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BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
STATE OF MISSOURI

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
LOCAL PUBLIC HEARING

In the Matter of Union)
Electric Company d/b/a)
Ameren Missouri's Tariffs)
to Adjust Its Revenues)
for Electric Service,) File No. ER-2024-0319

Wednesday, January 24, 2025
12:00 p.m.

VIRTUAL HEARING VIA WEBEX

VOLUME 7

JOHN CLARK, PRESIDING
REGULATORY LAW JUDGE

MAIDA J. COLEMAN,
JASON R. HOLSMAN,
GLEN KOLKMEYER,
JOHN MITCHELL,
COMMISSIONERS

Reported by:
Colin Wallis (via WebEx)

* * * * *

(Starting time of the hearing: 1:20 p.m.)

REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Let's go on the record. Good afternoon. It's January 24th of 2025, and the current time is 1:20 p.m.

The question and answer portion of this public hearing has just ended. If you had questions about this rate case, I hope you were able to get those questions answered. The Missouri Public Service Commission has set aside this time for today in -- for a local public hearing file ER-2024-0319 a general rate case, which is captioned as In the Matter of Union Electric Company doing business as Ameren Missouri's Tariffs to Adjust its Revenues for Electric Service.

My name is John Clark. I'm the regulatory law judge presiding over this hearing today, and eventually my tongue and lips will start working. The Missouri Public Service Commission regulates the rates charged by investor-owned utility companies in Missouri to insure that those rates are just and reasonable.

The Commission also regulates the quality

1 of service and the safety of operations of
2 investor-owned utilities in Missouri. The
3 Commission is made up five commissioners, the
4 chair of the Commission, Kayla Hahn, and
5 Commissioners: Maida Coleman, Jason Holsman,
6 Glen Kolkmeier and John Mitchell.

7 The commissioners are appointed by the
8 governor to fixed terms and confirmed by the
9 senate. The commissioners employ a staff of
10 engineers, accountants, attorneys, financial
11 analysts and other specialists in the area of
12 utility regulation.

13 With me today, are the chair of the
14 Commissioner Kayla Hahn, and Commissioners
15 Maida Coleman, Jason Holsman and Glen
16 Kolkmeier. Commissioner Hahn, would you like
17 to make any opening remarks?

18 COMMISSIONER KOLKMEYER: This is
19 Commissioner Kolkmeier. I'd like to welcome
20 everyone here today. On behalf of Chair Hahn,
21 and the entire commissioners, we want to
22 welcome you. We welcome your comments here
23 today. We have not heard anything other than
24 from the company that they have filed -- that
25 they want a rate case. So, this is step one in

1 the process, and that's hearing from you, the
2 customers of Ameren. So, thanks again for
3 coming out today and being on this web and
4 sharing your comments. Thank you.

5 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Thank you
6 very much, Commissioner Kolkmeyer. Now,
7 there's a court reporter here that's
8 transcribing this hearing so that the
9 commissioners and myself can read the comments
10 later again if we would like to. I do have a
11 court reporter.

12 (Court reporter acknowledgment.)

13 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: At this time,
14 I'm going to ask the counsel for the parties to
15 enter their appearances for the records,
16 starting with Ameren Missouri.

17 MR. LUCAS: And my contact information is
18 on record with the docket.

19 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Thank you,
20 Ameren Missouri. On behalf of the Commission
21 Staff.

22 MR. KEEVIL: Yes, Judge, appearing for
23 staff, Jeff Keevil. Address is 200 Madison
24 Street, PO Box 360, Suite 800, Jefferson City,
25 Missouri 65102.

1 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Thank you,
2 staff. From the Office of the Public Counsel.

3 MS. VANGERPEN: Good afternoon. This is
4 Lindsay VanGerpen on behalf of the Public
5 Counsel. Our address is 200 Madison Street,
6 Jefferson City. Thank you.

7 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Thank you,
8 Public Counsel. Are there any intervenors
9 present? We have a few intervenors in this
10 case. I hear none. I'm going to remind that
11 there are people joined by phone, and there are
12 people joined via the internet. If you are
13 joined by phone, and you are going to be
14 offering comments to the Commission, please
15 remember to unmute yourself on the phone,
16 please press star six. If you are joining by
17 computer, there is a chat function. The chat
18 function is not part of the transcript of this
19 hearing, so I would ask you not use the chat
20 function to make comments or comment on other
21 people's comments.

22 With that in mind, for those who would
23 will like to provide comments today, I'm going
24 to call the names on the list in the order they
25 were provided to me. When I call your name,

1 please unmute yourself. I'll then place you
2 under oath and ask you to state and spell your
3 name for the record, and then you'll have an
4 opportunity to offer your comments to the
5 Commission. Now, there's a number of people
6 that want to offer comments to the Commission,
7 and the Commission wants to hear your comments.
8 In order to take as many comments as possible,
9 I'm going to be limiting people to
10 approximately three minutes. When you get to
11 roughly three minutes in your comments, I will
12 let you know and that will give you an
13 opportunity to finish your sentence or thought.

14 Also, before -- after you finish your
15 comments but before you remute, wait just a
16 second. If I have any questions or if the
17 commissioners have any questions or any of the
18 attorneys present have any questions at that
19 time, they'll ask them. Commissioners, just
20 anytime you want to ask a question, go ahead
21 and ask them. If the attorneys for the parties
22 want to ask a question, please let me know, get
23 my attention.

24 Now, the commissioners nor myself will be
25 able to answer your questions today if you have

1 any. That's what the Q&A portion was for, and
2 that's because this is a pending case before
3 the Commission that has not been to an
4 evidentiary hearing yet. And because it's
5 ongoing and they haven't heard the evidence
6 presented in this case, they can't yet answer
7 your questions because they haven't made a
8 decision and they have to remain unbiased until
9 it's time to make a decision. If you have a
10 question, I'm going to ask that you speak to
11 the company; that you contact the staff of the
12 Commission or the Office of the Public Counsel.
13 I'm also going to ask that while others are
14 speaking, that you, again, not use the chat
15 function but be polite and treat everyone who
16 is speaking here today as you would like to be
17 treated.

18 With that in mind, I have two lists, and
19 there will probably be some people at the end.
20 I'm going to start with the list of people that
21 I was provided in advance of the hearing. Is
22 there a Tammy Sneaks (ph.) here? James Monroe
23 (ph.)? John Stagg? Margaret Hovel? Joel
24 Orrim. And some of these people signed up days
25 ago, so they may not have attended.

1 MS. VANGERPEN: Judge Clark?

2 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Yes?

3 MS. VANGERPEN: I apologize for
4 interrupting. This is Lindsey VanGerpen on
5 behalf of the OPC. I was just asking if you
6 could remind people that if they're on mute on
7 the phone, how to unmute. I believe it's star
8 six.

9 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: I would be
10 happy to, and thank you very much for that,
11 Ms. VanGerpen. As Ms. VanGerpen said, if you
12 are attending this comment hearing by phone and
13 you are trying to speak and nobody is
14 acknowledging you, it's probably because you're
15 still on mute. So, if you want to unmute and
16 you're attending by phone, please press star
17 six to do so when offering comments. Is there
18 a Judy Finazzo? Christy Richter? Now, we
19 should be into the list of people who are here
20 who would like to speak. Staring with a Nora
21 C. Do I have a Nora C. present?

22 MS. CARDINALE: Yes, I'm here. Can you
23 hear me?

24 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: I can hear
25 you. Thank you very much. Would you please

1 state and spell your name for the court
2 reporter?

3 MS. CARDINALE: Yes, Nora, N-o-r-a,
4 Cardinale, C-a-r-d-i-n-a-l-e.

5 (Nora Cardinale sworn.)

6 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay, what
7 would you like to tell the Commission about
8 this rate request?

9 MS. CARDINALE: Okay, I would like to say,
10 first, I want to address just overall the
11 disparity between the haves and the have nots.
12 And, so, we've seen the CEO pay in the United
13 States from 1987 to 2023 raise 1,085 percent in
14 comparison to a typical citizen, which received
15 24 percent increase from '77 to '23. In 1923,
16 the president and CEO of Ameren, Martin Lyons,
17 he made 8.2 million, and also the senior
18 executive vice president CFO, Michael Moehn in
19 2023, made 9.6 million.

20 So, earlier, the Ameren gentlemen was
21 saying the raises at company were 3 percent.
22 But that wasn't including -- that was the basic
23 salary increase. It wasn't including the
24 compensation from stock options; and this is
25 just one company the CEOs are making this much

1 money; and we have, you know, every -- this has
2 exploded across every industry in the United
3 States.

4 I also didn't list out the other top
5 executives at Ameren and probably the million
6 dollar compensation packages that they are
7 receiving. So, they're proposing the
8 17 percent increase, and this is coming at the
9 time when we're all expecting our homeowner
10 insurances to increase 15 percent this year or
11 more, and food and other staples are still
12 elevated; and, now, President Trump is saying
13 it's not going to be so easy to reduce the
14 price of eggs. So, how are we expected to pay
15 for this, especially retired people, like
16 myself, so I would ask that you consider what
17 is happening to the average everyday American.

18 I feel like the balance of customer value
19 to -- versus shareholder value is skewed in
20 favor of shareholders, a large many of Ameren's
21 shareholders are hedge funds. Meanwhile, we
22 have to have electricity, so their benefit is
23 coming at all of our expense.

24 In 2023, Ameren, they paid out 662 million
25 in stock dividends. And they're asking for

1 more from us, and I don't know with climate
2 change and all of the other increases that
3 we're to absorb, I don't know how we're going
4 to do that.

5 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: I'm going to
6 let you know you're at three minutes.

7 MS. CARDINALE: Thank you. I thank you
8 for your time.

9 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Thank you
10 very much for your comments. Christie
11 Richter. Ms. Richter, if you're attending by
12 phone you need to unmute but I was told you
13 were present. And you can unmute by pressing
14 Star 6 on your phone. Okay. Is there a Jeff M
15 here?

16 MR. MEIER: Yes.

17 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: And would you
18 please state and spell your name for the
19 record.

20 MR. MEIER: Jeff Meier, J-e-f-f, Meier,
21 M-e-i-e-r.

22 (Jeff Meier sworn.)

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: And what
24 would you like to tell the Commission today,
25 Mr. Meier?

1 MR. MEIER: Well, I'd first like to thank
2 Ameren for the quality of the electric power
3 that they're delivering in my area, and the
4 recent upgrades they made to our substations,
5 which significantly improved our power
6 reliability during the recent ice storm. As a
7 required -- as a retired chemical engineer, I
8 do not understand why Ameren Missouri customers
9 are paying for the illegal plant changes at
10 Rush Island. In the 1990s, I was involved in
11 ensuring a major oil refinery upgrade complied
12 with federal and state law. We knew if this
13 was done improperly, we'd not be able to
14 operate the facility.

15 I struggle to see how this mistake in 2007
16 and in 2010, and was allowed to occur by both
17 the state EPA, the PSC and Ameren. In my
18 opinion, this would require considerable levels
19 of incompetence. Ameren and the people who
20 made this decision should be accountable, not
21 the rate payers. I also would like to see the
22 Public Service Commission conduct a
23 benchmarking study to evaluate how Ameren could
24 perform closer to best in class electric
25 utilities. The oil refineries that I work for

1 did this approximately every five years to make
2 sure that we are operating as efficiently as
3 possible in all areas.

4 In this case, most major oil refineries
5 participated in an anonymized study to make
6 this happen. In the 1980s, I was involved in
7 building an electric cogeneration plant in
8 Oklahoma as a refinery liaison engineer with no
9 authority to modify the utility's behavior
10 beyond safety concerns. It was obvious the
11 electric utility ran up the project costs to
12 the legal limit to increase their profits. The
13 PSC should be closely monitoring how Ameren
14 spends money to minimalize this type of
15 behavior.

16 It appears to me that the proposed cost
17 increase is too simplistic. I do not
18 understand how each category of my bill goes up
19 at the same rate. It would nice if we were
20 billed based on what things actually cost
21 instead of applying a 15.7 percent increase
22 across the board. I do not understand how --
23 why Ameren Missouri is not offering rebates for
24 efficient HVAC, heat pump water heaters and
25 heat pump driers to reduce system peak demand.

1 Reducing system peak demand would also reduce
2 the amount of power Ameren is purchasing out of
3 state.

4 It is my understanding that the out of
5 state power is considerably more expensive than
6 Ameren Missouri generation in Missouri. I'm
7 disappointed that Ameren installed a new
8 electric substation within 200 feet of a
9 community water well in Lake Ozark after the
10 problems with St. Charles Renault, and I would
11 like to see Ameren explore clean coal to reduce
12 customer cost in the future. Thank you.

13 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Mr. Meier,
14 thank you for your comments. Very succinct and
15 very on point. Thank you.

16 MR. MEIER: Yeah.

17 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Claire
18 Mueller.

19 MS. MUELLER: Hi. Just real quick before
20 we start, I'm so sorry, I was just typing this
21 in the chat. I have a friend on the call who's
22 not able to get in, and I just tried to call
23 myself and it says the host has not joined the
24 meeting, so I'm worried that the phone users
25 are not able to hear any of this.

1 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay, thank
2 you for letting me know. If you'll hold on
3 just a second --

4 MS. MUELLER: Thank you.

5 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: I'm going to
6 see if I could do something about that.

7 MR. COLE: I'm sorry, sir, can you hear
8 me?

9 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Yes, I can
10 hear you just fine. Would you please state and
11 spell your name for the record.

12 MR. COLE: I'm a phone user just so you're
13 aware. I can hear everything you're saying.

14 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay. That's
15 good. We may be just having a technical glitch
16 then, I don't know. And who is speaking?

17 MS. MUELLER: Claire Mueller.

18 MR. COLE: My name is Matthew Cole.

19 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay, you're
20 not up to talk yet. You're just -- you're just
21 participating by phone.

22 MR. COLE: Right, I just was letting you
23 know that I'm on the phone.

24 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: I very much
25 appreciate that, thank you. Ms. Mueller, would

1 you please state and spell your name for the
2 record?

3 MS. MUELLER: Yes, my name is Claire
4 Mueller. First name, C-l-a-i-r-e. Last name,
5 M-u-e-l-l-e-r.

6 (Claire Mueller sworn.)

7 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Please go
8 ahead.

9 MS. MUELLER: My name is Claire Mueller.
10 I am speaking as a private citizen. First, I
11 want to thank the Commission for holding these
12 meetings. I know you guys have many of these
13 this week, and this successful option virtually
14 is really helpful as well, so I hope the
15 turnout and involvement have shown the absolute
16 necessity for keeping these meetings. Please
17 do not get rid of these.

18 I would just like to say that I'm opposed
19 to another Ameren rate increase. There are
20 multiple other options to provide Ameren
21 funding without furthering burdening customers.
22 Per Ameren's media room, the key component of
23 the rate adjustment includes providing cleaner
24 energy. There are federal incentives that
25 Ameren can utilize for this, including the

1 Inflation Reduction Act of 2022, specifically
2 aimed at providing public power entities
3 opportunities to lead the clean energy
4 transition while reducing ratepayer costs. I'm
5 unsure why incentives like this would not be
6 top of mind and fully exhaustive before we come
7 to forcing customers to pay more.

8 Additionally, as mentioned in many
9 previous testimonies, C-Suite salaries are
10 obscene. Ameren's response to this, of course,
11 is their C-Suite salaries are in line with the
12 market, skillfully skirting the question as
13 they have with many of these questions; and I
14 think the general public sentiment towards
15 corporate greed at the expense of the lives and
16 the health of others has become clear in the
17 past few months, and should be heeded.

18 I've canvased and spoken within
19 historically marginalized groups who are most
20 proportionally impacted by these socioeconomic
21 changes and climate change. People have no
22 idea that they can have a say in their utility
23 costs, or that they should -- should the
24 Council choose to heed this input, but they
25 have no idea because power is monopolized.

1 Until I canvased, I had no idea that you could
2 comment on these increases, and I think that
3 is -- it does seem purposeful. But people are
4 having to choose between human rights, like
5 housing, heat and food to pay their bills. You
6 know, earlier on the Q&A, Warren -- he noted
7 that there were chemicals previously used by
8 Ameren that we did know were harmful and that
9 many other companies did it, too.

10 I don't think that is sound reasoning, and
11 we have to do better. We need to work harder
12 and care more deeply to find solutions, because
13 this rate hike will negatively impact our
14 community and potentially unhouse people.
15 Please connect with humanity and understand
16 that this newest rate hike is not an
17 appropriate answer. Thank you.

18 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Ms. Mueller,
19 you said you were here as a private citizen,
20 but you also indicated that you did some
21 canvassing. Are you affiliated with any of the
22 intervenors in this case?

23 MS. MUELLER: Where may I find the
24 intervenors?

25 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: I'm sorry?

1 MS. MUELLER: Where may I find the list of
2 inventors?

3 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: It would be
4 on the Commission's website. But, I mean, are
5 you part of an organization that's interested
6 in this?

7 MS. MUELLER: I have volunteered with the
8 Sierra Club, yes, and I have volunteered with
9 several other local organizations based in
10 environmental and sustainability causes.

11 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay, thank
12 you so much, Ms. Mueller. Thank you for your
13 comments.

14 MS. MUELLER: Thank you.

15 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: I have a
16 Lillie, no last name listed. Is there a Lillie
17 here?

18 MS. CLAY: Yes, yes, I'm here.

19 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Lillie, would
20 you please state and spell your name for the
21 court reporter?

22 MS. CLAY: It's Lillie, L-i-l-l-i-e. Last
23 name is Clay, C-l-a-y.

24 (Lillie Clay sworn.)

25 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: And what

1 would you like to tell the Commission today?

2 MS. CLAY: Well, first of all, we can kind
3 of kick this issue down the road a long time as
4 far as today, but just wanted to get into the
5 fact that we had some question and answers
6 prior to coming on to the testimony part of the
7 meeting, and we are still not really getting a
8 clear reasoning why this increase is due;
9 because as stated before, they had a rate
10 increase in 2023 of 5.2 percent; they really
11 haven't accurately shown us what they've
12 actually done with the funding.

13 And also I agree with the other caller
14 that was previous that there are other ways you
15 cut on your costs and yet come to a
16 compromising position of where the investors
17 are happy and the consumer is happy as well.

18 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay. Thank
19 you for letting us know that, Ms. Clay.

20 MS. CLAY: Well, one other thing, I just
21 wanted to comment, too, I think we're more
22 concerned about our investors than the end
23 user, and I think it's already been stated
24 before. And, like I said, we can kick it all
25 day, the bottom line is we need to find a

1 compromising method or situation to address
2 this other than giving a current hike of
3 17 percent. And if you can do that, even cut
4 that price and do it over a two-year period or,
5 you know, spread it out, lower the rate or no
6 rate at all, because it's actually helping the
7 disenfranchised people that are -- including
8 myself, that have circumstances where, you
9 know, this hike would be -- rate hike would be
10 detrimental to all that are concerned, because
11 they're not really -- they're putting that
12 money to good use. There are other ways that
13 they actually cut their costs instead of asking
14 for this amount of increase of 17 percent.

15 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay. Thank
16 you, Ms. Clay, for your comments. Sue
17 Limestall.

18 MS. LIMESTALL: Hi, I'm online.

19 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay. Would
20 you please state and spell your name for the
21 court reporter?

22 MS. LIMESTALL: I'm an Ameren customer,
23 S-u-s-a-n, L-i-m-e-s-t-a-l-l.

24 (Susan Limestall sworn.)

25 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Please go

1 ahead.

2 MS. LIMESTALL: I'm also in agreement with
3 most of the speakers so far that I appreciate
4 the opportunity to be a part of the public
5 hearing and to testify. I do think the Ameren
6 rate increase is way too high. It seems like,
7 you know, they got an increase that was
8 finalized in July of 2023, and 11 months later
9 they're filing for the next one; and that's
10 just -- and it's three times what they received
11 the year before. So, it's just way too much
12 money when budgets are too tight.

13 We've got a president that now says he's
14 going to reduce costs for everyday Americans.
15 We'll see what comes to bear out of that
16 campaign promise, but this is just way too much
17 money; and it's too hard on the marginalized
18 people in our society that can't afford
19 increased groceries, increased, you know,
20 utility costs, you know. And I've got city
21 water that's gone up. I've got natural gas
22 company rates has gone up. It's tough, and I
23 think they're asking way too much money.

24 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay. Thank
25 you. You also made a good point. You said you

1 agreed with some other speakers here. If it's
2 your turn to offer comments and your comments
3 mirror somebody else's and you want to let me
4 know that, please do. If -- it will allow
5 other people to get their comments in if -- if
6 we're not covering the same ground with each
7 and every comment. Ms. Limestall, thank you
8 for your comments to the Commission. John
9 Bowman.

10 MR. BOWMAN: I'm here, your Honor.

11 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Mr. Bowman,
12 would you please state and spell your name?

13 MR. BOWMAN: John, J-o-h-n. Bowman,
14 B-o-w-m-a-n.

15 (John Bowman sworn.)

16 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay, please
17 go ahead.

18 MR. BOWMAN: First off, I want to say I do
19 agree with everybody that's spoken ahead of me.
20 The one thing I do have to say is when I asked
21 a question about trimming the fat, they didn't
22 mention anything about their wallets. It was,
23 you know, basically their programs and all this
24 stuff, and what they're doing on that side, but
25 when I meant trim the fat, I meant, like, you

1 know, a lot of people mentioned, you know,
2 their huge salaries. They can afford to take
3 some of that money in their salaries and put it
4 towards this infrastructure that they want to
5 burden the customers with; and I think this tax
6 hike -- or this hike is just ridiculous. It's
7 uncalled for, and I'm a hundred percent against
8 it.

9 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay, thank
10 you, Mr. Bowman. I appreciate your comments I
11 have a Reverend Kevin Kosh. I believe you
12 may -- if you're at the Southside Wellness
13 Center you may still be muted.

14 MR. KOSH: Yes.

15 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Reverend
16 Kosh, can you hear me?

17 MR. KOSH: Yes, sir, can you hear me?

18 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: I can. Would
19 you please state and spell your name for the
20 record?

21 MR. KOSH: Yes, Reverend Kevin Kosh.
22 K-e-v-i-n. Kosh, K-o-s-h.

23 (Kevin Kosh sworn.)

24 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay. What
25 would you like to tell the Commission today,

1 Reverend?

2 MR. KOSH: Yes, I come on behalf of our
3 seniors, our young families and for
4 not-for-profit as well as our churches in
5 saying this rate increase is totally
6 unreasonable.

7 It's unreasonable because our seniors at
8 the present time are spending ten to 25 percent
9 of their income on increases or taxes of some
10 point and kind. As a result of this -- these
11 increases, some of our seniors and some of them
12 within our community, have to choose whether
13 they're going to eat or even have medications.
14 Some of our seniors are in the place where they
15 cannot afford, because of these increases, to
16 stay where they live, but they cannot afford to
17 move from their residences. We come on behalf
18 of our young families, because the median
19 income in our community and in my church is
20 38,000 dollars a year. Our young families
21 cannot afford a rate increase.

22 It is unreasonable to consider a family of
23 three making 38,000 dollars a year, a 15 --
24 actually a 15.77 percent increase. It is
25 unreasonable when we consider that Ameren

1 Missouri received, after paying all of their
2 bills a profit margin of one billion dollars
3 last year. I read that somewhere. I can't say
4 if that's true, but that's what I read. Also,
5 I would ask Ameren this particular question:
6 would they consider it reasonable, would they
7 consider it reasonable, if their employees of
8 their company across the board received a
9 15.77 percent increase? I believe they would
10 say it would be considered unreasonable. And I
11 think what they are proposing is totally
12 unreasonable to our seniors, to our young
13 families and to our not-for-profits and
14 churches who have to be the safety net because
15 many turned to us to -- for help when they
16 cannot afford to meet their obligations.
17 Whether it's utilities, gas or water, thank
18 you, sir.

19 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Thank you
20 very much, Reverend Kosh. I appreciate your
21 comments. I keep seeing people using the chat
22 function. I'm trying to pay attention to
23 comments as people are making them. I'm not
24 paying attention to the chat, and as I
25 previously indicated, the chat is not part of

1 the transcript of this hearing. So, I would
2 ask people to not use the chat again. Thank
3 you very much for your comments, Reverend Kosh.

4 MR. KOSH: Thank you.

5 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Reverend
6 McKoy? Is there a Reverend McKoy?

7 MR. MCKOY: Yes.

8 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Would you
9 please state and spell your name for the
10 record?

11 MR. MCKOY: Ken McKoy, K-e-n, M-c-K-o-y.

12 (Ken McKoy sworn.)

13 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: What would
14 you like to tell the Commission today, Reverend
15 McKoy?

16 MR. MCKOY: First, I'm here on behalf of
17 the AME Zion Church. I'm the director for
18 political and economic empowerment for the
19 same, statewide. And I'm also the pastor of
20 Progressive AME Zion Church, 5631 Wells. And I
21 ditto everything that my colleague Reverend
22 Kosh said. I'd like to add onto that, that
23 this is a very vulnerable position for our
24 community, particularly our seniors, in that
25 you are -- you guys are the only game in town.

1 I heard you say earlier that investors had
2 options, but we, the consumers, we don't. You
3 all have a literal monopoly, and we have to
4 deal with you guys. So, I pastor a very small
5 church but a very good church, and due to the
6 extreme cold, we've had to keep our utilities
7 on in ways that we typically don't. We have to
8 keep our water running, our heat running, and
9 this, I mean, we have astronomical utility
10 bills as a result of that, so we've had to ask
11 our people to dig deeper, so that we could keep
12 the lights and the heat on in the church, so
13 that we continue to provide the services that
14 Reverend Kosh talked about, that we do for our
15 parishioners.

16 But, now, here they are being saddled with
17 an increase, and this thing seems to have a
18 domino economic effect on not just households,
19 but on our institutions that support often
20 times the homeless, those struggling with
21 substance abuse. This is personal to me. I've
22 spent most of my adult life as a pastor, slash,
23 activist, and, now, I'm a retired person living
24 on a fixed income. It is frightening sometimes
25 when I get my check and look at all the things

1 that I have to do just to make ends meet. Not
2 do anything extra, but just to make ends meet.

3 I'd like to think that I'm not just
4 speaking to a commission; that I'm speaking to
5 some individuals who live in this world with
6 us. I don't want to be preachy, but you are
7 all familiar with the parable of the Good
8 Samaritan, and so I know just in terms of your
9 culture, that you all are pro-profit, not that
10 you hate people but you like profits a little
11 more, maybe.

12 I want to appeal to your heart just as a
13 human being, because like that man who was on
14 the side of road and was disregarded by two
15 religious institutions, but a good Samaritan
16 just came by, some nondescript person who just
17 had a big heart. So, I'm appealing to your
18 heart that --

19 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Mr. McKoy,
20 I'm going to let you know that you're at three
21 minutes but go ahead, please go ahead and
22 finish your thought.

23 MR. MCKOY: Let me finish it with this.
24 It's interesting to me that off the record had
25 five minutes, and on the record gets three

1 minutes. But anyway, I'm appealing to your
2 heart. This is absolutely unacceptable and on
3 behalf of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion
4 Church in Missouri, we are vehemently opposed
5 to this increase.

6 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay. Thank
7 you very much for your comments on that,
8 Mr. McKoy or Reverend McKoy. Give me just a
9 second. And there may be a little confusion
10 here. There are attorneys here from the
11 company, from the Public Counsel's Office and
12 from the staff of the Commission's office, and
13 there's the commissioners in attendance. But
14 these are separate from the company. While the
15 Commission regulates the company, we are not
16 part of the company in any way, shape or form.
17 So, I wanted to be sure there's not any
18 confusion about that. The next name I have on
19 my list to offer comments is Wallamusa (ph.).
20 And if I said that wrong, please let me know.

21 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: He had to
22 leave, so you can skip.

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay, thank
24 you for letting me know. Mallory Hill.

25 MS. HILL: That's me, and I'm speaking on

1 behalf of someone else but -- Mallory --

2 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Ms. Hill --

3 MS. HILL: Yeah, it's M-a-l-l-o-r-y.

4 Hill, H-i-l-l.

5 (Mallory Hill sworn.)

6 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE SEYER: Okay, go

7 ahead, Ms. Hill.

8 MS. HILL: All right, so I'm speaking on
9 behalf of Citizen Regina Sangwanet, (ph.) and
10 she's saying this, "Thank you for the
11 opportunity to voice our concerns today about
12 Ameren's proposed 15.77 rate increase, which
13 would go into affect later this year, and
14 permanently raise our bills an average of
15 almost \$18 a month.

16 Like many of the consumers here today, I
17 am on fixed income faced with inflation on just
18 about everything. Higher pharmacy copayments,
19 increased insurance premiums and high property
20 tax rates on top of last year's rate increases
21 on our utilities, electric, gas, water and
22 refuse. Even when the city doesn't even empty
23 the dumpsters for a couple of weeks. Most
24 people on fixed incomes don't have much
25 discretionary income, so we get to make hard

1 choices every month. Can I refill all my
2 prescriptions this month? Couldn't I get by
3 taking some every other day while the doctor's
4 office says no. Could I splurge on that carton
5 of eggs? Can I avoid to heat my home above
6 60 degrees? My shoes and winter coat is worn
7 out, and can't be repaired or mended anymore.
8 Can I afford to replace it?

9 Social Security recipients receive just a
10 two and a half percent cost of living
11 adjustment this month which comes to an average
12 \$50 and everyone is eager to claim their piece
13 of it. But there isn't anything left are
14 dealing with inflation for essentials. \$18 a
15 month per household may not sound like much to
16 executives of a multibillion public utility. I
17 read this week that last year Ameren realized
18 1.1 billion in profits from 7.3 billion last
19 year, and has assets totaling more than 41
20 billion.

21 Let's say that again. More than 1 billion
22 profit, that's what Ameren had after paying all
23 its expenses last year, but 1.1 billion isn't
24 enough for 2025. Ameren wants even higher
25 profits, so they're requesting another

1 permanent rate increase. Keep in mind that
2 this isn't for a project to build or upgrade
3 facilities to produce cheaper electricity or
4 cover increased production costs. Ameren,
5 examine your expenses closer. There has to be
6 somewhere you can make small sacrifices that
7 would improve your bottom line and still
8 satisfy the shareholders while continuing to
9 afford competitive compensation packages for
10 the senior executives, board members and
11 dedicated employees. We all have hard choices
12 to make in a difficult economy, so we can meet
13 responsibilities by doing more with less.

14 Why doesn't what is essentially a very
15 successful but monopolistic public utility make
16 some meaningfully sacrifices before proposing a
17 nearly 16 percent rate increase on top of a 1.1
18 billion profit? Considering our current
19 circumstances, this shameful proposal is so
20 tone deaf to the needs of the community that it
21 shouldn't have been presented. Thank you for
22 time and consideration." That's it.

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Thank you,
24 Ms. Hill. Thank you for your comments and
25 thank -- is it Ms. Sangwanet for her comments.

1 MS. HILL: Yes, thank you.

2 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Margaret
3 Williams. Is there a Margaret Williams who
4 wanted to offer comments to the Commission?

5 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes, I'm trying to get off
6 of mute. Can you hear me now?

7 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: I can hear
8 you, Ms. Williams, and I'll just remind
9 everybody --

10 MS. WILLIAMS: Can you hear me?

11 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: I can hear
12 you, Ms. Williams.

13 MS. WILLIAMS: All right, very good.

14 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: I'm just
15 going to remind everybody real quick if you're
16 joining by phone, and I know Ms. Williams is
17 not, you unmute yourself by pressing star 6.
18 Ms. Williams, would you go ahead and state your
19 name for the record?

20 MS. WILLIAMS: My name is Margaret,
21 M-a-r-g-a-r-e-t. Williams, W-i-l-l-i-a-m-s.

22 (Margaret Williams sworn.)

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay, what
24 would you like to tell the Commission today?

25 MS. WILLIAMS: I would like to speak in

1 reference primarily to the continual success of
2 Ameren Corporation by way of the stock market.
3 They have, as I'm looking at records here,
4 have -- and these particular records start as
5 early as 1985. They have continuously been
6 very successful in terms of increasing the
7 value of their stock, the inflow of money from
8 investors had been continuous. As I mentioned
9 in the previous meeting, there are times when
10 the stock market, as it will do, made dips and
11 Ameren Missouri's intake of investor funds
12 dipped, too, but it was not -- it was primarily
13 always at a time that the whole stock market
14 was decreasing. It has continuously grown
15 quite a bit. To illustrate what I'm talking
16 about, in January of 2024, the cost of a share
17 of Ameren was \$70.03. They have been extremely
18 successful in 2024. One of their highest
19 (inaudible) were it is, as of today, when I
20 first started on this call, it was \$93.97 --

21 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Ms. -- Ms.
22 Williams --

23 MS. WILLIAMS: As I'm speaking to you --

24 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Ms. Williams,
25 I'm sorry, you're cutting out a little bit, and

1 I want to be sure I hear everything. So, I had
2 down in January of 2024, the share price was
3 70.03 cents but you were talking about 20 -- or
4 I'm sorry. You were talking about more recent,
5 I didn't catch the amount that you said.

6 MS. WILLIAMS: Okay. I'm going to come a
7 little bit closer to my -- to the speaker as
8 well. Maybe that will help. The microphone,
9 rather.

10 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: I don't -- I
11 don't think it was the speaker. I think it was
12 technology, but go ahead. I'm sorry.

13 MS. WILLIAMS: Oh, okay. All right, well
14 when I started this call, I checked the stock
15 value, the cost, and it was \$93.97. It --
16 since talking -- since being on this call
17 continuously since noon, it is \$94.14 cents.
18 It kind of represents the way Ameren's stocks
19 have gone up. My personal purpose in
20 mentioning this is that Ameren has been
21 successfully able to get money to invest, and
22 they have done that very successfully through
23 the years with those (inaudible) or Ameren.
24 And the last dividend that Ameren gave, it was
25 2.85 (inaudible) percent.

1 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: I'm sorry,
2 you cut out there. 2. --

3 MS. WILLIAMS: Well, that dividend pretty
4 well represents what they have done -- 2.85.

5 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Thank you.

6 MS. WILLIAMS: 2.85 percent. While my
7 point in all of this is to say that Ameren has
8 a huge flow of investment. On the other hand,
9 and I won't go through what people have already
10 said a whole lot, but the short of it is, none
11 of us have had that kind of, I should say,
12 those of us who are marginal, those of us who
13 are retired, those of us who live in the
14 community that I live in in St. Louis City have
15 had that kind of continuous increase in our
16 salaries while we were working and now as a
17 senior.

18 The profits have been mentioned before. I
19 won't go into all the money that Ameren has
20 had. It is difficult for me to understand any
21 kind of reasoning for a 15 percent increase
22 (inaudible) for people who are struggling.
23 They're not (inaudible) making a decision, for
24 example, in the summer not to use lifesaving
25 electricity to use their air-conditioning units

1 or their system. We're talking about the
2 difference between life and death.

3 If people are struggling like that, and
4 Ameren has acknowledged that people are
5 requesting help, it seems as if someone should
6 be hearing that 15 percent is a very, very high
7 amount of money to request of customers. When
8 it could be that they could use some of the
9 funds through the investments they're getting
10 and making -- and some kind of adjustment
11 somewhere else in their systems like -- like
12 those who are running Ameren.

13 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Ms. Williams,
14 I'm going to let you know --

15 MS. WILLIAMS: So, I just wanted to say --
16 okay, I'm sorry. I lost you that time. What
17 did you say?

18 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Oh, I said --
19 I've said you've gone over three minutes. So,
20 if you could finish your thought so that
21 somebody else can speak.

22 MS. WILLIAMS: Oh, okay. I will -- I'll
23 just say this that it's under -- understandable
24 that costs have gone up, because they have gone
25 up for the average citizen, and the proportion

1 between Ameren's profits and how their expenses
2 have gone up compared to those of us who make a
3 lot less does not justify 15 percent. It just
4 doesn't.

5 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay, thank
6 you, Ms. Williams. Sorry, just looking at my
7 notes for a second. David Jackson? Is there a
8 David Jackson present? David Jackson?

9 MR. JACKSON: Yes.

10 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Would you
11 please state and spell your name for the
12 record, Mr. Jackson?

13 MR. JACKSON: David, D-a-v-i-d. Jackson,
14 J-a-c-k-s-o-n.

15 (David Jackson sworn.)

16 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: What would
17 you like to tell the Commission?

18 MR. JACKSON: Well, I thank you for the
19 opportunity to speak before you, and I stand on
20 the support and benefit for the elderly low
21 income families. It is very important when you
22 listen to all the testimony, this testimony
23 today, the testimony of the past, and one thing
24 ain't coming, and that's common sense.

25 The young lady, Ms. Williams, spoke just

1 before me and gave a common sense reason to not
2 support this. The two pastors before me gave a
3 common sense explanation as to not to support
4 this. It is no reason that this agency has
5 made a profit -- for the last 15 years, they've
6 made a profit. This is not an increase to do
7 anything different. This to maintain what they
8 already have. There's no need for it if you
9 got a budget or if you have a profit margin of
10 a billion dollars. There's no need for this
11 much of an increase at this time. I do not
12 stand in support of this increase as it is.
13 There's no reason that I can see that Ameren
14 should have come before your Board and asked
15 for a 15 percent increase, when they've been
16 asking for 5 percent and less, and still stayed
17 ahead of the community needs.

18 There's no reason. And one of the things
19 that I looked for is if they asked for this
20 large increase, did they increase they're share
21 to help their customers in their needless
22 program? I've never seen where they've
23 increased the amount of money to help those who
24 couldn't pay their bills. I think that should
25 have been one of the points they should have

1 outlined when they asked your board for their
2 increase.

3 As you contemplate, after these
4 testimonies and others, please ask yourself,
5 because this regulatory board has approved
6 every increase that Ameren came before you.
7 All I ask is a common sense look. Why is the
8 need for such a large increase at the present
9 time? Why is the need for an increase at all
10 when you're making profits every year? You're
11 within your own budget. You're succeeding in
12 every issue that you had with the customers,
13 good service. I just can't see one common
14 sense reason to approve a 15 percent increase.
15 Thank you.

16 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Thank you
17 very much. Would it be to fair to say,
18 Mr. Jackson -- I'm sorry.

19 MR. JACKSON: Yes?

20 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: All right.
21 So, one of the things you said, you said that
22 you did not hear the company say anything about
23 increasing any programs to help people having
24 difficulty with their utility bills, and you
25 would like to see that increase, correct?

1 MR. JACKSON: Yes.

2 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay, thank
3 you.

4 MR. JACKSON: I would -- I would have
5 thought that would have been a top agenda item
6 any time you come before a regulatory and asked
7 for an increase, that you bring something to
8 the table. I mean, you get in or you get out
9 what you get in. And, so, why -- why wasn't
10 that a top priority of Ameren of asking such a
11 huge increase and not increasing their
12 assistance to the needy?

13 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay, thank
14 you, Mr. Jackson --

15 MR. JACKSON: Thank you.

16 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: -- for
17 clarifying that for me. It was pointed out to
18 me that I may have skipped an R. Jackson. Is
19 there an R. Jackson present? Is there an R
20 Jackson? I see somebody talking. You may be
21 muted. So you may want to unmute if you're
22 muted. Ms. Jackson, I've seen you have an
23 unmute request. I've sent you that. If you
24 would answer that, that should allow you to
25 speak --

1 MS. JACKSON: Hello?

2 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Yes.

3 MS. JACKSON: Can you hear me now?

4 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: I can. Can
5 you please spell your name for the record?

6 MS. JACKSON: It's Rosalyn, R-o-s-a-l-y-n.
7 Jackson, J-a-c-k-s-o-n.

8 (Rosalyn Jackson sworn.)

9 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay, please
10 go ahead.

11 MS. JACKSON: As you just heard, I am
12 Rosalyn Jackson. I'm live in St. Louis City,
13 North City to be exact, in the O'Fallon
14 community. I am opposed to a rate increase.
15 I'm a senior with an income always a nickel
16 above the eligibility levels in the past, and I
17 can only assume I will continue to not make the
18 eligibility letter -- level for assistance. I
19 would like to encourage Ameren to prepare to
20 offer assistance to most, if not all, of your
21 customers, because inflation continues to eat
22 away our purchasing power.

23 Although, I mean, earn or receive in
24 retirement benefits just as any other consumer
25 would earn certain income above the poverty

1 level, my purchasing power has become more and
2 more limited. It has the effect of a household
3 below the poverty level due to the purchasing
4 power being drastically reduced. This is only
5 going to worsen. We never receive a
6 complementary benefit increase with --
7 commensurate with inflation.

8 So, again, I would like to ask Ameren to
9 prepare to make all of their customers eligible
10 for energy assistance, because due to the way
11 life is happening for us all, none of us will
12 be able to pay the bills, any of our bills, and
13 feed ourselves if this type of inflation
14 continues and it will, and if the utility
15 companies and everyone else continues to take
16 more and more big hunks of our income. Thank
17 you.

18 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Thank you,
19 Ms. Jackson. And you were saying that you kind
20 of fall into a gap where you make too much for
21 assistance programs but still struggle with
22 bills?

23 MS. JACKSON: That's correct.

24 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay, thank
25 you very much your comments.

1 MS. JACKSON: You're welcome.

2 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: I have a Dan,
3 first name only.

4 MR. KALAF: Good afternoon. Can you hear
5 me?

6 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Yes, would
7 you please --

8 MR. KALAF: Fantastic, my name is Dan
9 Kalaf spelled D-a-n, last name, Kalaf,
10 K-a-l-a-f. Over the past 15 years --

11 (Dan Kalaf sworn.)

12 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay, what
13 would you like to tell the Commission today?

14 MR. KALAF: Thank you for taking my
15 comment. Over the past 15 years, Ameren's
16 stock has grown at an average annual rate of
17 approximately 9 percent, not including
18 dividends, which is always already a very
19 healthy return.

20 During that same time, on top of the stock
21 value growth, Ameren's dividends to their
22 shareholders have doubled. In 2024 alone,
23 Ameren paid over 700 million dollars in
24 dividends to their shareholders. And they
25 could -- and they have told their shareholders

1 in their Q3 earning report to expect future
2 dividends to continue to grow at a 6 to
3 8 percent per year rate. Ameren could fund
4 their full 446 million increase request from
5 their dividends and still have a quarter of a
6 billion dollars, that's billion with a B, to
7 distribute to their shareholders.

8 I'm not opposed to investors making a
9 return, but it is time to stop increasing
10 investor return by increasing costs to
11 consumers. Increasing consumer rates, while
12 promising investors returns growth of 6 to
13 8 percent per year, is nothing more a continued
14 effort to take money from the average
15 Missourian and funnel it into the pockets of
16 the wealthy investors. Thank you for your
17 time.

18 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Thank you,
19 Mr. Kalaf. That was very to the point. Thank
20 you very much. Ms. Kramer? Is there a Liz
21 Kramer present.

22 MS. KRAMER: Yes.

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Would you
24 please spell your name for the court reporter?

25 MS. KRAMER: Yes, Liz, L-i-z, Kramer,

1 K-r-a-m-e-r.

2 (Liz Kramer sworn.)

3 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay, go
4 ahead.

5 MS. KRAMER: My name is Liz Kramer. I'm a
6 resident of St. Louis City. I really
7 appreciate the opportunity to speak today, and
8 for the commissioners to read our comments and
9 see how we all feel about this. As others have
10 said, I agree with what has been said. I want
11 to echo Dan's comments that he just shared so
12 concisely and accurately, and I'm also opposed
13 to this rate increase.

14 That being said, we must have a more
15 stable and resilient electrical grid. We need
16 more renewable options. We need better choices
17 for people to have better energy efficiency in
18 their homes. And what really is sticking with
19 me, and what I've seen in my experience, is
20 that Reverend McKoy and Ms. Williams both
21 raised, is the real danger to people's lives.

22 I live in a two-family building built in
23 1907. It is not a very energy efficient
24 building. I live upstairs, and we have tenants
25 who live downstairs, and multiple times, I had

1 tenants who have chosen not to turn their
2 air-conditioning on when it's over 90, when
3 it's over 95, because they can't pay for the
4 electrical costs. And I'm doing what I can to
5 to try to improve our systems and bring the
6 cost down, but, ultimately, we live in an old
7 building and it is a real danger. It's a
8 danger to young people. It's a danger to old
9 people. It's a danger to all of us when it
10 gets hot. When it gets humid. And it's going
11 to get hotter. It's going to get more humid.
12 And as we make that transition to things that
13 are much more scary and less stable, we need
14 electricity. We need to be able to have it
15 reliably available to us, and I'm worried that
16 more people will make the choice to not turn on
17 their air-condition or not turn on their heat
18 when they critically need it.

19 So, that's why I'm really concerned about
20 this and why I'm opposed to the rate increase,
21 and I'd like to see Ameren make other choices
22 with their financial investment. Thank you.

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Thank you
24 very much, Ms. Kramer. And I did not note
25 earlier, but I'm going to note now that we were

1 also joined by Commissioners Coleman and
2 Mitchell, so the entire Commission is listening
3 to your comments. Is there a Kristi Iker?

4 MS. ELIKER: Eliker.

5 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: I apologize,
6 thank you so much. Ms. Eliker, would you
7 please state and spell your name for the court
8 reporter?

9 MS. ELIKER: Kristi, K-r-i-s-t-i, Eliker,
10 E-l-i-k-e-r.

11 (Kristi Eliker sworn.)

12 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay, please
13 go ahead.

14 MS. ELIKER: A lot of things here have
15 been echoed. I agree with all of them, of
16 course. I also want to point out that beyond
17 people that are homeless, veterans, officially
18 disabled by the government or anything else, is
19 the reality that more and more just everyday
20 people are working two jobs to already pay
21 their bills. Giving up space and privacy with
22 multiple roommates trying to survive with the
23 absolute bare minimum, including what the
24 previous person said, rationing things like
25 heat and AC when it's vital and necessary. And

1 a 15 percent increase is just -- it needs to go
2 on the record as just being completely
3 appalling.

4 People are dying. 15 percent for this
5 entire company, how many lives does it end up
6 equaling, and when does that matter?

7 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Thank you for
8 your comment, Ms. Elikier. Matthew Kohl? Is
9 there a Matthew Kohl present?

10 MR. KOHL: Yes, I'm here.

11 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Mr. Kohl --

12 MR. KOHL: Can you hear me?

13 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Yes, I can,
14 I'm sorry. Will you spell your name for the
15 record?

16 MR. KOHL: Matthew, M-a-t-t-h-e-w, Kohl,
17 K-o-h-l.

18 (Matthew Kohl sworn.)

19 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: And what
20 would you like to tell --

21 MR. KOHL: I'm just -- yeah, I'm sorry. I
22 just wanted to say I'm another concerned Ameren
23 customer. And I wholeheartedly object to this
24 rate increase. There's been a lot of numbers
25 thrown out there, but the fact that Ameren

1 continues to make billions of dollars year over
2 year, I just -- I don't see the justification
3 in a 15 percent rate increase --

4 (Other voices started speaking on the WebEx.)

5 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Hold on a
6 second just as -- we've got some chatter in the
7 background. Let me see if I can get that taken
8 care of. All right, go ahead, Mr. Kohl.

9 MR. KOHL: Yeah --

10 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: I apologize
11 for the interruption.

12 MR. KOHL: I was just saying that there's
13 lots of numbers thrown out there, but the one I
14 saw was 12 months ending September 30th, 2024,
15 they've made over 5.5 billion dollars so -- in
16 profit, gross profits; but I don't just see the
17 justification in a 15 percent rate increase. I
18 don't care how the profit is split. I know
19 they say they got, you know, investors, capital
20 improvements, salaries. It really doesn't
21 matter. The fact that this is even being
22 proposed is a slap in the face to its
23 customers, in my opinion.

24 I know that the Reverend had mentioned
25 that we can't even choose another provider even

1 if we wanted to, so I wanted to come on here
2 and plead with the commissioners to please
3 don't approve this rate increase or any rate
4 increase this year. I want to thank you guys
5 for your time and service to our community.

6 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Thank you
7 very much, Mr. Kohl. I appreciate your
8 comments. Ollie Stewart? Is there an Ollie
9 Stewart present?

10 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Yeah, she's
11 coming.

12 MS. STEWART: Hello, hello.

13 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Hello,
14 Ms. Stewart. Would you please state and spell
15 your name for the record.

16 MS. STEWART: Ollie, O-l-l-i-e,
17 S-t-e-w-a-r-t.

18 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Ms. Stewart,
19 have we spoken before?

20 MS. STEWART: Of course. I'm sure we
21 have. Maybe. I've been in the neighborhood a
22 long time. I'm 92, so I've been around a long
23 time.

24 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Have you been
25 to -- have you been to the Public Service

1 Commission hearings before?

2 MS. STEWART: No, we had one last year
3 here.

4 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay, and
5 were you in attendance at that one?

6 MS. STEWART: We had -- we had a hearing
7 here at the -- a virtual, here at the Southside
8 Wellness. I'm part of Southside Wellness, so
9 my name is probably familiar with -- to you.

10 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay.

11 (Ollie Stewart sworn.)

12 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay, what
13 would you like to tell the Commission about
14 Ameren's request?

15 MS. STEWART: Well, the reason we have
16 this Zoom meeting, so that the seniors could
17 tell their own story how this 15 percent
18 increase is going to affect their income. But
19 the question when on so long, over an hour,
20 until they had to leave. If you notice when
21 you first came in, our room was filled with
22 seniors that wanted to tell their own testify
23 (sic. They wanted to testify how this was
24 going to affect them. Either -- the utility's
25 peer rates going to affect their income.

1 Nobody has gotten a 15 percent increase.

2 I'm on Social Security. I haven't got
3 that. Pension, they haven't gotten it. But
4 15 percent is going to cut out their
5 medication. Many of them is on different types
6 of medication, and the prescription drugs have
7 not went down. They have not -- they don't
8 have 15 percent to buy their medication or
9 their food. So, we are -- I'm not for the
10 15 percent. I think it's a shame that low
11 income peoples have to put -- bear this burden
12 to pay to their utilities. That's really what
13 I have to say, and many things that I could say
14 that have been said before, and I don't want to
15 repeat because everything that was said today
16 was a valuable to the low income -- to the
17 senior citizens and low income families. But
18 thank you.

19 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Thank you,
20 Ms. Stewart. And, again, I apologize these go
21 on so long. We have looked at a number of
22 different ways of doing them, however if you --
23 it's very helpful to have the Q&A upfront where
24 people can get questions answered, because if
25 you don't have that, you have people asking

1 questions of the Commission as I've indicated
2 because they have to remain impartial, they
3 can't answer those questions. So, I do find to
4 have a Q&A at the beginning helpful, but I do
5 understand it adds time to the hearing, and I
6 apologize for that. And I'm going to
7 mispronounce this, I apologize. Mike Scheidt.

8 MR. SCHEIDT: Yes, this is Mike.

9 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: And how do
10 you pronounce your last name?

11 MR. SCHEIDT: Scheidt.

12 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay.

13 Mr. Scheidt --

14 MR. SCHEIDT: First name spelled M-i-k-e.
15 Last name spelled S-c-h-e-i-d-t.

16 (Mike Scheidt sworn.)

17 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: And what
18 would you like to tell the Commission today,
19 Mr. Scheidt?

20 MR. SCHEIDT: Yes, I'd like to give an
21 attaboy to you guys for holding this forum and
22 for allowing us to voice our opinions. It's
23 very much appreciated, and as you can tell by
24 the comments, very much needed at this point.
25 I think the overall question here is, how is a

1 double digit increase justifiable, and if it is
2 justifiable, how is such an increase proposed
3 and who's to share in that? I guess through
4 the comments here, I was in the question and
5 answer period also, but unable to speak, but
6 I've learned more about Ameren's financials
7 from the customers than the officers and
8 employees that were in the question and answer
9 period, you know.

10 It was eyeopening that Ameren is making
11 billions upon billions each year, and most of
12 their comments was in this form of ROEs or
13 ROIs, but that 3 percent increase for the CEOs
14 has real dollars attached to it. And my
15 comment to that is, what are the real dollars?
16 I mean, there was a lady earlier in these
17 comments that shared eight million dollar
18 salaries, and I don't know the other one she
19 shared, but three percent of that is quite a
20 few dollars, so I would propose that Ameren
21 puts out real dollars on what these CEO
22 percentage are, and also the question that's
23 been danced around here as far as that income
24 from 2023 to 2024 never really was answered.
25 So, there's real dollars there. So, I'm

1 proposing that Ameren put out in the form of a
2 newsletter, maybe, on some of these real
3 dollars that are shared, and how they propose
4 to take those real dollars that they're getting
5 as far as a billion dollars a year net incomes
6 and decrease the 3 percent raises and clip
7 those toward this 446 million dollar proposed
8 increase, that they're proposing and see how
9 long it would take them to overcome that or if
10 there is a real need, to tell us what the real
11 need is, you know.

12 I mean, we got to compare what the profits
13 are here and what could be divvied into in
14 those profits to share in the cost of the need,
15 you know? So, I guess my proposal is that
16 Ameren put out a newsletter to all customers.
17 For one thing, maybe to -- what the concerns
18 that have been voiced here over this period of
19 time for these meetings. What are the
20 concerns? What are the resounding concerns
21 here, and also put out what the financial
22 statements and net profits are for the company,
23 and how the profits can be applied to the
24 proposed need, you know?

25 There are funds to be had here, instead of

1 divvy into the pockets of the customer base. I
2 mean, the proposed increase in 2023 was
3 5.2 percent. The proposed increase now is
4 three times that. So, what is Ameren offering
5 that is three times better for the customer
6 base than it was in 2023? And here we are a
7 year later asking for three times that. I
8 guess I'm just appalled at how such an increase
9 could be asked for when nothing is really set
10 in stone as to why there is such a need.

11 So, I'm -- or even, I guess, I live in a
12 county that has put a freeze, and maybe other
13 counties in Missouri has, too, put a freeze on
14 property taxes for anybody that could apply for
15 such a need, especially seniors, which I fall
16 into that category. But to me, utilities can
17 have a freeze also, and I'm proposing that we
18 don't --

19 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Mr. Scheidt,
20 you're over three minutes --

21 MR. SCHEIDT: Pardon me?

22 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Just to -- I
23 was just letting you know you're at three
24 minutes if you wanted to wrap up your thought.

25 MR. SCHEIDT: Right. So, whether it needs

1 to be a freeze or what it needs to be sure, it
2 doesn't need to be a double digit increase
3 here. So, let's put out to our customers what
4 the real need is and share with them the
5 financials and the profits, and don't try to
6 hide it into a question and answer period. So,
7 I thank you for your time.

8 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Thank you for
9 yours, Mr. Scheidt. Thank you for your
10 comments. Is there a Susan S present? A
11 Susan, last name begins with S. Ruth, last
12 name begins with E.

13 MS. SUTTON: Hello?

14 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Hello.

15 MS. SUTTON: Hello, this is Susan Sutton.
16 S-u-t-t-o-n.

17 (Susan Sutton sworn.)

18 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Go ahead,
19 Ms. Sutton.

20 MS. SUTTON: Okay, great, hi. Thank you
21 for having this today, and I 100 percent agree
22 with everybody that is -- their testimony,
23 especially the last gentleman, who, you know,
24 spoke about show us your financials. Why, you
25 know, why do you need this? I've been a

1 customer for Ameren -- for using Ameren since
2 1980, and I'm against the rate increase. And
3 I'm also serving on our community association
4 board, our condo association, for the last five
5 years, and, you know, I understand everything
6 going up. I mean, I see the bills that we have
7 to pay, the electric, the water and the trash
8 and the sewer, all that is included in our
9 association fees, and it keeps going up, and
10 people don't like it when we raise our fees,
11 but we have to show them, this is what's going
12 on, this is what we spend, this is our bills,
13 blah, blah, and blah.

14 Even though that still hurts, at least you
15 can see it on paper. So, I just really am
16 against this. I hope the commissioners, you
17 know, vote this down, and if anything, it
18 should be at least cut in half. It's way, way
19 too high.

20 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: So, you don't
21 see any --

22 MS. SUTTON: And that's about it.

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: It sounds
24 like both you and the last commenter indicate
25 that you feel there's a lack of transparency as

1 to a reason for the increase.

2 MS. SUTTON: Sure, yeah, why, when it's so
3 large.

4 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay. Thank
5 you for your comments, Ms. Sutton.

6 MS. SUTTON: Okay, thank you.

7 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: I called
8 before, is there a Ruth, last name E.

9 MS. EHRESMAN: Ruth Ehresman.

10 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Would you
11 state and spell your name, please?

12 MS. EHRESMAN: Sure, it's R-u-t-h. Last
13 name, E-h-r-e-s-m-a-n. I live in St. Louis at
14 --

15 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: No, please,
16 please, please do not -- do not provide any
17 personally identifiable information such as
18 exactly where you live. That's not information
19 that needs to be out there on the web.

20 MS. EHRESMAN: Okay.

21 (Ruth Ehresman sworn.)

22 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: What would
23 you like to tell the Commission today?

24 MS. EHRESMAN: Okay, I've been a resident
25 of St. Louis since 1977, and, currently, I head

1 up the volunteer efforts at the food pantry at
2 St. Pius the 5th Church on South Grand in St.
3 Louis. And thanks for this opportunity to
4 provide some testimony. I would like to speak
5 on behalf of the very large group of people who
6 come to our food pantry against the proposed
7 Ameren increase. It will have a significant
8 negative impact on their lives, and I think a
9 negative impact on the lives of all of us.

10 We have a large group of people come to
11 our pantry. During the last three months of
12 2024, we helped almost 12,000 individuals in
13 2,779 households. And we helped 117 households
14 stop disconnection of their utility bills, and
15 we help prevent an eviction of 91 households so
16 my comments very much --

17 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Could you --
18 would you back up just for a second and go --
19 give me that disconnection number again,
20 please? As to how many --

21 MS. EHRESMAN: Yes, we helped 117 -- 117
22 households who faced disconnection with
23 payments to stop that.

24 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay, thank
25 you. Go on. I'm sorry for the interruption.

1 MS. EHRESMAN: Okay. That's okay. I
2 wanted to give you just a little more detail to
3 build on some of the statements made by other
4 consumers. The overwhelming majority of
5 households that have come to us have incomes
6 that are less than \$1,000 a month. Their rents
7 usually raise -- range between 600 and \$850 a
8 month, and they do not typically live in the
9 subsidized public housing.

10 The income that they receive are typically
11 Social Security benefits, FFI Disability and
12 low wages for part time work. We know that
13 Social Security and SSI disability are not
14 sufficient to help them stay current on their
15 rent, gas and electric service. They have to
16 make choices each month about which bills to
17 pay. The folks that do have -- are employed,
18 typically don't have full-time jobs with
19 predictable or steady hours.

20 They do really important work for very low
21 wages. They work in nursing homes or as home
22 aids. They do janitorial and cleaning work,
23 laundry, food service in hospitals and schools.
24 Many of them have physical and mental
25 challenges that are barriers to employment.

1 Most folks rely on public transportation or
2 have cars that aren't dependable. Their lives
3 tend to be really unpredictable, and what can
4 be a temporary hurdle or setback with someone
5 with a higher income, becomes a crisis.

6 We help folks at the pantry, because we
7 know it's not healthy to live in chaos. And
8 being evicted or having a utility disconnected
9 is not just an inconvenience, it is a negative
10 life event. So, we know that we're just
11 providing a bandaid most times on a wound that
12 needs a hospital stay.

13 We need some systematic solutions that
14 address the challenges of affordable utilities
15 and shelter for everyone. The proposed rate
16 increases are frightening to these folks. In
17 the past two years, all of the major St. Louis
18 area utilities have either requested rate
19 increases or recently implemented those. While
20 those increases are described as modest, they
21 are significant to the families that we serve
22 and will be harmful and destabilize them. In
23 turn, this destabilizes our communities, our
24 city and our state.

25 We must find other solutions, and we are

1 urging you to deny Ameren's request to meet
2 these rates at this time. Again, thanks for
3 this opportunity.

4 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Thank you so
5 much. Thank you for your time and for your
6 comments.

7 MS. EHRESMAN: You're welcome.

8 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Vaughn Hogan.

9 MS. HOGAN: Hello. Vaughn Hogan,
10 V-a-u-g-h-n, H-o-g-a-n.

11 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay, I'm
12 sorry -- I'm sorry, Ms. Hogan. I had to mute a
13 background sound. Go ahead.

14 (Vaughn Hogan sworn.)

15 MS. HOGAN: So, I -- I want to point out
16 the fact that Ameren willingly and knowingly
17 continued to pollute at the Rush Island, which
18 they were sued, and I just find it interesting
19 that the lawsuit that the Judge went through at
20 the end of this year for 60 million dollars,
21 and then they ended up asking for such a
22 significant amount of money. I know that
23 somebody mentioned that, but I wasn't sure if
24 we knew, you know, the amount of that money,
25 which is 13 percent of that 446 million that

1 they're considering an increase.

2 I live in a medium household. We make
3 medium income, and we cannot afford this, so I
4 can't even imagine how the seniors or lower
5 income can make this work. To know the average
6 amount spent on electricity, not including
7 people that have gas, is \$135 is killing to me,
8 and I think that tells you a lot. Our average
9 electricity bill here is -- it has just jumped.
10 It was, before all of these hikes that we
11 recently had, was usually around \$170. Now,
12 it's 260.

13 So, for someone like us, it's not a \$17
14 increase that we're looking at. We're looking
15 at a 40 to \$50 increase for our electricity.
16 To think that there are people out that are
17 cutting their electricity and their heat and
18 they're cooling down so far that the average is
19 coming out to 135, tells you just how chilling
20 and scary it honestly is, because I couldn't
21 imagine being in the type of the cold or the
22 heat that these people would have to endure to
23 keep their electricity bills that low to begin
24 with.

25 With the increase of food being more than

1 double than it was, our household of a family
2 of four has seen our average food bill go from
3 about 9,000 a year to almost \$25,000. There's
4 so much to consider into all of it. Why -- why
5 Ameren, and why they decided to go -- to do the
6 poles of wiring the solar panels and the
7 transformers all at the same time, I feel like
8 there could have been more of a happy medium,
9 where maybe where we could have tackled the
10 poles and the wiring first or the transformers
11 first.

12 If we've been dealing with these issues or
13 these, you know, older poles, things like that,
14 for 50, 60 years, and, I mean, they've been
15 around for a long time, why -- why did we start
16 doing all of them at the same time, the solar
17 panels, you know, those things of the large
18 projects. I really do feel like a 100,000 is
19 the new 30,000, and if someone in a medium
20 community, and, I mean, I'm seeing this with my
21 neighbors as well, where we're barely pulling
22 through and surviving in the medium companies,
23 how do we expect our grandparents and the
24 elders and the people that are in poverty to do
25 this? That's what I had. Thank you for giving

1 me this opportunity.

2 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Thank you,
3 Ms. Hogan. A lot of information. Thank you.
4 Thank you for your comments.

5 MS. HOGAN: Thank you.

6 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: I have a
7 Mahala.

8 MS. PITTMAN: Hi, this is she.

9 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Would you
10 spell your name for the record?

11 MS. PITTMAN: Sure thing, my name is
12 M-a-h-a-l-a, P-i-t-t-m-a-n.

13 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: And,
14 Ms. Pittman, did you speak at one of the
15 local public hearings the other day?

16 MS. PITTMAN: I did.

17 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay. I
18 thought I recognized you. Would you raise your
19 hand to be sworn.

20 (Mahala Pittman sworn.)

21 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay, go
22 ahead, Ms. Pittman.

23 MS. PITTMAN: All right, thank you so much
24 for this opportunity. Thank you for holding
25 these hearings. I know that the virtual

1 hearings have been nice for people for
2 accessibility purposes. I wanted to highlight
3 a moment from the St. Louis City hearing that I
4 thought that was particularly powerful.
5 Someone had asked Ameren a great question,
6 which is the minimum salary needed to live
7 sustainably while also paying at this increased
8 rate. Ameren was unable to answer that
9 question.

10 If Ameren truly cared about their energy
11 being affordable, where they have stated
12 numerous times, and if the customer is truly
13 valued before the shareholders, Ameren should
14 be able to answer that question. The answer to
15 that question, as well as additional data
16 regarding average salary in their customer
17 base, should be considered.

18 We have heard stories of people going to
19 unrealistic lengths to keep their bills down,
20 which I communicated in previous testimony, and
21 today hearing about our seniors taking vital
22 medications every other day because they cannot
23 afford their bills. We see disconnections
24 skyrocketing with a starting 90,000
25 disconnections in 2024 alone, and that's just

1 the first time that Ameren has been required to
2 disclose that information since Covid.

3 So to know all of this and to approve
4 any -- to approve any rate increase on already
5 struggling Missourians to ignore the glaring
6 burden being felt by our communities. I
7 implore you say no to the rate hike and send
8 Ameren back to the drawing board to actually
9 consider their customers first. Thank you.

10 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Thank you
11 very much for comments, Ms. Pittman. Is there
12 a Christie or Kirstie Richter here? I know
13 I've called that name at the beginning, but.
14 Okay, those are all the names that I have
15 currently listed down of people who wanted to
16 speak. Is there anybody now, and don't
17 everybody just chime in at once, but I want to
18 be sure that I get to as many people as
19 possible. Is there anybody who did not get an
20 opportunity to offer comments to the Commission
21 that would like to offer them at this time?

22 MR. SCHMIDT: I would, your Honor.

23 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay, and
24 what's your name, sir?

25 MR. SCHMIDT: My name is Andrew Schmidt,

1 A-n-d-r-e-w, S-c-h-m-i-d-t.

2 (Andrew Schmidt sworn.).

3 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay, go
4 right ahead.

5 MR. SCHMIDT: I would like to challenge
6 Ameren on the statement they made during the
7 Q&A session that their investors require a
8 10 percent rate of return for their investment
9 in monopolistic utility. I think it is foolish
10 for Missouri residents to have to pay such a
11 high cost of capital, when what we're offering
12 is essentially a risk-free utility. The point
13 of investing in an utility like this is it's a
14 safe place to put money. Not a place to bleed
15 people dry.

16 If they want to make potentially high
17 returns, they're free to invest, and I'm sure
18 they do, in plenty of other vehicles that offer
19 more volatility. The benefit of investing in
20 an utility is the same nature of returns from
21 people you've heard from today, who are willing
22 to sacrifice medicine to pay for their
23 utilities. That's all.

24 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Thank you,
25 Mr. Schmidt. Tiffany Burks?

1 MS. BURKS-WRIGHT: Yes, hello.

2 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Would you
3 spell your name for the record, Ms. Burks?

4 MS. BURKS-WRIGHT: T-i-f-f-a-n-y, B, as in
5 boy, u-r-k-s, hyphen, W-r-i-g-h-t.

6 (Tiffany Burks-Wright sworn.)

7 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay, go
8 ahead, Ms. Burks-Wright.

9 MS. BURKS-WRIGHT: Hi, I am thankful
10 because of this virtual meeting because I am
11 disabled, so it's the only way that I would be
12 able to communicate my thoughts. I do receive
13 SSI, and I do have a son, so I'm on a fixed
14 income. A 15 percent increase is extremely,
15 is extremely unheard of and very disliked. I'm
16 already struggling to pay the rent and other
17 utilities that already went up, gas, water,
18 trash and now this at 15 percent?

19 Not to mention trying to eat and pay for
20 other things for a growing child. I'm trying
21 to understand exactly how did they get a
22 15 percent increase instead of trying to come
23 up with ways that will lower it or make it more
24 affordable for everybody because my question
25 is, at the rate it's this high, then that means

1 more people will go without, meaning less
2 people paying bills and less people being able
3 to pay them. So, if we're all struggling, then
4 what's the option going to be?

5 I'm not understanding about how they
6 didn't think about this and consider that if
7 their consumers are unable to pay, then that's
8 less money they're receiving. Or am I
9 misthinking about it too simply, because I'm
10 trying to understand why they can't understand
11 that part.

12 As far as transportation goes, I
13 understand everything is going up, but I still
14 feel as 15 percent is extremely high. That's
15 an unheard amount of a huge jump, instead of
16 something more simpler; but, then, again, they
17 just got a rate increase, so I'm trying to
18 understand why another raise so soon and why so
19 much?

20 But then, again, like I said, I am
21 disabled, and I am on a fixed income, so this
22 increase would make me have to decide what
23 bills am I going to pay this month, and what
24 bills I can afford to pay half of or a partial
25 payment because I'm not going to be able to pay

1 it all. Not to mention the money, but thank
2 you.

3 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Thank you.
4 Correct me, and if I've heard you wrong, but it
5 sounded like what you said that is if -- if
6 people can't afford to pay and they're
7 disconnected, that then there will be a smaller
8 pool of people to pay the increase, and I
9 believe --

10 MS. BURKS-WRIGHT: Yes.

11 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay. So, I
12 think Reverend McKoy was talking a little about
13 that when he was talking about the economic
14 domino affect.

15 MS. BURKS-WRIGHT: Yes, it's a domino
16 effect.

17 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Ms. Burks-Wri
18 ght thank you so much for your comments today.

19 MS. BURKS-WRIGHT: Thank you.

20 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Is there
21 anyone who else wanted to offer comment at this
22 time?

23 MR. KEILHOLZ: Yes, I would.

24 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: And what's
25 your name, sir?

1 MR. KEILHOLZ: My name is Nicholas
2 Keilholz, it's N-i-c-h-o-l-a-s. Last name is
3 K-e-i-l-h-o-l-z.

4 (Nicholas Keilholz sworn.)

5 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: All right, go
6 right ahead.

7 MR. KEILHOLZ: Yes, I'm just a Missouri
8 customer. I kind of caught on to this late as
9 far as this rate increase, and I'm glad I was
10 able to jump in and kind of hear, you know, the
11 public hearing and everything. Me, personally,
12 I'm already facing extra fees from Ameren
13 itself due to refusing the smart meter. I live
14 in an area where they went around and they've
15 install smart meters where everybody was at
16 work without their option to deny.

17 Currently, Missouri has a bill on the
18 table coming up in 2025, SP-224, which will
19 give customers back that right and option to
20 choose where they want that smart meter. I was
21 told by Ameren about two weeks ago in a message
22 that they were going to shut my power off in
23 three days if I did not call them to have the
24 smart meter installed. Then I was the last
25 resident in my area code of 65024 that doesn't

1 not have the smart meter. So, I called them
2 and they told me my option was to put in the
3 non -- I think it's the non-dial meter, which
4 is the other option than the smart meter, and
5 they told me that I'll have to pay a \$90 dollar
6 installation fee plus \$40 a month on top of
7 that.

8 So, when I found out there's a 15 percent
9 increase, a 15.7 increase on top of that, that
10 makes me pretty upset, because they have a
11 monopoly. I live literally on the line where
12 right across the street is Three Rivers
13 Electric. If I had the option, I'd throw a
14 power line, and I would use them instead. Not
15 to say they're any better. They've done the
16 smart meter thing, too, but what it looks like
17 happened was Ameren signed up with the smart
18 meters, and they got quite upset that this
19 electric program did not work for them, and
20 that customers finally caught on. And I had
21 this told to me by their meter reader that
22 comes out to my hose, that Ameren was very
23 upset that they did not have all the customers
24 comply with this program to put smart meters in
25 for their new grid system.

1 And, to me, it seems like their way of
2 going through and collecting that debt that
3 they took while this Biden administration was
4 in that signed up the country to put one of the
5 people in the Q&A, a solar panel project in
6 Northwest Missouri that's not even Ameren.
7 Doesn't even go to our customers in Missouri.
8 It goes to Virginia.

9 So, when you start to add all that up, you
10 have no choice as a customer. Now me, I
11 messaged them the bill has not passed, so for
12 anybody that has a smart meter, keep an eye on
13 SB-224 because later this year, hopefully soon,
14 it will pass to where we don't have to pay --
15 I'm paying \$40 a month for a meter reader to
16 come up my driveway. When she told me, she can
17 sit on my road and read my meter; but because
18 all the smart meters are the new program, I'm
19 on an outcast. I'm going to be charged extra
20 dollars for everybody getting the \$18 extra,
21 I'm paying now it will be close to \$60 extra a
22 month on top of my, like, \$300 bill in a
23 trailer that I live in. So, I'm with
24 everybody. I think this is ridiculous that
25 Ameren would even propose this, especially the

1 fact they don't even have to worry about the
2 same costs, and that's because they are all
3 making plenty of money, whereas we have zero
4 choice.

5 I'm a veteran. I lived on a fixed income
6 as a retired veteran, and I don't have a
7 choice. And, like I said, I personally live
8 right on the line a foot away where I can hook
9 into another electric company, and I don't know
10 what availability that is; but just wanted to
11 bring that out, that I don't know how many
12 people are threatened by Ameren to have their
13 power shut off, because they were refused this
14 smart meter, that if you go on the WHO (sic) as
15 zero human testing done on it to say whether
16 it's good or not for your health, and I just
17 wanted to kind of give my comments that they're
18 also taxing me a fee until that bill passes,
19 then they're going to charge anyone with a
20 smart meter \$90 to remove the smart meter if
21 they so choose. So, just more fees, more this
22 and that. Most people had them installed
23 without their option while they were at work.
24 So, thank you for your time. I just wanted to
25 give my comments.

1 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Thank you
2 very much for your comments, Mr. Keilholz.
3 Also, thank you very much for your service. I
4 appreciate that.

5 MR. KEILHOLZ: Thank you, sir.

6 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Is there
7 anybody else that wanted to offer comments to
8 the Commission at this time? Okay --

9 MS. HARMON: I would like to.

10 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Oh, I didn't
11 mean to miss anyone. Would you please state
12 and spell --

13 MS. HARMON: I would like to say
14 something --

15 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: -- your name
16 for the record. Say that again, please.

17 MS. HARMON: Jade Harmon. Jade Harmon.
18 J-a-d-e, H-a-r-m-o-n.

19 (Jade Harmon sworn.)

20 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay, go
21 ahead. What would you like to tell the
22 Commission today?

23 MS. HARMON: So, just like a quick search
24 from Google says that during the period from
25 20- -- or from 2020 to 2023, the average Ameren

1 summer residential bill rose by 19.56 percent,
2 and the average winter bill rose by
3 21.05 percent. It says that Ameren's
4 residential customers experienced significant
5 recent increases in their electricity bills
6 outpacing both the national inflation at
7 18.6 percent, and Missouri average weekly
8 growth at 16 percent. I'm against any sort of
9 rate increase at all for Ameren at this time --
10 I don't think there should be any sort of
11 increase right now. Especially, I mean,
12 everyone is having hard times, so that is all I
13 would like to say.

14 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Okay, thank
15 you for comments, Ms. Harmon. Is there anyone
16 else who wanted to offer comments at this time?
17 Okay. Would any commissioner like to make a
18 closing remark, please?

19 CHAIR HAHN: Yes, thank you, Judge. This
20 is Chair Hahn. I just want to let everyone
21 know how helpful it is for them to spend -- for
22 them to spend their time telling us their
23 experiences and their thoughts about the
24 pending rate case. It's the only way that we
25 can learn about how the public feels about the

1 case. And, so, I know that there's a lot of
2 things folks could do on this Friday afternoon,
3 but really thankful they spent their time
4 trying to inform us. So, with that, on behalf
5 of the entire commission, thank you all very
6 much. Thanks, Judge.

7 REGULATORY LAW JUDGE CLARK: Thank you,
8 Chair Hahn. These have been very robustly
9 attended, which is wonderful. If -- I'd like
10 to thank everyone who showed up today to offer
11 testimony. If you have additional comments or
12 you are talking to someone who was unable to be
13 present today and would like to offer comments,
14 you can make written comments by contacting the
15 e-mail address, PSC Info at psc@mo.gov. PSC
16 stands for Public Service Commission. But
17 contacting the Office of the Public Counsel,
18 the Public Counsel has been gracious about
19 getting comments to us. Or by going to the
20 PSC's webpage, and you'll see a link to comment
21 on cases.

22 If you're going to comment on a case or if
23 you're wanting to comment on this case, in
24 order to connect your comments to the case, you
25 need to include the case number. So, the case

1 number for this case is ER-2024-0319. Again,
2 I'd like thank everyone for their participation
3 today. These have been very robustly attended.
4 So, thank you all for your comments and have a
5 wonderful afternoon.

6 (Ending time of the hearing: 3:04 p.m.)

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1 I, Colin Wallis, in and for the State of
2 Missouri do hereby certify that the witness
3 whose testimony appears in the foregoing
4 Examination Under Oath was duly sworn by me;
5 that the testimony of the said witness was
6 taken by me to the best of my ability and
7 thereafter reduced to typewriting under my
8 direction; that I am neither counsel for,
9 related to, nor employed by any of the parties
10 to the action in which this examination was
11 taken, and further that I am not relative or
12 employee of any attorney or counsel employed by
13 the parties thereto, nor financially or
14 otherwise interested in the outcome of the
15 action.

Colin Wallis

17 within and for the State of Missouri
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