Green. And me
22 and my husband and our four kids, we live on a fixed income.
23 And I guess it would usually be about anywhere from 65 to 75
24 dollars a month, but it's rised to this -- I guess from last
25 month, \$122. And that's a big increase for us on a fixed

1 income.

2 And trying to keep warm, we have the gas as
3 low as we can get it, but I guess I have arthritis and plus
4 I'm anemic and when it gets cold, my bones get really cold.
5 But -- so instead of turning the heat up, getting comfortable,
6 we try to wrap up and stay up as little as possible and go to
7 bed. And we cover up with quilts and stuff to try to keep
8 warm to keep the bills down.

9 Because when my husband -- he don't like to go
10 and beg for help and stuff like that. So, you know, this
11 \$6 raise or whatever that every-- is going to be on
12 everybody's bill may not seem like much to other peoples, but
13 for us it's a lot. Because most of the money that we get
14 anyway goes on bills or house necessities.

15 If it wasn't for the food bank or The Wardrobe
16 where we get clothes most of the time, we couldn't afford to
17 live where we live now and it's low income. So a lot of
18 peoples -- I mean, maybe you don't understand how a lot of
19 peoples live that's on a fixed rate or in, you know, getting
20 in low -- low-income housing and stuff, but this is a big
21 thing for us, you know.

22 Because when the house is real cold, not able
23 to change the weather, our four girls, they catch a cold.
24 Just, what, before Thanksgiving we had two of them at home
25 just because of the change of weather. And it could have been

1 just because of the house was cold and we trying to, you know,
2 keep the bills down.

3 So I think you all should really think about
4 raising the gas rate because it hurts -- it really hurts to
5 live in your home, paying bills and stuff and you can't have
6 your heat up so you can live comfortable without wrapping up
7 or your kids saying, It's cold, can we have cover or blankets.
8 And that's the way we live most of the time in the winter just
9 to keep the bills down. So I thank you, but for -- listening
10 to me. Thank you.

11 JUDGE DALE: Thank you, ma'am. Questions in
12 Columbia?

13 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: I just had one line of
14 questioning, Judge.

15 Ms. Green, have you all ever looked into doing
16 the budget billing thing, the plan where it smooths out the
17 bill where it doesn't go up and down?

18 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Ain't nobody going to go to
19 jail for not wanting to pay no bill. That bill don't work.

20 THE WITNESS: Well, it's kind of hard for me
21 to --

22 AUDIENCE MEMBER: That bill don't work.

23 THE WITNESS: -- to really -- you know, I
24 could say something about that, but see, like I say, we're on
25 a fixed income and it's my husband's disability so with his

1 disability, we -- he pays the bills. So what he pays, you
2 know -- however, you know, the way he have to pay it, that's
3 the way I go.

4 So -- and then I have seen peoples with --
5 that -- I don't really think it's fair because my -- my
6 sister, she was like -- her gas bill was like maybe 2- or
7 300 dollars a month because -- she was working now and she got
8 laid off for a while. And she got on this fixed income.

9 And they had her paying maybe like \$195 a
10 month. But when that bill -- when your gas bill go down and
11 you ain't got to pay and it ain't \$195 or something like that,
12 it's less, you still got to pay that \$195. And I don't think,
13 you know -- a lot of peoples don't think that's right.

14 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: Okay. Thank you.

15 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

16 MR. OCHOA: Delores Gould.

17 THE WITNESS: I'm kind of bashful, ya'll, but
18 I'm up here. My right hand is up.

19 JUDGE DALE: Spell your last name.

20 THE WITNESS: G-o-u-l-d.

21 JUDGE DALE: Thank you.

22 (Witness sworn.)

23 JUDGE DALE: Thank you. Please proceed.

24 DELORES GOULD testified as follows:

25 THE WITNESS: Well, my gas got cut off today,

1 but it's going to be cut back on tomorrow, thank God. Because
2 the HDC thought I had electric, but I had gas. Do I -- I
3 ain't got to keep holding my hand up, do I?

4 COMMISSIONER GAW: No. You're all right.

5 THE WITNESS: Anyway, they made a mistake on
6 my energy assistance. And I messed up last year, it was my
7 fault, didn't pay the bill. Now I'm on this -- got this big
8 old gas bill that I need to pay.

9 I had my son living with me during the time,
10 didn't pay the bill. Now the budget billing just smacked me
11 with a big bill. And, you know, they -- you know, it's my
12 fault. It ain't ya'lls fault, you know. I got to pay that
13 bill down. But, you know, I know I got to get that done, you
14 know. The good Lord going to work with me. I got faith in
15 God.

16 But anyway, I just hope that rate don't go up,
17 you know. It's hard. I'm living by myself, I'm on a fixed
18 income and I get \$10 worth of food stamps and I live by
19 myself. My son no longer lives with me. And it's hard --
20 it's very hard, you know.

21 You know, I got to turn my heat on 80 to warm
22 my house up. I live in a house. The house is small, but I
23 don't think it's weatherized or whatever you want to call it
24 because it's -- when I stand up, the house is warm, when I'm
25 laying down, the house is cold, you know. So I got to put two

1 blankets on, you know, to warm up.

2 But I just hope the rate, you know, don't go
3 up because it's very hard when you live by yourself and you
4 got to buy food. And plus, I'm on Section 8 and they take
5 part of my rent. I pay half of my rent and it's hard, you
6 know. The landlord make me pay half of my rent, he still
7 charge me for a two-bedroom and it's very hard. It's taking
8 most of my income.

9 So I'm going to have to get out of his house
10 next year as soon as my lease is up and that way maybe
11 something will go good -- come out good as soon as I get the
12 gas bill down. But, you know, it's -- everything going to be
13 all right. Now I'm done. Okay.

14 JUDGE DALE: Thank you. Are there questions
15 in Columbia?

16 COMMISSIONER GAW: Ms. Gould, the amount --
17 and you can tell me this or not. I'll leave it up to you.
18 Okay?

19 THE WITNESS: I'll show it to you.

20 COMMISSIONER GAW: Just whatever you want to
21 do here. I'm looking for the amount that you're having to pay
22 for your utilities --

23 THE WITNESS: Yeah.

24 COMMISSIONER GAW: -- can you compare that to
25 how much does that take out of your income percentage-wise

1 about? Do you have any idea?

2 THE WITNESS: It take all of it. I mean,
3 well --

4 COMMISSIONER GAW: By the time you finish
5 trying to catch up with where -- what you have from last year
6 and paying your current bill and paying your electric and
7 other things too --

8 THE WITNESS: I'm going to have to at least
9 take 200 out of my check to get it down if I want it down. So
10 it's -- it's pretty high. The bill's high.

11 COMMISSIONER GAW: Well, how much does it
12 leave you for food by the time you pay your utilities?

13 THE WITNESS: Well, about -- a little money.
14 A little money. My daughter she -- thank God I got a
15 daughter, you know, on my side. I got one daughter and one
16 son. And she helps me out with her little food stamps she
17 get. So thank God she gets food stamps and I can eat out of
18 canned goods.

19 COMMISSIONER GAW: But if you didn't have
20 access to that --

21 THE WITNESS: I don't know what I'd do. As
22 long as I got God in my life, you know. I wouldn't know what
23 to do. I go to church, I get -- I got baptized this year and
24 somebody going to help me, you know. God made a way.

25 COMMISSIONER GAW: Yes, ma'am.

1 THE WITNESS: You know, and I go to the Food
2 Pantry, but it's hard.

3 COMMISSIONER GAW: But it's hard. I
4 understand.

5 THE WITNESS: Yeah. You know, as long as I
6 have faith, I know somebody going to help me.

7 COMMISSIONER GAW: Yes, ma'am.

8 THE WITNESS: Okay.

9 COMMISSIONER GAW: Thank you for answering my
10 questions.

11 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: I don't have any
12 questions, ma'am. Thanks for coming.

13 MR. OCHOA: Pam Forbes.

14 THE WITNESS: Hi.

15 JUDGE DALE: Could you please spell your last
16 name?

17 THE WITNESS: F-o-r-b-e-s.

18 JUDGE DALE: Thank you.

19 (Witness sworn.)

20 JUDGE DALE: Thank you. Please proceed.

21 PAM FORBES testified as follows:

22 THE WITNESS: I live in Columbia now. I lived
23 out in the county for, oh, 15 years. When I -- maybe more
24 like 20. I lived here in '83 and I rented and it was a pretty
25 energy inefficient situation, which I didn't find out about

1 until after I was in it. And I was paying an AmerenUE bill
2 for my gas and it was very high.

3 And when I bought and moved out into the
4 country, I was pleasantly surprised with the fact that Boone
5 Electric actually sent me a check every year. I moved back
6 into town a couple years ago because of the price of fuel,
7 gasoline and found myself having to deal with Ameren again.

8 And although my bills have not been that high
9 because I did get something energy efficient, I'm here more to
10 testify to the erosion of the middle class in our state. I
11 work in a factory and we haven't had a hard hourly raise for
12 four years. The cost of our insurance has gone way up to a
13 point where the company used to subsidize our insurance and
14 now it all comes out of our pocket.

15 People with little kids who are having to pay
16 high day care costs and a -- a gas increase or an electric
17 increase is going to add to the base cost of all that stuff.
18 Everything we all need. And I'm telling you now that the
19 whole state will be on budget billing if you're not careful.

20 MS. GOULD: Got that right.

21 THE WITNESS: I'm just here to say that I
22 think that it's -- that with -- with the state of the economy
23 right now or at least my economy and the economy of the people
24 that I work with, utility price increases are not something
25 that we're positioned to deal with. I'm finished.

1 JUDGE DALE: Thank you. Questions in
2 Columbia?

3 COMMISSIONER GAW: None from me. Thank you
4 very much.

5 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: I don't have any
6 questions either. Thank you, Ms. Forbes.

7 JUDGE DALE: Thank you.

8 MR. OCHOA: Brenda Procter.

9 JUDGE DALE: Hello. Could you spell your last
10 name, please?

11 THE WITNESS: P-r-o-c-t-e-r.

12 (Witness sworn.)

13 JUDGE DALE: Thank you. Please proceed.

14 BRENDA PROCTER testified as follows:

15 THE WITNESS: Okay. Before I talk about the
16 utility increase, I just want to get it on the official record
17 that this facility is not a good place to hold a public
18 hearing if your goal is to hear from a cross section of the
19 public.

20 I've lived here for 30 years. I couldn't find
21 the building, I couldn't figure out where to come in the door.
22 And I heard this lady in the wheelchair talk about access. So
23 I think in the future really some intentional effort should be
24 made to have these hearings in places that are accessible and
25 maybe publicize them a little better.

1 I was just sitting doing a little bit of math.
2 At 6.50 an hour if you work full time, you have before taxes
3 about \$1,127 a month. Okay? So let's say you're renting --
4 you know, you're working full-time, you're renting, maybe you
5 pay about \$600 a month in rent, which in Columbia is pretty
6 cheap. If you're paying \$600 a month in rent, you probably
7 are not well weatherized and the place probably isn't very
8 well insulated.

9 Let's say you need \$200 a month for food. So
10 there you've got 1,127. You haven't even paid your taxes yet,
11 you've taken off \$800 a month for rent and food. So that
12 leaves you \$327 a month to pay for healthcare, clothing,
13 personal items, transportation, furniture and utilities. And
14 I don't -- I cannot imagine a house in Columbia that would
15 rent for \$600 that wouldn't take most of that \$327 you have
16 left in your pocket to pay for everything else.

17 And I think, you know, it's fine that there's
18 a process that AmerenUE's stockholders are insured a certain
19 return on investment. You know, that's great. But there is
20 no way that low-income families are assured a return on
21 anything. And it's very, very difficult to live.

22 I think when you do the math, even if you
23 haven't been touched by the stories that we've all heard,
24 which have really kind of gotten to me on a personal level,
25 the math doesn't really support a rate increase either.

1 If we're going to have a rate increase,
2 somebody's going to have to pay for the low-income families
3 that are in this situ-- the minimum wage situation or, you
4 know, on public assistance.

5 I think that we over the last probably --
6 really since Welfare Reform hit in '97, we've expected
7 low-income families to bear more and more and more of the pain
8 of some of the policy changes that we've made. And while I
9 don't begrudge AmerenUE's stockholders, you know, a fair
10 return on their investment, I think we need to think about the
11 families that are kind of -- are most affected by the rate
12 increase. And that's all I have to say.

13 JUDGE DALE: Thank you. Are there questions
14 in Columbia?

15 COMMISSIONER GAW: Maybe just one or two.
16 Ma'am, you are a gas customer --

17 THE WITNESS: Uh-huh.

18 COMMISSIONER GAW: -- for Ameren. Correct?

19 And from the standpoint of the question that
20 you raised or the issue you raised about this facility, do you
21 think -- first of all, was it difficult to see the facility as
22 you were driving by? Is that one of the --

23 THE WITNESS: I forgot about the disconnect in
24 Walnut and I got to the end and thought, Wait a minute. It
25 took me a while to figure it out.

1 COMMISSIONER GAW: So that was an issue?

2 THE WITNESS: Yes.

3 COMMISSIONER GAW: When you actually drove by
4 it, was it difficult to see? The lighting was perhaps --

5 THE WITNESS: Uh-huh.

6 COMMISSIONER GAW: -- not such that you could
7 tell that this building was the building?

8 THE WITNESS: Right. I didn't know where to
9 park. There were no signs. I didn't know where the door was
10 for the hearing. Yeah.

11 COMMISSIONER GAW: One of the reasons that I
12 suspect that this site was picked was because of the video
13 capability, the remote capability. But aside from -- aside
14 from that question, do you have other locations that you could
15 give off the top of your head that you would recommend as a
16 meeting place if -- well, when we have additional hearings on
17 other cases?

18 THE WITNESS: I think well-known places like
19 the public library. Places that everybody knows where they
20 are. I knew there was a Moberly Area Community College. I
21 didn't know they had this education center. Kind of glad to
22 know it's here now, but that's not the point of what we're
23 doing tonight.

24 COMMISSIONER GAW: Sure. You also mentioned
25 the notice issue. Do you know -- how did you find out about

1 this meeting?

2 THE WITNESS: I actually heard about it from an
3 e-mail from GRO. And I feel like if GRO wasn't aggressively
4 sending e-mails to everybody they could think of that we wouldn't
5 have had anybody here tonight, so I --

6 COMMISSIONER GAW: So that's the only --

7 THE WITNESS: -- appreciate GRO for that.

8 COMMISSIONER GAW: I didn't mean to interrupt.
9 Was there any other notice that you saw?

10 THE WITNESS: There may have been in the
11 paper, but this time of year it's hard to pay attention and
12 pick up on everything that's going on. And, you know, this is
13 a pretty important issue to get buried in the holidays.

14 COMMISSIONER GAW: Yes. Yes. I understand
15 that too.

16 Now, from -- so do you have any
17 recommendations on getting the word out that you'd want to
18 suggest?

19 THE WITNESS: Well, getting it to groups like
20 GRO is a good place to start. I think working through all the
21 obvious community-based organizations, you know. There's the
22 cable TV thing, there's the newspaper. I mean there's all
23 kinds of ways. I think you really kind of -- kind of like
24 bird shot. You need to hit every piece you can think of
25 because different people have different ways of communicating.

1 COMMISSIONER GAW: Yes, ma'am. I think that
2 those ideas need -- we need to discuss a little more and I
3 appreciate the fact that -- appreciate -- did we lose them?
4 She's still here.

5 THE WITNESS: Good.

6 COMMISSIONER GAW: I appreciate the fact that
7 you're offering those suggestions, so thank you very much.

8 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: I would add, the last
9 Ameren Gas rate case hearing was at the public library at --

10 THE WITNESS: Good. Did you have good
11 attendance there?

12 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: -- Broadway and Garth.
13 Is that -- I'm sorry.

14 THE WITNESS: Did you have better attendance
15 there?

16 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: It was a bigger room so
17 it's kind of hard to say. I think there are more people here
18 though. The hearing was in the middle of the summer, so gas
19 prices aren't as --

20 THE WITNESS: But I just think the point of
21 the hearing -- it's almost a symbolic thing. The point of a
22 hearing is to hear everyone and I don't think an effort -- a
23 thorough effort was made to hear everyone, so --

24 COMMISSIONER GAW: I think -- I think we've
25 had hearings at the -- at the county building perhaps too.

1 AUDIENCE MEMBER: We had them at Stevens
2 Municipal Auditorium one time and that was quite cold.

3 COMMISSIONER GAW: If you all, when you come
4 up here, have any suggestions you want to offer on that
5 subject, we'll be glad to hear it.

6 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: I don't have any other
7 questions. Thank you.

8 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

9 JUDGE DALE: Thank you.

10 MR. OCHOA: Aimee Wehmeier.

11 MS. BERNSEN: Aimee had to leave. She's going
12 to submit written comments.

13 MR. OCHOA: Faye Pugh.

14 JUDGE DALE: Could you please spell your name?

15 THE WITNESS: Yes, P-u-g-h.

16 (Witness sworn.)

17 JUDGE DALE: Thank you. Please proceed.

18 FAYE PUGH testified as follows:

19 THE WITNESS: Well, I do concur that I too did
20 not have the slightest bit of knowledge prior to getting here
21 as to where this location was and I've lived here off and on
22 since 1983. I know Stevens Auditorium worked out real well, a
23 prior meeting that was there and, in fact, there was quite a
24 large crowd there and there was room to accommodate the crowd.

25 I do have a concern with the accessibility to

1 the handicapped and the elderly getting into this building.
2 That was an issue I saw just coming in, once I could determine
3 where to turn into the parking lot.

4 I did not really come with a prepared
5 statement. I've got a concern where Ameren is saying that
6 they need this rate increase to cover laying of new lines and
7 just coverage of general business expenses.

8 Every businessman I know has general business
9 expenses. It's a cost of doing business. You start raising
10 your rates as a cost of doing business, generally don't have
11 the business there to do.

12 Most of us, we have home maintenance. We
13 can't go ask our boss for a raise when we need to replace the
14 lateral line to the septic tank. That's the coast of owning a
15 home. Household insurance doesn't cover that. So, therefore,
16 I have a bit of concern where Ameren says general maintenance
17 costs are things that need to be passed onto the customer.

18 I do understand the cost increase in gas. We
19 have no control of that. That is passed onto us. I'm not on
20 a fixed income like many of the individuals here; however,
21 even in my household, right now the thermostat's sitting on
22 65. It's raised occasionally when I'm having health issues.

23 We have very large expenditures of medication
24 in my house, health insurance. So there are health insurance,
25 including my husband's diabetic neuropathy, where the heat

1 does have to be raised from time to time. At the moment I
2 have a daughter home from college. She's griping about
3 sitting around with a lap robe on. There again, the heat's a
4 little warmer than it normally is for that very issue.

5 I got my budget billing back this month.
6 Fortunately, this is the first time in years I've not had to
7 pick up a large sum to pay that difference. Past years I
8 have. That's part of the reason why the heat's turned down
9 this year. And, in fact, I'm \$30 below my budget billing for
10 this month's bill for that adjustment.

11 Boone Electric does have some something that
12 makes it a little bit more accessible to customers as far as
13 where their budget billing is concerned. Your budget billings
14 roll over from year to year. You don't have that big sticker
15 shock one month. And I've found that's much easier even on my
16 air conditioning bill if it's rolled over into the next year's
17 budget billing.

18 Another issue I have with Ameren is several
19 years ago when they were charged with charging the customers
20 too much and were to reimburse their customers the excess that
21 they overcharged, they made a deal for that to go to the
22 Dollar More program.

23 I don't really have an issue with it going to
24 the Dollar More program. However, those customers like myself
25 that overpaid did not receive a tax credit that we could turn

1 in on our income taxes for what they credited out of our money
2 to the Dollar More program. It would have been nice if we had
3 of. AmerenUE got that tax credit.

4 You know, the elderly sitting in this room I
5 know -- my mother lives in Springfield. Springfield owns its
6 gas company and, therefore, there is no oversight into their
7 rates. My mom's 70 years old. A neighbor that she helps take
8 care of is 94. Her gas bill was \$394 last month. She keeps
9 the house at 72 degrees. My mother saw a double jump and you
10 could hang meat in my mother's house she keeps the temperature
11 that low. She saw a doubling of her gas figure in
12 Springfield.

13 So I see the elderly, I've got a bit of
14 contact with the elderly. My mother-in-law's 85, fortunately,
15 her utilities are paid for by her senior housing. It is rough
16 on them just to pay medicine and basic utilities. When you
17 start adding increases, no matter how minute, that means
18 whether or not that person may get medicine that month. And I
19 have issues with that knowing the medications I need in a
20 day's time and knowing what happens if I don't get them.
21 That's it.

22 JUDGE DALE: Thank you. Questions from
23 Columbia?

24 COMMISSIONER GAW: On the budget bill, so when
25 you get to the end of the cycle on the budget bill with

1 Ameren, they send you a bill for the difference if you're
2 under. That's what I understood what you said.

3 THE WITNESS: If you're under your budget
4 billing, you get a lower bill that month. For instance,
5 instead of \$82, I got a \$52 bill.

6 COMMISSIONER GAW: So like a credit?

7 THE WITNESS: Right. You get that credit. If
8 you're over your budget billing -- and I've had bills as high
9 as \$190 to make up in a month's time.

10 COMMISSIONER GAW: Now, tell me about Boone
11 Electric a minute and how that works.

12 THE WITNESS: Boone Electric billing, you have
13 your budget bill each year and whether you're under or over,
14 they re-adjust after a year's time what your budget billing
15 would be, just like AmerenUE. However, if you've got a
16 positive balance that needs to be carried over, that's figured
17 into the next year's budget billing.

18 COMMISSIONER GAW: So that budget bill for
19 that year then is adjusted upward --

20 THE WITNESS: It's adjusted.

21 COMMISSIONER GAW: -- and evened out over that
22 next year?

23 THE WITNESS: Over that next year if it needs
24 to be. Other times it -- there again, it's lowered if, for
25 instance, you don't need that.

1 COMMISSIONER GAW: And do they do the same
2 thing if it's lower?

3 THE WITNESS: Yes.

4 COMMISSIONER GAW: They lower the amount and
5 equalize it over the course of that whole budget billing
6 cycle?

7 THE WITNESS: Yes. Uh-huh. Makes it much
8 easier for those in particular like myself. You know, I've
9 got a daughter going to school in Maine. I've already got
10 enough out the door as far as expenses just in travel expenses
11 and tuition.

12 It makes it easier to be able to know what
13 your utility bills are going to be and not have that one big
14 month of it's either going to jump -- I don't mind not having
15 to pay up as much, but if it's going to jump up, it hurts.
16 Even when it jumps up midyear. And I will say this. Both
17 AmerenUE and Boone Electric do adjust it midyear if they think
18 that budget billing's going to be an issue. But, there again,
19 that can be painful too depending on where you're at.

20 COMMISSIONER GAW: But you would prefer that
21 the budget billing work at Ameren be done similarly to Boone
22 Electric?

23 THE WITNESS: Yes. Where it would just
24 rollover.

25 COMMISSIONER GAW: And your daughter goes

1 school in Maine. Is this the same daughter that wanted to
2 have the heat turned up when she got back here? That's okay.
3 You don't have to answer that.

4 THE WITNESS: Yeah. But her dorm room is kept
5 at 68 all the time. Yes, that is the same daughter. But
6 actually I went up there for Thanksgiving and I came back to
7 19 inches of snow and it was beautiful weather up there.

8 COMMISSIONER GAW: Thank you, ma'am.

9 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: Ms. Pugh, could I just
10 ask a question? How many times a year does your budget bill
11 change with Ameren?

12 THE WITNESS: Usually just twice a year. And
13 it only changes -- generally the only time I see a change in
14 Ameren's bill -- and I have had budget billing for several
15 years -- is if they feel like I'm going to have that large
16 jump at the end of the year, then they will raise my budget
17 billing during the year.

18 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: So when they do that,
19 do you still have a catch-up payment at the end of the year --

20 THE WITNESS: Generally I do, yes.

21 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: -- if the numbers
22 aren't right?

23 THE WITNESS: Right. You'll still have a
24 catch-up payment at the end of the year. But I will say this
25 much. They do try -- six months prior to that, if they see

1 that you're in a deficit situation, they do try to adjust your
2 budget billing where that will not be as large. I will give
3 them that. But Boone Electric does the same thing, so --

4 COMMISSIONER CLAYTON: Okay. That answers my
5 question. Thank you.

6 THE WITNESS: You're welcome.

7 MR. OCHOA: That is the last person that's
8 signed up. Is there anyone else that wishes to testify
9 tonight?

10 COMMISSIONER GAW: If you have something you
11 want to say, please take advantage of the time.

12 JUDGE DALE: Mr. Wood, is there anyone at
13 Rolla who wishes to say anything?

14 MR. WARREN: No. I just double checked, and
15 there's not.

16 JUDGE DALE: Okay. Thank you. And everyone
17 is finished in Columbia?

18 COMMISSIONER GAW: It appears so. Yes.

19 JUDGE DALE: Then we will adjourn this hearing
20 and go off the record. Thank you all very much.

21 WHEREUPON, the hearing was adjourned.

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