

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

In the matter of Missouri Gas Energy's tariff sheets)
designed to increase rates for gas service in the) Case No. GR-98-140
Company's Missouri service area.)

**OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC COUNSEL'S
REQUEST FOR LOCAL PUBLIC HEARINGS**

COMES NOW, the Office of the Public Counsel ("Public Counsel") and respectfully requests the Public Service Commission ("Commission") to issue an Order scheduling local public hearings in the above-referenced matter. In support of this request, Public Counsel states:

1. That on October 3, 1997, Missouri Gas Energy ("MGE"), a division of Southern Union company ("SU"), filed a general rate case with the Commission requesting an increase in rates for the Company's service area.
2. That MGE's proposed tariffs, if adopted, would result in the rate increase of approximately \$27.8 million or 6.9%. For the average residential customer, the proposed increase would be approximately \$4.67 a month.

3. That as a result of the proposed rate increase by MGE, the Commission should schedule local public hearings in order to allow members of the public in the Company's service area an opportunity to testify concerning the increase, the quality of service presently received or any other relevant issue.

4. That in order to provide the public with adequate notice of the requested local public hearings, Public Counsel suggests that the following information regarding local public hearings be provided to the public:

a. That notice of the time, date, and place of the local hearing, with information regarding the amount of the proposed rate increase and the approximate percentage of proposed increase, be given to each affected customer, by either an imprint on the customer's monthly billing, or a bill insert, or a separate mailing, not more than 45 days or less than 10 days prior to the date of the public hearing;

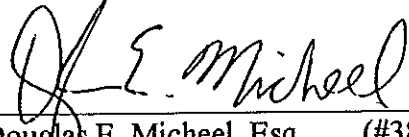
b. That the newspaper publishers, as listed in newspaper directory to the current Official Manual of the State of Missouri, in the relevant service areas be noticed regarding the proposed increase and the date, time, and location of the local hearing not less than 10 days before the date scheduled for the hearing and be requested to publish such notice seven and three days before the hearing in each newspaper's area;

c. That similar notice be given to any radio and television stations of each area not less than three days before the public hearing.

WHEREFORE, Public Counsel moves the Commission to issue its Order scheduling local public hearings in the service areas of Missouri Gas Energy, more particularly, the St. Joseph, Joplin, Monett/Nixa, Eastern Jackson County (Blue Springs/Independence) and Kansas City metropolitan areas, providing adequate notice to the public as requested previously, and for any other relief the Commission deems proper.

Respectfully submitted,

OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC COUNSEL

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Certificate of Service

I hereby certify that a true and correct copy of the above and foregoing document was either mailed or hand delivered to all counsel of record this 5th day of December 1997.

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