

FILE

ORIGINAL

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO

IN THE MATTER OF:

FirstEnergy Distribution Rate Case Nos:

07-551-EL-AIR
07-552-EL-ATA
07-553-EL-AAM
07-554-EL-UNC

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TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

Distribution Rate Increase Hearing held before Janet K. Stoneking, Attorney Examiner, for the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio, at the City of Wauseon Municipal Building, Council Chambers, Second Floor, 230 Clinton Street, Wauseon, Ohio, on Tuesday, March 11th, 2008, at 6:30 p.m.

ACKERMAN COURT REPORTING
P.O. Box 1807
Toledo, OH 43604
419-244-4448 FAX 419-244-6944

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1 MS. STONEKING: The Public Utilities
2 Commission of Ohio has assigned for hearing at
3 this time and place the following case numbers:
4 07-551-EL-AIR, 07-552-EL-ATA, 07-553-EL-AAM, and
5 07-554-EL-UNC. These cases are titled In The
6 Matter of the Application of Ohio Edison Company,
7 the Toledo Electric Illuminating Company and the
8 Toledo Edison Company for authority to increase
9 rates for distribution service, modify certain
10 accounting practices and for tariff approvals.

11 I want to mention that with electric
12 deregulation your electric bill was broken into
13 three parts. There is the transmission that takes
14 the energy from town to town; there is the
15 generation that creates power; and then there is
16 the wires that take it from the plant to your
17 home. This rate case is focusing on the wires
18 piece or the distribution piece.

19 If you have a question here tonight about
20 this utility rate increase, we do have people here
21 from FirstEnergy that can answer your questions.
22 I will point those out tonight. And we also have
23 a couple of representatives from the office of
24 Consumers' Counsel, and shortly we'll have staff
25 from the Public Utilities Commission to also

1 answer questions for you tonight.

2 I'd like to take appearances at this time
3 of the attorneys that are here that represent the
4 parties in the case.

5 MR. HAYDEN: On behalf of the Companies,
6 Mark A. Hayden, 76 South Main Street, Akron, Ohio,
7 44308.

8 MS. STONEKING: Thank you.

9 MR. REESE: Thank you. On behalf of the
10 residential rate cases of the FirstEnergy
11 Companies and on behalf of the Ohio Consumers'
12 Counsel, Janine Migden-Ostrander, my name is Rick
13 Reese.

14 MS. STONEKING: Thank you. Just to let
15 you know, there were other interveners, or people .
16 who filed who asked to be a party in the case.
17 That's what we mean by the term intervener. Those
18 people who were granted intervention for party
19 status are the City of Cleveland, a citizen
20 coalition comprised of Consumers For Fair Utility
21 Rates; The Empowerment Center of Greater Cleveland
22 and the Neighborhood Environment Coalition. Also
23 intervening are the Northwest Ohio Aggregation
24 Coalition, the Kroger Company, Constellation New
25 Energy, Industrial Energy Users Ohio, the Ohio

1 Energy Group, Ohio Home Builders, the Ohio
2 Manufacturer's Association, Ohio Partners for
3 Affordable Energy, the Ohio Schools Council, and
4 Nucor Steel Marion, Incorporated. Each of these
5 parties will represent their various constituents
6 in the rate case.

7 On June 7th, 2007, the Ohio Edison
8 Company, the Toledo Edison Company and the
9 Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company, all three
10 we refer to as FirstEnergy, filed applications
11 with the Public Utilities Commission to increase
12 their electric distribution rates. By their
13 applications, each electric distribution company
14 is seeking a rate increase that would generate
15 specific revenues for that individual company.
16 Here you're in the Toledo Edison area. In their
17 application they've requested approximately
18 \$70,539,796 of additional revenue, or an increase
19 of 44.6 percent over the current revenue.

20 As part of the rate case proceeding, the
21 staff of the Public Utilities Commission has
22 inspected portions of the company plant and
23 equipment, interviewed company personnel and
24 government officials, reviewed company records,
25 performed analysis of data including financial

1 information that was collected from the company.
2 The Commission staff then prepared and filed a
3 staff report for each company on December 4th,
4 2007. The staff report summarizes the staff's
5 findings concerning each company's financial
6 situation, their service performance and sets
7 forth recommendations in this case, which among
8 other things, recommends the following for the
9 Toledo Edison Company.

10 The staff has recommended a revenue
11 increase for the distribution portion of a range
12 between \$34,924,693 and \$37,823,225 for an
13 increase of between 22.25 and 24.10 percent over
14 the current revenue for the distribution portion
15 of your electric bill. There are 12 local public
16 hearings being scheduled in this case like the
17 hearing here tonight, and that's one part of the
18 rate case. There is also an evidentiary hearing
19 in the case which was held in Columbus and began
20 on January 29th, 2008. The purpose of the
21 evidentiary hearing was to allow the companies,
22 the staff and the interveners to present witnesses
23 and evidence in support of each of their positions
24 in the case.

25 The purpose of the hearing tonight is for

1 the Commission to receive comments from the public
2 regarding the Toledo Edison's distribution rate
3 increase application. We won't be hearing from
4 the companies or the staff or any of the
5 interveners tonight. This is your opportunity to
6 let the Commission know what you think about the
7 company's request to increase its distribution
8 rates.

9 You've noticed that we have a court
10 reporter here tonight. For the people who are
11 testifying, it will be sworn testimony. When you
12 come to the podium, I'll ask you to raise your
13 hand and swear you in or ask you to affirm that
14 your testimony is true. If there is anyone that
15 did not get a chance to sign in to testify and
16 that you would like to later, you will certainly
17 have the opportunity to do that. I'm going to
18 call witnesses in the order that they signed up.
19 I will attempt not to mangle your names. If when
20 I call your name you've decided that you no longer
21 want to testify, you can just merely pass to the
22 next witness. Once you've testified, you're
23 welcome to stay, or if you'd like to leave, you
24 may do that also. If you happen to bring
25 testimony tonight in typewritten form, it would be

1 helpful to give the court reporter a copy of that
2 testimony.

3 Do you have any questions about the
4 process that I talked about for this evening?
5 Okay.

6 Marc Robinson. Please raise your right
7 hand.

8 - - -

9 having been duly sworn as provided by law, testified and said as
10 follows:

11 - - -

12 MS. STONEKING: Please state and spell
13 your name and address for the record.

14 MR. ROBINSON: My name is Marc, M-a-r-c
15 A., Robinson, R-o-b-i-n-s-o-n. 126 South Fulton
16 Street, Wauseon, Ohio.

17 MS. STONEKING: Thank you.

18 MR. ROBINSON: Good evening. I would
19 like to extend a sincere thank you to the
20 Commission for allowing me the opportunity to
21 discuss the impact of electric rate increases on
22 what is perhaps the most precious commodity in all
23 communities, the education of our young people.

24 My name is Marc Robinson, and I am
25 currently the Superintendent of the Wauseon

1 Exempted Village School District right here in
2 Fulton County, Ohio.

3 I would first like to start out by
4 expressing our district's appreciation to
5 FirstEnergy for providing ours and 248 other
6 school districts outstanding support in the past.
7 We have had two Energy for Education Programs over
8 the last ten years which have been extremely
9 helpful in keeping electric rates down. These
10 meaningful savings have been used to provide
11 additional educational opportunities for the boys
12 and girls of Wauseon.

13 However, the elimination of the Energy
14 for Education Program, along with potential rate
15 increases, will have a significant impact on our
16 school district. Let me share specifically what
17 this could mean in the Wauseon schools.

18 The Energy for Education Program, which
19 will expire on December 31st, 2008, will result in
20 nearly a 13.5 percent increase in our electric
21 rates. In total, this will increase the rates of
22 the 249 other participating school districts in
23 the Ohio Schools Council by \$11.7 million.
24 Specifically, in Wauseon the elimination of this
25 program will result in an increase of \$32,000.

1 Additionally, should the PUCO approve a
2 rate increase, we would estimate that our annual
3 electric costs will increase another \$56 to
4 \$58,000. All told, this could mean a total annual
5 increase of nearly \$90,000 for our school
6 district.

7 Unfortunately, this is an operational
8 cost increase that we have absolutely no control
9 over. We would have to cut elsewhere in our
10 budget to deal with this increase. As we have
11 looked to evaluate the real meaning of this cost
12 increase, it would equate to the following
13 examples: The salary of three classroom teachers
14 on an annual basis; the purchase of an entire set
15 of textbooks and supplies for two grade levels;
16 the equivalent cost of one and a quarter brand new
17 school buses; the cost of replacing 100 computers
18 in the classroom and computer labs in our school
19 district; the purchase of three years' worth of
20 additional or replacement books for all four of
21 our school district's libraries; the purchase of
22 36 projectors and Smart boards for our classrooms;
23 and finally, the potential need to go to the
24 taxpayers of our community to ask for additional
25 one half mill in property tax.

1 All in all this increase hits school
2 districts disproportionately hard. It is not a
3 gradual increase, but a huge increase.

4 I would ask that you take a serious look
5 at the impact of potential rate increases on
6 school districts. I would truly request that the
7 Commission be sympathetic towards public schools
8 and look at and treat us as a distinct group
9 worthy of the types of discounted rates for which
10 we have been eligible in the past.

11 Thank you very much for taking the time
12 to listen to my concerns.

13 MS. STONEKING: Thank you for your
14 testimony.

15 Mike Van Wagner.

16 MR. VAN WAGNER: I decided not to
17 testify. I just came here to watch.

18 MS. STONEKING: Vance Jacobs. Carla
19 Rice. Please raise your right hand.

20 - - -

21 having been duly sworn as provided by law, testified and said as
22 follows:

23 - - -

24 MS. STONEKING: Please state your name
25 and spell your name and give your address.

1 MS. RICE: My name is Carla, C-a-r-l-a,
2 Rice, R-i-c-e. Address is 103 West Young Street,
3 Liberty Center, Ohio.

4 As I said, my name is Carla Rice. I'm
5 the treasurer of Liberty Center Schools located in
6 Henry County. I'd like to thank the Commission
7 for allowing me to explain how an electric rate
8 increase will impact the education of the children
9 in Liberty Center. For prospective on the size of
10 our district, we have 1,200 students, we operate
11 one building for all grades. Our general fund
12 budget is \$11.1 million. Our electric bill
13 accounts for 1.4 percent of that general fund
14 budget, and we are currently a Toledo Edison
15 customer.

16 Ohio Schools Council expert witnesses
17 have estimated the average distribution costs of
18 electric will increase between 40 to 60 percent
19 beginning January 1, 2009.

20 With the expiration of the Energy for
21 Education II program, the average increase for all
22 districts for electricity will be 13.4 percent.

23 The loss of the special school rates for
24 districts in the Toledo Edison territory also
25 increases the cost of electricity.

1 The change in the cost of the generation
2 rates is undeterminable at this point but is also
3 expected to add to the cost of electricity.

4 We must prepare a budget appropriation
5 for fiscal year 2009 and will plan on the total
6 cost of electricity increasing between 30 and
7 40 percent starting in January of 2009 as a result
8 of the factors I mentioned earlier. As such, we
9 will recommend that an additional \$30,000 be
10 appropriated for our coming fiscal year, which is
11 really a half of the increase as the rest of the
12 fiscal year or the rest of the calendar year will
13 be continued into our next fiscal year. This
14 amount would be doubled in the following years as
15 I project these increases for our five-year
16 financial forecast as required by the State of
17 Ohio. The amount of the increase is equivalent to
18 one teacher in Liberty Center, including salary
19 and benefits.

20 This increase becomes another in a long
21 list of unfunded mandates over which local schools
22 and the local taxpayer has no control. We will
23 have to make cuts elsewhere in our budget in order
24 to fund this increase.

25 At a time when gas prices are rising,

1 health insurance costs are increasing, and special
2 education costs are rising, we are already making
3 cuts in staff and not purchasing much-needed
4 textbooks and technology equipment. We and our
5 taxpayers cannot afford these drastic increases in
6 electric rates.

7 The taxpayers across the state are
8 consistently saying no to school levies for
9 additional operating funds. I do not think that
10 this is because they are not supporting the
11 schools, but because the economic climate and
12 their own personal funds are strapped to the
13 limit. We have already squeezed the turnip and
14 there is no more funding to be had.

15 Further, the Ohio Schools Council's
16 analysis has concluded that a school's load
17 characteristics are more favorable than other
18 commercial customers. Schools do not peak during
19 the three summer months like other commercial
20 customers because school is not in session during
21 those peak days. Therefore, special school rates,
22 which currently exist for Toledo Edison customers,
23 are justified and should continue.

24 This increase hits schools
25 disproportionately hard, especially with the loss

1 of the discount in the Energy For Education II
2 program. This is not a gradual increase, it is a
3 tidal wave.

4 Thank you for listening to my concerns
5 about a rate increase and its impact on the
6 dollars needed for educating the children. We
7 hope the Commission will be sympathetic towards
8 schools and look at us as a distinct group worthy
9 of the school rates which have been in effect.
10 Thank you.

11 MS. STONEKING: Thank you for your
12 testimony. If you have a typed statement, if you
13 could please give it to the court reporter.

14 Dean Genter.

15 - - -

16 having been duly sworn as provided by law, testified and said as
17 follows:

18 - - -

19 MS. STONEKING: Please state and spell
20 your name for the record and give your address.

21 MR. GENTER: Dean A. Genter, G-e-n-t-e-r,
22 last name. 152 South Fulton Street, Fulton County
23 Commissioner.

24 Thank you for this opportunity to come
25 and speak before you, the Public Utilities

1 Commission. On behalf of myself and Commissioner
2 Joe Short, Commissioner Paul Barnaby, I just
3 wanted to say a few words tonight. I don't have
4 any numbers or facts that I want to give you, but
5 concerns.

6 As commissioners, we're concerned about
7 economic development and what these price hikes
8 will do to our business and industries. As you
9 know, we are heavy in manufacturing here in Fulton
10 County, anywhere from woodworking to steel, to
11 small business, to retail, and we have a lot of
12 concern in that sector as far as the impact that
13 these price increases will have on those
14 industries. You know, it is tough enough to be
15 competitive with other neighboring states to keep
16 our businesses here providing good-paying jobs for
17 our residents here in Fulton County. Not only
18 that, I want to talk, we also as commissioners
19 represent various entities, like the Senior
20 Center, who represents a lot of our seniors here
21 in Fulton County. A lot of our seniors are on
22 fixed incomes, and with the increase in fuel
23 prices and heating oil and so forth, natural gas,
24 it's hard for them to continue to absorb the
25 increases in those electric rates that are

1 proposed. We also have Northwest Community Action
2 I represent. I'm also going to be the president
3 of that organization. They represent a lot of the
4 low and moderate income people. Again, we just
5 continue to -- are more involved in more and more
6 vouchers for utility expenditures and increased
7 costs and that will just make more and more people
8 be lining up at our doors for those vouchers.

9 So as you listen to our school districts,
10 and I guess my concerns and also the concerns of
11 our residents, as you can see this place is
12 somewhat full, I would say packed, that they have
13 concerns and they're tired of increases and
14 increases after increase. And I know the
15 frustrations of Toledo Edison, and maybe as we
16 talk about deregulation, maybe we should
17 deregulate regulations because we know as
18 government officials, they know as Toledo Edison,
19 everybody's over regulated. And the hoops that
20 you have to jump through to make any type of
21 expansion, to provide additional services, it's
22 frustrating the demands on mandates and rules and
23 regulations that we have to follow to make sure
24 before we can do any steps to try to expand our
25 utility base.

1 So I applaud Toledo Edison, what they can
2 do, appreciate their viability of the utility that
3 they have. We don't have many brownouts or loss
4 of electricity, and when we do, they're there to
5 provide the service to get us up and running
6 again. But I do have concerns representing the
7 entities I just talked about as far as being able
8 to continue to afford the ever increasing prices
9 we have to pay for our utilities. Thank you.

10 MS. STONEKING: Thank you for your
11 testimony. Robert Gustwiller, Gustwiller.

12 Would you please raise your right hand.

13 - - -

14 having been duly sworn as provided by law, testified and said as
15 follows:

16 - - -

17 MS. STONEKING: Please state and spell
18 your name for the record and also give your
19 address.

20 MR. GUSTWILLER: Robert F. Gustwiller.
21 Robert, R-o-b-e-r-t, F., G-u-s-t-w-i-l-l-e-r. I
22 thank you for letting us -- my address is 15725
23 County Road K. I just represent myself as a
24 resident of Fulton County and as a small business
25 operator. I am the chief operations officer of a

1 locally-owned business for 29 years in our family,
2 which is the Arrowhead Motel out by the toll road.
3 We are an energy sensitive company if you want to
4 see that way, because with the gasoline increases
5 that are going on, we're not sure what kind of
6 revenues we're going to have this year because
7 people won't be able to travel. So any increase
8 in anything as like this rate increase that you're
9 talking about, even though you told them you could
10 maybe go 24 percent increase, any kind of increase
11 is going to really hurt our small business and
12 probably just make it a lot tougher for our family
13 to hold on after 29 years, or any kind of rate
14 increase with the gasoline crisis that's going on.

15 And as the school systems and everything
16 was talking here, they're talking about changing
17 their budgets and everything. What they have to
18 do is they have to come to us, the taxpayers, and
19 try to get us to raise our property taxes, which
20 is another rate increase that we can't afford on
21 our property out there. And we got a new school
22 in Wauseon that we got to be building here, so any
23 kind of a rate increase is going to be very
24 detrimental to any small business. We're not
25 talking big businesses, it's going to hurt

1 everyone, but the small business is really going
2 to hurt. So I would appreciate it that if the
3 PUCO could see fit to maybe tell them to try to
4 cut somewhere else in their budgets and try to
5 recoup their losses on their power lines somewhere
6 else in their company instead of trying to get a
7 rate increase at this time going into this future
8 that we got going with the economic situation.
9 Thank you.

10 MS. STONEKING: Thank you for your
11 testimony. Terry Stites.

12 - - -

13 having been duly sworn as provided by law, testified and said as
14 follows:

15 - - -

16 MS. STONEKING: Please state and spell
17 your name for the record and your address.

18 MR. STITES: My name is Terry Stites,
19 T-e-r-r-y, S-t-i-t-e-s. My address is 11213
20 County Road C.

21 MS. STONEKING: Thank you.

22 MR. STITES: In all fairness, I do thank
23 Toledo Edison for their good service record, have
24 an excellent service record. That's appreciated.
25 I'm also a pretty good customer since I've had an

1 all electric house since 1968, so you can see why
2 I'm here, all electric. The last rate increase we
3 had pretty well -- my wife and I are on our own
4 now, the kids are gone, we live in a moderate size
5 house. We've got three rooms that we keep the
6 heat down in the 50s.

7 I've also noticed some other things too.
8 I've also noticed a number of my neighbors --
9 we're all living in a rural area -- now no longer
10 leave their security lights on at night because
11 they feel they can't afford it anymore. So that's
12 where we're coming from. If we have another
13 massive rate increase, I'm pretty much retired, on
14 fixed income and there is a lot of folks that I
15 know, and especially in the rural areas, that are
16 probably much worse off than what I am and they're
17 going to be between a rock and a hard place. What
18 are they going to do? A lot of us, we do not have
19 accessibility to natural gas. Propane is very
20 prohibitive, some folks here, I'm sure, would be
21 able to attest to. And so where does that leave
22 us? So am I going to have to put a furnace in?
23 If I do so, I have to make some real tough
24 decisions if there's a big increase. It probably
25 would, I'm sure, will cost some people to possibly

1 sell their homes, move into a small apartment,
2 have to give up their house. There is some other
3 things that can happen along this line, and I
4 certainly would request that you take this into
5 consideration, and my request is that you might
6 have some mercy upon people, the senior citizens
7 on fixed income and especially some of your
8 customers like myself that have been around since
9 1968. And when I signed up for it, I was told
10 that I would always have a special rate, which I
11 find out now as of January 1 of '09 will be gone.
12 And that's the reason I'm here tonight. So I
13 guess that's about it. Thank you.

14 MS. STONEKING: Thank you for your
15 testimony. Penny Gruszecki.

16 - - -

17 having been duly sworn as provided by law, testified and said as
18 follows:

19 - - -

20 MS. STONEKING: Please state and spell
21 your name for the record and your address.

22 MS. GRUSZECKI: Penny, P-e-n-n-y,
23 G-r-u-s-z-e-c-k-i, 720 Westwood Drive, Defiance.
24 I'd like to thank you, I'm glad to have the
25 opportunity to be able to address the local public

1 hearing assembly. My colleagues and I are with
2 Northwestern Ohio Community Action Commission.
3 And as the community services staff, we are the
4 ones in the field that see firsthand the
5 day-to-day struggles of low-income families in
6 this five-county area. And while we understand
7 that your proposed rate increase is part of a
8 long-term restructuring plan started years ago, it
9 is our hope that you will consider our points and
10 change the terms of your proposal.

11 A rate increase would not be beneficial
12 because it will increase the PIPP customer base.
13 Electric enrollment in PIPP increased 16 percent
14 in 2006 due a 5 percent increase implemented in
15 2005. The proposed 9.8 percent rate increase
16 could potentially result in a 32 percent increase
17 in PIPP enrollment. From 2005 to 2006 our
18 agency's emergency services payments to Toledo
19 Edison increased by 30 percent. While having an
20 average increase of only 14 percent in other years
21 that did not experience a rate increase.

22 Customers would remain on PIPP
23 indefinitely due to astronomical bills. The rates
24 may have gone up, but income remains the same.
25 Then you have the in-between households.

1 Households may be able to receive HEAP but not be
2 eligible for PIPP. Families making the sacrifice
3 of food versus electricity and/or working longer
4 hours versus time spent with the family. For
5 those households there is only alternative payment
6 plans.

7 Households with Social Security income or
8 with lower incomes that won't allow for a higher
9 budget plans, the ones at 1/3 and 1/6 plans will
10 also be too high. And what, if any, new payment
11 plans will be made available to households with
12 incomes between 150 and 175 percent.

13 Then you have to look at the future costs
14 to Toledo Edison consumers. The universal service
15 rider is based on consumption and the rate
16 increase is based on distribution. How is that
17 going to affect the repayment of PIPP forgiveness
18 plans and bills of deceased customers. In 2005
19 the consumption rate increase freeze ends on
20 December 31, 2008. Is there another rate increase
21 proposal in the works?

22 Then there is effects on other consumers.
23 Municipals buy from alternative energy suppliers,
24 and those who buy from Toledo Edison will most
25 likely experience a rate increase also.

1 Municipals do not offer PIPP, 1/3, 1/6 or budget
2 plans, and some charge up to \$275 for just a
3 service reconnection. There is no \$175 plan for
4 these households.

5 Is an increase going to effect the
6 municipals and the co-ops? Given the experience
7 that we have with servicing low-income households,
8 we believe that this rate increase will put undo
9 economic burdens on families, service agencies and
10 other utility consumers creating a downward spiral
11 of problems.

12 MS. STONEKING: Thank you. Sydney W.
13 Taylor.

14 MR. TAYLOR: Pass.

15 MS. STONEKING: Opal Taylor.

16 - - -

17 having been duly sworn as provided by law, testified and said as
18 follows:

19 - - -

20 MS. STONEKING: Please state and spell
21 your name for the record and also give your
22 address.

23 MS. TAYLOR: Opal Taylor, O-p-a-l,
24 T-a-y-l-o-r, 223 Sycamore, S-y-c-a-m-o-r-e,
25 Wauseon.

1 MS. STONEKING: Thank you. Please give
2 your statement.

3 MS. TAYLOR: I'm here for a senior
4 citizen. We are on a fixed income, and when you
5 raise yours and the gas company raised theirs, and
6 the school has to be -- then all that trickles
7 down and where does it stop? We use as little as
8 we can. We don't go to the hotels and the best
9 restaurants and all the places that the executives
10 have to go to entertain their people. I'm
11 thinking that everybody's going to have to cut
12 down like we did when we were in the depression.
13 Most of you are not familiar with the depression
14 and what we had to do. And so I'm thinking, you
15 know, maybe somebody ought -- I read in the paper
16 yesterday a woman, Indian woman, an American
17 citizen, had been here forever and could not get
18 Medicaid because she didn't have the right papers.
19 They implemented a program that you have to have
20 certain papers in order to get Medicaid and she
21 couldn't get it and yet she's lived in the United
22 States forever and her ancestors. It cost \$100 to
23 implement and make sure everybody had their
24 citizenship and it cost -- and all it saved was 14
25 cents. Now how can people do this? I think we

1 all need to start watching our pennies. Now, I
2 know that I'm going to support the school, and the
3 bus is going to have to run on gas, and the gas
4 prices jumped 30 cents in three days. So, you
5 know, where is it going to end? The school has to
6 run, and if you put your lights up, how are the
7 kids going to be able to see? It just has to end
8 someplace, and I'm here to say I'm glad I don't
9 have a lot longer to live to see this fiasco.
10 Thank you.

11 MS. STONEKING: Thank you for your
12 testimony. Ken Jones.

13 - - -

14 having been duly sworn as provided by law, testified and said as
15 follows:

16 - - -

17 MS. STONEKING: Please state and spell
18 your name for the record and also state your
19 address.

20 MR. JONES: My name is Ken Jones, K-e-n,
21 J-o-n-e-s. My address is 935 Ottawa Way, Wauseon,
22 Ohio. Good evening. My name is Ken Jones and my
23 position is the Superintendent of the Evergreen
24 Schools in Fulton County.

25 I want to thank the Commission for this

1 opportunity to discuss the effects of electric
2 rate increases on the educational opportunities
3 for the students in the Evergreen Local Schools.

4 Let me first of all express my
5 appreciation to FirstEnergy Corporation for
6 providing reliable and efficient electricity to
7 the 249 school districts that make up the Ohio
8 Schools Council. This partnership between
9 FirstEnergy and the Ohio Schools Council in the
10 Energy for Education Programs during the past ten
11 years has provided substantial savings in
12 electricity costs for these school districts.

13 My purpose in testifying before you this
14 evening is to share with you the financial impact
15 to my district that will result from the
16 elimination of the Energy for Education Program
17 and the added burden of potential rate increases
18 if allowed by the Public Utilities Commission and
19 the Ohio legislature.

20 The Energy for Education Program II,
21 which will expire on December 31st of 2008, will
22 cause our electric rates to increase by
23 13.4 percent, the present negotiated savings with
24 FirstEnergy. This will increase the cost to the
25 249 participating school districts by more than

1 \$11.7 million per year.

2 Specifically, the Evergreen Local Schools
3 has paid FirstEnergy an average of \$250,000 per
4 year for electricity use during the past three
5 years. The elimination of the Energy for
6 Education Program II will immediately increase the
7 cost to the Evergreen School District by
8 \$33,500 per year.

9 The Ohio Schools Council's expert witness
10 has estimated the average distribution cost will
11 increase between 40 and 60 percent. While the
12 cost of the generation rates is undeterminable at
13 this point, it is realistic to expect additional
14 costs for electricity for the Evergreen Schools.

15 School districts are now in the process
16 of preparing their budgets for fiscal 2009. We
17 need to plan for the total cost of electricity
18 increasing between 30 and 40 percent starting in
19 January of 2009 as a result of the factors I've
20 listed above. As such, we will be recommending
21 that an additional \$100,000 be appropriated for
22 the coming fiscal year for our increased energy
23 costs related to electricity. This would be
24 equivalent to the elimination of three teachers,
25 impacting both educational programs and class

1 size.

2 \$100,000 is also equivalent to educating
3 12 students in the Evergreen Schools for one year.
4 \$100,000 would pay the supplemental contracts for
5 all the football coaches, boys and girls
6 basketball coaches, volleyball coaches, wrestling
7 coaches, baseball and softball coaches at
8 Evergreen for one year. To eliminate these
9 activities would affect over 150 student/athletes
10 in the Evergreen Schools.

11 In order for the Evergreen Board of
12 Education to raise an additional \$100,000 in
13 revenue, local taxpayers would need to pay an
14 additional one mill of property tax. It is
15 doubtful that the Evergreen residents would vote
16 to increase their property taxes to pay for the
17 school district's increased electric costs.

18 Finally, let me assure you that I
19 understand the importance for a business to make
20 money. If FirstEnergy does not turn a profit, the
21 advantages we have, as a result of being able to
22 turn a switch and have electricity at our
23 fingertips may be lost. The question is, does
24 FirstEnergy Corporation need a rate increase at
25 this time to keep their company viable?

1 The February 28th, 2008, edition of the
2 Cleveland Plain Dealer reported, and I quote,
3 Though its fourth quarter profits were down
4 slightly, FirstEnergy Corp. finished last year
5 with record profits of \$1.3 billion, the highest
6 in the ten-year history of the Akron-based
7 utility. This same article reported that, quote,
8 Top corporate officers called 2007 a solid year
9 and predicted even better results this year,
10 earnings of up to \$4.43 per share. Drivers of
11 growing profitability would be increasing the
12 generation capacity of the company's power plants,
13 running them more efficiently and improving system
14 reliability.

15 As you consider FirstEnergy's request to
16 increase their rates to the consumer, I would ask
17 you to seriously consider the consequences of such
18 action. Higher electric costs will hinder school
19 administrators and school boards of education in
20 their efforts to provide a quality education for
21 students under their care. By increasing the cost
22 to the public schools, parents pay for electricity
23 twice, once at home when they pay their bill and
24 once at school when they pay their taxes. Thank
25 you for your consideration in this matter.

1 MS. STONEKING: Thank you for your
2 testimony. Wayne Sorrel.

3 MR. SORREL: Pass.

4 MS. STONEKING: Michael Hurd.

5 - - -

6 having been duly sworn as provided by law, testified and said as
7 follows:

8 - - -

9 MR. HURD: My name is Mike Hurd, H-u-r-d,
10 755 South Shoop Avenue, Wauseon, Ohio. I'm here
11 tonight as a consumer. I also manage the hospital
12 facilities as Maintenance Director, so I see
13 firsthand the increases of utilities and how it
14 affects the cost that everyone pays for health
15 care. My biggest concern before you tonight is
16 the deregulation process. In 2000 deregulation
17 was explained to us. The stranded costs utility
18 companies were to come before you as my
19 understanding, and correct me if I'm wrong, with
20 their capital acquisitions and deregulation was
21 going to hit in five years that they had to pay
22 for those capital acquisitions, and stranded costs
23 were allowed which were to counterset those
24 capital acquisition expenses so that when
25 deregulation took place they would be able to turn

1 a profit and continue to function. Now, in 2001
2 the stranded costs started and they were supposed
3 to end in 2005 originally. Is that correct so
4 far?

5 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: We can't answer your
6 question.

7 MS. STONEKING: They can talk to you
8 afterwards.

9 MR. HURD: Then continuing on into 2008,
10 so now we're coming back with another rate
11 increase. I'm just wondering how did this happen,
12 how did this deregulation process that appears to
13 have fallen apart. We all know what happened with
14 the natural gas. It goes to people who buy it and
15 resell it. The companies that produce it don't
16 sell it anymore, they sell it to people who have
17 money -- who make money off of us. Same thing
18 takes place with gasoline. And now we're going to
19 turn electricity over to that same group of
20 people, and I'm just concerned how that is in the
21 best interest of the Ohio public. Someone needs
22 to explain that to me in a way that's
23 satisfactory. We've already seen stranded costs
24 extend two years beyond what they're supposed to
25 and now a big rate increase because probably

1 utility companies see they can't make a marketable
2 share when a deregulation hits, so they want a
3 rate increase on their distribution side so they
4 can make up for it. So I'm going to say what half
5 the people in this room already think, and that is
6 if we did our job like that, we'd have to be
7 looking for another job. Thank you.

8 MS. STONEKING: Thank you. Lorraine
9 Klopfenstein.

10 - - -

11 having been duly sworn as provided by law, testified and said as
12 follows:

13 - - -

14 MS. STONEKING: Please state and spell
15 your name for the record and your address.

16 MS. KLOPFENSTEIN: Lorraine,
17 L-o-r-r-a-i-n-e, Klopfenstein,
18 K-l-o-p-f-e-n-s-t-e-i-n, 14900 County Road K,
19 Wauseon. I'm Lorraine Klopfenstein, and I'm just
20 a factory worker from Wauseon. I just see it as
21 you guys need a rate increase. Well, a lot of us
22 need jobs. I have family and friends that don't
23 have jobs right now because their companies have
24 left them. Me, I'm laid off right now. Our land
25 tax is so ridiculous. Even with my husband and I

1 both working it's really hard to even make our
2 land taxes, and if the schools are going to need
3 more taxes, we just can't afford it. All of us, I
4 speak for everybody, is that we've worked so hard
5 for everything we have and everything just keeps
6 going up and up more and more and it's just
7 railroading us. Nobody can afford it. I mean, I
8 would like to know why all these companies, gas,
9 electric, everybody can't look at us with common
10 sense instead of dollar signs, you know. It's
11 eating us. I've worked too hard for what I have
12 in order to let, like, power companies and gas
13 companies and everybody -- I don't want to lose my
14 home. I've worked too hard for what I have, all
15 of us have. And I can't see how what with taxes
16 going up, if the schools need more money for this,
17 we can't afford it. I look around at all the
18 people right now that don't have jobs, and I don't
19 know where they think they're going to pull it out
20 of us to even be able to afford anymore. It's
21 just it trickles down to the everyday housewife.
22 People -- I mean, look at me, I don't dress fancy.
23 This is all I got, you know. I work in a factory,
24 and I don't have much, but what I do have, it's
25 hard to keep. And if we have to pay more for

1 electricity even on top of everything else, I just
2 don't see how these companies think we can do it.
3 It's hurting everybody, our kids, our future. You
4 know, like I said, you need more money? Well, how
5 about our people getting their jobs back first.
6 We don't even have jobs to comply with that, a lot
7 of people. I just don't know how -- if the
8 schools are going to be hurting, it's going to
9 trickle down, but I know I can't afford any more
10 taxes or nothing. My husband and I can't, my
11 family can't, my neighbors can't, my friends
12 can't. It's not even feasible. I don't
13 understand why, you know. I mean, it don't make
14 sense. I don't even have a job right now. I
15 mean, we're laid off. Like I said, everybody else
16 is out of jobs, and I mean, where are we supposed
17 to come up with helping? We can't even help
18 ourselves, let alone help the schools. That's how
19 I see it. I just wanted to share that with you.

20 MS. STONEKING: Thank you for your
21 testimony. Larry Klopfenstein.

22 MR. KLOPFENSTEIN: Pass.

23 MS. STONEKING: Connie Sperry.

24 - - -

25 having been duly sworn as provided by law, testified and said as

1 follows:

2

- - -

3

MS. STONEKING: Please state and spell
4 your name for the record and give your address.

5

6

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10

MS. SPERRY: My name is Connie
C-o-n-n-i-e, Sperry, S-p-e-r-r-y. My home address
is 808 Burr Road, Wauseon. I'm also here
representing my workplace, which is the Senior
Center next door, and that address is 240 Clinton
Street, Wauseon.

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I see a lot of my seniors here in the
crowd, and I'm so proud of Opal Taylor who stood
up here and talked. Every day on a daily basis we
see the impact of higher bills, whether it be
medication, utilities. We see the people applying
for HEAP; we see the people applying for all sorts
of help. I would like to thank you for letting us
voice our opinions. I am here on behalf of myself
too, because I am a consumer, and I truly
appreciate Toledo Edison and what they've given to
us. But I cannot understand after reviewing the
facts -- and often at the Senior Center we have an
Ohio Consumers' Counsel representative give us
information on all utilities. After reviewing
facts that they have given us, we just feel

1 compelled to come and speak out against Toledo
2 Edison's proposed rate increase.

3 Given our current economic climate and
4 the need to keep jobs and promote jobs in this
5 county, I cannot see how this rate increase could
6 possibly do anything but harm. As a matter of
7 fact, yesterday at a board meeting at the Senior
8 Center I believe Dean Genter, one of our
9 commissioners, stated that one of our local
10 industries here is going to have like a
11 \$20 million increase above what they pay
12 currently. Now, how can that impact anything but
13 their bottom line? It just can't happen.

14 Many families who are already struggling
15 economically will find themselves on the brink or
16 pushed over the edge into economic disaster. We
17 have words like working poor. Well, I think we
18 can all attest to that. We are the working poor.
19 Our seniors, who we love dearly and care for every
20 day, we see them choose between medication and
21 food. How in the world will this added, this
22 added increase be to their benefit?

23 Please consider the impact that this
24 increase Toledo Edison has proposed will have on
25 Northwest Ohioans, who already pay the highest

1 rate in Ohio.

2 Thank you for your time and your
3 consideration.

4 MS. STONEKING: Thank you for your
5 testimony. Jerry Dehnbostel.

6 - - -

7 having been duly sworn as provided by law, testified and said as
8 follows:

9 - - -

10 6789: My name is Jerry J-e-r-r-y,
11 Dehnbostel, D-e-h-n-b-o-s-t-e-l, 701 Burr Road,
12 Wauseon, Ohio. I'd like to speak both as mayor of
13 Wauseon and a small business owner near Wauseon.

14 I believe as Dean Genter alluded to, the
15 life blood of any community is jobs. When we
16 interview with a business looking to relocate or
17 to expand, they always agree we have a great water
18 source, we have great employees available, we have
19 a great place to live. When they ask our energy
20 source and we tell them Toledo Edison, that is
21 usually, if anything, what turns them away.
22 That's what turns them away. With another
23 increase, that's going to make it more and more
24 difficult. And as Mrs. Klopfenstein said, we're
25 going to have more and more people out of work.

1 We cannot afford that. As a business owner, last
2 year was a terrible year for me. I did not make
3 any money. I was in the red. I have to compete
4 with businesses that are not Toledo Edison
5 customers, and I can't add anything in there
6 because I have to pay more for utilities than one
7 of my competitors from out of the area, so I have
8 to eat that cost. If I have to eat another
9 24 percent increase in utility costs, I could be
10 very well further in the red next year.

11 Just want to thank the Commission for
12 holding this meeting tonight and hopefully the
13 Commission will reconsider the proposed increase.

14 MS. STONEKING: Thank you for your
15 testimony.

16 George Stuckey.

17 - - -

18 having been duly sworn as provided by law, testified and said as
19 follows:

20 - - -

21 MS. STONEKING: Please state and spell
22 your name for the record and give your address.

23 6789: George Stuckey, G-e-o-r-g-e,
24 S-t-u-c-k-e-y, 112 Washington Street.

25 I'm here as a private citizen. I've done

1 everything I could to make my house as efficient
2 as possible. I have all fluorescent lights. I
3 don't have any electric utilities other than
4 refrigerator and some of the smaller appliances.
5 My question is why is this increase necessary with
6 the profits that Cleveland Dispatch, or the
7 Cleveland newspaper as attested to? I guess I
8 don't understand why we need these considerable
9 increases, 24 percent. I understand this is
10 strictly for distribution costs. Is Toledo Edison
11 going to come to us in another couple years and
12 ask for another rate increase for generation
13 costs? I don't know what their stance is going to
14 be on that. If it's going to be generation costs,
15 are we going to subsidize mismanagement at
16 Davis-Besse. How do you allow boric acid
17 intrusion into the reactor cap? I guess I don't
18 understand that. I don't know how much it costs
19 to repair that. I'm sure that the customers of
20 Toledo Edison are paying for that cost too now.

21 And the North Star Steel plant out here,
22 they employ quite a few people here in Fulton
23 County, but what do they pay for electrical costs?
24 I mean, they're a large customer. I don't know
25 how many megawatt hours, megawatt, kilowatt hours,

1 or whatever they use a day out there, but are the
2 citizens of Fulton County and Toledo Edison
3 customers subsidizing their costs for electric
4 power. I don't know what those big induction
5 heaters out there cost to melt the steel, how much
6 power they require. It seems that everybody here
7 in this room and in Fulton County and all the
8 customers of Toledo Edison may be subsidizing
9 those rates. I've never seen any data on how much
10 they pay per kilowatt hour. I'm sure it's
11 probably less than residential customers.

12 My grandfather was the district
13 supervisor for Toledo Edison out here on Lawrence
14 Avenue for probably 30 or 35 years. George
15 Devries was his name. I think he's probably
16 rolling over in his grave right now thinking about
17 all these rate increases you guys been asking for
18 in the last 30, 40 years. It just seems like it
19 never stops. And along with everybody else here,
20 taxes are increasing, gas prices are increasing.
21 It's got to stop somewhere, gentlemen. Thank you
22 for your time.

23 MS. STONEKING: Thank you for your
24 testimony. Cheryl Swisher.

1 having been duly sworn as provided by law, testified and said as
2 follows:

3 - - -

4 MS. STONEKING: Please state and spell
5 your name for the record.

6 MS. SWISHER: Cheryl, C-h-e-r-y-l,
7 Swisher, S-w-i-s-h-e-r.

8 I am the Treasurer of Swanton Local
9 School District. We are about 15 miles east of
10 here, so I'd like to reiterate the comments of my
11 colleagues tonight in saying the impact this would
12 have on our school district. The program that we
13 participate in now has saved our district
14 13.4 percent per year, but the equivalent rate
15 increase will cost our district between \$80 and
16 \$100,000 per year.

17 Like my colleagues have stated, that's
18 the equivalent of three to four teachers; the
19 equivalent of two intervention programs; the
20 equivalent of portions of busing that we currently
21 offer our students. I'm not sure if a lot of you
22 are familiar with the history of Swanton and the
23 financial struggles that we have already been
24 through. Three years ago we cut 21 teaching
25 positions due to failed levy attempts. The

1 district has finally struggled back to financial
2 stability and are doing everything within our
3 power to be diligent in spending, and this type of
4 an impact, because of that, would be significant
5 to our district and the programs that we are
6 trying to fund, the academic excellence that we
7 are trying to achieve, and the progress that we
8 have made from struggling back from a
9 \$1.1 million deficit three years ago.

10 I thank you for hearing our comments and
11 concerns today, and I ask you to reconsider the
12 impact this will have on all of the school
13 districts in this area. I also am a resident of
14 Fulton County. The school district in which I
15 live I have spoken with, and their impact is
16 approximately the same. So I ask you as a
17 taxpayer that is trying to live in the district
18 that is trying to pass levies to fund new schools
19 that are desperately needed but, in fact, is being
20 hindered by additional operating costs and cannot
21 be done because the economy cannot support any
22 additional expenses from what we already are
23 incurring. I ask you to reconsider your rate
24 proposal. Thank you.

25 MS. STONEKING: Thank you for your

1 testimony. Ray Cox.

2 - - -

3 having been duly sworn as provided by law, testified and said as
4 follows:

5 - - -

6 MS. STONEKING: Please state and spell
7 your name for the record.

8 MR. COX: Ray Cox, R-a-y, C-o-x. My
9 address is 447 East Walnut Street, Wauseon, which
10 is my place of business.

11 We're a small manufacturing company that
12 we probably employ 35 people, and so I guess I'm
13 kind of representing them as well. We make metal
14 stampings. It's a tough industry to be in right
15 now and with the -- somebody mentioned the
16 electric costs at North Star Steel. We buy a lot
17 of steel. That's probably 50 percent of our
18 costs, so these electric rates affect us in many,
19 many ways with our raw materials and so on. We
20 spend probably \$150,000 a year in electric,
21 because another big cost is an air compressor we
22 have to run to run all our machines. Again, we
23 for the last five years I think I've been able to
24 pass on about probably about a 4 percent price
25 increase in five years. So, obviously, our

1 profits are impacted by all of our costs going
2 out. And, again, if you're making a profit, which
3 it appears that the electric utility is, I think
4 that there is no need for any increase at this
5 point, let alone a 20 to 40 or 60 percent
6 increase. Thank you.

7 MS. STONEKING: Thank you for your
8 testimony. John Kuscund.

9 MR. KUSCUND: I'll pass.

10 MS. STONEKING: Lisa Arend.

11 - - -

12 having been duly sworn as provided by law, testified and said as
13 follows:

14 - - -

15 MS. STONEKING: Please state and spell
16 your name for the record and give your address.

17 MS. AREND: Lisa, L-i-s-a, A-r-e-n-d, 152
18 South Fulton Street, Suite 280, Wauseon. I'm the
19 Fulton County Economic Development Director. I'm
20 here on behalf of our employers, our work force
21 and our citizens.

22 Two of the main components sites look for
23 when they want to look for an area to attract a
24 company to and bring jobs is its quality of life.
25 I think Fulton County provides a great quality of

1 life for our citizens and our work force. We
2 couldn't find a better work force. Worth ethic in
3 Fulton County and Northwest Ohio is wonderful.

4 One of the things that prevents us from
5 attracting most industries is our current electric
6 rates. They are higher than any of the other
7 states around us, let alone the companies we've
8 already lost to municipal electric systems within
9 the State of Ohio that have moved 20, 40 miles
10 down the road just to be in the lower electric
11 rate area. Currently we are getting leads from
12 the State of Ohio that are requesting only
13 municipal electric areas. They don't want to be
14 in Toledo Edison territory. We have had numerous
15 plant closings and numerous layoffs. Many of our
16 citizens are out of work and on unemployment.
17 They can't afford an increase. We can't bring new
18 jobs to Fulton County with the electric rates we
19 have, and if we see them increase, we're really
20 going to have some problems and probably going to
21 lose some more jobs in this area. I think we need
22 to look at how we can better manage those costs.
23 Most the overhead for our companies now are
24 getting too high to the fact where their profits
25 are diminishing and that's causing them to lay off

1 more workers.

2 So I think we need to review the increase
3 that they're looking at at this point. Thank you.

4 MS. STONEKING: Thank you for your
5 testimony. Karen Crumm.

6 - - -

7 having been duly sworn as provided by law, testified and said as
8 follows:

9 - - -

10 MS. STONEKING: Please state and spell
11 your name for the record and give your address.

12 MS. CRUMM: Karen Crumm, C-r-u-m-m.
13 133 West Lincoln Street, Wauseon. I'm here as a
14 utility consumer and also as a member of City
15 Council.

16 Several years ago in August of 2003
17 Toledo Edison's regional president at that time
18 told City Council that in December of 2006 the
19 transition costs that we see on our bill would go
20 away. I checked three current bills; they're
21 still there today.

22 I just want to say that it's really hard
23 for us to swallow a rate increase of any size
24 given FirstEnergy's current profits and the
25 salaries that are paid to CEOs. We can't afford

1 an increase, even 24 percent. Thank you.

2 MS. STONEKING: Thank you. Jon
3 Majerowski.

4 - - -

5 having been duly sworn as provided by law, testified and said as
6 follows:

7 - - -

8 MS. STONEKING: Please state and spell
9 your name for the record and give your address.

10 MR. MAJEROWSKI: Jon, J-o-n, Majerowski,
11 M-a-j-e-r-o-w-s-k-i. My address is 112 Harrison
12 Avenue, Swanton, Ohio.

13 I'm the CEO of the Ugly Duckling
14 restaurant in Swanton, and as a CEO I made \$2,000
15 last year, not \$13.9 million. My profits were
16 nowhere near the billion dollar Marc. And as a
17 restaurant, I have a lot of electricity use. I
18 also have a Wi-Fi, the whole restaurant is Wi-Fi
19 so everyone -- when I built the restaurant, I
20 actually restored a building in town and decided
21 to put a receptacle in every single seat so people
22 can plug in their laptops if their battery dies.
23 I'm thinking about pulling them out. My friends
24 and family, we can't afford this increase.
25 24 percent is a lot. My food costs are soaring

1 high. I can't pass it along to the people because
2 they're not going to pay \$20 for a hamburger, and
3 I can't expect them to. I'm looking at closing up
4 everything and moving out of the state. I'm going
5 to look up and down the list and find the state
6 with the lowest electricity. Once I get there,
7 I'll tell everybody where I'm at.

8 As of right now I don't think it's even
9 feasible for 24 percent. 45 percent is
10 ridiculous. I just wanted to come and voice my
11 opinion. Thank God we live in America where we
12 can do that, land of the free, and appreciate it.
13 Thank you everybody.

14 MS. STONEKING: Thank you for your
15 testimony. Kelly Gannon.

16 MS. GARROW: It's Garrow.

17 MS. STONEKING: I'm sorry.

18 - - -

19 having been duly sworn as provided by law, testified and said as
20 follows:

21 - - -

22 MS. STONEKING: Please state and spell
23 your name for the record and give your address.

24 MS. GARROW: My name is Kelly, K-e-l-l-y,
25 Garrow, G-a-r-r-o-w, and I live at 122 South

1 Fulton Street.

2 My name is Kelly Garrow and I am the
3 manager for Sunshine, Incorporated, of Northwest
4 Ohio. We're a large nonprofit agency that serves
5 folks with developmental disabilities. I'm really
6 here representing our employees in terms of we've
7 mentioned the working poor, and our employees are
8 very hard working employees. They make an average
9 wage of between \$9 and \$11 an hour. They are just
10 stretched to the max. I mean, these are people
11 that are working hard every day, coming to work
12 and doing the best that they can for their
13 families. We have a lot of women that work for
14 us, a lot of head of households, single
15 breadwinners for their families. And I think it's
16 important for the Commission to come out and look
17 into the faces of Ohioans and Northwest Ohioans
18 and see the people that are struggling out here
19 because it's very, very real. People are
20 stretched very thin.

21 This area of the state has been in, I
22 would say, recession for the last five years.
23 We're talking about the nation as a whole going
24 into recession, but I've seen it here for the last
25 several years. We're a manufacturing, blue-collar

1 based economy here and we are really struggling
2 with the changes in the economy.

3 I would just urge you to seriously
4 reconsider this kind of an excessive rate
5 increase. It just is not feasible with this
6 economic environment and with this, you know, base
7 of people who are just trying to make ends meet
8 out here to have 20 and 30 and 40 percent
9 increases.

10 I know our employees at Sunshine are
11 going to have to make some very, very difficult
12 choices. I know that us as an agency, we have not
13 been able to -- we've been able to give a
14 3 percent increase in staff wages in the last four
15 years. Our rates are frozen by the State and have
16 been frozen for the last four years, and probably
17 in the next biennium might even be cut. So all of
18 us are having to tighten our belts and encourage
19 Toledo Edison and FirstEnergy to do the same.

20 MS. STONEKING: Thank you for your
21 testimony. Mike Thompson.

22 - - -

23 having been duly sworn as provided by law, testified and said as
24 follows:

25 - - -

1 MS. STONEKING: Please state and spell
2 your name for the record.

3 MR. THOMPSON: Michael Thompson,
4 M-i-c-h-a-e-l, T-h-o-m-p-s-o-n, and I live at
5 815 Spruce Street, Wauseon, Ohio. I'm on behalf
6 just as a consumer. I am also a total electric
7 consumer. I bought my house in Wauseon about 15
8 years ago. I'm here just to voice my opinion as a
9 consumer.

10 One of the things is that we were always
11 told to tighten our belts, to budget things in our
12 families and everything else. I kind of agree
13 with everybody in this room here, with our schools
14 and our town where we are, we're a manufacturing
15 kind of town.

16 Just to state for the record, I am
17 working for a manufacturer that is reconsidering
18 to downsize. We are no longer going to be the
19 major manufacturer, one of the companies in
20 Archbold. And it's kind of scary right now
21 because you're on the verge of losing your job.
22 We know that work is important, work gives us
23 credibility, it is what we do.

24 I have three daughters. I have two of
25 them in college. I have no way if there is a rate

1 increase to increase my electrical bill to help
2 them in college, and I have one more in high
3 school. I would like to have the Utility
4 Commission reconsider this rate increase, to live
5 within our means. We live in a country that has
6 out-expended itself. Executives are making too
7 much money. Of course, money is not wrong, but I
8 think that we should as a whole, as a country,
9 should live within our means.

10 MS. STONEKING: Thank you for your
11 testimony.

12 Anyone here who has not been able to
13 testify who would like to?

14 MR. VAN WAGNER: I'd like to now. I
15 signed in earlier.

16 MS. STONEKING: I put a different form
17 outside. For anyone who didn't want to testify
18 tonight because they've already heard someone
19 else's point of view, you can feel free to sign
20 that on your way out that you were here and you
21 heard the testimony and you agree with the
22 testimony given. If there is anyone else that
23 would like to offer additional testimony, then we
24 can do that now.

25 MR. VAN WAGNER: Yes, I would like to

1 offer additional.

2 MS. STONEKING: Okay, please go to the
3 mike.

4 - - -

5 having been duly sworn as provided by law, testified and said as
6 follows:

7 - - -

8 MS. STONEKING: Please state and spell
9 your name for the record and give your address.

10 MR. VAN WAGNER: Michael Van Wagner,
11 M-i-c-h-a-e-l, capital V-a-n, space, capital
12 W-a-g-n-e-r.

13 Many of the concerns people have talked
14 about tonight we all share, but when you look at
15 the rates that the CEOs are getting, it is insane.
16 The medium income out here is \$30,000. Doing
17 quick math on his salary, you're talking 4,633
18 citizens. That's how much he gets in one year.
19 You're going to bleed this county dry. You're
20 going to close a couple big businesses and then
21 where are the rates going to come from then.
22 You're killing the golden steer here. You heard
23 the economic people talking, you've heard the
24 citizens talking. We have to have some sanity in
25 this. When you can pay a guy, what is it,

1 \$9 million and that's the same as 4,633 people
2 get, it's not right. That's all I have to say.
3 Thank you.

4 MS. STONEKING: Thank you for your
5 testimony.

6 Is there anyone else who would like to
7 testify this evening? Please come forward.

8 - - -

9 having been duly sworn as provided by law, testified and said as
10 follows:

11 - - -

12 MS. STONEKING: Please state and spell
13 your name for the record and give your address.

14 MR. FUNK: Michael, M-i-c-h-a-e-l, Funk,
15 F-u-n-k, 10136 State Route 108, Wauseon, Ohio.

16 I am a displaced worker. The factory I
17 worked at went someplace that now has lower
18 electric rates. How many other factories are
19 going to shut down because of that. I think it's
20 time to say enough is enough and make Edison
21 fiscally responsible for their actions. Thank
22 you.

23 MS. STONEKING: Thank you. Is there
24 anyone else? Please come forward.

25 - - -

1 having been duly sworn as provided by law, testified and said as
2 follows:

3 - - -

4 MS. STONEKING: Please state and spell
5 your name for the record.

6 MS. CARPENTER: Robin Carpenter,
7 R-o-b-i-n, C-a-r-p-e-n-t-e-r. 5901 County Road C,
8 Delta.

9 What's the matter with you people? We're
10 in a recession. What is the matter with you
11 people? We see gas prices jump 30 percent
12 overnight. Senior citizens can't afford their
13 homes, they can't afford medication. My mom sold
14 her home because she can't maintain it. What is
15 the matter with you people? Record profits and
16 people are going hungry and going without their
17 medication. Think about what you're doing.

18 MS. STONEKING: Thank you. Is there
19 anyone else who would like to testify this
20 evening? If not, I'd like to thank you for your
21 participation this evening. Please feel free to
22 sign the form on your way out if you agree with
23 the testimony. The testimony that has been given
24 tonight will be submitted on record as part of the
25 evidence in this rate case for the Commission to

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consider in reaching its decision.

Thank you. This hearing is adjourned.

(Hearing adjourned at 7:55 p.m.)

- - -

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Lori A. Hauenstein, a Notary Public and Court Reporter within and for the State of Ohio, duly commissioned and qualified, do hereby certify that a hearing was held before the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio in the above-captioned case; that testimony was presented and was reduced to stenotype in the presence of said parties, afterwards reduced to computer transcription under my supervision, and that the foregoing is a true and correct transcription of the testimony and statements so given by them as aforesaid.

I do further certify that the proceedings were taken at the time and place in the foregoing caption specified.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal of office at Toledo, Ohio, on this 14th day of March, 2008.



My commission expires
August 1, 2012.

Lori A. Hauenstein
Notary Public
in and for the State of Ohio.

<p>\$</p> <p>\$1.1 [1] 43:9 \$1.3 [1] 30:5 \$100 [1] 25:22 \$100,000 [1] 28:21 29:2,4,12 42:16 \$11 [1] 50:9 \$11.1 [1] 11:12 \$11.7 [1] 8:23 28:1 \$13.9 [1] 48:15 \$150,000 [1] 44:20 \$175 [1] 24:3 \$2,000 [1] 48:14 \$20 [1] 37:11 49:2 \$250,000 [1] 28:3 \$275 [1] 24:2 \$30,000 [1] 12:9 54:16 \$32,000 [1] 8:25 \$33,500 [1] 28:8 \$34,924,893 [1] 5:12 \$37,823,225 [1] 5:12 \$4.43 [1] 30:10 \$56 [1] 9:3 \$58,000 [1] 9:4 \$70,539,796 [1] 4:18 \$80 [1] 42:15 \$9 [1] 50:9 55:1 \$90,000 [1] 9:5</p>	<p>21 [1] 42:24 22.25 [1] 5:13 223 [1] 24:24 24 [1] 18:10 39:9 40:9 48:1,25 49:9 24.10 [1] 5:13 240 [1] 36:9 248 [1] 8:5 249 [1] 8:22 27:7,25 280 [1] 45:18 28th [1] 30:1 29 [1] 18:1,13 29th [1] 5:20</p> <p>3</p> <p>3 [1] 51:14 30 [1] 12:6 22:19 26:4 28:18 41:14,18 51:8 56:11 31 [1] 23:20 31st [1] 8:19 27:21 32 [1] 22:16 35 [1] 41:14 44:12 36 [1] 9:22</p> <p>4</p> <p>4 [1] 44:24 4,633 [1] 54:17 55:1 40 [1] 11:18 12:7 28:11,18 41:18 45:5 46:9 51:8 44.6 [1] 4:19 44308 [1] 3:7 447 [1] 44:9 45 [1] 49:9 4th [1] 5:3</p>	<p>across [1] 13:7 action [1] 16:1 22:2 30:18 actions [1] 55:21 activities [1] 29:9 actually [1] 48:20 add [1] 12:3 39:5 added [1] 27:17 37:21,22 additional [1] 4:18 8:11 9:20,24 12:9 13:9 16:21 28:13,21 29:12,14 43:20,22 53:23 54:1 additionally [1] 9:1 address [1] 7:13 10:25 11:2 14:20 17:19,22 18:17,19 21:21,25 24:22 26:19,21 33:15 36:4,6,9 38:22 44:9 45:16 47:11 48:9,11 49:23 54:9 55:13 adjourned [1] 57:2,3 administrators [1] 30:19 advantages [1] 29:21 affect [1] 23:17 29:9 44:18 affects [1] 31:14 affirm [1] 6:13 affixed [1] 58:18 afford [1] 13:5 17:8 18:20 20:11 34:3,7,17,20 35:9 39:1 46:17 47:25 48:24 56:12,13 affordable [1] 4:3 aforesaid [1] 58:14 afterwards [1] 32:8 58:11 agencies [1] 24:9 agency [1] 50:4 51:12 agency's [1] 22:18 aggregation [1] 3:23 ago [1] 22:8 42:24 43:9 47:16 52:8 agree [1] 38:17 52:12 53:21 56:22 air [1] 44:21 akron [1] 3:6 akron-based [1] 30:6 allow [1] 5:21 23:8 40:16 allowed [1] 27:18 31:23 allowing [1] 7:20 11:7 alluded [1] 38:14 alone [1] 35:18 45:5 46:7 already [1] 13:2,13 32:23 33:5 37:14,25 42:23 43:22 46:8 53:18 alternative [1] 23:5,23 america [1] 49:11 american [1] 25:16 among [1] 5:7 amount [1] 12:14,17 analysis [1] 4:25 13:16 ancestors [1] 25:22 and/or [1] 23:3 annual [1] 9:2,4,14 another [1] 9:3 12:20 18:20 20:12 23:20 32:10 33:7 38:22 39:8 40:11,12 44:21 answer [1] 2:21 3:1 32:5 apart [1] 32:13 apartment [1] 21:1 appearances [1] 3:2 appears [1] 32:12 45:3 applaud [1] 17:1 appliances [1] 40:4 application [1] 2:6 4:17 6:3 applications [1] 4:10,13 applying [1] 36:15,16 appreciate [1] 17:2 19:2 36:20 49:12 appreciated [1] 19:24 appreciation [1] 8:4 27:5 appropriated [1] 12:10 28:21 appropriation [1] 12:4 approvals [1] 2:10 approve [1] 19:1</p>	<p>approximately [1] 4:17 43:16 archbold [1] 52:20 area [1] 4:16 20:9 22:6 39:7 43:13 45:23 46:11,21 50:21 areas [1] 20:15 46:13 arend [1] 45:10,17 around [1] 21:8 34:17 46:7 arrowhead [1] 18:2 article [1] 30:7 assembly [1] 22:1 assigned [1] 9:1 association [1] 4:2 assure [1] 29:18 astronomical [1] 22:23 attempt [1] 6:19 attempts [1] 42:25 attest [1] 20:21 37:18 attested [1] 40:7 attorneys [1] 3:3 attract [1] 45:23 attracting [1] 48:5 august [1] 47:18 authority [1] 2:8 available [1] 23:11 38:18 avenue [1] 31:10 41:14 48:12 average [1] 11:17,21 22:20 28:3,10 50:8 away [1] 38:21,22 47:20</p> <p>B</p> <p>back [1] 32:10 35:5 43:1,8 barnaby [1] 15:2 base [1] 16:25 22:12 51:6 baseball [1] 29:7 based [1] 23:15,16 51:1 basis [1] 9:14 36:13 basketball [1] 29:6 battery [1] 48:22 becomes [1] 12:20 began [1] 5:19 beginning [1] 11:19 behalf [1] 3:5,9,11 15:1 36:18 45:20 52:5 believe [1] 24:8 37:8 38:14 belts [1] 51:18 52:11 beneficial [1] 22:11 benefit [1] 37:22 benefits [1] 12:19 best [1] 25:8 32:21 50:12 better [1] 30:9 46:2,22 between [1] 5:12,13 11:18 12:6 20:17 23:12 27:8 28:11,18 37:20 42:15 50:9 beyond [1] 32:24 biennium [1] 51:17 big [1] 18:25 20:24 32:25 41:4 44:21 54:20 biggest [1] 31:15 bill [1] 2:12 5:15 11:12 30:23 47:19 53:1 billion [1] 30:5 48:16 bills [1] 22:23 23:18 36:14 47:20 bleed [1] 54:19 blood [1] 38:15 blue-collar [1] 50:25 board [1] 29:11 37:7 boards [1] 9:22 30:19 books [1] 8:20 boric [1] 40:16 both [1] 28:25 34:1 38:12 bottom [1] 37:13 bought [1] 52:7 boys [1] 8:11 29:5 brand [1] 9:16 breadwinners [1] 50:15 bring [1] 6:24 48:24 46:17</p>
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