	Page 17
1 STATE OF MISSOURI	
2 PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION	
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5 TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS	
6 Hearing	
7 June 2, 2016	
8 Jefferson City, Missouri	
Volume 5	
9	
10 In the Matter of The )	
Empire District Electric )	
11 Company for Authority to )	
File Tariffs Increasing ) Case No. ER-2016-0023	
12 Rates for Electric Service )	
Provided to Customers in )	
13 The Company's Missouri )	
Service Area )	
14	
15 KIM S. BURTON, Presiding,	
REGULATORY LAW JUDGE.	
16	
DANIEL Y HALL, Chairman	
17 STEPHEN M. STOLL,	
WILLIAM P. KENNEY,	
18 SCOTT T. RUPP,	
MAIDA J. COLEMAN,	
19 COMMISSIONERS.	
20	
21 REPORTED BY:	
22 KELLENE K. FEDDERSEN, CSR, RPR, CCR NO. 838	
MIDWEST LITIGATION SERVICES	
23	
24	
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		Page 20
1	PROCEEDINGS	
2	(WHEREUPON, the hearing began at	
3	8:37 a.m.)	
4	(EMPIRE EXHIBIT NOS. 1-34, ECG	
5	EXHIBIT NOS. 1-5, CITY OF JOPLIN EXHIBIT NO. 1,	
6	DIVISION OF ENERGY EXHIBIT NOS. 1-5, MEUA EXHIBIT	
7	NOS. 1-3, STAFF EXHIBIT NOS. 1-24 AND OPC EXHIBIT	
8	NOS. 1-18 WERE MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION.)	
9	JUDGE BURTON: Let's go ahead and go	
10	on the record in the matter of the Empire District	
11	Electric Company's request for authority to	
12	implement a general rate increase for electric	
13	service, File No. ER-2016-0023.	
14	Good morning, everyone. It's	
15	8:37 a.m. on June 2nd, 2016. The Commission has	
16	set this date and time for an evidentiary hearing	
17	on Empire's general rate increase request. At this	
18	time I will ask the parties and everyone who's here	
19	present to please put their phones and electronic	
20	devices on silent mode.	
21	And we'll go ahead and take the entry	
22	of appearance by the parties. On behalf of the	
23	Empire District Electric Company?	
24	MS. CARTER: Diana Carter and Dean	
25	Cooper with Brydon, Swearengen & England for the	

Page 21 Empire District Electric Company. 2 JUDGE BURTON: On behalf of the Staff 3 of the Missouri Public Service Commission? 4 MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Judge. 5 Kevin Thompson, Jamie Myers and Nicole Mers for the 6 Staff of the Missouri Public Service Commission, Post Office Box 360, Jefferson City, Missouri 8 65102. 9 JUDGE BURTON: Office of the Public Counsel? 10 11 MS. MAYFIELD: Thank you, your Honor. 12 Cydney Mayfield for Office of the Public Counsel and for the ratepayers, and my information has been 13 14 previously provided to the court reporter. 15 JUDGE BURTON: Midwest Energy Users Association. 16 17 MR. CONRAD: Stu Conrad,

- 18 3100 Broadway, Suite 1209, Kansas City, Missouri,
- 19 64111. I have also provided that information to
- 20 the court reporter.
- JUDGE BURTON: Thank you. City of
- 22 Joplin?
- MS. BELL: Stephanie Bell and Marc
- 24 Ellinger for the City of Joplin. Our information
- 25 has been provided to the court reporter.

Page 22 1 JUDGE BURTON: Midwest Energy 2 Consumers Group? 3 MR. WOODSMALL: David Woodsmall on behalf of the Midwest Energy Consumers Group. 4 5 JUDGE BURTON: Missouri Division of 6 Energy? 7 MR. ANTAL: Yes, your Honor. Alex Antal with the Missouri Department of Economic 8 9 Development, appearing today on behalf of the 10 Missouri Division of Energy, P.O. Box 1157, Jefferson City, Missouri 65102. 11 12 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you. Now, are 13 there any procedural matters that we need to address while we are on the record before we begin 14 today? 15 16 MS. MAYFIELD: Your Honor, previously 17 I'd indicated that the Office of the Public Counsel 18 may add an additional witness should the Commission 19 ask some questions related to policy on the rate 20 case expense, and that witness would be Chuck 21 Hyneman. 22 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you very much. 23 It's my understanding today that we will be 24 addressing regulatory policy, rate case expense a 25 and potential pilot low-income rate for the issues.

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- 1 The attorneys will be providing an opening
- 2 statement on those issues and addressing any
- 3 concerns that the Commission might have.
- 4 MR. THOMPSON: I think we're not
- 5 going to be doing opening statements, Judge.
- 6 JUDGE BURTON: Okay. Will the
- 7 attorneys be coming up to answer any questions from
- 8 the Bench?
- 9 MR. THOMPSON: We'll all be happy to
- 10 answer questions as best we can.
- 11 JUDGE BURTON: I believe that this is
- 12 a little bit different from the procedural schedule
- 13 we previously had in place, so I would say let me
- 14 know if we want to adjust the schedule of which
- 15 parties would go in which order.
- 16 MS. CARTER: Judge, I think as far as
- 17 all of us back here are concerned, we do not have
- 18 anything prepared for you today due to a pending
- 19 settlement on all of the revenue requirement
- 20 issues, but we as attorneys are all here ready to
- 21 answer questions on regulatory policy and then the
- 22 two issues that the Commission wanted addressed, in
- 23 addition to what we had put on the issues list.
- 24 And then we also have -- each party
- 25 has their witnesses here today on those three

Page 24

- 1 issues, if the Commission were to want to take
- 2 testimony on those issues.
- JUDGE BURTON: All right. And let's
- 4 begin with regulatory policy. I believe the
- 5 witnesses that we have listed are Mr. Beecher, Kim
- 6 Bolin and Marke from Empire, Staff and OPC.
- 7 MS. MAYFIELD: That's correct.
- 8 JUDGE BURTON: Does the Commission --
- 9 MR. CONRAD: Judge, let the record
- 10 note that we strongly support regulatory policy.
- JUDGE BURTON: Thank you, Mr. Conrad.
- 12 Duly noted.
- MR. WOODSMALL: It depends on the
- 14 policy.
- JUDGE BURTON: We do have the
- 16 prefiled testimony that has not been entered yet
- 17 from those three witnesses on those issues, but let
- 18 me see if the Commission has any questions it would
- 19 like to ask any of the attorneys or the witnesses
- 20 that were identified for regulatory policy issues.
- 21 CHAIRMAN HALL: I have no questions
- 22 about regulatory policy.
- 23 COMMISSIONER STOLL: I've been
- 24 totally thrown off, and I have no questions about
- 25 regulatory policy either.

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- 1 JUDGE BURTON: It appears that this
- 2 will be a fast day. And let's move on then to the
- 3 rate case expense issue, and for this the parties
- 4 have identified the following available witnesses:
- 5 Keith from Empire, McMellen from Staff, Sarver from
- 6 Staff and Conner from the Office of Public Counsel.
- 7 MS. MAYFIELD: With the addition of
- 8 Hyneman.
- 9 JUDGE BURTON: With the addition of
- 10 Mr. Hyneman. Are there any questions from the
- 11 Bench for the attorneys?
- 12 CHAIRMAN HALL: I have a couple. My
- 13 understanding is that there is a pending settlement
- 14 on the revenue requirement, which I assume would
- 15 include rate case expense. Can someone explain
- 16 what the -- whether the settlement would include or
- 17 will include specific mention of rate case expense
- 18 and how it is being calculated?
- 19 MS. CARTER: We have not drafted the
- 20 settlement agreement yet. If that's something the
- 21 Commission would like us to put in there, we
- 22 certainly can specify.
- 23 All parties were in agreement early
- 24 on in this case that we would utilize for rate case
- 25 expense the sharing mechanism that the Commission

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- 1 ordered in the recent KCP&L rate case. So that is
- 2 what we were following throughout the case and will
- 3 be following with the settlement.
- 4 CHAIRMAN HALL: Well, speaking on my
- 5 behalf, I would appreciate the stipulation
- 6 including specific reference to how that was
- 7 calculated. And I applaud the parties' willingness
- 8 to agree to that particular mechanism.
- 9 COMMISSIONER STOLL: I too would like
- 10 to see that. So I may not have any questions today
- 11 until we see what the agreement -- language of the
- 12 agreement is.
- 13 JUDGE BURTON: Moving on, if there
- 14 aren't any --
- 15 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Hold on. You
- 16 know, one other topic which we don't have on our
- 17 agenda but in this settlement agreement, one of the
- 18 things is you mentioned the KCP&L case that we
- 19 would like as a Commission is dealing with the ROE.
- 20 A lot of times we get this black box ROE and we
- 21 don't necessarily appreciate that. We appreciate
- 22 that the parties are trying to work together, but
- 23 we would like a range so we can have an idea and
- 24 calculate where it is.
- MS. CARTER: We have been listening,

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- and that has also been contemplated throughout our
- 2 settlement discussion, and the settlement agreement
- 3 will have actually a very tight ROE range that the
- 4 settlement is based on.
- 5 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Thank you.
- 6 JUDGE BURTON: All right. Thank you.
- 7 Moving on to the final issue for the day, which
- 8 would be the potential pilot low-income rate.
- 9 MR. ANTAL: Judge, if I may. The
- 10 Division of Energy wasn't in the room or was on the
- 11 phone line when parties discussed not having
- 12 opening statements on issues. So we do have some
- 13 prepared remarks, and if no other party has an
- 14 objection, I'm prepared to make those remarks.
- JUDGE BURTON: That sounds fine.
- 16 Mr. Antal, if you would just like to step up to the
- 17 podium.
- 18 MR. ANTAL: May it please the
- 19 Commission? My name is Alex Antal. I'm here today
- 20 representing the Missouri Division of Energy.
- 21 Thought this impromptu issue was worth an opening
- 22 statement. I know Staff gave its position in its
- 23 updated statement of positions, and wanted to give
- the Commission the Division of Energy's position on
- 25 potential low-income rates or additional low-income

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- 1 programming.
- 2 As demonstrated in the rebuttal and
- 3 surrebuttal testimony Division of Energy witness
- 4 Sharlet Kroll, there is a significant need in
- 5 Empire's service territory. The average poverty
- 6 rates in the state of Missouri by county is
- 7 roughly -- well, the state average is 15.5 percent.
- 8 In the 16 counties that Empire serves, the average
- 9 poverty level is 19 -- just over 19 percent. So
- 10 there is, you know, a lot of people living in
- 11 poverty in Empire's service territory, and I think
- 12 we should be mindful of that.
- The Division of Energy believes that
- 14 it is in the Commission's statutory authority to
- 15 implement low-income rates and similar programs to
- 16 provide economic relief to these customers. The
- 17 Comprehensive State Energy Plan discussed the
- 18 implementation of low-income rates and believes
- 19 that the -- either the Commission or the General
- 20 Assembly should take action.
- 21 If the Commission wishes to give
- 22 immediate relief to the people living in poverty in
- 23 Empire's service territory, it has the ability to
- 24 implement a pilot program in this case. I'll in
- 25 just a little bit kind of move on to a specific

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- 1 example that the Division has developed. Not
- 2 saying it's a perfect or that we're necessarily
- 3 recommending this example, but basically we've made
- 4 an example based off of the Commission's recent
- 5 decision in the Missouri American case, what an
- 6 80 percent discount on the customer charge would
- 7 look like for this utility.
- 8 And then the Division of Energy would
- 9 also inform the Commission that there are existing
- 10 low-income programs in the state that other
- 11 utilities are using and that have shown promise.
- 12 One example would be Ameren Missouri's Keeping
- 13 Current program, which has a more nuanced approach
- 14 than say a flat customer charge discount. It
- 15 provides tiered incentives based off of a
- 16 customer's percentage of the federal poverty limit
- 17 that they find themselves in.
- 18 So as I mentioned, there's a
- 19 significant need in Empire's service territory.
- 20 Generally in the state of Missouri households that
- 21 find themselves in -- with incomes 50 to
- 22 100 percent of the federal poverty level have an
- 23 average home energy burden of 17 percent of their
- 24 annual income. Now, to put that in perspective,
- 25 many experts in housing analysis, in affordable

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- 1 housing have stated and published that an energy
- 2 burden of 6 percent of your income is the threshold
- 3 for unaffordability. So we're literally talking
- 4 about almost three times what is considered by
- 5 experts to be unaffordable.
- 6 As I said earlier, in 2014 over
- 7 15 percent of individuals in the state of Missouri
- 8 were found to be in the federal poverty limits, and
- 9 in Empire's service territory alone, the average is
- 11 We did an analysis in again DE
- 12 witness Sharlet Kroll's testimony, rebuttal
- 13 testimony, which we found that, based on a bill
- 14 sample provided by Empire, the current average
- monthly residential bill is approximately \$142 or
- just over \$1,700 annually, which creates an energy
- 17 burden of 8.5 percent for a family at 100 percent
- 18 of the federal poverty level. That's assuming a
- 19 family size of three persons, which is just over
- 20 the average family size in Empire's service
- 21 territory, creating a 42 percent greater than --
- 22 energy burden than what is considered affordable by
- 23 national experts.
- 24 As I said earlier, the establishment
- 25 of a low-income rate or additional low-income

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- 1 relief pilot programs is -- was also recommended in
- 2 the Comprehensive State Energy Plan to be --
- 3 specifically the CSEP stated that -- recommended
- 4 the clarification of the explicit -- that it be
- 5 made explicit that the PSC has the statutory
- 6 authority to consider rates specific to low-income
- 7 utility customers.
- Now, Staff mentioned in its statement
- 9 of position a working docket from a few years ago
- 10 where this specific topic was discussed. The
- 11 Division of Energy nor myself were involved in that
- 12 particular docket, but I did review most of the
- 13 comments that were in that docket or filed in that
- 14 docket prior to this case or prior to today's
- 15 hearing.
- And from my perspective, the
- 17 consensus was that the Commission does not have the
- 18 explicit statutory authority to implement a
- 19 low-income rate class. However, many stakeholders
- 20 in their comments said that the Commission may have
- 21 the implicit authority to establish a low-income
- 22 rate.
- 23 And essentially, the way I -- you
- 24 know, a lot of ink has already been spilled on this
- 25 issue about whether -- what is the Commission's

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- 1 authority on this issue, and it's unclear. The
- 2 courts have not made a determination, and to date,
- 3 what seems to be the course is that, you know,
- 4 we're going to wait to see if the general assembly
- 5 takes action to give the Commission explicit
- 6 authority, which has not happened.
- 7 And I see two alternatives. We can
- 8 continue to wait for the General Assembly to make
- 9 clarification on this issue, or the Commission can
- 10 take -- can test the bounds of its statutory
- 11 authority. And, you know, as cases of first
- 12 impression, there is the risk that such a decision
- 13 may be overturned. But that is the question before
- 14 the Commission is continue to wait for
- 15 clarification from the General Assembly or, you
- 16 know, take action, see where the bounds of the
- 17 authority lies.
- 18 As also mentioned in the CSEP, the
- 19 Commission has considered affordability in past
- 20 Commission proceedings. We think that considering
- 21 affordability for a low-income rate class is
- 22 consistent with past practices. And the Commission
- 23 should use -- should consider affordability in this
- 24 case and when setting rates and in future cases.
- Now, turning to the example that I

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- 1 mentioned, the Division of Energy took the design
- 2 that the Commission approved in the recent Missouri
- 3 American case and tried to apply it to what it
- 4 would look like for Empire. And this is on page 3,
- 5 slide 2 of the handout. We modeled both Staff's
- 6 proposed \$15 customer charge, Empire's 14.47
- 7 customer charge, and the current customer charge of
- 8 12.42.
- 9 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Excuse me. Can
- 10 I interrupt you?
- 11 MR. ANTAL: Yes.
- 12 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: These numbers,
- this 2,400, 2,399, is that a percentage of LIHEAP
- or is that total LIHEAP on page 3, number of
- 15 participants.
- 16 MR. ANTAL: Number of participants.
- 17 That is -- those are the actual number of LIHEAP
- 18 customers that Empire has. They're not
- 19 percentages.
- 20 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Where were you
- 21 on the position with American Water on this?
- MR. ANTAL: The Division of Energy
- 23 supported the establishment of the low-income
- 24 customer charge pilot.
- 25 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: This Commission

Page 34 just less than a month ago said they would not do a 2. state -- or an all --3 MR. ANTAL: A service territory wide. 4 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Yeah, pilot 5 program. 6 MR. ANTAL: I'm aware of that, yes. 7 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: So you're recommending we do that, and you think we have 8 9 statutory authority to do that, correct? Possibly? 10 It's questionable? MR. ANTAL: The Division of Energy 11 12 believes that the Commission has the authority to establish a low-income rate. 13 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Because I 14 looked at your numbers, and the 24 cents a customer 15 16 per month it would cost the other customers is 17 almost identical to what a pilot program 18 encompassing the entire service territory of 19 American Water would cost. Actually, this is a 20 little more, that this Commission denied. They 21 didn't want to go there. So you're recommending we 22 do that now? 23 MR. ANTAL: The Division of Energy is

Fax: 314,644,1334

not specifically recommending this approach in this

case. We're purely providing this for the

24

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- 1 Commission, this example for the Commission's, you
- 2 know --
- 3 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Okay. Because
- 4 I didn't see this similar information in the
- 5 American Water case, which is -- we just concluded.
- 6 MR. ANTAL: Well, to be clear, the
- 7 Division of Energy did not take a position on the
- 8 low-income pilot in the Missouri American case
- 9 until the briefing occurred. So we did not take a
- 10 position at hearing --
- 11 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Okay. Thank
- 12 you.
- MR. ANTAL: -- in that case.
- 14 So based off essentially qualifying
- 15 all LIHEAP customers for this type of 80 percent
- 16 discount on the customer charge, you would see a
- 17 monthly cost to residential customers, assuming
- 18 that you applied the cost of such a program
- 19 specifically to residential customers.
- 20 And the Division acknowledges that
- 21 that's not the only option that the Commission has.
- 22 The Commission could spread costs over all rate
- 23 classes. But for this example, we looked at just
- 24 spreading the cost to residential, and you're
- 25 looking at a cost of, you know, just over 20 cents

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- 1 to just over 24 cents per customer. And that would
- 2 provide a discount of just over \$10 to just over
- 3 the \$12, depending on the customer charge that the
- 4 Commission ultimately would approve or someplace in
- 5 the middle if parties are able to settle on a
- 6 customer charge. A purely illustrative example.
- 7 However, as I said earlier, this type
- 8 of approach doesn't necessarily have all the
- 9 nuances you would want to have in a low-income
- 10 pilot program. As I said, Ameren Missouri's
- 11 Keeping Current program is a more nuanced approach.
- 12 It has different tiers of bill rebates or customer
- 13 rebates based off of a customer's percentage in the
- 14 federal poverty limits.
- This also takes into account things
- 16 such as heating customers versus non-heating
- 17 customers. Now, heating customers who use
- 18 electricity obviously are going to have larger
- 19 bills than customers who use another source of
- 20 energy for their heating needs.
- 21 Keeping Current also requires LIWAP
- 22 or LIWAP rather participation or that they sign up
- 23 for it to ensure that if we're going to give people
- 24 rebates, that they're at least in the queue to get
- 25 weatherization services so that their housing stock

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- 1 is as efficient as possible.
- 2 There are also educational
- 3 requirements and tiered cooling programs for
- 4 customers who just go on such a program during the
- 5 summer cooling period and need the extra additional
- 6 support to get through the hot summers.
- 7 The Division of Energy has two
- 8 witnesses that are willing to field Commissioner
- 9 questions. We have Sharlet Kroll, who this will be
- 10 her first time appearing before this Commission.
- 11 She can field questions on the need for low-income
- 12 relief in Empire's service territory as well as
- 13 low-income program administration.
- 14 And then we have had Mr. Martin
- 15 Hyman, who has appeared here before, who can field
- 16 questions on rate and program design as well as
- 17 bill and customer impacts.
- 18 So that is the conclusion of my
- 19 prepared remarks.
- 20 CHAIRMAN HALL: Good morning. Will
- 21 one of your witnesses be able to discuss Empire
- 22 District's experimental low-income program that was
- 23 in place, I believe, from 2002 maybe to 2009 or
- 24 2010?
- MR. ANTAL: Neither of our witnesses

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- 1 were involved in that program. However, I believe
- 2 Ms. Kroll has reviewed the evaluation of that
- 3 program and may be able to field some questions.
- 4 CHAIRMAN HALL: Okay. Thank you.
- 5 COMMISSIONER STOLL: Good morning.
- 6 Have the parties been discussing a low-income rate
- 7 as part of this settlement or part of this case?
- 8 MR. ANTAL: The parties, to my
- 9 knowledge, have not considered this until the
- 10 Commission brought it to our attention.
- 11 COMMISSIONER STOLL: So is it even
- 12 possible that there would be a low-income pilot
- 13 project established? How would that work? Why are
- 14 we going to hear witnesses about something that
- 15 can't happen?
- MR. ANTAL: I believe it's within the
- 17 Commission's authority --
- 18 COMMISSIONER STOLL: To hear it?
- 19 MR. ANTAL: -- to order a pilot
- 20 program. But, I mean, in direct testimony, there
- 21 has not been any specific proposals as we had in --
- 22 at least in Missouri American case we had
- 23 surrebuttal testimony that had outlined a pilot
- 24 program. But here we have nothing in testimony.
- 25 COMMISSIONER STOLL: Also, so your

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- 1 statement that says the Commission has the
- 2 authority to establish a low-income rate and doing
- 3 so is consistent with the recommendations of the
- 4 Comprehensive State Energy Plan, that is you have
- 5 nuanced that. That is not exactly correct,
- 6 correct? You're saying we hear you say we have the
- 7 authority, and then I think you just said you
- 8 didn't think we really did, that would have to be
- 9 legislative action, or was I --
- 10 MR. ANTAL: No. To be clear, what I
- 11 meant to convey was that the Division believes that
- 12 the Commission has the authority to establish a
- 13 low-income class. However, it's not -- it's not
- 14 explicit. There's no explicit authority.
- 15 COMMISSIONER STOLL: So establish a
- 16 low-income class, but we would have to do that to
- 17 square our action with state law? Because doesn't
- 18 it say in state law, and I don't have the
- 19 reference, that you have to treat all customers in
- 20 a class the same?
- 21 MR. ANTAL: The Commission has the
- 22 authority to -- you have to treat them the same,
- 23 unless the Commission establishes a new class. The
- 24 Commission has approved multiple pilot programs
- 25 that give rebates to low-income customers who today

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- 1 are still considered to be residential customers.
- 2 COMMISSIONER STOLL: So they could be
- 3 residential customers, but they would be in a
- 4 separate class, a low-income residential customer;
- 5 is that correct?
- 6 MR. ANTAL: We believe the Commission
- 7 has the authority to do so. I don't know if this
- 8 is the case to do it in since those issues have not
- 9 been discussed in testimony, but we do believe it
- 10 is within the Commission's authority.
- 11 COMMISSIONER STOLL: Okay. Thank
- 12 you.
- 13 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: In our recent
- 14 case, American Water, could it be considered that
- 15 we set up a separate class? It might be a small
- 16 class. It's a pilot program, right? But it's
- 17 still -- we gave them a special rate.
- 18 MR. ANTAL: Legally, I don't know
- 19 that I would be comfortable today saying that you
- 20 have established a separate class. I know that the
- 21 Commission established a pilot program based off
- 22 its experimental rate authority, but I don't
- 23 believe --
- 24 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Well, are they
- 25 going to receive a different rate?

		Page 41
1	MR. ANTAL: In practice, yes.	
2	COMMISSIONER KENNEY: And are the	
3	other customers picking up that charge?	
4	MR. ANTAL: Yes, they are. For	
5	practical purposes	
6	COMMISSIONER KENNEY: The Commission	
7	just decided to make it a smaller amount. Instead	
8	of this separate group. Instead of giving	
9	everybody it, the entire LIHEAP, they said let's	
10	take a percentage of LIHEAP?	
11	MR. ANTAL: Yes.	
12	COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Thank you.	
13	JUDGE BURTON: Thank you, Mr. Antal.	
14	Ms. Carter, would you like to	
15	MS. CARTER: Judge, this may be a	
16	good time. Empire has marked as Exhibits 32, 33	
17	and 34 certain documents from Empire's ELIP,	
18	experimental low-income program, that went in in	
19	2002, and that may help answer some of the	
20	questions that Commissioners have regarding how	
21	that functioned in the past. They had a very	
22	thorough evaluation done and many years of data to	
23	go off of with that program.	
24	JUDGE BURTON: Would you like to	
25	offer?	

Page 42 MS. CARTER: Yes, Exhibit 32, 33 and 1 2. 34. 3 JUDGE BURTON: And just for the record to be clear, I have 32 as marked the direct 4 5 testimony of Sherrill McCormack, Case No. ER-2011-0004, and 33 is the ELIP Evaluation from 6 7 March 29, 2010? 8 MS. CARTER: Correct. 9 JUDGE BURTON: And Exhibit 34 is the 10 Global Agreement for File No. ER-2011-0004? 11 MS. CARTER: Yes, those are connect. 12 JUDGE BURTON: Are there any 13 objections to the admissions of those three exhibits, Empire's Exhibits 32, 33 or 34? 14 15 (No response.) 16 JUDGE BURTON: Seeing none, they are 17 admitted into the record. (EMPIRE EXHIBITS 32, 33 AND 34 WERE 18 19 RECEIVED INTO EVIDENCE.) 20 MS. CARTER: Judge, I believe I gave 21 you one copy of each of those. Here are four more 22 copies of each. 23 JUDGE BURTON: Does the Commission 24 have any questions for Ms. Carter or any of the 25 other --

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1	COMMISSIONER KENNEY: I'd like them	
2	explained. Can we have the summary explained,	
3	No. 34?	
4	JUDGE BURTON: Ms. Carter, could you	
5	please step up to the podium	
6	MS. CARTER: Sure.	
7	JUDGE BURTON: and explain this	
8	exhibit?	
9	COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Can you	
10	summarize the, I guess it was what are these,	
11	33, 34, 35?	
12	MS. CARTER: 32, 33, 34.	
13	COMMISSIONER KENNEY: 33 was the	
14	summary of the program through 2010; is that	
15	correct?	
16	MS. CARTER: It's the program	
17	evaluation that	
18	COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Could that be	
19	explained? Because we're just receiving it. I	
20	don't want to sit here and try to read it.	
21	MS. CARTER: Yes. And just to	
22	briefly summarize, this has not been an issue in	
23	the case between the parties. It was not in any	
24	testimony, and we had not contemplated discussing	
25	it at the hearing. The Commissioners requested	

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- 1 that be added as an issue. So we are all here to
- 2 do our very best, but there was not a substantial
- 3 amount of preparation time on this issue because
- 4 the parties were not contemplating a low-income
- 5 rate coming out of this case, but we will do our
- 6 very best.
- 7 Empire started in 2002 with an ELIP,
- 8 an experimental low-income program, and what you
- 9 have is Mrs. McCormack's testimony from 2010, which
- 10 is when Empire and the parties were looking to
- 11 terminate the low-income program, and they had the
- 12 evaluation done and then there was a settlement
- 13 agreement to discontinue it.
- 14 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Was that
- 15 established in a rate case?
- MS. CARTER: Yes.
- 17 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: A Commission
- 18 set up that pilot program in 2002?
- 19 MS. CARTER: Yes. And on page 15 of
- 20 Ms. McCormack's testimony, which is Exhibit 32,
- 21 that has the case number where it was established.
- 22 It was set up with two tiers, depending on poverty
- 23 level, and they received a bill credit depending on
- 24 the LIHEAP poverty level. You could either have a
- 25 bill credit up to \$20 or a bill credit up to \$50,

Page 45 1 and you could be on the program for a 12-month 2 period and then you could reapply at the end of 3 that 12-month period to continue. Unfortunately, what Empire and the 4 5 parties involved found is that when customers went 6 off the program, their bill paying habits were 7 worse than when they went on the program. So 8 looking at before the program and after the 9 program, bill-paying habits were less after they 10 graduated from the program. And so it was determined to 11 12 discontinue the program due to that, that it wasn't 13 helping bill-paying habits in this case, and also there was an evaluation on the cost effectiveness 14 of the program and it was determined not to be cost 15 16 effective using the agreed-upon rating scale. 17 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: So you're saying that as the program went on, when the 18 19 customers got off the program, they had taken 20 advantage of it and it wasn't a -- they just --21 their late pays got worse than before the program 22 started? 23 MS. CARTER: Yes. 2.4 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Thank you.

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MS. CARTER: It does not mean we

25

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- 1 wouldn't be willing to look at it again and give it
- 2 another try. So that is the experience that we had
- 3 2002 to 2010.
- 4 COMMISSIONER RUPP: I have a
- 5 question. So you say when they got off the
- 6 program. Is that because the program pilot ended
- 7 or because they no longer qualified due to an
- 8 increase of income or parameters or --
- 9 MS. CARTER: I cannot say
- 10 specifically on that. And I don't know that it's
- 11 broken down to that level in the evaluation. It
- 12 certainly could be that they decided not to reply.
- 13 It's not because the funding was ending.
- 14 JUDGE BURTON: Is it possible that
- 15 Empire's witness Mr. Keith would be available to
- 16 answer?
- 17 MS. CARTER: He is certainly
- 18 available. I don't know if he can answer that
- 19 question, though.
- 20 MR. KEITH: I don't know that level
- 21 of detail. It wasn't because funding was ending.
- MS. CARTER: Yeah.
- 23 COMMISSIONER RUPP: That's all I
- 24 needed to know.
- MS. CARTER: It was not a funding

Page 47 1 issue. 2. COMMISSIONER RUPP: Okay. Very good. 3 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: But that's different than the pilot program we just approved 4 5 in American Water was just a discount in the 6 customer charge, period, and then I think Division 7 of Energy's approach is just a discount in the 8 customer charge. 9 MS. CARTER: Correct. COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Which is 10 completely different than the program that Empire 11 12 established in 2002, correct? MS. CARTER: It was a bill credit 13 14 amount not specific to the customer charge, 15 although that is what would come off first. 16 Everyone has the customer charge and then their 17 energy charges and it was a credit. So it was a 18 higher amount that they would have been receiving. 19 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Much higher. 20 MS. CARTER: Much higher. 21 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Thank you. 22 CHAIRMAN HALL: Do you believe that 23 the Commission would have the authority to implement some type of low-income program, be it a 24 25 pilot or service-territory-wide, outside of a rate

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- 1 case?
- 2 MS. CARTER: I am not prepared to
- 3 answer that question for you because we haven't
- 4 been anything about it until just a few days ago in
- 5 this case. Certainly the Commission has
- 6 experimental authority, and utilities and parties
- 7 have been able to do many things in settlements
- 8 that perhaps couldn't be done through an order of
- 9 the Commission.
- 10 CHAIRMAN HALL: You indicated and the
- 11 report also indicates that the program was dis--
- 12 was discontinued in part because it was deemed to
- 13 be not cost effective. What does that mean?
- MS. CARTER: In looking at it, it
- 15 appears similar to the standards we're now using on
- 16 MEEIA programs on the cost effectiveness test, and
- 17 I would not be able to explain the details for that
- 18 on what all goes into that calculation. But it
- 19 seems that this program evaluation was similar to
- 20 what we now use on MEEIA-type programs to determine
- 21 cost effectiveness.
- 22 CHAIRMAN HALL: Would your witness be
- 23 able to provide more information on that? It seems
- 24 to me that one of the purposes of a low-income
- 25 program is to promote affordability, and I can't

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- 1 imagine how your company's cost effective analysis
- 2 would include that particular parameter, but maybe
- 3 it does.
- 4 JUDGE BURTON: We'll just plan on
- 5 having Mr. Keith up here to answer those questions
- 6 and he can state what he knows, what he's familiar
- 7 with, if it's outside your scope.
- 8 MS. CARTER: Yes. He has been warned
- 9 that he will be put up here.
- 10 CHAIRMAN HALL: And I'll go ahead and
- 11 let you know, the company and all the other parties
- 12 here, this issue was thrown at you a little late in
- 13 the game. I absolutely understand why counsel and
- 14 witnesses may not be as prepared as they would
- 15 otherwise be on other issues. And it may, in fact,
- 16 be too late in the game for the Commission to take
- 17 action on this issue.
- 18 But I think, speaking for myself, I
- 19 wanted more information on Empire's program from
- 20 2002 to 2010 and particularly in light of the
- 21 Commission's order, recent order in Missouri
- 22 American where we implemented, as Commissioner
- 23 Kenney indicated, a somewhat different program.
- 24 Thank you.
- 25 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Do you have an

Page 50 idea of what the total dollar amount was for those 2 programs or range? 3 MS. CARTER: I know it is --4 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Again, I 5 appreciate your --6 MS. CARTER: It was shared funding. 7 There were some shareholder funds and some 8 ratepayer funds, and I imagine Mr. Keith will know those dollar amounts. Otherwise, maybe not. know it is in one of these documents. 10 11 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: And I -- again, 12 I echo Chairman Hall's comments. I know this is very late in the game, and if you don't know them, 13 I understand that, but I'm just curious because I 14 15 know in the Division of Energy's proposal they're looking at about 367,000 to cover the entire 16 17 district-wide at a reduction of \$12 using Staff's

20 MS. CARTER: That's definitely

was spent in those.

21 something we can follow up with for you. That will

members. I was just curious about how much money

- 22 be easy to find. I don't know the dollar amounts
- 23 offhand.

18

19

- 24 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: I just briefly
- 25 ran through 33, and I didn't see the totals

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- 1 anywhere. That's fine. I was just curious.
- MS. CARTER: We can definitely follow
- 3 up with that. Like you said, it would have been
- 4 higher. It was a substantial bill credit depending
- 5 on the poverty level, and it was for all who
- 6 qualified under LIHEAP.
- 7 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: And was that a
- 8 district-wide program?
- 9 MS. CARTER: It was Empire's service
- 10 territory.
- 11 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Maybe we
- 12 shouldn't talk about that. The Commission doesn't
- 13 like that.
- 14 MR. ANTAL: Commissioner, if I may.
- 15 I've been directed to the tariff, the ELIP tariff,
- 16 and it's our understanding that the annual funding
- was approximately \$300,000.
- 18 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: That almost
- 19 covers what your proposal is, right? I think you
- were about 367, if I remember right.
- MR. ANTAL: Again, it's not our
- 22 recommendation. It's purely an illustrative
- 23 example, but yes, the budgets are pretty close.
- 24 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Thank you.
- 25 MS. CARTER: Mr. Keith would be happy

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- 1 to get up there and answer other questions,
- 2 including on other low-income programs that Empire
- 3 has available, although not a low-income rate.
- 4 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you. Are there
- 5 any other parties that would like to have counsel
- 6 address the Commission? Are there any attorneys
- 7 that the Commission would like to have?
- 8 CHAIRMAN HALL: Yeah. I'll ask
- 9 Mr. Thompson a question, and perhaps other
- 10 attorneys might be interested in responding as
- 11 well. It's the same question I asked Ms. Carter.
- 12 I'm curious as to whether or not Staff has a
- 13 position as to whether or not the Commission could
- 14 put some type of low-income tariff in place, be it
- 15 pilot or service territory-wide, outside of a rate
- 16 case.
- 17 MR. THOMPSON: Without having done
- 18 any research on the issue, my reaction would be no.
- 19 I think you would have to do that in a rate case.
- 20 The Commission does not have authority to treat
- 21 some residential ratepayers differently than other
- 22 residential ratepayers. The statute clearly
- 23 forbids discrimination and preferences.
- 24 The Commission has the authority to
- 25 establish classes of service based on differences

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- of service, and there are some early Supreme Court,
- 2 Missouri Supreme Court cases addressing the
- 3 Commission's power to classify. It's not
- 4 arbitrary. You can't classify simply because you
- 5 want to. You have to classify based on cost.
- 6 Traditional regulation is all about cost, cost of
- 7 service.
- 8 So you certainly have a
- 9 well-recognized power to do experimental things,
- 10 such as an experimental low-income program, in
- 11 order to investigate what the result would be or
- 12 how it would work or whatever the issues are that
- 13 you would want to gather information about by doing
- 14 the program.
- But as far as permanently
- 16 establishing a low-income class or a low-income
- 17 rate mechanism, I don't think the Commission has
- 18 the statutory authority to do that.
- 19 CHAIRMAN HALL: I think perhaps
- 20 you're combining two issues. One issue is whether
- 21 we have the authority to establish a low-income
- 22 rate, and then the second issue is whether we have
- 23 that authority outside of a rate case.
- MR. THOMPSON: Right.
- 25 CHAIRMAN HALL: And the first issue I

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- 1 understand the legal issues involved without
- 2 question.
- 3 MR. THOMPSON: Okay.
- 4 CHAIRMAN HALL: The second issue is
- 5 whether it can be done outside of a rate case. So
- 6 for this question, assume we have the authority to
- 7 put some kind of low-income tariff in place. I'm
- 8 curious as to whether or not we can do it outside
- 9 of a rate case.
- 10 MR. THOMPSON: Again, I think you
- 11 can't. In the telephone world, they would
- 12 establish new service offerings outside of rate
- 13 cases all the time, and that was permissible
- 14 because it was new. Here, the only thing that's
- 15 new is the way you're charging for it. It's the
- 16 same old service but perhaps charged in a different
- 17 way.
- 18 So I think it would have to be done
- 19 in a rate case where all relevant factors would be
- 20 considered.
- 21 CHAIRMAN HALL: Okay. Any other
- 22 counsel wish to comment on that?
- MS. MAYFIELD: I would just respond
- that I would agree with Mr. Thompson's analysis.
- 25 I'm starting to dig into this just a little bit,

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- 1 and I would agree that the Commission would not
- 2 have authority outside of a rate case to implement
- 3 a low-income rate absent a review of all inclusive
- 4 factors. So I would just mirror the eloquent
- 5 statement Mr. Thompson made.
- 6 CHAIRMAN HALL: And that would be
- 7 your position whether it was a new class or if it
- 8 was simply a low-income pilot similar to the pilot
- 9 put in place in Missouri American?
- 10 MS. MAYFIELD: Well, certainly to the
- 11 class. I'm not so much for sure about the Missouri
- 12 American example, but certainly to the class
- 13 itself. I would have to research more on the other
- 14 part.
- 15 CHAIRMAN HALL: Okay. Any other
- 16 attorneys wish to --
- 17 MR. CONRAD: Judge, let me -- the old
- 18 gray-haired guy. There is an old case, and I think
- 19 that it is at least one of those to which
- 20 Mr. Thompson is referring. I wish I could recall
- 21 the citation. It is referred to generally as the
- 22 Londray case. And I see him nodding his head. It
- 23 essentially tells the Commission -- this was
- 24 reversed by the Court. Told the Commission at that
- 25 time that they were free to classify customers

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- 1 based on load and usage characteristics and on no
- 2 other characteristics.
- Now, that did not involve residential
- 4 customers and staying within a class. I have to
- 5 agree with Mr. Thompson's analysis, and as he warns
- 6 you, he hasn't researched it, and honestly I
- 7 haven't either for a long time since the Londray
- 8 case, but that does limit your ability to classify
- 9 customers. And perhaps that's one that
- 10 Mr. Thompson was referring to.
- 11 CHAIRMAN HALL: I have no further
- 12 questions.
- 13 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Mr. Thompson?
- 14 MR. THOMPSON: Sir?
- 15 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: What was your
- 16 involvement in that 2002 Empire rate case? I know
- 17 you have a plethora of knowledge.
- 18 MR. THOMPSON: A plethora of -- I do
- 19 not recall what involvement, if any, I had in the
- 20 2002 Empire rate case.
- 21 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: I'm curious
- 22 because the Commission established a program for
- 23 low-income -- or low-income program. That's what
- 24 I've been told today, and it ran till 2010 until it
- 25 was determined that it was not effective. So it

	P	age 57
1	must have gone through several rate cases.	
2	MR. THOMPSON: I'm sure it did.	
3	COMMISSIONER KENNEY: I'm told now	
4	that we can't do that.	
5	MR. THOMPSON: No. You can do an	
6	experimental program.	
7	COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Was that an	
8	experimental program?	
9	MR. THOMPSON: Yes, it was.	
10	COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Well, did it	
11	only encompass so many qualified people or how did	
12	it work?	
13	MR. THOMPSON: It may have	
14	encompassed all eligible ratepayers within the	
15	entire service area.	
16	CHAIRMAN HALL: So in other words,	
17	Commissioner, it was experimental because it was	
18	called experimental.	
19	MS. CARTER: That is exactly correct.	
20	COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Mr. Thompson, I	
21	notice Staff had recommended that we consider this	
22	in a future rate case, the low-income program,	
23	correct? That's Staff's position, correct?	
24	MR. THOMPSON: Yes, sir.	
25	COMMISSIONER KENNEY: What's Staff's	

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- 1 position if this Commission wanted to impose an
- 2 experimental low-income program?
- 3 MR. THOMPSON: Staff would do
- 4 whatever it could to facilitate the Commission
- 5 achieving its desire.
- 6 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: So I wish I
- 7 would have known about that experimental deal about
- 8 a month ago.
- 9 JUDGE BURTON: I do have a question
- 10 to follow up on that. If it is an experimental
- 11 program, let's say, for instance, would it be
- 12 available to consider through a tracker program
- 13 where it's considered a regulatory asset?
- MR. THOMPSON: Well, I think that's
- 15 what's -- that was what was done in the Missouri
- 16 American one, if I recall correctly, was that the
- 17 revenue that was forgone by the company was
- 18 deferred.
- 19 JUDGE BURTON: And would that be an
- 20 option outside of this rate case?
- 21 MR. THOMPSON: I think you could
- 22 probably, and I say probably, because the question
- 23 is -- as Diana said very eloquently, a lot of
- things can be accomplished by agreement that cannot
- 25 be imposed by fiat. In other words, if all the

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- 1 stakeholders are willing to sign on and nobody's
- 2 running to the Court of Appeals saying make them
- 3 stop, make them stop, then many things can be done.
- 4 So I believe that a revenue-neutral
- 5 program -- and by revenue-neutral I mean the
- 6 company may not be collecting the money now, but
- 7 the company gets to collect the money later with a
- 8 carrying cost. Right?
- 9 So that kind of program could
- 10 probably be imposed outside of a rate case because
- 11 it doesn't impact all moving parts. Right? It's
- 12 neutral. The only -- the only part it impacts is
- 13 the company has to accept collecting less money
- 14 now, but it's satisfied because it will collect
- 15 more money later. So you could probably do that
- 16 between rate cases, outside of a rate case.
- 17 JUDGE BURTON: Would any of the other
- 18 parties like to respond to that?
- 19 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Mr. Thompson,
- 20 now that we've had this introduced by the Division
- 21 of Energy, couldn't the parties put this into some
- 22 type of black box settlement?
- MR. THOMPSON: There is no question
- 24 that if the Commission wants an experimental
- low-income pilot program to come out of this case,

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- 1 then the parties can put one together for you. I
- 2 do not doubt that for a moment.
- 3 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Well, I would
- 4 recommend that I think the Division of Energy's
- 5 approach would be a good approach to adopt, but I'm
- 6 just one commissioner.
- 7 MR. ANTAL: Judge, if I may. There
- 8 was a couple of questions from the commissioners
- 9 that I wanted to address.
- 10 Based off a review of the former ELIP
- 11 tariff, it appears that the program was available
- 12 to the first 1,000 customers who applied and the
- 13 applications went through.
- 14 And to Commissioner Rupp's question,
- 15 it appears based off the tariff that the program --
- 16 customers were allowed to participate in the
- 17 program for 12 months and then would have to
- 18 reapply to participate.
- 19 COMMISSIONER STOLL: Was the program
- 20 reauthorized in the next rate case then for it to
- 21 go that long, I assume, or was there a time limit?
- 22 MS. CARTER: There were multiple rate
- 23 cases. There was no automatic end to the program.
- 24 It ended through a settlement in the 2011 rate
- 25 case.

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1	COMMISSIONER STOLL: Okay. Thanks.	
2	JUDGE BURTON: The parties have	
3	identified witnesses that are available to answer	
4	any questions the Commission may have on these	
5	issues, and they are Mr. Keith from Empire,	
6	Ms. Kliethermes from Staff, Marke from OPC, Kroll	
7	and Hyman from Division of Energy. Does the	
8	Commission wish to hear any testimony from those	
9	entities?	
10	CHAIRMAN HALL: Yeah. I think	
11	Mr. Keith from the company to start on my	
12	recommendation.	
13	JUDGE BURTON: All right. Mr. Keith,	
14	would you please step forward.	
15	(Witness sworn.)	
16	JUDGE BURTON: Would you please state	
17	and spell your name for the record.	
18	THE WITNESS: My name is Scott Keith,	
19	K-e-i-t-h.	
20	JUDGE BURTON: Okay. And could you	
21	state what your current position is?	
22	THE WITNESS: My current position is	
23	director of planning and regulatory at Empire	
24	District Electric Company.	
25	SCOTT KEITH testified as follows:	

Page 62 1 QUESTIONS BY CHAIRMAN HALL: 2 Q. Good morning. 3 Α. Good morning. 4 0. So my understanding based on the 5 comments this morning and my brief review of the 6 report prepared by -- well, Exhibit 33, is that 7 this was a program, the experimental low-income 8 program was a program that was designed by the 9 company; is that correct? 10 I wasn't employed at Empire when it 11 was first put into place. I came along in 2005. 12 So I'm not sure who designed the program. It might have been a collaborative effort between a group of 13 14 people. 15 So there was a \$20 credit or a \$50 ο. 16 credit based on income; is that correct? 17 Α. Yes. And who determined eligibility? Was 18 Q. 19 that something determined by the company or --20 Α. No, it wasn't. My recollection is we 21 used two CAP agencies, one in Joplin and one in 22 Ozark, and the program wasn't really service area wide. That kind of limited it to several of our 23 24 larger counties. And I think there's some 25 discussion of that in the evaluation that it could

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- 1 be expanded by using some of the CAP agencies in
- 2 the Branson area, for example.
- 3 Q. So the two CAP agencies were --
- 4 A. I think it was Economic Security in
- 5 Joplin and OACAC in Ozark.
- 6 Q. And it was available for the first
- 7 1,000 eligible applicants?
- 8 A. I don't recall that. I know we had
- 9 participation issues. It didn't seem like we got
- 10 the participation everybody thought we were going
- 11 to have. So we really never expended the budget.
- 12 Q. So you never reached the caps?
- 13 A. That's correct.
- 14 Q. Ms. Carter indicated that the program
- 15 was discontinued in part because it was deemed not
- 16 to be cost effective. Can you explain to me what
- 17 that means?
- 18 A. Yes. I'll try. The consultant we
- 19 hired to review it, everybody agreed it needed to
- 20 be evaluated again, and we had to hire an
- 21 independent consultant to do it. In looking -- I
- 22 briefly looked at the document a couple of days ago
- 23 when this came up, and it looked like it had a cost
- 24 effectiveness of .31. It was below 1. Which meant
- 25 to the consultant that was doing the evaluation

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- 1 that it actually cost more than it saved, so that
- 2 it turned into an adder to everybody's bill.
- 3 Q. So the cost side of that equation I
- 4 think I understand. That's the amount that is
- 5 being essentially subsidized on customers' bills.
- 6 But the savings, what is that?
- 7 A. I'm not sure what they used. I could
- 8 see maybe bad debt savings as an offset. I'm not
- 9 sure what benefits they used to offset the cost.
- 10 It was below one, though. For example, like
- 11 affordability you mentioned earlier might be this
- 12 subjective cost that they did not consider, but it
- 13 would -- it would never show up on our books and
- 14 records.
- 15 Q. Yeah. Because for me, that is the
- 16 goal of a low-income tariff is to promote
- 17 affordability so that individuals or families with
- 18 low income are able to afford electricity. And I
- 19 don't understand how that -- I think you
- 20 acknowledged this as well. I don't know how that
- 21 could be part of a formula used to determine cost
- 22 effectiveness.
- 23 A. Correct.
- Q. So it was also indicated earlier this
- 25 morning that the -- that this program was funded by

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- 1 shareholders and ratepayers; is that correct?
- 2 A. That's correct. That's how it
- 3 started. As I recall, it was 50/50. It was -- say
- 4 150,000 was in rates and 150,000 was funded by the
- 5 shareholders, given a \$300,000 budget.
- 6 Q. So the \$300,000 budget was set by
- 7 either commission order or tariff or both, correct?
- 8 A. It was probably part of a settlement.
- 9 So that dollar amount was derived at the settlement
- 10 and then brought forward to the Commission for
- 11 approval and got into the tariffs that way.
- 12 O. If the Commission were to indicate
- 13 its desire that the company work with Staff, OPC
- 14 and the other -- and the other parties to put
- 15 together some type of experimental low-income
- 16 program, do you have any thoughts as to what that
- 17 might look like, what might make sense in light of
- 18 the company's prior experience?
- 19 A. Well, for sure one of the things we'd
- 20 certainly like to see is the evaluation of the
- 21 customer eligibility taken out of our hands, in
- 22 other words, determined by some independent CAP
- 23 agency or something. We don't want to get into the
- 24 business of trying to track income of customers.
- 25 Q. Yeah. And I for one would agree with

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- 1 that completely.
- 2 A. But certainly we'd be happy to work
- 3 with them. We did it before with this ELIP
- 4 program, and we'd be willing to do it again to come
- 5 up with some design to present.
- 6 Q. In the Missouri American case, the
- 7 Commission ordered a pilot program that involved an
- 8 80 percent reduction of the customer charge. It
- 9 left the variable rates in place. And I don't know
- 10 if the order spelled this out, but at least from my
- 11 perspective that made sense because we didn't want
- 12 to do anything to encourage additional consumption.
- 13 We didn't want to encourage inefficient use of
- 14 water.
- 15 I think the same principle would
- 16 apply here, that if we were going to put in place
- 17 some kind of low-income tariff, doesn't it make
- 18 more sense to focus on the customer charge as
- 19 opposed to the variable charge?
- 20 A. Yes. However, given what happened to
- 21 our old program at 20 and \$50, with our charge only
- 22 being around 12.50, \$13 now, it's not -- doesn't
- 23 appear to be a lot of bill credit or not as much
- 24 help as we were trying to give before.
- 25 And then, you know, over the term of

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- 1 our program, it appeared all the payment --
- 2 participants and their payment methods were --
- 3 became worse once they were off the program. So it
- 4 didn't seem to encourage, I don't know, quicker
- 5 payments or more efficient usage necessarily.
- 6 Q. Though I must say, I'm -- I don't
- 7 understand why anyone would be surprised that if
- 8 somebody -- if a low-income family was receiving a
- 9 20 or a \$50 credit on their bill and then all of a
- 10 sudden they weren't, why anyone would be surprised
- 11 that that didn't cause additional payment problems.
- 12 A. I agree.
- Q. Well, I -- I'll just say that I -- I
- 14 very much appreciate the company's willingness to
- put this program in place from 2002 to 2010. I
- 16 think it was a very progressive effort by the -- by
- 17 the company and the parties.
- 18 One of the criteria for eligibility I
- 19 believe included some type of conservation efforts
- 20 or weatherization.
- 21 A. I believe they had to sign up for
- 22 assistance for one thing. They had to be on the
- 23 list of assistance. At that time I doubt if Empire
- 24 had a weatherization program, but we do right now,
- 25 and certainly that could be added, that they get

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- 1 into that queue, too. And they had to sign up for
- 2 average pay, try and spread out some of their spike
- 3 bills over 12 months.
- 4 Q. Is there any information on the
- 5 results of participants applying for available
- 6 energy assistance programs, including
- 7 weatherization?
- 8 A. In the report?
- 9 Q. Or otherwise.
- 10 A. I'm trying to think. If I -- I don't
- 11 know that we would track that internally. The CAPs
- 12 may have that. They would be able to, say, match
- 13 customers up that way.
- 14 Q. If the Commission were to direct the
- 15 parties to put together some type of experimental
- 16 program, if we were to direct the company to work
- 17 with the parties to find some type of discrete
- 18 geographic area to do that, do you have any sense
- 19 now as to what that discrete geographic area might
- 20 **be?**
- 21 A. Well, we have two major areas, the
- 22 Branson area and then we have the Joplin area. I'd
- 23 have to think about that a little bit. But I would
- 24 think it would be between those two, one of those
- 25 two.

Page 69 CHAIRMAN HALL: Okay. I have no 1 2 further questions. Thank you. 3 COMMISSIONER STOLL: No questions. 4 Thank you. 5 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: I have a 6 question or two and then a comment. 7 QUESTIONS BY COMMISSIONER KENNEY: You stated one of the failures with 8 Q. 9 this program was the lack of participation? 10 Α. Yes. We really never came close to spending that budget. So we always had these 11 12 excess funds that we essentially rolled over into other DSM and energy efficiency programs. 13 14 Q. You know, we had a recent Kansas City 15 Power & Light rate case, and I recall that their 16 low-income weatherization program, that our Staff 17 had requested not increasing any money. This 18 Commission voted to raise that, not because of this 19 lack of participation. I notice that a lot of 20 these programs in the low-income communities there 21 is a lack of participation, maybe because they don't know the programs exist. 22 23 What type of methods do you have, if 24 you know, did Empire use to inform the low-income 25 community that this program was available?

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- 1 A. The ELIP, the ELIP that was in place
- 2 for a number of years?
- 3 Q. Yes.
- 4 A. I don't recall exactly what we did.
- 5 I know that currently we do market the existing
- 6 programs, and we try and get out the word through
- 7 advertisement and things like that and the CAPs,
- 8 make sure the CAPs help market them.
- 9 Q. A lot of times low-income customers
- 10 don't have the access to as much media or
- information as others. They're strapped. I can
- 12 understand that they don't realize the programs are
- 13 out there.
- 14 A. I know that would be an important
- 15 aspect to put into the new program.
- 16 Q. I think if it was just based off of a
- 17 customer charge and they'd have to sign up for it,
- 18 if somehow we knew we can -- a process that's not
- 19 cumbersome to the company but that we could use
- 20 would be much easier to implement than it be just
- 21 on a customer charge. I think it would be easier
- 22 to have them sign up for.
- 23 A. I would agree, except we'd certainly
- 24 want the CAPs to determine the eligibility because
- 25 they also manage our weatherization programs. So

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- 1 they can match up that customer and see if they're
- 2 eligible for weatherization, too.
- 3 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Great. Thank
- 4 you very much.
- 5 QUESTIONS BY COMMISSIONER RUPP:
- 6 Q. Good morning, sir.
- 7 A. Good morning.
- 8 Q. I'm going to stop and ask -- and step
- 9 back and question, why are we even considering
- 10 this? So I want to verify some facts. In the
- 11 previous program people can apply for 12 months and
- 12 then they can reapply, but what you found was that
- 13 people had a bigger difficulty when they got off
- 14 the program of paying their bills than when they
- were on the program?
- 16 A. Yes, that's correct.
- 17 Q. Okay.
- 18 MS. CARTER: And just to clarify
- 19 that, the comparison was before they went on the
- 20 program with after, not during.
- 21 BY COMMISSIONER RUPP:
- Q. Not during. Right. So you could
- 23 simply basically -- you could make the assumption
- 24 that, unless their economic situation changed, that
- once they were on the program, they were going to

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- 1 be dependent on the program moving forward to help
- 2 meet their -- pay their electric bill.
- 3 So my question is, gets back to the
- 4 old saying, you can give a person a fish and
- 5 they're hungry for -- feed them for a day, but if
- 6 you teach them how to fish, they can not be hungry
- 7 for the rest of their life. I butchered that
- 8 saying, but you know what I'm trying to say.
- 9 So shouldn't the goal -- if we think
- 10 about a low-income, is there a way to structure a
- 11 program that, rather than just giving them the
- 12 money, a credit on their bill, you take the amount
- 13 that you would have given them in the credit on the
- 14 bill and you do energy efficiency upgrades to their
- 15 apartment, to their house, and you can tie it to
- 16 the deed? I know that Kentucky has done this and
- 17 they have some programs. And use that money that
- 18 would help them lower their bill long-term rather
- 19 than just give them a credit on their bill.
- 20 Is there a way that -- is there a
- 21 possibility of structuring it in a way that would
- 22 provide long-term benefits to the end user?
- 23 A. Such as like educational benefits,
- 24 too, maybe a -- what do they call them, behavioral
- 25 change program. I can't remember what they're

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- 1 called now. But there certainly would be some
- 2 opportunity and probably should be -- it should be
- 3 coupled with something other than just money so
- 4 that there's some longer-term benefit for increased
- 5 energy efficiency or they use energy in the most
- 6 efficient manner.
- 7 Q. Because I'm going to make the
- 8 assumption that if you're a low-income person that
- 9 is on here, there probably is a statistical strong
- 10 correlation between how energy efficient your
- 11 appliances, your air conditioning, your heating and
- 12 your house, the weatherization of the house,
- 13 there's probably a strong correlation between those
- 14 two. I'm sure it probably can be statistically
- 15 **verified.**
- 16 So if we were to look at -- if we
- 17 were to have a program and structure it in that
- 18 way, then there would be so much more impact on the
- 19 dollars that would be spent, and when a person --
- 20 if they do leave or whatever, then that benefit
- 21 stays with that meter and that deed for the next
- 22 person then that comes in.
- 23 So I would really encourage you guys
- 24 to explore that. I'm sure you probably can't in
- 25 this rate case. But I do know that several other

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- states have programs like this where they tie it to
- 2 the deed. The question comes into financing, but
- 3 if you can do it in a rate case or a low-income
- 4 rider, then there will be some monies in there.
- 5 A. I'm sure the group that gets together
- 6 to try and collaborate on this, we can think of
- 7 some things to couple it with that hopefully would
- 8 meet what you're talking about.
- 9 Q. That would be great. Thank you.
- 10 MR. ANTAL: Judge, if I may? Just to
- 11 address Commissioner Rupp's comments, we do have --
- 12 you know, the company and the Division of Energy do
- 13 have, you know, weatherization programs currently,
- 14 and there have been discussions of whether or not
- 15 additional low-income programs can be developed.
- 16 But we'll definitely take your comments into
- 17 consideration in developing any future programs.
- 18 Thank you.
- 19 MR. RUPP: Just to follow up on your
- 20 comment. My thoughts are to go beyond
- 21 weatherization. Go into -- I have a furnace that's
- 22 50 years old that is completely not energy
- 23 efficient, but I'm low income and I can't afford
- \$3,000 to go have my furnace replaced, but that
- 25 would be a huge savings towards energy efficiency,

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- 1 or my air conditioner or what have you. And if you
- 2 can somehow tie the financing to the deed, get
- 3 beyond weatherization, beyond weather stripping,
- 4 because that's only going to get you so far, get
- 5 into some of the big energy users.
- 6 But I appreciate your comments. I
- 7 think that's great.
- 8 MR. ANTAL: Thank you.
- 9 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: You know,
- 10 looking at Exhibit 33, the evaluation of the
- 11 low-income program, certainly low-income programs
- 12 are -- can be very convoluted, I think, as far as
- 13 what happens to a person that's getting the
- 14 subsidy, and it's a lot more involved, a lot more
- 15 complicated than we have the time to go into.
- I do have a lot of questions about
- 17 this evaluation, which I understand it covers a
- 18 period from 2003 to 2009. And so that makes a big
- 19 difference, too, in the different things we've been
- 20 talking about. I certainly look forward to reading
- 21 this information.
- But I do think, know from experience
- 23 and from folks that I have worked with as a
- 24 legislator that it does appear to be a subsidiary
- 25 during the time that people are getting the

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- 1 assistance because just because a person is
- 2 participating in a low-income program, it doesn't
- 3 mean that their financial situation is getting any
- 4 better. They may be getting help with a utility
- 5 but not getting help overall. So there's, you
- 6 know, so many other things that are part of what's
- 7 going on in the life of a person that needs these
- 8 services.
- 9 And Commissioner Rupp, the question
- 10 is feed a man for -- feed a -- let me see. Give a
- 11 man a fish, you feed him for a day. Teach a man to
- 12 fish, you feed him for a lifetime. Thank you,
- 13 Judge.
- JUDGE BURTON: Were there any
- 15 questions from the parties for this witness? Okay.
- 16 Seeing none. Thank you, Mr. Keith. You're
- 17 excused.
- 18 THE WITNESS: Thank you.
- 19 JUDGE BURTON: Would the Commission
- 20 like to hear from any other witness that was
- 21 offered for this issue?
- 22 CHAIRMAN HALL: If there are any
- 23 witnesses that are prepared to discuss the final
- 24 report of the experimental low-income program by
- 25 Tech Market, Exhibit 33, I'd be interested in

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- 1 getting different parties' perspectives on that
- 2 report. If there's nobody here who's prepared to
- 3 talk about it, then...
- 4 MS. MERS: I believe Staff's witness
- 5 Sarah Kliethermes can speak on that.
- 6 MS. MAYFIELD: And OPC's witness
- 7 Dr. Marke can also speak on that as well.
- 8 MR. ANTAL: And Division of Energy's
- 9 witness Sharlet Kroll can speak to it, too.
- 10 (Witness sworn.)
- 11 JUDGE BURTON: Would you please state
- 12 and spell your name for the record.
- 13 THE WITNESS: Sarah Kliethermes,
- 14 S-a-r-a-h, K-l-i-e-t-h-e-r-m-e-s.
- JUDGE BURTON: And would you please
- 16 state your position and place of employment.
- 17 THE WITNESS: Regulatory Economist 3
- 18 with the Missouri Public Service Commission Staff.
- JUDGE BURTON: Thank you.
- 20 SARAH KLIETHERMES testified as follows:
- 21 QUESTIONS BY CHAIRMAN HALL:
- Q. Good morning.
- A. Good morning.
- Q. So my understanding is that this
- 25 particular report indicated that the program was

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- 1 not cost effective and it had an adverse effect on
- 2 bill-paying habits?
- 3 A. Yes. And I think there's an
- 4 important aspect of the experiment that hasn't
- 5 really come out yet this morning, and that was that
- 6 part of what the experiment was, to get around some
- 7 of the issues that have been raised with legal
- 8 challenges of relief for low-income customers, the
- 9 experiment was to see if reducing the bill burden
- 10 for customers who were often in arrearage
- 11 situations would have an effect on reducing the
- 12 overall revenue requirement by reducing cash lead
- 13 lag problems, bad debt problems, that sort of
- 14 thing.
- So while low-income relief I think in
- 16 the minds of many parties was a very laudable
- 17 latent benefit, the technical design of the program
- 18 I believe was to the experiment of reducing the
- 19 company's cash flow issues and bad debt burden.
- 20 Q. And upon what do you base that
- 21 understanding?
- 22 A. I was the attorney for Staff on the
- 23 rate cases from 2006 through 2010 or something like
- 24 that.
- 25 Q. Is there anything in the record that

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- 1 would indicate that that was the purpose of the
- 2 program?
- 3 A. It is my recollection -- although
- 4 given how this came up, I frankly didn't think to
- 5 look at it. It is my recollection that there's
- 6 some testimony in that 2002 rate case probably from
- 7 Staff witness Ann Ross that would address that
- 8 issue. That's my recollection.
- 9 Q. Because that -- the effect of the
- 10 low-income program on a company's bad debt was
- 11 expressly one of the things that the Commission
- 12 cited in the Missouri American case.
- 13 A. Yes. And if I may just a bit
- 14 further.
- 15 Q. Please.
- 16 A. Part of the experiment was that there
- 17 were defined criteria to be tested and that were
- 18 tested, you know. So essentially the program ran
- 19 when it ran with the intent to study those aspects,
- 20 and I think it was viewed that the benefit to the
- 21 low-income customers during the time, if that's
- 22 something the Commission couldn't objectly seek
- 23 out, that that was certainly a desirable, you know,
- 24 benefit that came about as part of that study.
- 25 Q. Do you, sitting here today, have

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- 1 thoughts as to how a program could be better
- 2 structured either from the perspective of
- 3 affordability or from the perspective of minimizing
- 4 bad debt?
- 5 A. Frankly, off the top of my head --
- 6 well, not entirely off the top of my head. The
- 7 Commission's approach in Missouri American at least
- 8 from a, can Staff and the company work together to
- 9 design tariffs to implement this and know how to
- 10 process it approach, that addressed a lot of the
- 11 problems that have come up in the past when we've
- 12 looked at this.
- 13 As far as an implementation approach,
- 14 you're avoiding having a separate class that we
- 15 have to have load research data for. You're
- 16 avoiding having to estimate normalized volumetric
- 17 usage.
- 18 So certainly from the part of it that
- 19 I work with, the Commission's Missouri American
- 20 approach is a very workable solution. As far as
- 21 how that has a better impact on customers, frankly,
- there's probably better people on Staff to answer
- 23 that question. I apologize for that.
- 24 Q. So if the Commission were to ask the
- 25 company to work with Staff, OPC and the other

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- 1 parties to put together some type of either
- 2 experimental program or pilot program, do you
- 3 sitting here today have a thought as to whether it
- 4 would make sense to do it like Missouri American
- 5 where there was a discount exclusively on the
- 6 customer charge or would you think there's some
- 7 other approach that makes sense?
- 8 A. Speaking only from a, you know, I
- 9 guess technologically feasible side, if you do it
- 10 on volumetric, I frankly don't know how we would do
- 11 that. If you do it as a flat dollar value, whether
- 12 it's applied to the customer charge or similar to
- 13 how the ELIP program worked, we can do that math.
- 14 Q. Well, if you were to do it as a
- 15 **credit --**
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. -- separate and apart from either the
- 18 volumetric or the customer charge, from a -- from a
- 19 mechanical perspective, that's something new?
- 20 A. Yes, absolutely. That worked with
- 21 ELIP and I think it could work for, you know, as
- 22 far as the ability to bill it and process it and
- 23 keep track of the money.
- Q. Yeah. I guess I was asking more from
- a policy perspective, would it make sense to do it

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- 1 exclusively on the customer charge? There is the
- 2 issue that on a \$140 bill reducing 13 to \$15 may
- 3 not have much effect.
- 4 A. Exactly. You know, not -- while
- 5 there are better people on Staff to answer probably
- 6 more detailed questions than that, yeah, I mean,
- 7 intuitively you don't have a lot of play there with
- 8 the size customer charge that Empire has relative
- 9 to total bill.
- 10 Q. Now, the average bill is \$140 or so;
- 11 is that correct?
- 12 A. That sounds roughly right, and --
- 13 yes.
- Q. And my understanding, and this may
- not be the case specifically with Empire, but I
- 16 think there is data out there that shows that there
- 17 is a rough correlation between income and
- 18 consumption. Do you agree with that, that the
- 19 low-income customers tend to consume less than
- 20 high-income customers?
- 21 A. I know there have been different
- 22 studies on that over time. I don't know what the
- 23 most current view of that is. I know at one time
- 24 there was a -- I believe there was a U-shaped
- 25 graph, but I don't know if that is currently still

Page 83 the belief. 1 2. CHAIRMAN HALL: Okay. I have no 3 further questions. 4 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: No questions. 5 QUESTIONS BY COMMISSIONER RUPP: 6 Q. Good morning. 7 Good morning. 8 Q. You're a regulatory economist level 9 three? 10 Yes. Α. 11 All right. Let's just put on the Q. 12 economist hat. Not considering any social benefit 13 or social positives that could come out, what --14 after reviewing this study that they did, what are 15 the purely economical benefits to ratepayers, to 16 the company, the shareholders, of having a program 17 like this besides the people that got the 18 reduction? Sure. In that bad debt -- and I'm 19 Α. 20 struggling with the term right now. It's one of 21 the accounting terms. But the uncollectibles and 22 the lead lag cash flow issue, those all factor in 23 to the revenue requirement. So all customers end up paying bad debt. So if you reduce the level of 24 25 bad debt, you reduce what those customers pay.

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- 1 reduce the carrying cost on bad debt.
- 2 Q. But with this study specifically
- 3 showing that they did not have any, what is the --
- 4 if that study is showed to be true, then what is
- 5 the economic benefit of having a program like this?
- 6 A. For these customers during this time
- 7 period as studied, this showed that you spent more
- 8 money reducing customers' bills than what bad debt
- 9 was reduced, is my understanding.
- 10 Q. So is there an economic benefit to
- 11 having -- to having had this program?
- 12 A. This program, no.
- 13 Q. Thank you.
- 14 COMMISSIONER STOLL: No questions.
- 15 Thank you.
- JUDGE BURTON: Any questions from the
- 17 parties? You may be excused.
- 18 Would the Commission like to hear
- 19 next from -- I believe we have Marke available or
- 20 Mr. Hyneman from the Office of Public Counsel or
- 21 Kroll from the Division of Energy.
- MS. MAYFIELD: We have Dr. Marke
- 23 available.
- 24 (Witness sworn.)
- JUDGE BURTON: Would you please state

Page 85 and spell your name for the record. 2 THE WITNESS: It's Geoff Marke, 3 G-e-o-f-f, M-a-r-k-e. 4 JUDGE BURTON: And would you please 5 state your current position and place of 6 employment. 7 THE WITNESS: I'm an economist with 8 the Missouri Office of Public Counsel. GEOFF MARKE testified as follows: 9 QUESTIONS BY CHAIRMAN HALL: 10 11 Good morning. Q. 12 Good morning. 13 Q. Here is a wide-open question. You've 14 been in the hearing room all morning? 15 Α. Correct. 16 0. You've listened to the discussion 17 about the experimental low-income program and 18 the -- and the report that was issued about that program that is Exhibit 33? 19 20 Α. Yes. 21 Do you have any thoughts? Q. 22 Α. I do have some thoughts. 23 Yes. Q. 2.4 Α. Okay. I didn't think it was a very 25 good program or a report. I've got a handout if

Page 86 you're interested. 2. JUDGE BURTON: Would you please hold 3 on one second and let's have your counsel review that and see if it' going to be marked for the 5 record. MS. MAYFIELD: Did you prepare this 6 7 handout? 8 THE WITNESS: I did. 9 MS. MAYFIELD: Did the information on the handout come from the report that is Exhibit 33 10 offered by the Empire District? 11 12 THE WITNESS: Yes, it is. MS. MAYFIELD: And is there also 13 information contained in here, a chart that was 14 prepared based on your rebuttal testimony that will 15 be submitted in this case later on? 16 17 THE WITNESS: Yes. 18 MS. MAYFIELD: Your Honor, I would like to mark this as OPC Exhibit 19, and I will 19 20 pass it out to the parties for review. 21 JUDGE BURTON: One moment and we'll 22 see if there are any objections. 23 (OPC EXHIBIT 19 WAS MARKED FOR 24 IDENTIFICATION.) 25 JUDGE BURTON: What's been marked as

Page 87 OPC Exhibit 19, Ms. Mayfield, did you want to move 2. for this to be admitted? 3 MS. MAYFIELD: I would move for the 4 admission of this, OPC Exhibit 19. 5 JUDGE BURTON: Are there any 6 objections? (No response.) 8 JUDGE BURTON: Seeing none, 9 Exhibit OPC 19 is admitted into the record. 10 (OPC EXHIBIT 19 WAS RECEIVED INTO 11 EVIDENCE.) 12 THE WITNESS: Okay. So I had an 13 opportunity to review the evaluation last night and the attached surrebuttal. So on the -- on the page 14 with all the text, No. 1 is highlights of the 15 16 actual evaluation itself. Some of these points 17 have already been fleshed out. The bullet points under the Tier 1 and Tier 2, the highlights that 18 19 I'd just like to bring to the Commission's 20 attention. 21 So there are two tiers. That second 22 tier with the larger number, you're talking zero to 23 50 percent of the federal poverty line, that's very, very poor. So all the observations are -- I 24 25 think are spot on in terms of it's very difficult

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- 1 to get out of this cycle once you're stuck into it.
- 2 So it's not a surprise that bad debt and arrears
- 3 went up after.
- 4 It should be noted within the study
- 5 that when they were on the program, bad debt and
- 6 arrears went down. So there's that.
- 7 We do have programs like this with
- 8 KCPL. We do have programs like this in Ameren.
- 9 They're mildly successful. They're getting better.
- 10 It's a work in progress.
- 11 BY CHAIRMAN HALL:
- 12 Q. Excuse me. I'm sorry to interrupt.
- 13 You said that while customers were in the program,
- 14 bad debt and arrearages went down?
- 15 A. Correct.
- 16 Q. Can you direct me to the report where
- 17 that is set forth?
- 18 A. As soon as I find my report. So
- 19 there's two sections within the report. There's
- 20 several bar graphs that are listed there. The
- 21 first set of bar graphs talks about bad debt and
- 22 arrears in conjunction with other payment programs.
- 23 So it's not just the ELIP program that a family
- 24 might be receiving. They might also be receiving
- 25 LIHEAP, some other form of assistance,

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- 1 weatherization, so forth.
- 2 That can -- in terms of data, that
- 3 can make it more difficult to go ahead and clean
- 4 and see what the actual impact of just ELIP is.
- 5 Again, the vast majority of these customers you're
- 6 talking a \$20 discount.
- 7 The second set tries to control for
- 8 just the ELIP numbers. So I want to say several
- 9 different breakdowns here.
- 10 Q. Where are you in the report? I'm
- 11 sorry.
- 12 A. I'm on page 17, and I'm trying to
- 13 take --
- 14 JUDGE BURTON: And this is of
- 15 Empire's Exhibit 33?
- 16 THE WITNESS: It is. And to be
- 17 honest with you, Chairman, I'm -- caught me off
- 18 guard. I know that it's in here, but I don't know
- 19 which bar graph that speaks to that.
- 20 BY CHAIRMAN HALL:
- Q. Would you agree that -- I mean, and I
- 22 think this was your point -- that that indicates at
- 23 least one significant benefit from the program?
- A. Right.
- 25 Q. And so in a sense, that evidence

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- would go directly to affordability?
- 2 A. It would. It would. The program
- 3 itself, though, the evaluation kind of -- it opines
- 4 on some of the faults of it. The program had
- 5 difficulty advertising.
- 6 So I think one of my bullet points
- 7 refers to this, that the information provided on
- 8 the website is not listed under programs offered by
- 9 Empire in Missouri. So Missouri ratepayers, if
- 10 they had access to the Internet, would see that and
- 11 they wouldn't see anything under Missouri.
- 12 You couldn't find this information on
- 13 any of the CAP agency websites. The report itself
- 14 says that, you know, points out that a lot of
- 15 low-income customers at this period might not have
- 16 access to the Internet anyway. I think that was a
- 17 point raised earlier.
- There was a lot of speculation, I
- 19 guess, on the evaluators that said that customers
- 20 might not be inclined to sign up for this program
- 21 because, and this is the third point, customers may
- 22 want to let their utility bill rise to a high level
- 23 of arrearage and receive notice of disconnection.
- 24 When this occurs, they can often qualify for
- 25 temporary emergency relief through the emergency

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- 1 crisis intervention program. Essentially these
- 2 customers then would have access to a larger
- 3 credit.
- 4 If they stayed on the ELIP program,
- 5 part of that contingent -- part of that requirement
- 6 of the ELIP program was that they were essentially
- 7 put into budget billing, a levelized bill. For
- 8 some customers this can be a bit confusing because
- 9 your bill in any given month might be larger than
- 10 your actual usage.
- In that sense, if you're on a
- 12 levelized payment, you're also not eligible for any
- 13 emergency relief funds. So that's one -- one trip
- 14 to the hospital. That's one, you know, fill in the
- 15 blank, whatever emergency and all of a sudden it
- 16 becomes that much more difficult.
- Weighing those options, those
- 18 realities on a day-to-day basis, customers might
- 19 not opt to go into an ELIP program.
- 20 We've spoken a lot about the benefit
- 21 cost test. I think there's a reference that the
- 22 same test is used in MEEIA. I'm fortunate to have
- 23 spent a lot of time in MEEIA. It's not the same
- 24 test. The low-income -- I'd never heard of this
- 25 test before. It's called the low-income -- the

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- 1 low-income public purpose test. I had to go ahead
- 2 and Google that. I found the Tech Mark report that
- 3 actually describes that test. So this is from a
- 4 2001 study.
- 5 The key thing to note here -- and
- 6 this is the third black bullet point on that page.
- 7 So what was referenced is the results of the
- 8 low-income public purpose test is 0.22.
- 9 I bolded the statement coming up in
- 10 the next sentence. This program, like many most
- 11 low-income programs, is essentially a subsidy to
- 12 the customers that participate. From an evaluation
- 13 standpoint, from a social researcher standpoint,
- 14 this gives me pause, any time you have somebody
- 15 making a bold statement that low-income programs
- 16 are all subsidies. The idea behind it is that the
- 17 evaluator themselves would want to remain neutral.
- 18 So right off the bat -- again, I'm -- I paused.
- 19 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: Excuse me. If
- 20 it's not a subsidy, what is it?
- 21 THE WITNESS: So I follow you down to
- the next part, and we've been trying to kind of
- 23 wrestle with this idea. Are there any benefits
- that can be had from low-income programs? There's
- 25 been several different progressive utilities that

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- 1 really tried to make an impact in this area. The
- 2 graph there refers to Citizens Gas. It's an
- 3 Indiana utility. Essentially they came to the
- 4 conclusion that some money's better than no money.
- 5 So they gave a discount and essentially were able
- 6 to net a greater amount of revenue than they
- 7 otherwise would with the control group.
- 8 Essentially, this no longer makes it
- 9 a subsidy. You've got customers -- utility's
- 10 better off. Customers are better off. Reference a
- 11 couple other programs. Colorado, Excel, and New
- 12 Jersey, Pennsylvania both have similar programs.
- This is an important distinction,
- 14 though, because I would say that I'm fairly
- 15 confident that most of these states actually had a
- 16 low-income designation, so they can actually offer
- 17 a low-income rate. It's been statutorily driven.
- There's in my mind a difference
- 19 between a bill credit program and a low-income rate
- 20 program or a low-income classification. We've got
- 21 bill credits. We've got lots of -- we have a
- 22 history of pilots of bill credit programs that have
- 23 died for various reasons.
- I've got mixed feelings about all of
- 25 this. On one hand, I think it's absolutely

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- 1 important, and I hear what the Commission is
- 2 saying. My hesitation just lies -- I echoed this
- 3 in the Missouri American case. I think it's just
- 4 important that we design it right. I'd hate to
- 5 have another pilot program just go to the graveyard
- 6 at the end of the day.
- 7 And that's what I feel like going
- 8 through the four years' worth of rate case
- 9 testimony, that's what I saw was that we had good
- 10 intentions to start off, and for all sorts of
- 11 reasons things changed.
- 12 We have been talking about other
- 13 low-income programs. It's been an active
- 14 discussion in terms of the DSM and the energy
- 15 efficiency and weatherization. To Commissioner
- 16 Rupp's point, we looked into the Eastern Kentucky
- 17 PACE tariff program, and we spoke with Holz Home
- 18 (phonetic), is the head of a fraction out of the
- 19 DOE that's pushing the PACE tariff program.
- 20 My understanding of program as it
- 21 stands right now is that it's a -- it's been
- 22 successful with coops. They don't have any
- 23 examples -- nobody -- there hasn't been an
- 24 investor-owned utility that's attempted to do the
- 25 program yet.

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- 1 Given the parameters of where Empire
- 2 is, the desire of the Commission to do a low-income
- 3 program, it's largely rural community as opposed to
- 4 some of the other utilities. I think the PACE
- 5 tariff is an excellent idea to move forward, and to
- 6 the extent that we're looking at low-income
- 7 programs to bridge into some of the DSM programs,
- 8 again, Empire doesn't have a MEEIA. It seems like
- 9 it would be a good fit. So we have had discussions
- 10 about that.
- 11 On the back of the page, this is
- 12 actually from my rebuttal testimony. There were
- 13 questions about is there any data to substantiate
- 14 whether or not low-income customers use less energy
- 15 or not. This is primary data from Empire Electric
- 16 themselves. This isn't any other party. This is
- 17 Empire. This was used to support their IRP and
- 18 their DSM programs.
- 19 There's a lot of numbers going on
- 20 there and there's a lot to kind of take in. Empire
- 21 is a unique company in the sense that there are a
- 22 lot more electric space heating customers, but --
- 23 so any time that we're talking about just
- 24 reducing -- this is somewhat ironic given our
- 25 position in a lot of testimony. As far as the

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- 1 customer charge goes, I think we just be cognizant
- 2 that -- well, let me step back.
- 3 BY CHAIRMAN HALL:
- 4 Q. Let me -- so I'm looking at the
- 5 bottom four rows of page 2 of that exhibit, and
- 6 though the numbers don't line up directly, it would
- 7 appear that from those numbers there is a
- 8 correlation between income and consumption. Is
- 9 that correct?
- 10 A. That's how I interpret it.
- 11 Q. And so with that -- and this came
- 12 directly from what source?
- 13 A. This is the Empire's triennial IRP.
- 14 Q. So with that information, if a
- 15 program were designed that involved exclusively a
- 16 reduction or a possible elimination of the customer
- 17 charge for low-income residents, in light of the
- 18 fact that low-income residents tend to have lower
- 19 consumption, that could have a significant impact,
- 20 could it not?
- 21 A. For those customers, yes.
- Q. Okay. I'll let you continue.
- 23 A. I'll finish with the low-income
- 24 public purpose test. The fact that it's a low
- 25 number is largely because of the inputs that are in

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- 1 there. You have a copy of the exhibit. It's on
- 2 page 23. So the benefits in that case are speaking
- 3 strictly to fewer shutoffs, fewer reconnects and
- 4 fewer notices.
- 5 It's what you value, I mean, at the
- 6 end of the day, what you want to deem as a benefit.
- 7 We can -- I wouldn't put a lot of stock in these
- 8 numbers at the end of the day, the low-income
- 9 public purpose test. Outside of this evaluation
- 10 and the reference of the 2001, I couldn't find it
- 11 anywhere else. All right.
- 12 If this evaluation just looked at was
- 13 there an increase in revenues, like Excel did, I
- 14 think you would automatically see benefits right
- 15 there. That in turn would change. So, you know,
- 16 that just speaks to the design and the importance
- 17 of really crafting this in a tight manner.
- 18 CHAIRMAN HALL: I have no further
- 19 questions. Thank you.
- 20 QUESTIONS BY COMMISSIONER STOLL:
- 21 Q. I appreciate your testimony and the
- 22 information that you passed out. I mean, to me one
- 23 of the important things you said is that we need
- 24 to design this right, whatever -- if there is a
- low-income program, it needs to be designed

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- 1 correctly. I'm not sure what that looks like.
- 2 A. Right.
- 3 Q. But that's my only reason to pause in
- 4 this case because I don't want to do something just
- 5 to say or just to do something. I really would
- 6 like to see it designed right and have all the
- 7 parties give input and -- and try to come up with a
- 8 product that we think would be useful or a model or
- 9 looking at the Excel project, how would that fit in
- 10 Missouri.
- I also think there are a lot of
- 12 things that could be done and hopefully are being
- done as far as weatherization and -- and other
- 14 means to give people an opportunity to live in a
- 15 home or an apartment that is more energy efficient.
- 16 Frankly, many places don't have
- 17 building codes, and I heard testimony in previous
- 18 cases from people who lived in apartments, young
- 19 people who said, you know, I would love to reduce
- 20 my bill, but the apartment I'm in is just not up to
- 21 par. So I think there's always things we can work
- 22 on there, and I know people are doing that.
- But I think when we do implement a
- 24 program for low-income participants in Empire, I'd
- like to see it done right and to get input from all

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- 1 the parties. So that's more of a statement than a
- 2 question, but I did appreciate the design right
- 3 aspect. I think that's -- that's crucial in --
- 4 it's crucial in anything we do, but in this
- 5 program, too. Thank you.
- 6 QUESTIONS BY COMMISSIONER RUPP:
- 7 Q. Good morning.
- 8 A. Good morning.
- 9 Q. Would you give a brief overview of
- 10 the PACE program for the benefit of the
- 11 Commissioners and those in the audience and the
- 12 thousands listening online?
- 13 A. Actually, DE might be better able to
- 14 speak to the PACE program, but it's my
- 15 understanding the PACE program was selected as one
- 16 of Time Magazine's 100 best ideas moving into the
- 17 new millennium. It was this idea that on-bill
- 18 financing and energy efficiency, that you could go
- 19 ahead and retrofit your property, to go ahead and
- 20 reduce your consumption and pay off those debt
- 21 through your monthly bills.
- The program basically ran into a lot
- 23 of problems because of the housing crisis, and
- 24 Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac essentially said that if
- 25 you owed a lot of money on your house, you had to

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- 1 pay the bank first as opposed to going through the
- 2 utility and the on-bill financing.
- 3 Subsequently the program has been
- 4 really focused on commercial customers. It's my
- 5 understanding that there might be a rural component
- 6 that's being introduced right now. It's -- it's
- 7 something that a lot of people feel very passionate
- 8 about and move forward, and we're trying our best
- 9 to promote that in both Ameren and KCPL's service
- 10 territory with their commercial and industrial
- 11 programs.
- 12 Q. So I know one of the issues that they
- 13 were running into was with a mortgage you can
- 14 bundle these and you can securitize these and you
- 15 can sell them in the other market. There hasn't
- 16 been a market for this. But I believe that some
- 17 financial products have emerged that have allowed
- 18 this, which has brought some of the financing costs
- 19 **down**.
- 20 So when you look at a district like
- 21 Empire that has 77 percent of the people that own
- 22 their own home and you have almost 70 percent of
- 23 the people's homes were built in the last century,
- 24 would you think that the PACE program would be a
- good match for what is trying to be accomplished

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- 1 through the comments you've heard here in that
- 2 district?
- 3 A. I mean, if you can get around the, I
- 4 guess the earlier stated hurdles of PACE, I think
- 5 it's a phenomenal match for Empire. Yeah. I mean,
- 6 just building things better to code, better to
- 7 standards is going to go a long way. And I think
- 8 it's something that people and families can
- 9 understand. It goes through your bill and it's not
- 10 a piecemeal process. So you can go ahead and get
- 11 that HVAC but also get that insulation, get the
- 12 whole retrofit process.
- Too often we just do things
- 14 singularly, and when you're trying to conserve
- 15 energy through air conditioning or heating, it's
- 16 really a systematic approach. It's the whole
- 17 house. So PACE enables that process.
- 18 Q. And so in your testimony, you had
- 19 seen multiple pilots that have been tried over the
- 20 period of years that have been done and then just
- 21 went to the wayside and failed. And to your point
- 22 of designing and to Commission Stoll's question of
- 23 designing it, would it be prudent to look at a
- 24 program that has been -- received a lot of
- 25 attention, has been vetted, has gone through some

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- 1 ups and downs and some tweaks and try to model that
- versus recreating the wheel?
- 3 A. I mean, that's the key. We just -- I
- 4 don't think most people would probably accuse
- 5 Missouri of being a first mover. So we can --
- 6 there's plenty of examples to go ahead and the best
- 7 practices that we do lean on.
- 8 Q. Thanks.
- 9 QUESTIONS BY COMMISSIONER COLEMAN:
- 10 Q. Good morning. I'd like a
- 11 clarification on the statement about the -- some of
- 12 these low-income programs were not a subsidy,
- 13 because I think that people in general who are
- 14 receiving the assistance would certainly believe
- 15 that it's a subsidy because now they're getting
- 16 credited and getting a grant for something they
- 17 didn't have to pay. So give me your reasoning
- 18 behind your comments, please.
- 19 A. I mean, I would agree with you,
- 20 Commissioner. And to clarify my comment in terms
- 21 of the subsidy comment, I think subsidy within the
- 22 context of rate design sometimes has a negative
- 23 connotation that we can't justify doing X because
- 24 it's a subsidy because you're favoring one
- intraclass or one group over another, and we're

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- 1 supposed to be nondiscriminatory.
- I guess the only point I was trying
- 3 to make is that there are a number of utilities
- 4 that have gone on record and said that by helping
- 5 and enabling this group, it's actually a benefit
- 6 for all. And we make that comment all the time as
- 7 a societal benefit, but now we have empirical
- 8 evidence where at the bottom line there's actually
- 9 revenues that are being created, being captured
- 10 that otherwise would not. In that sense, I look at
- 11 that as just good business practice.
- 12 Q. Okay. I think I had another. Under
- 13 your item No. 1, your bullet point No. 3, that
- 14 customers let their utility bills rise in order to
- 15 receive a notice of disconnection. They can then
- 16 go to some agency to receive assistance. That
- doesn't always happen, though, does it?
- 18 A. No, and I would caution with that,
- 19 that as I read those, I mean, it seemed it was
- 20 speculative, that these are reasons maybe that it
- 21 was taking place. There's a lot of uncertainty
- 22 with that evaluation, whether the numbers -- at the
- 23 end of the day, if we were -- you know, if we had
- 24 to go back in time and do this over, I think it
- 25 would be imperative that we actually look at what

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- 1 that data says. There's a lot of ways to interpret
- 2 that.
- 3 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you.
- 4 Thank you, Judge.
- 5 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you. Any
- 6 questions from the parties?
- 7 MR. ANTAL: Judge, I would have a
- 8 couple questions for Dr. Marke, if I may.
- 9 QUESTIONS BY MR. ANTAL:
- 10 Q. Dr. Marke, you were discussing the
- 11 findings of the evaluation and some of the
- 12 challenges with marketing the ELIP program with the
- 13 Commissioners, and I wanted to ask you if you
- 14 recalled the finding that the CAP agencies
- 15 indicated that they lacked program brochures to
- 16 explain the program to their clients?
- 17 A. I mean, that seemed to be -- there
- 18 was definitely a disconnect between the agencies,
- 19 utility, I think stakeholders, as far as really
- 20 promoting the program. Again, I think \$300,000 was
- 21 the annual budget. I think expenditures didn't
- 22 exceed maybe 50,000 at any given year. I think we
- 23 know that the level of poverty, I think you cited
- 24 to this earlier, is obviously very great in that
- 25 area. To suggest that that money couldn't get

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- 1 spent raises some doubt.
- Q. And would you think that, in your
- 3 opinion, that having a brochure that explains the
- 4 program would be essential to promoting a program
- 5 such as this?
- 6 A. I think it would help. I think the
- 7 best thing we could do is probably bring the CAP
- 8 agencies themselves to the table and ask them
- 9 directly, what can we do to empower you?
- 10 MR. ANTAL: Okay. Thank you. No
- 11 further questions.
- 12 JUDGE BURTON: Commissioner Rupp has
- 13 an additional question.
- 14 QUESTIONS BY COMMISSIONER RUPP:
- 15 Q. I'm sorry. I forgot a question. On
- 16 your handout, Exhibit 19, on the page with the
- 17 text, you mentioned that some individuals could
- 18 qualify for emergency relief through the emergency
- 19 crisis intervention program. Who funds that and
- where's that program housed?
- 21 A. I couldn't speak to that directly.
- 22 My understanding from reading the evaluation is
- 23 that that's a component of Empire itself, but that
- 24 was a quote lifted directly from the evaluation
- 25 itself.

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- 1 Q. So you believe it's like another
- 2 program offered from the utility, it's not through
- 3 some other social benefactor, government agency
- 4 or --
- 5 A. I guess I would put it that way. The
- 6 sheer fact that I don't know that, the fact that
- 7 we've got multiple different streams, and then if
- 8 you cross one of these streams all of a sudden
- 9 you're out of the program suggests to me that
- 10 there's a flaw there. Again, the design is really
- 11 important, but I don't know.
- 12 MR. ANTAL: Judge, if I may, I
- 13 believe DE's witness Ms. Kroll could answer that
- 14 question when she takes the stand.
- 15 JUDGE BURTON: Were there any further
- 16 questions for this witness based off of the
- 17 questions from the Commission or from Division of
- 18 Energy?
- 19 (No response.)
- JUDGE BURTON: All right. Seeing
- 21 none, you're excused. Why don't we take a brief
- 22 ten-minute recess and we will return at about
- 23 10:45.
- 24 (A BREAK WAS TAKEN.)
- JUDGE BURTON: At this time why don't

Page 107 we go ahead and call up Division of Energy's 2. witness Kroll. 3 MR. ANTAL: Yes. Division of Energy calls Ms. Sharlet Kroll to the stand. 4 5 (Witness sworn.) JUDGE BURTON: Would you please state 6 7 and spell your name for the record after you're 8 seated. 9 THE WITNESS: Sharlet Kroll, S-h-a-r-l-e-t, K-r-o-l-l. 10 11 JUDGE BURTON: And would you please 12 identify your job title and place of employment? THE WITNESS: I am a Planner 2 within 13 the Missouri Division of Energy. 14 15 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you. Are there 16 any questions for Ms. Kroll? 17 SHARLET KROLL testified as follows: QUESTIONS BY CHAIRMAN HALL: 18 19 Q. Good morning. 20 Α. Good morning. 21 What would your view be of Q. 22 implementation of a program that included an either 23 elimination or reduction in the customer charge for

Fax: 314,644,1334

LIHEAP eligible customers in Empire's service

territory limited to some specific geographic

24

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- 1 region yet to be determined? Is that a program
- 2 from a policy perspective that you believe would
- 3 make sense?
- 4 A. So I want to make sure I understand
- 5 correctly. So you're asking about limiting the
- 6 program just to LIHEAP customers within the
- 7 geographic area and my viewpoint on whether that
- 8 would be a good design?
- 9 Q. Well, and the benefit would be a
- 10 reduction or elimination of the customer charge.
- 11 A. Okay. So in my surrebuttal
- 12 testimony, I looked at the average bill currently
- of an Empire customer based on Mr. Hyman's analysis
- 14 of the usage data that we received, and I compared
- that looking to a family of three for Empire
- 16 customers because the average household size,
- 17 according to U.S. Census data, is 2.46 for that
- 18 area.
- 19 And based on that, those customers
- 20 currently have an energy burden of 8.5 percent. So
- 21 if there was, say, a \$12 reduction on the customer
- 22 charge, on the fixed charge, that would reduce the
- 23 energy burden not quite a full percent. So they
- 24 would drop it from 8.5 down closer to 7 point --
- 25 and I can't remember the exact number.

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- 1 Q. Is that analysis based on average
- 2 consumption and average bills or is that analysis
- 3 based upon --
- 4 A. It is based on average consumption.
- 5 Q. Well, that's a pretty significant
- 6 distinction, isn't it?
- 7 A. I will let Mr. Hyman -- I will defer
- 8 that question to Mr. Hyman. As far as other
- 9 benefits, any time the bill goes down, customers do
- 10 have more income to spend in other areas, it helps
- 11 reduce their energy burden.
- 12 One of the challenges to the program
- 13 from looking at Empire's Exhibit 33 was that the
- 14 incentive amount wasn't significant enough for
- 15 consumers to take advantage of, and I believe
- 16 Dr. Marke alluded to this, that some customers --
- 17 some customers didn't want to be part of the
- 18 program because if they did go into a situation
- 19 where they received a notice of termination, then
- 20 they could apply to the Energy Crisis Intervention
- 21 Program through the LIHEAP program and receive a
- 22 more significant payment onto their bill.
- 23 So that would be a program
- 24 implementation challenge that would have to be
- 25 addressed.

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- 1 Q. Any other comments from a policy
- 2 Or -- policy perspective or from a mechanical
- 3 implementation perspective on such a program?
- 4 A. So any time you implement a new
- 5 program there is a lot of energy that a program
- 6 manager needs to put into that program to get it up
- 7 and off the ground. So Empire would need to be
- 8 committed to having a designated person assigned to
- 9 be able to get this program moving.
- 10 It's more than just cutting a check,
- 11 handing it off to your contracted partners and
- 12 hoping at the end of 12 months that it ran right.
- 13 Based on my experience, having managed statewide
- 14 programs and done contract management, you have to
- 15 be following up at least on a quarterly basis with
- 16 your contractors, making sure that they are hitting
- 17 the measures that you have in place, making sure
- 18 that they have the support, the technical support,
- 19 being available to answer calls to them, having the
- 20 education that they need, the guidelines that they
- 21 need to know the parameters, the scope of work is
- 22 for this contract expectation, making sure that,
- 23 you know, they're a quarter way through their
- 24 annual budget -- excuse me -- they're a quarter of
- 25 the way through their contract period, are they a

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- 1 quarter of a way through their budget. So you want
- 2 to make sure they're on track with their budget.
- 3 So there's a lot of program
- 4 management that the company will be taking on. And
- 5 I feel that, you know, that probably needs to be a
- 6 designated person within the company, not just
- 7 handing it off to Mr. Hackney as other duties
- 8 assigned, because he covers all of their energy
- 9 efficiency programs and weatherization programs for
- 10 both Missouri and for Arkansas. So he has a huge
- 11 responsibility of overseeing programs, multiple
- 12 programs.
- 13 So that would be one concern that I
- 14 would have is the time commitment and the personnel
- 15 designated to the program. The other issue would
- 16 be the contract agencies, because the CAP agencies
- 17 do multiple programs in their communities. So this
- 18 is another aspect that we would be asking them to
- 19 take on, which they've done in the past, but there
- 20 is an administrative cost for them.
- 21 And just having done a quick review
- 22 of Ameren's Keeping Up evaluation that was done in
- 23 2012, one of the comments that that evaluation
- 24 found was that the payment -- I hesitate to use the
- 25 word payment -- the administrative costs that the

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- 1 agencies were asked to take on in order to identify
- 2 and process and follow up with customers that were
- 3 enrolling in Keeping Current was not significant
- 4 enough for those CAP agencies to incur that burden
- 5 of managing the program.
- 6 The other point I'd like to make is
- 7 you want to keep the program simple and easily
- 8 understood. You're dealing with a population that
- 9 has multiple challenges that they deal with in
- 10 their everyday lives, and this will be another
- 11 application that they will need to apply for. So
- 12 the application process needs to be very
- 13 streamlined and very simple so that it doesn't
- 14 become a burdensome process for them that they
- 15 don't then not follow forward with.
- 16 CHAIRMAN HALL: I have no further
- 17 questions. Thank you.
- 18 COMMISSIONER STOLL: No questions.
- 19 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: No questions.
- 20 Thank you.
- 21 COMMISSIONER RUPP: No questions.
- 22 MR. ANTAL: Ms. Kroll can answer the
- 23 questions about the funding for that emergency
- 24 program.
- 25 QUESTIONS BY COMMISSIONER RUPP:

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- 1 Q. Ma'am, would you please answer that
- 2 question.
- 3 A. Yes. So LIHEAP has two components to
- 4 it: Their energy assistance, which assists with
- 5 heating, and then they also have their crisis
- 6 program, which is their Energy Crisis Intervention
- 7 Program, their ECIP, and that requires verification
- 8 of a verifiable crisis, so a shutoff, in order for
- 9 a client to apply for and receive that.
- 10 Q. And LIHEAP is funded by?
- 11 A. It is a federal program, and Missouri
- 12 through the Department of Social Services applies
- 13 for that federal grant and manages it.
- 14 Q. So once again, to your point, if
- 15 you're going to design a program, look at the other
- 16 programs that are out there and make sure there's
- 17 not a cross-cutting disincentive to participate.
- 18 Thank you.
- 19 QUESTIONS BY COMMISSIONER COLEMAN:
- 20 Q. I think I do need a clarification.
- 21 It was the doctor's testimony that I think said
- 22 that -- I may be wrong here. Been listening to a
- 23 little bit of testimony this morning -- that if a
- 24 person could possibly be in the LIHEAP program but
- 25 not receive funding from other places, there can't

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- 1 be like a -- you can't dip out of two pots. Have
- 2 you ever heard of that in that type of a situation?
- 3 Because I know, as you just mentioned, that Social
- 4 Services administers the program. They send those
- 5 funds out to different nonprofits throughout the
- 6 state, like community action organizations and
- 7 other nonprofits.
- 8 Are people able to receive funds from
- 9 other entities if they receive LIHEAP funds?
- 10 A. So I believe what Dr. Marke was
- 11 referring to is the possibility, and I've not
- 12 reviewed the policy manual for LIHEAP, but if I
- 13 understand correctly, there may be language in the
- 14 LIHEAP stipula -- policies and procedures that if
- 15 they're participating in this type of budget
- 16 billing program, then they wouldn't be eligible.
- 17 And again, I am speculating because I have not
- 18 reviewed those.
- 19 MR. MARKE: Commissioner, if I may?
- 20 It's just the reverse. My understanding was that
- 21 part of the condition on the ELIP program was that
- 22 customers could not apply for the emergency
- 23 program.
- 24 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Okay. Thank
- 25 you. Thank you, Judge.

Page 115 THE WITNESS: Well, they would need a 1 2 verifiable shutoff notice in order to be eligible 3 for ECIP. BY COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: 5 And LIHEAP also, wouldn't they, or is Q. LIHEAP just funding provided based on your income? 6 7 Α. It is --8 Q. That's subsidy. 9 It is income based at 145 percent of 10 poverty. 11 Q. Okay. Thank you. 12 QUESTIONS BY JUDGE BURTON: 13 I just have a quick question. This 14 is sort of a follow-up on Commissioner Rupp's 15 question. Concerning the Emergency Crisis 16 Intervention Program, are you familiar with the 17 percentage of the individuals in Empire's area who would use that? 18 19 I did not request that data from the 20 company. I only requested the number of LIHEAP 21 recipients, so those who were receiving energy 22 assistance. So I don't have that information. 23 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you. Are there 24 any questions from the parties?

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(No response.)

25

Page 116 1 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you very much. 2 You're excused. 3 I believe the Commission will hear next from Mr. Hyman. 5 MR. ANTAL: DE calls Mr. Martin Hyman 6 to the stand. (Witness sworn.) 8 JUDGE BURTON: You may be seated. Would you please state and spell your name for the 10 record. 11 THE WITNESS: Martin Hyman, 12 H-y-m-a-n. JUDGE BURTON: And what is your 13 current job title and place of employment? 14 15 THE WITNESS: I am a Planner 3 in the 16 Missouri Division of Energy. 17 JUDGE BURTON: Thank you. Any 18 questions from the Commission? MARTIN HYMAN testified as follows: 19 20 OUESTIONS BY CHAIRMAN HALL: 21 I think I'm going to ask you the same 22 question I asked Ms. Kroll. That is, what would 23 your view be of the establishment of a low-income 24 program that involved the elimination or reduction 25 of the customer charge for LIHEAP-eligible

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- 1 customers of Empire that resided in some specific
- 2 geographic region of the service territory?
- 3 A. So as a division, I don't think we've
- 4 discussed this, the issue of limiting it to a
- 5 specific geographic area. For example, when I was
- 6 running my calculations I did it as all LIHEAP
- 7 participants that Ms. Kroll got in her -- from her
- 8 data request. I think that the 80 percent customer
- 9 charge reduction option is certainly one option,
- 10 and that's as Mr. Antal stated. But I think that's
- 11 sort of the simple, quick and easy if you want to
- 12 provide immediate relief option.
- 13 If you want to do something more
- 14 detailed, I think you need to have a working docket
- 15 to examine what the proper rate design would be.
- 16 So, for example, if you wanted to move towards
- 17 Ameren's Keeping Current program, which is a pretty
- 18 good model from what we've seen, that that would be
- 19 something certainly you could discuss in a docket.
- 20 Q. Well, what about the specific program
- 21 that was contemplated by the Commission with regard
- 22 to Missouri American?
- A. As I said, I think that's certainly
- 24 one option. That's sort of your simple quick fix
- 25 option. That's relatively easy to implement

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- 1 compared to if you wanted to add in some other
- 2 things that you see, for example, in Keeping
- 3 Current, such as arrearage reductions, maybe even
- 4 throw in some sort of education component.
- 5 So like I say, I think we -- there's
- 6 definitely a need for some type of program in the
- 7 Empire territory. I think the questions are how
- 8 soon do you want to do this, and what design do you
- 9 want?
- 10 CHAIRMAN HALL: I have no further
- 11 questions. Thank you.
- 12 COMMISSIONER STOLL: No questions.
- 13 COMMISSIONER KENNEY: No questions.
- 14 Thank you.
- JUDGE BURTON: Thank you very much.
- 16 Are there any questions from the parties? You're
- 17 excused.
- 18 I believe that is all the witnesses
- 19 that the Commission is looking to hear from today
- 20 on that issue. So unless there are any final
- 21 statements from the parties on that, we can go and
- 22 address procedural issues for the remainder of the
- 23 hearing.
- Now, it's my understanding the
- 25 parties have tentatively reached a settlement as

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- 1 far as revenue requirement and still are working to
- 2 address some issues as far as rate design and some
- 3 fuel issues. We do have the hearing scheduled to
- 4 resume next week, and I believe there was
- 5 discussion about perhaps canceling Monday's hearing
- 6 to give parties an opportunity to work on
- 7 settlement, then resuming on Tuesday because of
- 8 some issues of potential conflict with witnesses.
- 9 MR. THOMPSON: That's correct, Judge.
- MS. MAYFIELD: That's correct.
- 11 JUDGE BURTON: So looking at next
- 12 Tuesday, and that would be June 7th, unless I hear
- 13 otherwise from parties, are we fine beginning at
- 14 8:30 in the morning?
- Now, as it is right now, the parties
- 16 have obviously heard the testimony and the issues
- 17 that have been brought up and the questions that
- 18 the Commission had on the issue low-income pilot
- 19 program, both one in the past and the current one.
- 20 Since the parties haven't formalized any final
- 21 agreement to submit to the Commission as far as the
- 22 revenue requirement for the agreement, if this is
- 23 something that is to be added by the parties in any
- 24 final settlement of potential low-income program,
- 25 that's obviously something the Commission will

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- 1 review. If not, we can review this as part of
- 2 something that might be addressed in the briefing
- 3 at the conclusion of the hearing, and that would be
- 4 an issue of what potential options the parties
- 5 would recommend or suggest for the low-income
- 6 program or other options and the legality of any
- 7 potential conflicts or issues that the parties
- 8 might see or challenges to the Commission looking
- 9 into an experimental program perhaps in either this
- 10 case or in a separate filing.
- Now, just for some housekeeping, the
- 12 only exhibits that we have admitted into the record
- 13 today are Empire's Exhibits 32, 33 and 34, which
- 14 Ms. Carter have clarified they have been provided
- 15 to the court reporter, and Office of the Public
- 16 Counsel's Exhibit 19.
- MS. MAYFIELD: Yes.
- 18 JUDGE BURTON: Is there anything else
- 19 that needs to be addressed while we're on the
- 20 record?
- MS. BELL: Just one thing, your
- 22 Honor. If we do move forward with this list of
- 23 issues, the City of Joplin only takes a position on
- 24 certain issues and so requests for next week to be
- 25 excused from time to time.

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1	JUDGE BURTON: That would be fine. I	
2	just state, provide notice of what days you will be	
3	unavailable.	
4	MS. BELL: Thank you.	
5	MS. CARTER: Judge, we'll try to get	
6	a new schedule to you by the end of tomorrow,	
7	depending on how things go this afternoon and	
8	tomorrow.	
9	JUDGE BURTON: I was hoping for one	
10	today, but I will definitely take tomorrow. Thank	
11	you, everyone, and we're off the record.	
12	(WHEREUPON, the hearing concluded at	
13	11:12 a.m.)	
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	EXHIBIT NO. 2		
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6	Beecher 20	J	
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8	EXHIBIT NO. 4		
	Direct Testimony of Nathaniel W.		
9	Hackney	20	
10	EXHIBIT NO. 5		
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11	Hackney	20	
12	EXHIBIT NO. 6		
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13	W. Hackney	20	
14	EXHIBIT NO. 7	- 20	
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	EXHIBIT NO. 8NP/8HC		
16	Rebuttal Testimony of W. Scott		
	Keith	20	
17			
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20	Direct Testimony of Joan E. Land EXHIBIT NO. 11	20	
21	Direct Testimony of Jeffery P. Lee	2.0	
22	Direct restimony of seriety r. nec		
	EXHIBIT NO. 12		
23	Surrebuttal Testimony of Blake A.		
	Mertens	20	
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2	CERTIFICATE	
3	STATE OF MISSOURI )	
	) ss.	
4	COUNTY OF COLE )	
5	I, Kellene K. Feddersen, Certified	
6	Shorthand Reporter with the firm of Midwest	
7	Litigation Services, do hereby certify that I was	
8	personally present at the proceedings had in the	
9	above-entitled cause at the time and place set	
10	forth in the caption sheet thereof; that I then and	
11	there took down in Stenotype the proceedings had;	
12	and that the foregoing is a full, true and correct	
13	transcript of such Stenotype notes so made at such	
14	time and place.	
15	Given at my office in the City of	
16	Jefferson, County of Cole, State of Missouri.	
17		
	Kellene K. Feddersen, RPR, CSR, CCR	
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