

FILE

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BEFORE

2008 APR -8 AM 9:16

THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO  
**PUCO**

In the Matter of the )  
Application of Ohio Edison ) CASE NOS.  
Company, The Cleveland ) 07-551-EL-AIR  
Electric Illuminating Company) 07-552-EL-ATA  
and The Toledo Edison Company) 07-553-EL-AAM  
for Authority to Increase ) 07-554-EL-UNC  
Rates for Distribution )  
Service, Modify Certain )  
Accounting Practices and for )  
Tariff Approvals. )

**ORIGINAL**

- - -

BE IT REMEMBERED, that upon the hearing of  
the above-entitled matter, held at Mansfield  
City Council, Council Chambers, 30 North Diamond  
Street, Mansfield, Ohio, before Gregory A.  
Price, Attorney Examiner, and commencing on  
Monday, the 24th day of March 2008, at 6:36  
o'clock p.m., at which time the following

proceedings were had.  
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1     **APPEARANCES:**

2

3     On Behalf of the Public Utilities Commission  
4     Of Ohio:

5             PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO

6     BY:     Gregory A. Price, Attorney Examiner  
7             180 East Broad Street  
8             Columbus, Ohio 43215  
9             614/752-9410

10

11     On Behalf of Ohio Consumers' Counsel:

12             OFFICE OF THE OHIO CONSUMERS' COUNSEL

13     BY:     Jeffrey L. Small  
14             Assistant Consumers' Counsel  
15             10 West Broad Street, Suite 1800  
16             Columbus, Ohio 43215-3485  
17             614/466-8574

18

19     On Behalf of the Applicants:

20             FIRSTENERGY

21     BY:     Mark A. Hayden, Attorney at Law  
22             76 South Main Street  
23             Akron, Ohio 44308  
24             330/761-7735

25

1 APPEARANCES (Continued):

2

3 **ALSO PRESENT:** Larry Lifer, Mark Wilcheck,  
4 Peter R. Keiser, George W. Harriman, Howard J.  
5 Harriman, Mervin L. Shaffner, Gregory Scott  
6 Jones, Steven Edward Willeke, Daryl Hall, Linda  
7 Arnold, Palresh Patel, Umesh Patel, Jenni Tucker  
8 and Kurt Stimens

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1                   **MR. PRICE:**           Good evening. The  
2 Public Utilities Commission has set at this time  
3 and this place the public hearing in Case Number  
4 07-551-EL-AIR, et al., being "In the Matter of  
5 the Application of Ohio Edison Company, The  
6 Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company and The  
7 Toledo Edison Company for Authority to Increase  
8 Rates for Distribution Service, Modify Certain  
9 Accounting Practices and for Tariff Approvals."

10                   My name is Gregory Price. I am the  
11 Attorney Examiner assigned to preside for the  
12 Commission at tonight's hearing. I would like  
13 to begin by taking appearances, starting with  
14 the Company.

15                   **MR. HAYDEN:**           On behalf of the  
16 Company, Mark A. Hayden.

17                   **MR. PRICE:**           Consumers' Counsel?

18                   **MR. SMALL:**           On behalf of the  
19 residential customers of the FirstEnergy  
20 companies, Jeffrey Small, Assistant Consumers'  
21 Counsel, Office of Ohio Consumers' Counsel, 10  
22 West Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio. Thank you.

23                   **MR. PRICE:**           Are there any  
24 representatives of any other intervening parties  
25 here tonight? Seeing none. At the hearing

1 tonight, there are representatives from the  
2 Commission's Service Monitoring and Enforcement  
3 department from FirstEnergy and from the Ohio  
4 Consumers' Counsel. If you have a question  
5 regarding any utility matter other than  
6 tonight's rate increase, which is the focus of  
7 tonight's hearing, please see a Company  
8 representative, a member of our Service  
9 Monitoring and Enforcement department or a  
10 representative from the Consumers' Counsel. I  
11 think they're back that way. Sorry.  
12 (Indicating.)

13 On June 7th, 2007, Ohio Edison  
14 Company, The Toledo Edison Company and The  
15 Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company filed  
16 applications with the Public Utilities  
17 Commission of Ohio to each increase their  
18 electric distribution rates. As part of the  
19 rate case proceeding, Commission staff prepared  
20 and filed a staff report for each Company on  
21 December 4th, 2007. This is a copy of the staff  
22 report for Ohio Edison in whose territory we're  
23 currently at. (Indicating.)

24 The staff report summarizes the  
25 staff's findings with respect to the Company's

1 financial situation and with respect to service  
2 performance and provides the staff's  
3 recommendations in this case. If you would like  
4 a copy of the staff report, you may get one by  
5 accessing it through the Commission's website,  
6 [www.PUCO.ohio.gov](http://www.PUCO.ohio.gov). Go to the docketing  
7 information service page and use the Case Number  
8 07-551-EL-AIR. You can also obtain a copy of  
9 the staff report by calling the Commission's  
10 hotline at 1-800-686 PUCO.

11 There have been 12 -- this is the  
12 12th and final public hearing scheduled in this  
13 case. This is only one aspect of the rate case  
14 process. The evidentiary hearing in this case  
15 began on January 29th, 2008 at the Commission  
16 offices in Columbus. The hearing ran  
17 approximately three weeks. We heard somewhere  
18 around in the neighborhood of 60 witnesses  
19 testifying as to the merits of FirstEnergy's  
20 application and the staff report findings in  
21 this case.

22 The purpose of that hearing was to  
23 allow the Company, the staff and any intervening  
24 parties to present witnesses and evidence in  
25 support of their positions in this case. We

1 will not be hearing from the Company, the staff  
2 or any intervening party at tonight's hearing.  
3 The purpose of tonight's hearing is to receive  
4 comments from the public. Not from the  
5 intervening parties. This is your opportunity  
6 to let the Commission know what you think about  
7 the Company's request to increase rates or about  
8 the Company's reliability performance.

9 When you arrived you were offered the  
10 opportunity to sign up to testify. If you  
11 missed that opportunity, it's still available in  
12 the side room over to the rear of this room.  
13 I'll take the witnesses in the order that they  
14 signed up.

15 Before you begin your testimony, I  
16 will ask for your name and address for the  
17 record. Your testimony will be considered part  
18 of the record in this case to be reviewed by the  
19 Commissioners before they make their final  
20 decision. All testimony will be under oath and  
21 attorneys for the Company and the other parties  
22 will be allowed to ask you any questions  
23 regarding your statement while you're under  
24 oath. Should you decide you do not wish to  
25 testify, just go ahead and pass and I will call

1 the next witness.

2           Tonight's hearing is being  
3 transcribed by our court reporter. Please speak  
4 clearly to the reporter so she can accurately  
5 reflect your comments on the record. If you  
6 have a prepared written statement, it would be  
7 helpful to provide a copy of the written  
8 statement to the court reporter.

9           We appreciate your participation in  
10 tonight's hearing, and we want to make sure  
11 everybody who wishes to make a statement has the  
12 time to do so, so let's go ahead and begin.

13           Our first witness is Larry Lifer. It  
14 is "Lifer"?

15           **MR. LIFER:**           "Lifer."

16           **MR. PRICE:**           "Lifer." Sorry.

17           **MR. LIFER:**           That's quite all  
18 right.

19           (Thereupon, Mr. Lifer was sworn by  
20 Mr. Price.)

21           **MR. PRICE:**           Please state your  
22 name and address for the record.

23           **MR. LIFER:**           My name is Larry  
24 Lifer, L-i, F as in "Frank," e-r. I'm  
25 representing the Clear Fork Valley Local School



1 District, 92 Hines Avenue in Bellville, Ohio.

2 MR. PRICE: Please proceed.

3 MR. LIFER: I thank the  
4 Commission for allowing me to explain how an  
5 electric rate increase will impact the education  
6 of the children of the Clear Fork School  
7 District. It is likely that the items I will be  
8 sharing with you this evening have been heard  
9 before over the past three weeks at your public  
10 hearings. Still, I am compelled to add our  
11 comments to those that have expressed their  
12 thoughts on this subject.

13 Over the past six years, the district  
14 has struggled with balancing a strong  
15 educational program with a fixed revenue stream  
16 eroded by increasing expenses. Fortunately, we  
17 have been benefactors of both of the Energy for  
18 Education Programs. We are very grateful that  
19 FirstEnergy was willing to negotiate rates for  
20 schools that assisted the Clear Fork School  
21 District in managing our electricity costs  
22 during these program years.

23 As a result of the Energy for  
24 Education, we have been able to reasonably  
25 manage our expenses and forecast future expense

1 with an increased certainty. Over the past four  
2 years, we have been successful in accomplishing  
3 a balanced budget where expenditures have not  
4 exceeded revenues, and our students have  
5 achieved an excellent rating on the 2006-2007  
6 State Report Card.

7           These accomplishments have been  
8 successful because of a staff that is committed  
9 to providing a sound education, sometimes doing  
10 without the bells and the whistles in the  
11 classrooms due to budget constraints. There are  
12 not a lot of frills at the Clear Fork Valley  
13 School District and overhead expenditures have  
14 been significantly reduced over the past four  
15 years to continue a balanced budget and have not  
16 asked the residents for increased operating  
17 dollars.

18           The Board of Education has been a  
19 strong supporter of low teacher-to-student  
20 ratios, especially in the elementary grades.  
21 The proposed increases in electricity rates and  
22 the elimination of Energy for Education Program  
23 will result in an increase of approximately  
24 \$60,000 more a year in electricity costs. In  
25 our district, this will equate to one and a half

1 teachers that will no longer be available to  
2 instruct our students.

3 I would urge the Commission to give  
4 due consideration to the request of FirstEnergy  
5 for the rate increase and allow a mechanism for  
6 FirstEnergy to negotiate a rate differential for  
7 our school districts. The financial impact of  
8 this decision could have a lasting impact on the  
9 education of our students and the fiscal  
10 solvency of the Clear Fork School District.  
11 Thank you for allowing me time to speak on the  
12 subject.

13 **MR. PRICE:** Thank you. Our  
14 next witness is Mark Wilcheck.

15 (Thereupon, Mr. Wilcheck was sworn by  
16 Mr. Price.)

17 **MR. PRICE:** Please state your  
18 name and address for the record.

19 **MR. WILCHECK:** Mark Wilcheck,  
20 Superintendent, Cardington-Lincoln Local  
21 Schools, 121 Nichols Street, Cardington, Ohio.

22 **MR. PRICE:** Proceed.

23 **MR. WILCHECK:** Good evening. My  
24 name is Mark Wilcheck, and I'm the  
25 Superintendent at Cardington-Lincoln Local

1 Schools in Cardington, Ohio in Morrow County. I  
2 thank the Commission for allowing me to explain  
3 how an electric rate increase will impact the  
4 education of our children at Cardington.

5 As you know, school funding is a  
6 major issue in our state. Any increase in cost  
7 in the basic cost -- in the basic cost of  
8 operating our district will take dollars away  
9 from our budget items.

10 We are very appreciative of the  
11 support FirstEnergy has provided to my school in  
12 the past and the other 248 districts in this  
13 program. We have had two Energy for Education  
14 Programs over the past ten years which have been  
15 very helpful in keeping the electric rates down.  
16 The savings have been used for increased  
17 learning opportunities for boys and girls.

18 School year 2008-2009 we will  
19 implement all day every day kindergarten in our  
20 district. The estimate cost of this program is  
21 about \$120,000; the estimated cost of two  
22 additional teachers with minimum years of  
23 experience.

24 A rate increase for our district  
25 equates as follows. In fiscal year '08 district

1 electric costs were about \$317,000. If we went  
2 with an increase or proposed increase rate of  
3 about 18 percent, we would realize an increase  
4 of \$62,503. The proposed cost estimate are  
5 close to the cost of one full time teacher for  
6 our kindergarten program. That's salaries and  
7 benefits.

8           Again, I would like to thank you for  
9 taking the time to listen to my concern about  
10 the rate increase and its impact for  
11 Cardington-Lincoln Local Schools. These dollars  
12 are needed for the education of our children.  
13 We hope that the Commission would be sympathetic  
14 towards the schools and look to us as a  
15 district -- or as a distinct group worthy of  
16 school rates which have been in effect. And I  
17 thank you very much.

18           **MR. PRICE:**           Thank you. Pete  
19 Keiser?

20           (Thereupon, Mr. Keiser was sworn by  
21 Mr. Price.)

22           **MR. PRICE:**           Please state your  
23 name and address for the record.

24           **MR. KEISER:**       Peter R. Keiser,  
25 1452 Auer Boulevard, A-u-e-r, Mansfield, Ohio

1 44907.

2 MR. PRICE: Please proceed.

3 MR. KEISER: I would like to  
4 thank the Commission. Myself, I'm on a fixed  
5 income. And I have a baby granddaughter who's  
6 eight months old. My daughter has to use food  
7 stamps, excuse me, to buy her formula and when  
8 she's out of formula she doesn't have anything.  
9 That's one aspect.

10 I know this doesn't have anything  
11 probably to do with it, but I was in Vietnam  
12 twice. I came in here to this hearing room and  
13 I looked up at that figurine up there and I saw  
14 those little kids on that figurine, people  
15 holding their hands. I have two brown stars, a  
16 Vietnam medal, nobody cares.

17 They keep raising the prices.  
18 Electricity, I've come home, my phone has been  
19 digitized out, my microwave, my clocks at least  
20 once a month. We get a bad storm or anything,  
21 it blows them out, blows the electricity out,  
22 digits out, all that I just aforementioned and  
23 things like that.

24 I think we need to make use of the  
25 equipment we have plus the modern equipment. I

1 don't think we need our rates increased. And  
2 they mentioned about the brief power  
3 interruptions, which I've had, nobody cares,  
4 nobody fixes them, nobody does anything about  
5 them. They're still going on. I've had lengthy  
6 outages and you can't call every time. You call  
7 you get a recording and if you get a recording  
8 they tell you, "Our office hours are eight to  
9 five," so you can't talk to anyone for one  
10 thing. It's just like talking to that floor or  
11 that wall.

12 I'm a senior citizen. I will be 66  
13 pretty soon. Nobody cares. Nobody's doing  
14 anything about it. We got to stop. Bananas, I  
15 love bananas. They've gone from 39 cents to 50  
16 cents. It's just got to stop. Gas has gone up,  
17 electric's gone up. That's about all I have to  
18 say. It's just got to stop.

19 **MR. PRICE:** Thank you.

20 **MR. KEISER:** Thanks.

21 **MR. PRICE:** George Harriman?

22 (Thereupon, Mr. George Harriman was  
23 sworn by Mr. Price.)

24 **MR. PRICE:** State your name and  
25 address for the record.

1                   **MR. GEORGE HARRIMAN:** George W.  
2     Harriman, 1020 Whippowill Lane, Mansfield, Ohio  
3     44906.

4                   **MR. PRICE:**             Please proceed.

5                   **MR. GEORGE HARRIMAN:** I more or less  
6     sympathize with the last man that was up here.  
7     I'm not a public speaker, I don't know exactly  
8     what I'm saying, but it sounds like you -- 12  
9     years since you've asked for a rate.

10                  Just as an example I want to give.  
11     You go around the country you see these farmers,  
12     their barns are falling down. They don't do  
13     nothing with them, so pretty soon they tear them  
14     down. They put up a pole barn where with a few  
15     dollars per year they could have kept up with  
16     their barn that was more than size in what they  
17     needed. That's just an example.

18                  But what I can't understand is why  
19     there's so many different rates out here. I'm  
20     charged one rate, my neighbor's charged another  
21     rate and another one's charged another rate.  
22     Why? I know you can't answer it. They're  
23     afraid to come here. They send you as their  
24     representative which can't say much.

25                  And that's why I was here tonight



1 hoping that they would give me some answers, but  
2 we're not going to get any, I can see that.  
3 Right?

4 MR. PRICE: You're correct.

5 MR. GEORGE HARRIMAN: So what are we  
6 here for?

7 MR. PRICE: This is your  
8 opportunity to tell the Commission what you  
9 think about the rate increase or any reliability  
10 issues regarding FirstEnergy.

11 MR. GEORGE HARRIMAN: Well, my  
12 example I give, why am I paying 6.3 per  
13 kilowatt, my next door neighbor in the same  
14 building is paying 4.9. Why?

15 MR. PRICE: As I --

16 MR. GEORGE HARRIMAN: Put that down.  
17 She's got it?

18 MR. PRICE: She has it.

19 MR. GEORGE HARRIMAN: Now, I don't  
20 think that's fair really. And it's all over the  
21 town. It's not just in my neighborhood. It's  
22 all over. So that's all I got to say really.

23 MR. PRICE: Thank you.

24 MR. GEORGE HARRIMAN: Thank you.

25 MR. PRICE: Howard Harriman?

1 (Thereupon, Mr. Howard Harriman was  
2 sworn by Mr. Price.)

3 **MR. PRICE:** Please state your  
4 name and address for the record.

5 **MR. HOWARD HARRIMAN:** Howard J.  
6 Harriman, 2765 Springmill West Road, Mansfield  
7 44903.

8 Being a recent retiree, I'm voicing  
9 the same thing that the rest of them said so far  
10 about this increase. When you become a retiree  
11 and you're on a fixed income with that Social  
12 Security check coming in, Social Security's not  
13 gone up the way other prices have gone up.

14 Go back to the bananas, the gasoline,  
15 the other upkeeps on houses. I recently lost my  
16 father last year to death. Took over his house.  
17 A man of 85 years old never once debated that  
18 electric bill. Paid it religiously.

19 Well, when I started looking at it, I  
20 can't figure out why, back to what the past  
21 speaker said about 6.3 per kilowatt, I've talked  
22 to neighbors and they're all over the place,  
23 from 3.4 to 5.5 to 6.3, 6.9.

24 My question is, you know, we got to  
25 have electric to live, but why is there

1 discrepancies on the per kilowatt hours? With  
2 the new modern technology we all have and we  
3 have all these modern devices in our houses,  
4 yes, we're going to use more with the air  
5 conditioning and et cetera, but we're willing to  
6 pay for what we use if the price is going to be  
7 somewhat consistent.

8           And that's what I'm basing this whole  
9 thing on. My father never questioned that. He  
10 just paid the bill. But now I'm going to take a  
11 different look at it, and I know other people in  
12 this audience tonight will do the same thing.

13           So that's my -- basically as far as  
14 the service, I have the same problem. When you  
15 call the 1-800 number, you get somebody that  
16 don't know your territory, your neighborhood.  
17 You got to go through the explanation of where  
18 you're at, what road you're off of and et  
19 cetera, et cetera.

20           When you have an outage, you're out  
21 and you need some help and all they can do is  
22 say, well, they're working on it. I just wish  
23 there was some place locally that you could talk  
24 to somebody about electric problems that we  
25 have. Thank you.

1                   **MR. PRICE:**           Thank you. Kevin  
2   Shaffer?

3                   **MR. SHAFFNER:**       Mervin Shaffner.

4                   **MR. PRICE:**           I'm sorry.

5                   **MR. SHAFFNER:**       Close. It's  
6   Mervin R. Shaffner.

7                   (Thereupon, Mr. Shaffner was sworn by  
8   Mr. Price.)

9                   **MR. PRICE:**           Please state your  
10   name again and your address for the record.

11                  **MR. SHAFFNER:**       Mervin R. Shaffner.  
12   I live at 580 Dogwood Circle. I own Shaffner  
13   Realty at 737 Park Avenue West.

14                  **MR. PRICE:**           Okay. Proceed.

15                  **MR. SHAFFNER:**       I've been selling  
16   real estate since 1961. You, as the Public  
17   Utilities Commission, is going to try to protect  
18   myself and all these people out here to give us  
19   a reasonable shake. Because most of the utility  
20   companies, I trust like a rattlesnake. If you  
21   know where the rattlesnake's at, you're not  
22   going to get bit.

23                  One of the problems that bothers me,  
24   I want the PUCO to justify the rate increase  
25   that Ohio Edison is going to charge me for

1 traveling that electric from Timbuktu to my  
2 house. Because nothing has changed on my lines  
3 at my house or my office. Nothing has changed.

4 I understand that there's possibly  
5 going to be somewhere around a 7 to an 8 percent  
6 increase. Can you answer that?

7 **MR. PRICE:** Let's go off the  
8 record.

9 (Thereupon, a discussion was held off  
10 the record.)

11 **MR. SHAFFNER:** I want this to go  
12 back to the PUCO. I'm in real estate. I  
13 remember when Ohio Edison dangled carrots in  
14 front of the property owners to have an  
15 all-electric home. One of the statistics is you  
16 had to have an 80-gallon hot water tank. You  
17 need an 80-gallon hot water tank like I need two  
18 Lincolns. I only got one poor man's Mercury  
19 Marquis.

20 You're now strapped with that  
21 80-gallon hot water tank. Mr. Jones decides to  
22 sell his home. He's under this special program.  
23 When he sells it to Mr. Smith, that rate is  
24 possibly going to double. I have an REO out on  
25 Stephens Court in Galion, Ohio. It was under

1 that program. The utility bill was over \$300-  
2 some and we had that baby shut down to 50  
3 degrees. I don't think I need to say anything  
4 else.

5 But for God's sake, give us a fair  
6 shake as the taxpayers, because I don't see a  
7 lot of millionaires out here. Thank you.

8 **MR. PRICE:** Thank you. Our  
9 next witness is Gregory Iames.

10 **MR. JAMES:** Gregory Scott  
11 Jones.

12 (Thereupon, Mr. Jones was sworn by  
13 Mr. Price.)

14 **MR. PRICE:** Please state your  
15 name again and address for the record.

16 **MR. JONES:** Gregory Scott  
17 Jones. I live at 703 Barnard Avenue, 44903. I  
18 had a friend, I'm not going to say his name, who  
19 said, "You know, if you go all electric you're  
20 going to get a deal, especially for your heating  
21 bill." Well, my heating bill did go down by 50  
22 percent. And, of course, I do have that  
23 80-gallon water tank now.

24 But then from what I understand from  
25 that gentleman that was talking about that that

1 was on the radio, if you are on this contract,  
2 somebody comes in to buy your house, they're not  
3 going to get that same contract that you have.  
4 And what I'm concerned is am I going to be able  
5 to afford to heat my house if this rate increase  
6 goes up? I'm not concerned about the 80-gallon  
7 water tank. That does a great job.

8 I've had no problem with -- with  
9 service, even though we've had ice storms and,  
10 you know, heavy snowstorms this winter. I've  
11 had no problem. I live inside the city. I know  
12 other people have. Of course, I was not here  
13 during the first storm in early January, I left.  
14 But I am concerned that this -- you know, I'm  
15 not going to be able to heat my house and afford  
16 it if this increase goes through.

17 And, of course, my only thinking is  
18 if we're going to give that money to the  
19 stockholders of FirstEnergy or to Ohio Edison,  
20 not necessarily to the improvement of the  
21 equipment, where they're going to send the  
22 electricity through. That's about all I have to  
23 say. Thank you.

24 MR. PRICE: Thank you. Steven  
25 Willeke?

1 (Thereupon, Mr. Willeke was sworn by  
2 Mr. Price.)

3 **MR. PRICE:** Please state your  
4 name and address for the record.

5 **MR. WILLEKE:** My name is Steven  
6 Edward Willeke. I'm representing the Crestview  
7 Local Schools, 1575 State Route 96, Ashland,  
8 Ohio 44805.

9 **MR. PRICE:** Proceed.

10 **MR. WILLEKE:** Good evening. My  
11 name is Steve Willeke, Superintendent of the  
12 Crestview Local Schools. Also representing  
13 Crestview this evening are school board members  
14 Mr. Jamie McGraw and Mr. Steve Faulkner.

15 As representatives of the Crestview  
16 Local School District, we strongly encourage  
17 FirstEnergy to continue offering a discounted  
18 electric rate program such as the Energy for  
19 Education Program for public schools.

20 We are very appreciative of the  
21 support FirstEnergy has provided to the  
22 Crestview Local School District and the other  
23 248 public school districts for this program.  
24 We have participated in two Energy for Education  
25 Programs over the past ten years which have been



1 very helpful in keeping our electric rates down.

2 The savings we have enjoyed have been  
3 used to provide quality educational services for  
4 our children, and this is our mission at  
5 Crestview.

6 Our understanding is that FirstEnergy  
7 has requested the public schools be classified  
8 as a commercial business; therefore, paying a  
9 higher rate than we have before experienced.  
10 Our response to that request is that public  
11 schools are not a commercial business. We have  
12 no way of passing on our increased costs to  
13 consumers like most businesses do.

14 Our consumers are students. They are  
15 young people from all types of backgrounds and  
16 with all levels of abilities who count on us to  
17 provide a quality education with limited  
18 resources. We operate based upon a limited  
19 source of revenue provided mainly by local  
20 taxpayers and an unpredictable state foundation  
21 formula.

22 Over half the school districts in  
23 Ohio are receiving no increase in state funding  
24 this year. Many will have received no increases  
25 for the past two years. Increased costs are

1 going to fall back on the local taxpayers, who  
2 are simply trying to survive themselves.

3 Unlike most businesses, we are not  
4 open for 12 months a year. For 3 months in the  
5 summer, school is not in session meaning the  
6 demand for electric is considerably less.

7 When the current Energy for Education  
8 Program II expires on December 31st, 2008, our  
9 electric rates will automatically go up. We  
10 project that for the Crestview Local School  
11 District, the reclassification along with the  
12 loss of the Energy for Education Program II,  
13 will mean an additional \$57,330 per year  
14 budgeted for electric costs.

15 According to figures we received from  
16 the Ohio Schools Council, the loss of the Energy  
17 for Education Program II will cost an additional  
18 \$29,600. The rate increase on distribution is  
19 to -- is projected to be an additional \$25,000.  
20 And then the State of Ohio collects a 5 percent  
21 excise tax of \$2,730. The total equals an  
22 additional \$57,330 to Crestview's electric bill.  
23 For Crestview, this additional cost is  
24 equivalent to one and a half classroom teachers.

25 We have projected electricity will

1 cost the District \$210,000 for this fiscal year.  
2 Using the figures we have, next fiscal year's  
3 costs will be almost \$270,000. A \$57,330 annual  
4 increase in electricity costs cannot easily be  
5 absorbed by our School District. Eventually we  
6 will need to begin eliminating teaching  
7 positions in order to pay our electric bill.  
8 Eliminating teachers will negatively impact our  
9 educational programs.

10 The Ohio Schools Council has  
11 projected that the loss of the Energy for  
12 Education Program II will cost the 249  
13 participating Ohio public school districts over  
14 \$11.7 million per year. If public schools are  
15 reclassified as commercial businesses, the rates  
16 will even be higher.

17 This concludes our statement. We  
18 appreciate your time and consideration and urge  
19 you not to approve the rate increase request  
20 that's applied to school districts. We simply  
21 cannot afford to pay more.

22 We would also encourage FirstEnergy  
23 to continue with the discount program as it has  
24 done in the past. We ask this on behalf of the  
25 children who are served by the public schools in

1 the state of Ohio. Thank you.

2 **MR. PRICE:** Thank you. Our  
3 next witness is Daryl Hall.

4 (Thereupon, Mr. Hall was sworn by  
5 Mr. Price.)

6 **MR. PRICE:** Please state your  
7 name and address for the record.

8 **MR. HALL:** Daryl Hall, 457  
9 Shelby-Ontario Road, Mansfield, Ohio 44906.

10 **MR. PRICE:** Proceed.

11 **MR. HALL:** Thank you. Good  
12 evening. My name is Daryl Hall, and I represent  
13 Ontario Local Schools. I'm Superintendent of  
14 Schools. Joining me this evening is our  
15 Treasurer, Randy Harvey. We would like to thank  
16 the Commission for this opportunity to address  
17 the situation.

18 On behalf of the Ontario Board of  
19 Education, students, staff, parents and  
20 community in the FirstEnergy service area, we  
21 are here today to register our objection to the  
22 electric rate increase. Ontario and other  
23 public schools that have testified previously  
24 across Ohio are struggling financially and those  
25 struggles continue. Any cost increase to

1 schools in general, and to Ontario specifically,  
2 will have a significant and negative impact  
3 during the economic downturn that we're now  
4 experiencing statewide.

5           It is our understanding that in  
6 addition to the rate increase, the Energy for  
7 Education Program will also not be renewed. The  
8 rate increase would cost Ontario Schools  
9 \$23,000, and the elimination of the Energy for  
10 Education Program would add an additional loss  
11 of 40,000 -- \$45,400. The total cost to Ontario  
12 Schools for next fiscal year would be  
13 approximately \$68,400.

14           To give the Commission an idea of  
15 what \$68,400 equates to for Ontario Schools,  
16 each item below would cost approximately  
17 \$68,400. \$68,400 would pay for 7 months of  
18 diesel fuel for our buses. \$68,400 would pay  
19 for our math textbook series and supplementals  
20 for every grade level, K through 12. \$68,400  
21 would pay for 2 brand new computer labs.  
22 \$68,400 would pay for five teacher's aides in  
23 our special education classrooms. \$68,400 would  
24 pay for the cost of the District's funding for  
25 our substance abuse coordinator and our school

1 resource officer combined. \$68,400 would pay  
2 for 45 security cameras for buildings and  
3 grounds, and \$68,400 would pay for 2 entry level  
4 teacher salaries.

5 As the Commission considers the rate  
6 increase and the elimination of the Energy for  
7 Education Program, we urge you to carefully  
8 weigh the negative effects that such a move will  
9 have on Ontario Schools specifically and on Ohio  
10 schools in general.

11 We appreciate your time and  
12 consideration and urge you not to approve the  
13 increase as applied to school districts. What  
14 I've just shared are approximate figures based  
15 on the Ohio Schools Council calculations. Thank  
16 you.

17 **MR. PRICE:** Thank you. Linda  
18 Arnold?

19 (Thereupon, Ms. Arnold was sworn by  
20 Mr. Price.)

21 **MR. PRICE:** Please state your  
22 name and address for the record.

23 **MS. ARNOLD:** Linda Arnold, 1650  
24 Carter Drive, Mansfield, Ohio. First of all, I  
25 would like to thank the Commission for having

1 this hearing in the evening. I can't afford to  
2 take off work.

3 Second, I do have to admit that in my  
4 years of using Ohio Edison I have had good  
5 service. In the times that our electric has  
6 been cut off for whatever reason, I've made that  
7 phone call to the 800 number, not liking getting  
8 a recording, but I have gotten what I consider  
9 to be reasonable service to get it repaired.

10 I have an all-electric home. I have  
11 an 80-gallon hot water tank. I am a widow  
12 living in a 1,700 square foot home. I am  
13 grandfathered on plan 14-A, which is the  
14 discount rate that will no longer apply when I  
15 sell my home.

16 And when I can no longer maintain my  
17 own home and begin the selling process, I'm  
18 immediately at a disadvantage if this rate goes  
19 through. Not only because of the increase, but  
20 because the plan 14-A is no longer active. My  
21 March bill under plan 14-A would be, at today's  
22 rates, 45 percent higher than what I pay.  
23 That's \$123 more than what I paid.

24 If the rate goes through, we're  
25 looking at perhaps 55 percent. I think my

1 bill's high enough. I have trouble paying that.  
2 My average use for the year 2007 was 1,688  
3 kilowatts. Now, I don't know how warm you keep  
4 your home, but at my house when my children and  
5 grandchildren come they know to bring a sweater,  
6 a sweatshirt, and if they're going to sit and  
7 watch TV they've got that afghan wrapped around  
8 because Grandma doesn't turn the heat up.

9           Increases in groceries, utilities,  
10 gasoline and taxes that I pay and everyone else  
11 in this room pays have taken their toll on all  
12 of us. I understand increases are needed.  
13 Waiting 12 years to ask for a big increase is  
14 wrong. Somebody wasn't on the ball. I can  
15 understand a 2 percent. If they would have done  
16 that 10 years ago, I probably wouldn't be  
17 standing here today, but they didn't do that.

18           At the rate things are going, I will  
19 need to approach my employer for a raise every  
20 month and you know how that's going to go over.  
21 He can't afford it any more than anyone else.

22           The Commission needs to look at the  
23 cost, the consequences and the results of this  
24 increase to each and every one of us. My only  
25 disappointment tonight, besides not -- knowing



1     that there will be no direct answers, which I  
2     knew before I came, I have talked to the PUCO  
3     and I have talked to Ohio Edison on several  
4     occasions about getting some information, but  
5     my -- my disappointment tonight is this room  
6     should be overflowing. There shouldn't be an  
7     empty seat or standing room anywhere for anyone.  
8     Everyone who has electric should be in here  
9     stating, if nothing else, "I don't want the  
10    increase."

11                 We have to begin talking, we have to  
12    begin defending ourselves, because no one else  
13    is doing it for us. You have to get on the ball  
14    and you have to let your thoughts be known.  
15    Mr. Shaffner's done a good job of that over the  
16    years. He is everywhere. Because he keeps  
17    track of what's going on. That's the only way  
18    you know. And you have to ask questions. Thank  
19    you.

20                 **MR. PRICE:**             Thank you. Paul  
21    Patel?

22                 (Thereupon, Mr. Palresh Patel was  
23                 sworn by Mr. Price.)

24                 **MR. PRICE:**             Please state your  
25    name and address for the record.

1                   **MR PALRESH PATEL:** Palresh Patel,  
2     P-a-l-r-e-s-h, P-a-t-e-l, 880 Laver Road,  
3     L-a-v-e-r, Mansfield 44905.

4                   Okay. I just barely took over one  
5     property over here in Ohio, '07 March, that I  
6     did find out a little while ago that somehow I'm  
7     not getting that discount, what I was supposed  
8     to be. My bill's supposed to be whatever I used  
9     last month, only 2,000 or 2,200. They charged  
10    me \$5,000-some not having that in that program.  
11    I don't think that was fair. Somebody else pays  
12    less and I pay twice. It wasn't good at all.

13                  And the business is not too good.  
14    Half of whatever I got I have to pay to Edison.  
15    I don't know how I'm going to survive.

16                  And if they are trying to say  
17    Mansfield wants some more business comes in and  
18    if you guys do this, after '07 whoever try to  
19    come in to Mansfield and have businesses, they  
20    won't come in because they don't got no  
21    opportunity for work.

22                  I have some property in California.  
23    I think it's better over there. It's less bill  
24    than here. I don't know why. I don't think so,  
25    nobody will come as a business that will come

1 into Mansfield or Ohio if you guys do that.  
2 That's it.

3 **MR. PRICE:** Thank you. I'm  
4 going to apologize in advance again. Umesh  
5 Patel?

6 (Thereupon, Mr. Umesh Patel was sworn  
7 by Mr. Price.)

8 **MR. PRICE:** Please state your  
9 name and address for the record.

10 **MR. UMESH PATEL:** Umesh Patel,  
11 U-m-e-s-h, P-a-t-e-l, 555 North Trimble Road,  
12 Mansfield 44906.

13 We are -- the same thing. We bought  
14 the business in February '07 and we looked at  
15 the electric bill and it was like having to be  
16 8,000 or something like that. Now we got  
17 \$12,000 bill. And now they're going to ask the  
18 people after January 1st, 2007 they're not in  
19 the plan and they give the increased rate.

20 And we are like a \$20,000 business.  
21 We pay 10,000, \$12,000 bill. How are we going  
22 to survive? The next thing is like up to 2007  
23 it's how the people coming in to do business in  
24 the town. They're not in the plan. The bill is  
25 going to keep increasing. It's very hard to

1 survive with our business.

2 I don't understand. Like, we are 30  
3 or \$32,000 business. We pay 12,000 for our  
4 electric bill. All of the mortgages and bills,  
5 how are we going to pay? That's all I have to  
6 say. Thanks.

7 **MR. PRICE:** Thank you. Our  
8 next witness is Jenni Tucker.

9 (Thereupon, Ms. Tucker was sworn by  
10 Mr. Price.)

11 **MR. PRICE:** Please state your  
12 name and address for the record.

13 **MS. TUCKER:** Jenni Tucker, 1729  
14 Darlington East Road, Bellville, Ohio 44813.

15 **MR. PRICE:** Proceed.

16 **MS. TUCKER:** I'm a new Ohio  
17 Edison customer. I've only been an Ohio Edison  
18 customer for two and a half years. I'm from the  
19 Dayton area and it was a shocker when I moved to  
20 here and I contacted Ohio PUCO about this issue  
21 before.

22 I know we're not talking today about  
23 the rates being higher, but not only are the  
24 rates higher, all your distribution and  
25 generated components are higher. On average, I

1 spend \$450 more a year for those non-related  
2 component charges on my bill. And I am an  
3 all-electric customer. You know, I was into it  
4 before they got rid of that discount.

5 So my question is, okay, well, you  
6 know, I'm not only paying \$450 more per year for  
7 having Ohio Edison versus DP&L or AEP, which I  
8 was current customer of. When I built my house  
9 up here, I built energy efficient, upgraded  
10 everything, everything is like the best of the  
11 best. And, you know, yeah, I'm saving, but my  
12 thing is is that all of my wires that are, like,  
13 from the pole to my house are not done by Ohio  
14 Edison up here.

15 And at the cheaper rate down in  
16 Dayton, if you build a new home or say, like, a  
17 tree falls down, which up here you would pay for  
18 that wire to replace. So, you know, you're  
19 going to increase your costs on top of what the  
20 cost already is, but you don't even offer the  
21 services that other electric companies in Ohio  
22 offer.

23 You know, I had to pay almost \$500 to  
24 run from a green box to my meter to have it dug,  
25 trenched. And, you know, we're -- my husband's

1 an electrician. He even laid the -- you know,  
2 we did the wire ourselves, you know. And that  
3 was \$500, you know, by the time it was all said  
4 and done just to replace that portion. Versus  
5 if I would have built a home in Dayton, I  
6 wouldn't have had to have that charge because  
7 their electric companies provide that service.

8 So if this increase is for  
9 distribution and wires and all that, I don't  
10 know if you can answer the question or not, if  
11 they're going to be included services for  
12 somebody -- like, you know, when we have these  
13 ice storms, if it knocks out your wire from the  
14 pole to the house, you know, in between the  
15 meter and where you connected Ohio Edison power,  
16 is that going to be an added service? Can you  
17 answer that question?

18 **MR. PRICE:** I can't answer the  
19 question, but if you have questions about  
20 service restoration, I would direct those to the  
21 Company representatives. They're here.

22 **MS. TUCKER:** Okay. I mean  
23 because that's kind of like one of the -- you  
24 know, you're asking for an increase, but I know  
25 as a previous DP&L customer, where my bill was

1 less then and that was -- that was less without  
2 any discount. You know, I'm up here and I'm  
3 getting a discount and it's still at least 60,  
4 \$70 a month more than down there. Because \$40  
5 of it is just generated related components and I  
6 guess that's what you're asking for the increase  
7 on, you know.

8 So that's something other household  
9 members or businesses, whatever, you know, if  
10 that happened to anybody in this room with the  
11 ice storm, you know, you've got to replace that  
12 line. That's not covered by Ohio Edison.  
13 You're only responsible -- you know, Ohio  
14 Edison, once it gets to the pole or, you know,  
15 the green box, that's it. Everything else is  
16 your responsibility.

17 And I would just like to say for the  
18 record that, you know, I'm an avid electrical  
19 saver. I mean I buy all the CFL bulbs and  
20 everything. I do whatever I can to save the  
21 money, you know. And they're just -- everything  
22 in my home is up to date, everything is energy  
23 efficient, you know, and my bill still averages  
24 around \$160 a month, you know.

25 And if you double that, you know,

1 you're talking a major budget cut for me and my  
2 family. And with the economy the way it's  
3 going -- you know, and I work for General Motors  
4 and I may be taking a layoff, you know. And  
5 where am I supposed to get this extra money?  
6 You know, it just needs to be known that, you  
7 know, if you're going to be asking for an  
8 increase for these things that you need to be  
9 offering something to show -- you know, because  
10 you're not showing anything to your customers.  
11 They say, "Well, we want more money, but we're  
12 not offering you anything for the service."  
13 Thank you.

14 **MR. PRICE:** Thank you. Evelyn  
15 Thomas?

16 **MS. THOMAS:** I'll pass.

17 **MR. PRICE:** Thank you. Kurt  
18 Stimens?

19 (Thereupon, Mr. Stimens was sworn by  
20 Mr. Price.)

21 **MR. PRICE:** Please state your  
22 name and address for the record.

23 **MR. STIMENS:** Kurt Stimens,  
24 S-t-i-m-e-n-s, 1111 South Main Street, Mansfield  
25 44907.



1 Well, I build houses and apartments  
2 in Mansfield. And, in fact, my family and I  
3 have built hundreds of apartments and houses in  
4 Mansfield back there in the '70s, the '80s, the  
5 '90s, right up to the present time. And we've  
6 always had a great relationship with Ohio  
7 Edison, and we thought they were a great  
8 company.

9 And we worked with them and we were  
10 confident in their abilities and they were  
11 always prompt and dependable. And during this  
12 time they promoted the 11-A and 11-B programs  
13 for all-electric apartments and houses. So we  
14 built almost all of ours all electric.

15 So back several years ago, you know,  
16 while things were still good, I felt that Ohio  
17 Edison needed a pay increase because I could see  
18 everything was going up in construction and  
19 everyday life.

20 Well, then on the 1st of January,  
21 2007, they got part of their increase by  
22 cancelling the 11-A and 11-B rate structures for  
23 any new customers of all-electric homes and  
24 apartments.

25 So for the time being, existing

1 customers are grandfathered in. Meaning, you  
2 know, the old customers are still enjoying their  
3 old rates. But the new ones are paying through  
4 the nose for their electric just because of the  
5 rate change.

6 Ohio Edison always promoted the 11-A  
7 and 11-B rates for the all-electric homes and  
8 they promised that this would always exist.  
9 This would always be there. Well, now they are  
10 not. And some of my renters are paying 5, 6, I  
11 even have one lady who last month her electric  
12 bill was over \$700 a month for an all-electric  
13 home. It's not because she's being wasteful.

14 Because for the last 12 years I've  
15 been extra insulating my houses. And I put R-40  
16 in the attics and I make sure the sidewalls are  
17 R-20, and I have the most efficient furnaces and  
18 everything in them. So some of these people are  
19 paying outrageous bills. And sometimes it seems  
20 like it's almost double what it should be.

21 I complained to officials at  
22 FirstEnergy and I complained to my congressman,  
23 I complained to PUCO, but nothing was done. And  
24 I didn't expect anything probably would be done,  
25 so because of this I feel like PUCO let us down.

1 I do not understand why PUCO did not at least  
2 insist on a phase-in program or plan for the  
3 elimination of the 11-A and 11-B rates. You  
4 know, maybe a 10 percent increase per year for  
5 however long it needs to be, but to allow such a  
6 drastic rate to increase so suddenly is a  
7 failure of PUCO to look out for the interests of  
8 FirstEnergy customers.

9           You know, back a year ago when I  
10 first started raising cain about this and I  
11 called Ohio Edison and they told me, "Well," you  
12 know, "we've been sending you notices for a year  
13 that this is going to happen." Well, big deal,  
14 you know. What are you going to do about it?  
15 It's like the doctor telling you, "You know,  
16 you've got terminal cancer." "So do something  
17 about it," you know. What are you going to do?  
18 There's nothing you can do about it.

19           And I also recall talking to an  
20 official at Ohio Edison who said, you know,  
21 "That grandfather clause for the all the 11-A  
22 and 11-B rates, that's good now," he said, "But  
23 don't be surprised in a year or two if that  
24 changes, too, and all those rates will change  
25 and everybody will lose their 11-A and 11-B

1 rates and then there will be all kinds of people  
2 raising hell. And with that, that's all I have  
3 to say about that matter. Thank you.

4 **MR. PRICE:** Thank you. Is  
5 there anybody who has not had an opportunity to  
6 testify that has signed up or who has not signed  
7 up that would like to testify?

8 Okay. With that we'll consider  
9 tonight's hearing to be adjourned. Thank you  
10 all for coming.

11 (Thereupon, the proceedings were  
12 concluded at 7:29 o'clock p.m.)

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## C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF OHIO, )  
 ) SS:  
SUMMIT COUNTY, )


I, Christina A. Arbogast, a Registered Professional Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of Ohio, duly commissioned and qualified, do hereby certify that these proceedings were taken by me and reduced to Stenotypy, afterwards prepared and produced by means of Computer-Aided Transcription and that the foregoing is a true and correct transcription of the proceedings so taken as aforesaid.

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

I do further certify that I am not a relative, employee of or attorney for any party or counsel, or otherwise financially interested in this action.

I do further certify that I am not, nor is the court reporting firm with which I am affiliated, under a contract as defined in Civil Rule 28(D).

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal of office at Akron, Ohio on this 1st day of April, 2008.

  
Christina A. Arbogast, RPR

My commission expires December 7, 2010.

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A				B
<b>abilities (2)</b> 25:16 41:10	44:9 <b>admit (1)</b> 31:3	27:3 <b>answer (5)</b> 16:22 21:6	3:7 30:18,19,23 30:23	<b>baby (2)</b> 14:5 22:2
<b>able (3)</b> 9:24 23:4,15	<b>advance (1)</b> 35:4	38:10,17,18 <b>answers (2)</b> 17:1 33:1	<b>arrived (1)</b> 7:9	<b>back (8)</b> 5:11 18:14,20
<b>above-entitled...</b> 1:17	<b>AEP (1)</b> 37:7	<b>anybody (2)</b> 39:10 44:5	<b>Ashland (1)</b> 24:7	21:12 26:1
<b>absorbed (1)</b> 27:5	<b>affiliated (1)</b> 45:14	<b>apartments (4)</b> 41:1,3,13,24	<b>asked (2)</b> 10:16 16:9	41:4,15 43:9
<b>abuse (1)</b> 29:25	<b>affixed (1)</b> 45:15	<b>apologize (1)</b> 35:4	<b>asking (3)</b> 38:24 39:6 40:7	<b>backgrounds (1)</b> 25:15
<b>accessing (1)</b> 6:5	<b>afford (5)</b> 23:5,15 27:21	<b>appearances (3)</b> 2:1 3:1 4:13	<b>aspect (2)</b> 6:13 14:9	<b>bad (1)</b> 14:20
<b>accomplishing...</b> 10:2	31:1 32:21 <b>afghan (1)</b> 32:7	<b>Applicants (1)</b> 2:19	<b>assigned (1)</b> 4:11	<b>balanced (2)</b> 10:3,15
<b>accomplishme...</b> 10:7	<b>aforementione...</b> 14:22	<b>application (3)</b> 1:5 4:5 6:20	<b>Assistant (2)</b> 2:14 4:20	<b>balancing (1)</b> 9:14
<b>Accounting (2)</b> 1:12 4:9	<b>aforesaid (1)</b> 45:9	<b>applications (1)</b> 5:16	<b>assisted (1)</b> 9:20	<b>ball (2)</b> 32:14 33:13
<b>accurately (1)</b> 8:4	<b>afraid (1)</b> 16:23	<b>applied (2)</b> 27:20 30:13	<b>attics (1)</b> 42:16	<b>bananas (3)</b> 15:14,15 18:14
<b>achieved (1)</b> 10:5	<b>ago (4)</b> 32:16 34:6	<b>apply (1)</b> 31:14	<b>attorney (5)</b> 1:20 2:6,21 4:11	<b>barely (1)</b> 34:4
<b>action (1)</b> 45:12	41:15 43:9 <b>ahead (2)</b> 7:25 8:12	<b>appreciate (3)</b> 8:9 27:18 30:11	45:11 <b>attorneys (1)</b> 7:21	<b>barn (2)</b> 16:14,16
<b>active (1)</b> 31:20	<b>aides (1)</b> 29:22	<b>appreciative (2)</b> 12:10 24:20	<b>audience (1)</b> 19:12	<b>Barnard (1)</b> 22:17
<b>add (2)</b> 9:10 29:10	<b>air (1)</b> 19:4	<b>approach (1)</b> 32:19	<b>Auer (1)</b> 13:25	<b>barns (1)</b> 16:12
<b>added (1)</b> 38:16	<b>Akron (2)</b> 2:23 45:15	<b>Approvals (2)</b> 1:13 4:9	<b>Authority (2)</b> 1:9 4:7	<b>based (2)</b> 25:18 30:14
<b>addition (1)</b> 29:6	<b>al (1)</b> 4:4	<b>approve (2)</b> 27:19 30:12	<b>automatically ...</b> 26:9	<b>basic (2)</b> 12:7,7
<b>additional (7)</b> 12:22 26:13,17	<b>allow (3)</b> 6:23 11:5 43:5	<b>approximate (1)</b> 30:14	<b>available (2)</b> 7:11 11:1	<b>basically (1)</b> 19:13
26:19,22,23 29:10	<b>allowed (1)</b> 7:22	<b>approximately...</b> 6:17 10:23	<b>Avenue (3)</b> 9:1 20:13 22:17	<b>basing (1)</b> 19:8
<b>address (16)</b> 7:16 8:22 11:18	<b>allowing (3)</b> 9:4 11:11 12:2	29:13,16 <b>April (1)</b> 45:16	<b>average (2)</b> 32:2 36:25	<b>began (1)</b> 6:15
13:23 15:25 18:4 20:10	<b>all-electric (7)</b> 21:15 31:10	<b>Arbogast (2)</b> 45:4,23	<b>averages (1)</b> 39:23	<b>behalf (7)</b> 2:3,11,19 4:15
22:15 24:4 28:7,16 30:22	37:3 41:13,23 42:7,12	<b>area (2)</b> 28:20 36:19	<b>avid (1)</b> 39:18	4:18 27:24
33:25 35:9 36:12 40:22	<b>annual (1)</b>	<b>Arnold (5)</b>	<b>A-u-e-r (1)</b> 13:25	28:18
<b>adjourned (1)</b>				<b>bells (1)</b> 10:10
				<b>Bellville (2)</b> 9:1 36:14
				<b>benefactors (1)</b>

9:17	2:7,15 4:22	calling (1)	changes (1)	26:20
<b>benefits (1)</b>	<b>brown (1)</b>	6:9	43:24	<b>Columbus (4)</b>
13:7	14:15	<b>cameras (1)</b>	<b>charge (2)</b>	2:8,16 4:22 6:16
<b>best (2)</b>	<b>budget (5)</b>	30:2	20:25 38:6	<b>combined (1)</b>
37:10,11	10:3,11,15 12:9	<b>cancelling (1)</b>	<b>charged (4)</b>	30:1
<b>better (1)</b>	40:1	41:22	16:20,20,21 34:9	<b>come (7)</b>
34:23	<b>budgeted (1)</b>	<b>cancer (1)</b>	<b>charges (1)</b>	14:18 16:23
<b>big (2)</b>	26:14	43:16	37:2	32:5 34:19,20
32:13 43:13	<b>build (2)</b>	<b>caption (1)</b>	<b>cheaper (1)</b>	34:25,25
<b>bill (18)</b>	37:16 41:1	45:10	37:15	<b>comes (2)</b>
18:18 19:10	<b>building (1)</b>	<b>Card (1)</b>	<b>check (1)</b>	23:2 34:17
22:1,21,21	17:14	10:6	18:12	<b>coming (3)</b>
26:22 27:7	<b>buildings (1)</b>	<b>Cardington (3)</b>	<b>children (6)</b>	18:12 35:23
31:21 34:23	30:2	11:21 12:1,4	9:6 12:4 13:12	44:10
35:15,17,21,24	<b>built (5)</b>	<b>Cardington-Li...</b>	25:4 27:25	<b>commencing (1)</b>
36:4 37:2	37:8,9 38:5 41:3	11:20,25 13:11	32:4	1:20
38:25 39:23	41:14	<b>carefully (1)</b>	<b>Christina (2)</b>	<b>comments (3)</b>
42:12	<b>bulbs (1)</b>	30:7	45:4,23	7:4 8:5 9:11
<b>bills (2)</b>	39:19	<b>cares (3)</b>	<b>Circle (1)</b>	<b>commercial (3)</b>
36:4 42:19	<b>buses (1)</b>	14:16 15:3,13	20:12	25:8,11 27:15
<b>bill's (2)</b>	29:18	<b>carrots (1)</b>	<b>citizen (1)</b>	<b>commission (22)</b>
32:1 34:8	<b>business (10)</b>	21:13	15:12	1:2 2:3,5 4:2,12
<b>bit (1)</b>	25:8,11 34:13,17	<b>Carter (1)</b>	<b>city (2)</b>	5:17,19 6:15
20:22	34:25 35:14,20	30:24	1:18 23:11	7:6 9:4 11:3
<b>blows (2)</b>	35:23 36:1,3	<b>case (11)</b>	<b>Civil (1)</b>	12:2 13:13
14:21,21	<b>businesses (5)</b>	1:5 4:3 5:19 6:3	45:14	14:4 17:8
<b>board (3)</b>	25:13 26:3	6:7,13,13,14	<b>classified (1)</b>	20:17 28:16
10:18 24:13	27:15 34:19	6:21,25 7:18	25:7	29:14 30:5,25
28:18	39:9	<b>cents (2)</b>	<b>classroom (1)</b>	32:22 45:24
<b>bothers (1)</b>	<b>buy (3)</b>	15:15,16	26:24	<b>commissioned ...</b>
20:23	14:7 23:2 39:19	<b>Certain (2)</b>	<b>classrooms (2)</b>	45:5
<b>bought (1)</b>		1:11 4:8	10:11 29:23	<b>Commissioner...</b>
35:13	<b>C</b>	<b>certainty (1)</b>	<b>clause (1)</b>	7:19
<b>Boulevard (1)</b>	<b>C (2)</b>	10:1	43:21	<b>Commission's ...</b>
13:25	45:1,1	<b>certify (4)</b>	<b>Clear (5)</b>	5:2 6:5,9
<b>box (2)</b>	<b>cain (1)</b>	45:6,9,11,13	8:25 9:6,20	<b>committed (1)</b>
37:24 39:15	43:10	<b>cetera (3)</b>	10:12 11:10	10:8
<b>boys (1)</b>	<b>calculations (1)</b>	19:5,19,19	<b>clearly (1)</b>	<b>community (1)</b>
12:17	30:15	<b>CFL (1)</b>	8:4	28:20
<b>brand (1)</b>	<b>California (1)</b>	39:19	<b>Cleveland (3)</b>	<b>companies (4)</b>
29:21	34:22	<b>Chambers (1)</b>	1:6 4:6 5:15	4:20 20:20
<b>brief (1)</b>	<b>call (5)</b>	1:18	<b>clocks (1)</b>	37:21 38:7
15:2	7:25 15:6,6	<b>change (2)</b>	14:19	<b>company (18)</b>
<b>bring (1)</b>	19:15 31:7	42:5 43:24	<b>close (2)</b>	1:6,7,8 4:5,6,7
32:5	<b>called (1)</b>	<b>changed (2)</b>	13:5 20:5	4:14,16 5:7,14
<b>Broad (3)</b>	43:11	21:2,3	<b>collects (1)</b>	5:14,15,20

6:23 7:1,21 38:21 41:8 <b>Company's</b> (3) 5:25 7:7,8 <b>compelled</b> (1) 9:10 <b>complained</b> (3) 42:21,22,23 <b>component</b> (1) 37:2 <b>components</b> (2) 36:25 39:5 <b>computer</b> (1) 29:21 <b>Computer-Aid...</b> 45:7 <b>concern</b> (1) 13:9 <b>concerned</b> (3) 23:4,6,14 <b>concluded</b> (1) 44:12 <b>concludes</b> (1) 27:17 <b>conditioning</b> (1) 19:5 <b>confident</b> (1) 41:10 <b>congressman</b> (1) 42:22 <b>connected</b> (1) 38:15 <b>consequences ...</b> 32:23 <b>consider</b> (2) 31:8 44:8 <b>considerably</b> (1) 26:6 <b>consideration ...</b> 11:4 27:18 30:12 <b>considered</b> (1) 7:17 <b>considers</b> (1) 30:5 <b>consistent</b> (1)	19:7 <b>constraints</b> (1) 10:11 <b>construction</b> (1) 41:18 <b>consumers</b> (10) 2:11,12,14 4:17 4:20,21 5:4,10 25:13,14 <b>contacted</b> (1) 36:20 <b>continue</b> (4) 10:15 24:17 27:23 28:25 <b>Continued</b> (1) 3:1 <b>contract</b> (3) 23:1,3 45:14 <b>coordinator</b> (1) 29:25 <b>copy</b> (4) 5:21 6:4,8 8:7 <b>correct</b> (2) 17:4 45:8 <b>cost</b> (18) 12:6,7,7,20,21 13:4,5 26:17 26:23 27:1,12 28:25 29:8,11 29:16,24 32:23 37:20 <b>costs</b> (9) 9:21 10:24 13:1 25:12,25 26:14 27:3,4 37:19 <b>Council</b> (5) 1:18,18 26:16 27:10 30:15 <b>counsel</b> (9) 2:11,12,14 4:17 4:21,21 5:4,10 45:12 <b>count</b> (1) 25:16 <b>country</b> (1) 16:11	<b>County</b> (2) 12:1 45:3 <b>course</b> (3) 22:22 23:12,17 <b>court</b> (4) 8:3,8 21:25 45:13 <b>covered</b> (1) 39:12 <b>Crestview</b> (8) 24:6,12,13,15,22 25:5 26:10,23 <b>Crestview's</b> (1) 26:22 <b>current</b> (2) 26:7 37:8 <b>currently</b> (1) 5:23 <b>customer</b> (5) 36:17,18 37:3,8 38:25 <b>customers</b> (6) 4:19 40:10 41:23 42:1,2 43:8 <b>cut</b> (2) 31:6 40:1	22:20 43:13 <b>death</b> (1) 18:16 <b>debated</b> (1) 18:17 <b>December</b> (3) 5:21 26:8 45:24 <b>decide</b> (1) 7:24 <b>decides</b> (1) 21:21 <b>decision</b> (2) 7:20 11:8 <b>defending</b> (1) 33:12 <b>defined</b> (1) 45:14 <b>degrees</b> (1) 22:3 <b>demand</b> (1) 26:6 <b>department</b> (2) 5:3,9 <b>dependable</b> (1) 41:11 <b>devices</b> (1) 19:3 <b>Diamond</b> (1) 1:18 <b>diesel</b> (1) 29:18 <b>different</b> (2) 16:19 19:11 <b>differential</b> (1) 11:6 <b>digitized</b> (1) 14:19 <b>digits</b> (1) 14:22 <b>direct</b> (2) 33:1 38:20 <b>disadvantage (...)</b> 31:18 <b>disappointme...</b> 32:25 33:5 <b>discount</b> (6)	27:23 31:14 34:7 37:4 39:2 39:3 <b>discounted</b> (1) 24:17 <b>discrepancies ...</b> 19:1 <b>discussion</b> (1) 21:9 <b>distinct</b> (1) 13:15 <b>distribution</b> (6) 1:10 4:8 5:18 26:18 36:24 38:9 <b>district</b> (17) 9:1,7,13,21 10:13,25 11:10 12:8,20,24,25 13:15 24:16,22 26:11 27:1,5 <b>districts</b> (7) 11:7 12:12 24:23 25:22 27:13,20 30:13 <b>District's</b> (1) 29:24 <b>docketing</b> (1) 6:6 <b>doctor</b> (1) 43:15 <b>Dogwood</b> (1) 20:12 <b>doing</b> (3) 10:9 15:13 33:13 <b>dollars</b> (4) 10:17 12:8 13:11 16:15 <b>door</b> (1) 17:13 <b>double</b> (3) 21:24 39:25 42:20 <b>downturn</b> (1) 29:3
---	--	---	---	--



<b>DP&amp;L (2)</b> 37:7 38:25 <b>drastic (1)</b> 43:6 <b>Drive (1)</b> 30:24 <b>due (2)</b> 10:11 11:4 <b>dug (1)</b> 37:24 <b>duly (1)</b> 45:5	9:15 25:3 27:9 <b>Edward (2)</b> 3:6 24:6 <b>effect (1)</b> 13:16 <b>effects (1)</b> 30:8 <b>efficient (3)</b> 37:9 39:23 42:17 <b>eight (2)</b> 14:6 15:8 <b>electric (30)</b> 1:7 4:6 5:15,18 9:5 12:3,15 13:1 18:18,25 19:24 21:1 22:19 24:18 25:1 26:6,9,14 26:22 27:7 28:22 31:5 33:8 35:15 36:4 37:21 38:7 41:14 42:4,11 <b>electrical (1)</b> 39:18 <b>electrician (1)</b> 38:1 <b>electricity (8)</b> 9:21 10:21,24 14:18,21 23:22 26:25 27:4 <b>electric's (1)</b> 15:17 <b>elementary (1)</b> 10:20 <b>eliminating (2)</b> 27:6,8 <b>elimination (4)</b> 10:22 29:9 30:6 43:3 <b>employee (1)</b> 45:11 <b>employer (1)</b> 32:19	<b>empty (1)</b> 33:7 <b>encourage (2)</b> 24:16 27:22 <b>energy (15)</b> 9:17,23 10:22 12:13 24:18,24 26:7,12,16 27:11 29:6,9 30:6 37:9 39:22 <b>Enforcement (2)</b> 5:2,9 <b>enjoyed (1)</b> 25:2 <b>enjoying (1)</b> 42:2 <b>entry (1)</b> 30:3 <b>equals (1)</b> 26:21 <b>equate (1)</b> 10:25 <b>equates (2)</b> 12:25 29:15 <b>equipment (3)</b> 14:25,25 23:21 <b>equivalent (1)</b> 26:24 <b>eroded (1)</b> 9:16 <b>especially (2)</b> 10:20 22:20 <b>estate (2)</b> 20:16 21:12 <b>estimate (2)</b> 12:20 13:4 <b>estimated (1)</b> 12:21 <b>et (4)</b> 4:4 19:5,18,19 <b>Evelyn (1)</b> 40:14 <b>evening (8)</b> 4:1 9:8 11:23 24:10,13 28:12	28:14 31:1 <b>Eventually (1)</b> 27:5 <b>everybody (2)</b> 8:11 43:25 <b>everyday (1)</b> 41:19 <b>evidence (1)</b> 6:24 <b>evidentiary (1)</b> 6:14 <b>exactly (1)</b> 16:7 <b>Examiner (3)</b> 1:20 2:6 4:11 <b>example (3)</b> 16:10,17 17:12 <b>exceeded (1)</b> 10:4 <b>excellent (1)</b> 10:5 <b>excise (1)</b> 26:21 <b>excuse (1)</b> 14:7 <b>exist (1)</b> 42:8 <b>existing (1)</b> 41:25 <b>expect (1)</b> 42:24 <b>expenditures (2)</b> 10:3,13 <b>expense (1)</b> 9:25 <b>expenses (2)</b> 9:16,25 <b>experience (1)</b> 12:23 <b>experienced (1)</b> 25:9 <b>experiencing (1)</b> 29:4 <b>expires (2)</b> 26:8 45:24 <b>explain (2)</b>	9:4 12:2 <b>explanation (1)</b> 19:17 <b>expressed (1)</b> 9:11 <b>extra (2)</b> 40:5 42:15 <b>e-r (1)</b> 8:24 <hr/> <b>F</b> <hr/> <b>F (2)</b> 8:24 45:1 <b>fact (1)</b> 41:2 <b>failure (1)</b> 43:7 <b>fair (3)</b> 17:20 22:5 34:11 <b>fall (1)</b> 26:1 <b>falling (1)</b> 16:12 <b>falls (1)</b> 37:17 <b>family (2)</b> 40:2 41:2 <b>far (2)</b> 18:9 19:13 <b>farmers (1)</b> 16:11 <b>father (2)</b> 18:16 19:9 <b>Faulkner (1)</b> 24:14 <b>February (1)</b> 35:14 <b>feel (1)</b> 42:25 <b>felt (1)</b> 41:16 <b>figure (1)</b> 18:20 <b>figures (3)</b> 26:15 27:2
--	--	--	---	--

30:14	12:25	15:16	<b>good (10)</b>	36:18
<b>figurine (2)</b>	<b>food (1)</b>	<b>gasoline (2)</b>	4:1 11:23 24:10	<b>Hall (7)</b>
14:13,14	14:6	18:14 32:10	28:11 31:4	3:6 28:3,4,8,8,11
<b>filed (2)</b>	<b>foot (1)</b>	<b>general (3)</b>	33:15 34:12,13	28:12
5:15,20	31:12	29:1 30:10 40:3	41:16 43:22	<b>hand (1)</b>
<b>final (2)</b>	<b>forecast (1)</b>	<b>generated (2)</b>	<b>gotten (1)</b>	45:15
6:12 7:19	9:25	36:25 39:5	31:8	<b>hands (1)</b>
<b>financial (2)</b>	<b>foregoing (2)</b>	<b>gentleman (1)</b>	<b>grade (1)</b>	14:15
6:1 11:7	45:8,10	22:25	29:20	<b>happen (1)</b>
<b>financially (2)</b>	<b>Fork (5)</b>	<b>George (11)</b>	<b>grades (1)</b>	43:13
28:24 45:12	8:25 9:6,20	3:4 15:21,22	10:20	<b>happened (1)</b>
<b>find (1)</b>	10:12 11:10	16:1,1,5 17:5	<b>grandchildren...</b>	39:10
34:6	<b>formula (3)</b>	17:11,16,19,24	32:5	<b>hard (1)</b>
<b>findings (2)</b>	14:7,8 25:21	<b>getting (4)</b>	<b>granddaughte...</b>	35:25
5:25 6:20	<b>Fortunately (1)</b>	31:7 33:4 34:7	14:5	<b>Harriman (16)</b>
<b>firm (1)</b>	9:16	39:3	<b>grandfather (1)</b>	3:4,5 15:21,22
45:13	<b>foundation (1)</b>	<b>girls (1)</b>	43:21	16:1,2,5 17:5
<b>first (4)</b>	25:20	12:17	<b>grandfathered...</b>	17:11,16,19,24
8:13 23:13	<b>four (2)</b>	<b>give (9)</b>	31:13 42:1	17:25 18:1,5,6
30:24 43:10	10:1,14	11:3 16:10 17:1	<b>Grandma (1)</b>	<b>Harvey (1)</b>
<b>FirstEnergy (1...</b>	<b>Frank (1)</b>	17:12 20:18	32:8	28:15
2:20 4:19 5:3	8:24	22:5 23:18	<b>grateful (1)</b>	<b>Hayden (3)</b>
9:19 11:4,6	<b>friend (1)</b>	29:14 35:19	9:18	2:21 4:15,16
12:11 17:10	22:18	<b>go (12)</b>	<b>great (3)</b>	<b>heard (2)</b>
23:19 24:17,21	<b>frills (1)</b>	6:6 7:25 8:12	23:7 41:6,7	6:17 9:8
25:6 27:22	10:12	16:11 18:14	<b>green (2)</b>	<b>hearing (17)</b>
28:20 42:22	<b>front (1)</b>	19:17 21:7,11	37:24 39:15	1:16 4:3,12,25
43:8	21:14	22:19,21 26:9	<b>Gregory (7)</b>	5:7 6:12,14,16
<b>FirstEnergy's ...</b>	<b>fuel (1)</b>	32:20	1:19 2:6 3:5	6:22 7:1,2,3
6:19	29:18	<b>God's (1)</b>	4:10 22:9,10	8:2,10 14:12
<b>fiscal (5)</b>	<b>full (1)</b>	22:5	22:16	31:1 44:9
11:9 12:25 27:1	13:5	<b>goes (4)</b>	<b>groceries (1)</b>	<b>hearings (1)</b>
27:2 29:12	<b>funding (3)</b>	23:6,16 31:18,24	32:9	9:10
<b>five (2)</b>	12:5 25:23	<b>going (37)</b>	<b>grounds (1)</b>	<b>heat (3)</b>
15:9 29:22	29:24	15:5 17:2 19:4,6	30:3	23:5,15 32:8
<b>fixed (3)</b>	<b>furnaces (1)</b>	19:10 20:17,22	<b>group (1)</b>	<b>heating (2)</b>
9:15 14:4 18:11	42:17	20:25 21:5,24	13:15	22:20,21
<b>fixes (1)</b>	<b>further (3)</b>	22:18,20 23:3	<b>guess (1)</b>	<b>heavy (1)</b>
15:4	45:9,11,13	23:4,15,18,21	39:6	23:10
<b>floor (1)</b>	<b>future (1)</b>	26:1 32:6,18	<b>guys (2)</b>	<b>held (2)</b>
15:10	9:25	32:20 33:17	34:18 35:1	1:17 21:9
<b>focus (1)</b>		34:15 35:4,17		<b>hell (1)</b>
5:6	<b>G</b>	35:21,25 36:5	<b>H</b>	44:2
<b>following (1)</b>	<b>Galion (1)</b>	37:19 38:11,16	<b>half (5)</b>	<b>help (1)</b>
1:22	21:25	40:3,7 41:18	10:25 25:22	19:21
<b>follows (1)</b>	<b>Gas (1)</b>	43:13,14,17	26:24 34:14	<b>helpful (3)</b>

8:7 12:15 25:1 <b>hereunto</b> (1) 45:15 <b>high</b> (1) 32:1 <b>higher</b> (6) 25:9 27:16 31:22 36:23,24 36:25 <b>Hines</b> (1) 9:1 <b>holding</b> (1) 14:15 <b>home</b> (12) 14:18 21:15,22 31:10,12,15,17 32:4 37:16 38:5 39:22 42:13 <b>homes</b> (2) 41:23 42:7 <b>hope</b> (1) 13:13 <b>hoping</b> (1) 17:1 <b>hot</b> (4) 21:16,17,21 31:11 <b>hotline</b> (1) 6:10 <b>hours</b> (2) 15:8 19:1 <b>house</b> (10) 18:16 21:2,3 23:2,5,15 32:4 37:8,13 38:14 <b>household</b> (1) 39:8 <b>houses</b> (6) 18:15 19:3 41:1 41:3,13 42:15 <b>Howard</b> (5) 3:4 17:25 18:1,5 18:5 <b>hundreds</b> (1) 41:3	<b>husband's</b> (1) 37:25 <hr/> <b>I</b> <b>James</b> (1) 22:9 <b>ice</b> (3) 23:9 38:13 39:11 <b>idea</b> (1) 29:14 <b>II</b> (4) 26:8,12,17 27:12 <b>Illuminating</b> (3) 1:7 4:6 5:15 <b>immediately</b> (1) 31:18 <b>impact</b> (7) 9:5 11:7,8 12:3 13:10 27:8 29:2 <b>implement</b> (1) 12:19 <b>improvement</b> ... 23:20 <b>included</b> (1) 38:11 <b>income</b> (2) 14:5 18:11 <b>increase</b> (44) 1:9 4:7 5:6,17 7:7 9:5 10:23 11:5 12:3,6,24 13:2,2,3,10 17:9 18:10 20:24 21:6 23:5,16 25:23 26:18 27:4,19 28:22,25 29:6 29:8 30:6,13 31:19 32:13,24 33:10 37:19 38:8,24 39:6 40:8 41:17,21 43:4,6 <b>increased</b> (7)	10:1,16 12:16 15:1 25:12,25 35:19 <b>increases</b> (4) 10:21 25:24 32:9,12 <b>increasing</b> (2) 9:16 35:25 <b>Indicating</b> (2) 5:12,23 <b>information</b> (2) 6:7 33:4 <b>inside</b> (1) 23:11 <b>insist</b> (1) 43:2 <b>instruct</b> (1) 11:2 <b>insulating</b> (1) 42:15 <b>interested</b> (1) 45:12 <b>interests</b> (1) 43:7 <b>interruptions</b> (... 15:3 <b>intervening</b> (4) 4:24 6:23 7:2,5 <b>issue</b> (2) 12:6 36:20 <b>issues</b> (1) 17:10 <b>item</b> (1) 29:16 <b>items</b> (2) 9:7 12:9 <hr/> <b>J</b> <b>J</b> (2) 3:4 18:5 <b>JAMES</b> (1) 22:10 <b>Jamie</b> (1) 24:14 <b>January</b> (4) 6:15 23:13	35:18 41:20 <b>Jeffrey</b> (2) 2:13 4:20 <b>Jenni</b> (3) 3:7 36:8,13 <b>job</b> (2) 23:7 33:15 <b>Joining</b> (1) 28:14 <b>Jones</b> (6) 3:6 21:21 22:11 22:12,16,17 <b>June</b> (1) 5:13 <b>justify</b> (1) 20:24 <hr/> <b>K</b> <b>K</b> (1) 29:20 <b>keep</b> (3) 14:17 32:3 35:25 <b>keeping</b> (2) 12:15 25:1 <b>keeps</b> (1) 33:16 <b>Keiser</b> (7) 3:4 13:19,20,24 13:24 14:3 15:20 <b>kept</b> (1) 16:15 <b>Kevin</b> (1) 20:1 <b>kids</b> (1) 14:14 <b>kilowatt</b> (3) 17:13 18:21 19:1 <b>kilowatts</b> (1) 32:3 <b>kind</b> (1) 38:23 <b>kindergarten</b> (... 12:19 13:6	<b>kinds</b> (1) 44:1 <b>knew</b> (1) 33:2 <b>knocks</b> (1) 38:13 <b>know</b> (59) 7:6 12:5 14:10 16:7,22 18:24 19:11,16 20:21 22:19 23:10,11 23:14 32:3,5 32:20 33:18 34:15,24 36:22 37:3,6,11,18 37:23,25 38:1 38:2,3,10,12 38:14,24,24 39:2,7,9,11,13 39:14,18,21,23 39:24,25 40:3 40:4,6,7,9 41:15 42:2 43:4,9,12,14 43:15,17,20 <b>knowing</b> (1) 32:25 <b>known</b> (2) 33:14 40:6 <b>Kurt</b> (3) 3:8 40:17,23 <hr/> <b>L</b> <b>L</b> (2) 2:13 3:5 <b>labs</b> (1) 29:21 <b>lady</b> (1) 42:11 <b>laid</b> (1) 38:1 <b>Lane</b> (1) 16:2 <b>Larry</b> (3) 3:3 8:13,23 <b>lasting</b> (1)
---	---	--	---	--

11:8	<b>local (12)</b>	9:25	<b>Mervin (4)</b>	<b>name (22)</b>
<b>Laver (1)</b>	8:25 11:20,25	<b>managing (1)</b>	3:5 20:3,6,11	4:10 7:16 8:22
34:2	13:11 24:7,12	9:21	<b>meter (2)</b>	8:23 11:18,24
<b>Law (1)</b>	24:16,22 25:19	<b>Mansfield (15)</b>	37:24 38:15	13:23 15:24
2:21	26:1,10 28:13	1:17,19 13:25	<b>microwave (1)</b>	18:4 20:10
<b>layoff (1)</b>	<b>locally (1)</b>	16:2 18:6 28:9	14:19	22:15,18 24:4
40:4	19:23	30:24 34:3,17	<b>million (1)</b>	24:5,11 28:7
<b>learning (1)</b>	<b>long (1)</b>	34:19 35:1,12	27:14	28:12 30:22
12:17	43:5	40:24 41:2,4	<b>millionaires (1)</b>	33:25 35:9
<b>left (1)</b>	<b>longer (4)</b>	<b>man's (1)</b>	22:7	36:12 40:22
23:13	11:1 31:14,16,20	21:18	<b>minimum (1)</b>	<b>necessarily (1)</b>
<b>lengthy (1)</b>	<b>look (4)</b>	<b>March (3)</b>	12:22	23:20
15:5	13:14 19:11	1:21 31:21 34:5	<b>missed (1)</b>	<b>need (9)</b>
<b>let's (2)</b>	32:22 43:7	<b>Mark (6)</b>	7:11	14:24 15:1
8:12 21:7	<b>looked (2)</b>	2:21 3:3 4:16	<b>mission (1)</b>	19:21 21:17,17
<b>level (2)</b>	14:13 35:14	11:14,19,24	25:4	22:3 27:6
29:20 30:3	<b>looking (2)</b>	<b>Marquis (1)</b>	<b>modern (3)</b>	32:19 40:8
<b>levels (1)</b>	18:19 31:25	21:19	14:25 19:2,3	<b>needed (4)</b>
25:16	<b>lose (1)</b>	<b>math (1)</b>	<b>Modify (2)</b>	13:12 16:17
<b>life (1)</b>	43:25	29:19	1:11 4:8	32:12 41:17
41:19	<b>loss (4)</b>	<b>matter (5)</b>	<b>Monday (1)</b>	<b>needs (3)</b>
<b>Lifer (11)</b>	26:12,16 27:11	1:4,17 4:4 5:5	1:21	32:22 40:6 43:5
3:3 8:13,14,15	29:10	44:3	<b>money (4)</b>	<b>negative (2)</b>
8:15,16,17,19	<b>lost (1)</b>	<b>McGraw (1)</b>	23:18 39:21	29:2 30:8
8:23,24 9:3	18:15	24:14	40:5,11	<b>negatively (1)</b>
<b>liking (1)</b>	<b>lot (2)</b>	<b>mean (3)</b>	<b>Monitoring (2)</b>	27:8
31:7	10:12 22:7	26:13 38:22	5:2,9	<b>negotiate (2)</b>
<b>limited (2)</b>	<b>love (1)</b>	39:19	<b>month (7)</b>	9:19 11:6
25:17,18	15:15	<b>meaning (2)</b>	14:20 32:20	<b>neighbor (1)</b>
<b>Lincolns (1)</b>	<b>low (1)</b>	26:5 42:1	34:9 39:4,24	17:13
21:18	10:19	<b>means (1)</b>	42:11,12	<b>neighborhood ...</b>
<b>Linda (3)</b>	<b>L-a-v-e-r (1)</b>	45:7	<b>months (4)</b>	6:18 17:21
3:6 30:17,23	34:3	<b>mechanism (1)</b>	14:6 26:4,4	19:16
<b>line (1)</b>	<b>L-i (1)</b>	11:5	29:17	<b>neighbors (1)</b>
39:12	8:24	<b>medal (1)</b>	<b>Morrow (1)</b>	18:22
<b>lines (1)</b>	<hr/>	14:16	12:1	<b>neighbor's (1)</b>
21:2	<hr/>	<b>member (1)</b>	<b>mortgages (1)</b>	16:20
<b>listen (1)</b>	<b>M</b>	5:8	36:4	<b>never (2)</b>
13:9	<b>Main (2)</b>	<b>members (2)</b>	<b>Motors (1)</b>	18:17 19:9
<b>little (2)</b>	2:22 40:24	24:13 39:9	40:3	<b>new (6)</b>
14:14 34:6	<b>maintain (1)</b>	<b>mentioned (1)</b>	<b>move (1)</b>	19:2 29:21
<b>live (4)</b>	31:16	15:2	30:8	36:16 37:16
18:25 20:12	<b>major (2)</b>	<b>Mercury (1)</b>	<b>moved (1)</b>	41:23 42:3
22:17 23:11	12:6 40:1	21:18	36:19	<b>Nichols (1)</b>
<b>living (1)</b>	<b>man (2)</b>	<b>merits (1)</b>	<hr/>	11:21
31:12	16:6 18:17	6:19	<hr/>	<b>Nobody's (1)</b>
	<b>manage (1)</b>		<b>N</b>	

15:13	4:5,21,22 5:3	<b>order (2)</b>	3:7,7 33:21,22	11:17 13:22
<b>non-related (1)</b>	5:13,17,22 9:1	7:13 27:7	34:1,1 35:5,6	14:2 16:4 18:3
37:1	11:21 12:1	<b>outrage (1)</b>	35:10,10	20:9 22:14
<b>North (2)</b>	13:25 16:2	19:20	<b>Paul (1)</b>	24:3 28:6
1:18 35:11	20:25 21:13,25	<b>outrages (1)</b>	33:20	30:21 33:24
<b>NOS (1)</b>	23:19 24:8	15:6	<b>pay (20)</b>	35:8 36:11
1:5	25:23 26:16,20	<b>outrageous (1)</b>	19:6 27:7,21	40:21
<b>nose (1)</b>	27:10,13 28:1	42:19	29:17,18,21,22	<b>plus (1)</b>
42:4	28:9,24 30:9	<b>overflowing (1)</b>	29:24 30:1,3	14:25
<b>Notary (1)</b>	30:15,24 31:4	33:6	31:22 32:10	<b>pole (4)</b>
45:5	33:3 34:5 35:1	<b>overhead (1)</b>	34:12,14 35:21	16:14 37:13
<b>notices (1)</b>	36:14,16,17,20	10:13	36:3,5 37:17	38:14 39:14
43:12	37:7,13,21	<b>owners (1)</b>	37:23 41:17	<b>poor (1)</b>
<b>number (4)</b>	38:15 39:12,13	21:14	<b>paying (8)</b>	21:18
4:3 6:7 19:15	41:6,16 42:6	<b>o'clock (2)</b>	17:12,14 25:8	<b>portion (1)</b>
31:7	43:11,20 45:2	1:22 44:12	32:1 37:6 42:3	38:4
<b>O</b>	45:5,16	<b>P</b>	42:10,19	<b>positions (2)</b>
<b>oath (2)</b>	<b>okay (5)</b>	<b>page (1)</b>	<b>pays (2)</b>	6:25 27:7
7:20,24	20:14 34:4 37:5	6:7	32:11 34:11	<b>possibly (2)</b>
<b>objection (1)</b>	38:22 44:8	<b>paid (3)</b>	<b>people (9)</b>	21:4,24
28:21	<b>old (4)</b>	18:18 19:10	14:14 19:11	<b>power (2)</b>
<b>obtain (1)</b>	14:6 18:17 42:2	31:23	20:18 23:12	15:2 38:15
6:8	42:3	<b>Palresh (4)</b>	25:15 35:18,23	<b>Practices (2)</b>
<b>occasions (1)</b>	<b>once (3)</b>	3:7 33:22 34:1,1	42:18 44:1	1:12 4:9
33:4	14:20 18:17	<b>parents (1)</b>	<b>percent (8)</b>	<b>prepared (3)</b>
<b>offer (2)</b>	39:14	28:19	13:3 21:5 22:22	5:19 8:6 45:7
37:20,22	<b>ones (1)</b>	<b>Park (1)</b>	26:20 31:22,25	<b>present (3)</b>
<b>offered (1)</b>	42:3	20:13	32:15 43:4	3:3 6:24 41:5
7:9	<b>one's (1)</b>	<b>part (3)</b>	<b>performance (2)</b>	<b>preside (1)</b>
<b>offering (3)</b>	16:21	5:18 7:17 41:21	6:2 7:8	4:11
24:17 40:9,12	<b>Ontario (8)</b>	<b>participated (1)</b>	<b>Pete (1)</b>	<b>pretty (2)</b>
<b>office (5)</b>	28:13,18,22 29:1	24:24	13:18	15:13 16:13
2:12 4:21 15:8	29:8,11,15	<b>participating (1)</b>	<b>Peter (2)</b>	<b>previous (1)</b>
21:3 45:15	30:9	27:13	3:4 13:24	38:25
<b>officer (1)</b>	<b>open (1)</b>	<b>participation (1)</b>	<b>phase-in (1)</b>	<b>previously (1)</b>
30:1	26:4	8:9	43:2	28:23
<b>offices (1)</b>	<b>operate (1)</b>	<b>parties (4)</b>	<b>phone (2)</b>	<b>price (68)</b>
6:16	25:18	4:24 6:24 7:5,21	14:18 31:7	1:20 2:6 4:1,10
<b>official (1)</b>	<b>operating (2)</b>	<b>party (2)</b>	<b>place (4)</b>	4:17,23 8:16
43:20	10:16 12:8	7:2 45:11	4:3 18:22 19:23	8:20,21 9:2
<b>officials (1)</b>	<b>opportunities ...</b>	<b>pass (2)</b>	45:10	11:13,16,17,22
42:21	12:17	7:25 40:16	<b>plan (6)</b>	13:18,21,22
<b>Ohio (60)</b>	<b>opportunity (7)</b>	<b>passing (1)</b>	31:13,20,21	14:2 15:19,21
1:2,5,19 2:4,5,8	7:5,10,11 17:8	25:12	35:19,24 43:2	15:23,24 16:4
2:11,12,16,23	28:16 34:21	<b>Patel (10)</b>	<b>please (18)</b>	17:4,7,15,18
	44:5		5:7 8:3,21 9:2	17:23,25 18:2

18:3 19:6 20:1 20:4,8,9,14 21:7 22:8,13 22:14 23:24 24:2,3,9 28:2,5 28:6,10 30:17 30:20,21 33:20 33:23,24 35:3 35:7,8 36:7,10 36:11,15 38:18 40:14,17,20,21 44:4	<b>programs (5)</b> 9:18 12:14 24:25 27:9 41:12 <b>project (1)</b> 26:10 <b>projected (3)</b> 26:19,25 27:11 <b>promised (1)</b> 42:8 <b>promoted (2)</b> 41:12 42:6 <b>prompt (1)</b> 41:11 <b>property (3)</b> 21:14 34:5,22 <b>proposed (3)</b> 10:21 13:2,4 <b>protect (1)</b> 20:17 <b>provide (4)</b> 8:7 25:3,17 38:7 <b>provided (3)</b> 12:11 24:21 25:19 <b>provides (1)</b> 6:2 <b>providing (1)</b> 10:9 <b>public (20)</b> 1:2 2:3,5 4:2,3 5:16 6:12 7:4 9:9 16:7 20:16 24:19,23 25:7 25:10 27:13,14 27:25 28:23 45:5 <b>PUCO (9)</b> 6:10 20:24 21:12 33:2 36:20 42:23,25 43:1,7 <b>purpose (2)</b> 6:22 7:3 <b>put (3)</b> 16:14 17:16	42:15 <b>P-a-l-r-e-s-h (1)</b> 34:2 <b>P-a-t-e-l (2)</b> 34:2 35:11 <b>p.m (2)</b> 1:22 44:12	<b>Q</b> <b>qualified (1)</b> 45:6 <b>quality (2)</b> 25:3,17 <b>question (6)</b> 5:4 18:24 37:5 38:10,17,19 <b>questioned (1)</b> 19:9 <b>questions (3)</b> 7:22 33:18 38:19 <b>quite (1)</b> 8:17	<b>R</b> <b>R (5)</b> 3:4 13:24 20:6 20:11 45:1 <b>radio (1)</b> 23:1 <b>raise (1)</b> 32:19 <b>raising (3)</b> 14:17 43:10 44:2 <b>ran (1)</b> 6:16 <b>Randy (1)</b> 28:15 <b>rate (35)</b> 5:6,19 6:13 9:5 11:5,6 12:3,24 13:2,10 16:9 16:20,21,21 17:9 20:24 21:23 23:5 24:18 25:9	26:18 27:19 28:22 29:6,8 30:5 31:14,18 31:24 32:18 35:19 37:15 41:22 42:5 43:6 <b>rates (22)</b> 1:10 4:8 5:18 7:7 9:19 10:21 12:15 13:16 15:1 16:19 25:1 26:9 27:15 31:22 36:23,24 42:3 42:7 43:3,22 43:24 44:1 <b>rating (1)</b> 10:5 <b>ratios (1)</b> 10:20 <b>rattlesnake (1)</b> 20:20 <b>rattlesnake's (1)</b> 20:21 <b>real (2)</b> 20:16 21:12 <b>realize (1)</b> 13:3 <b>really (2)</b> 17:20,22 <b>Realty (1)</b> 20:13 <b>rear (1)</b> 7:12 <b>reason (1)</b> 31:6 <b>reasonable (2)</b> 20:19 31:9 <b>reasonably (1)</b> 9:24 <b>recall (1)</b> 43:19 <b>receive (1)</b> 7:3 <b>received (2)</b>	25:24 26:15 <b>receiving (1)</b> 25:23 <b>reclassification...</b> 26:11 <b>reclassified (1)</b> 27:15 <b>recommendati...</b> 6:3 <b>record (20)</b> 7:17,18 8:5,22 11:18 13:23 15:25 18:4 20:10 21:8,10 22:15 24:4 28:7 30:22 33:25 35:9 36:12 39:18 40:22 <b>recording (3)</b> 15:7,7 31:8 <b>reduced (2)</b> 10:14 45:6 <b>reflect (1)</b> 8:5 <b>regarding (3)</b> 5:5 7:23 17:10 <b>register (1)</b> 28:21 <b>Registered (1)</b> 45:4 <b>related (1)</b> 39:5 <b>relationship (1)</b> 41:6 <b>relative (1)</b> 45:11 <b>reliability (2)</b> 7:8 17:9 <b>religiously (1)</b> 18:18 <b>remember (1)</b> 21:13 <b>REMEMBER...</b> 1:16 <b>renewed (1)</b>
---	--	---	---	---	--	---

29:7	39:13	13:6 30:4	5:7 16:11 17:2	9:8
renters (1)	rest (1)	save (1)	22:6 41:17	Shelby-Ontari...
42:10	18:9	39:20	Seeing (1)	28:9
REO (1)	restoration (1)	saver (1)	4:25	shocker (1)
21:24	38:20	39:19	sell (2)	36:19
repaired (1)	result (2)	saving (1)	21:22 31:15	show (1)
31:9	9:23 10:23	37:11	selling (2)	40:9
replace (3)	results (1)	savings (2)	20:15 31:17	showing (1)
37:18 38:4	32:23	12:16 25:2	sells (1)	40:10
39:11	retiree (2)	saw (1)	21:23	shut (1)
report (7)	18:8,10	14:13	send (2)	22:2
5:20,22,24 6:4,9	revenue (2)	saying (1)	16:23 23:21	side (1)
6:20 10:6	9:15 25:19	16:8	sending (1)	7:12
reporter (4)	revenues (1)	scheduled (1)	43:12	sidewalls (1)
8:3,4,8 45:5	10:4	6:12	senior (1)	42:16
reporting (1)	reviewed (1)	school (22)	15:12	sign (1)
45:13	7:18	8:25 9:6,20	series (1)	7:10
represent (1)	rid (1)	10:13 11:7,10	29:19	signed (3)
28:12	37:4	12:5,11,18	served (1)	7:14 44:6,6
representative...	right (3)	13:16 24:13,16	27:25	significant (1)
5:8,10 16:24	8:18 17:3 41:5	24:22,23 25:22	service (15)	29:2
representative...	road (6)	26:5,10 27:5	1:11 4:8 5:2,8	significantly (1)
4:24 5:1 24:15	18:6 19:18 28:9	27:13,20 29:25	6:1,7 19:14	10:14
38:21	34:2 35:11	30:13	23:9 28:20	simply (2)
representing (3)	36:14	schools (24)	31:5,9 38:7,16	26:2 27:20
8:25 24:6,12	room (7)	9:20 11:21 12:1	38:20 40:12	sit (1)
request (4)	7:12,12 14:12	13:11,14 24:7	services (3)	32:6
7:7 11:4 25:10	32:11 33:5,7	24:12,19 25:7	25:3 37:21	situation (2)
27:19	39:10	25:11 26:16	38:11	6:1 28:17
requested (1)	Route (1)	27:10,14,25	session (1)	six (1)
25:7	24:7	28:13,14,23	26:5	9:13
residential (1)	RPR (1)	29:1,8,12,15	set (2)	size (1)
4:19	45:23	30:9,10,15	4:2 45:15	16:16
residents (1)	Rule (1)	Scott (3)	Shaffer (1)	Small (3)
10:16	45:14	3:5 22:10,16	20:2	2:13 4:18,20
resource (1)	run (1)	seal (1)	Shaffner (11)	Smith (1)
30:1	37:24	45:15	3:5 20:3,3,5,6,7	21:23
resources (1)	R-20 (1)	seat (1)	20:11,11,12,15	snowstorms (1)
25:18	42:17	33:7	21:11	23:10
respect (2)	R-40 (1)	Second (1)	Shaffner's (1)	Social (2)
5:25 6:1	42:15	31:3	33:15	18:11,12
response (1)		security (2)	shake (2)	solvency (1)
25:10		18:12 30:2	20:19 22:6	11:10
responsibility ...	<hr/> S <hr/>	Security's (1)	shared (1)	somebody (6)
39:16	sake (1)	18:12	30:14	19:15,24 23:2
responsible (1)	salaries (2)	see (5)	sharing (1)	32:14 34:11

38:12	18:19 43:10	9:15	<b>supposed (3)</b>	22:23 23:7
<b>somewhat (1)</b>	<b>starting (1)</b>	<b>Street (7)</b>	34:7,8 40:5	31:11
19:7	4:13	1:19 2:7,15,22	<b>sure (2)</b>	<b>Tariff (2)</b>
<b>soon (2)</b>	<b>state (23)</b>	4:22 11:21	8:10 42:16	1:13 4:9
15:13 16:13	8:21 10:6 11:17	40:24	<b>surprised (1)</b>	<b>tax (1)</b>
<b>sorry (3)</b>	12:6 13:22	<b>strong (2)</b>	43:23	26:21
5:11 8:16 20:4	15:24 18:3	9:14 10:19	<b>survive (4)</b>	<b>taxes (1)</b>
<b>sound (1)</b>	20:9 22:14	<b>strongly (1)</b>	26:2 34:15	32:10
10:9	24:3,7 25:20	24:16	35:22 36:1	<b>taxpayers (3)</b>
<b>sounds (1)</b>	25:23 26:20	<b>structures (1)</b>	<b>sweater (1)</b>	22:6 25:20 26:1
16:8	28:1,6 30:21	41:22	32:5	<b>teacher (2)</b>
<b>source (1)</b>	33:24 35:8	<b>struggled (1)</b>	<b>sweatshirt (1)</b>	13:5 30:4
25:19	36:11 40:21	9:14	32:6	<b>teachers (4)</b>
<b>South (2)</b>	45:2,5	<b>struggles (1)</b>	<b>sworn (14)</b>	11:1 12:22
2:22 40:24	<b>statement (5)</b>	28:25	8:19 11:15	26:24 27:8
<b>speak (2)</b>	7:23 8:6,8,11	<b>struggling (1)</b>	13:20 15:23	<b>teacher's (1)</b>
8:3 11:11	27:17	28:24	18:2 20:7	29:22
<b>speaker (2)</b>	<b>statewide (1)</b>	<b>students (5)</b>	22:12 24:1	<b>teacher-to-stu...</b>
16:7 18:21	29:4	10:4 11:2,9	28:4 30:19	10:19
<b>special (2)</b>	<b>stating (1)</b>	25:14 28:19	33:23 35:6	<b>teaching (1)</b>
21:22 29:23	33:9	<b>subject (2)</b>	36:9 40:19	27:6
<b>specifically (2)</b>	<b>statistics (1)</b>	9:12 11:12	<b>sympathetic (1)</b>	<b>tear (1)</b>
29:1 30:9	21:15	<b>substance (1)</b>	13:13	16:13
<b>specified (1)</b>	<b>Stenotypy (1)</b>	29:25	<b>sympathize (1)</b>	<b>technology (1)</b>
45:10	45:7	<b>successful (2)</b>	16:6	19:2
<b>spend (1)</b>	<b>Stephens (1)</b>	10:2,8	<b>S-t-i-m-e-n-s (1)</b>	<b>tell (2)</b>
37:1	21:25	<b>suddenly (1)</b>	40:24	15:8 17:8
<b>Springmill (1)</b>	<b>Steve (2)</b>	43:6		<b>telling (1)</b>
18:6	24:11,14	<b>Suite (1)</b>	<b>T</b>	43:15
<b>square (1)</b>	<b>Steven (3)</b>	2:15	<b>T (2)</b>	<b>ten (2)</b>
31:12	3:6 23:24 24:5	<b>summarizes (1)</b>	45:1,1	12:14 24:25
<b>SS (1)</b>	<b>Stimens (5)</b>	5:24	<b>take (4)</b>	<b>terminal (1)</b>
45:3	3:8 40:18,19,23	<b>summer (1)</b>	7:13 12:8 19:10	43:16
<b>staff (11)</b>	40:23	26:5	31:2	<b>territory (2)</b>
5:19,20,21,24	<b>stockholders (1)</b>	<b>SUMMIT (1)</b>	<b>taken (4)</b>	5:22 19:16
6:4,9,20,23 7:1	23:19	45:3	32:11 45:6,8,10	<b>testified (1)</b>
10:8 28:19	<b>stop (3)</b>	<b>Superintende...</b>	<b>talk (2)</b>	28:23
<b>staff's (2)</b>	15:14,16,18	11:20,25 24:11	15:9 19:23	<b>testify (4)</b>
5:25 6:2	<b>storm (3)</b>	28:13	<b>talked (3)</b>	7:10,25 44:6,7
<b>stamps (1)</b>	14:20 23:13	<b>supplementals...</b>	18:21 33:2,3	<b>testifying (1)</b>
14:7	39:11	29:19	<b>talking (6)</b>	6:19
<b>standing (2)</b>	<b>storms (2)</b>	<b>support (3)</b>	15:10 22:25	<b>testimony (3)</b>
32:17 33:7	23:9 38:13	6:25 12:11	33:11 36:22	7:15,17,20
<b>stars (1)</b>	<b>strapped (1)</b>	24:21	40:1 43:19	<b>textbook (1)</b>
14:15	21:20	<b>supporter (1)</b>	<b>tank (6)</b>	29:19
<b>started (2)</b>	<b>stream (1)</b>	10:19	21:16,17,21	<b>thank (35)</b>



4:22 9:3 11:11 11:13 12:2 13:8,17,18 14:4 15:19 17:23,24 19:25 20:1 22:7,8 23:23,24 28:1 28:2,11,15 30:15,17,25 33:18,20 35:3 36:7 40:13,14 40:17 44:3,4,9 <b>Thanks (2)</b> 15:20 36:6 <b>thing (7)</b> 15:10 18:9 19:9 19:12 35:13,22 37:12 <b>things (4)</b> 14:23 32:18 40:8 41:16 <b>think (11)</b> 5:11 7:6 14:24 15:1 17:9,20 22:3 31:25 34:11,23,24 <b>thinking (1)</b> 23:17 <b>Thomas (2)</b> 40:15,16 <b>thought (1)</b> 41:7 <b>thoughts (2)</b> 9:12 33:14 <b>three (2)</b> 6:17 9:9 <b>Timbuktu (1)</b> 21:1 <b>time (14)</b> 1:22 4:2 8:12 11:11 13:5,9 15:6 27:18 30:11 38:3 41:5,12,25 45:10 <b>times (1)</b>	31:5 <b>today (3)</b> 28:21 32:17 36:22 <b>today's (1)</b> 31:21 <b>told (1)</b> 43:11 <b>Toledo (3)</b> 1:8 4:7 5:14 <b>toll (1)</b> 32:11 <b>tonight (6)</b> 4:25 5:1 16:25 19:12 32:25 33:5 <b>tonight's (8)</b> 4:12 5:6,7 7:2,3 8:2,10 44:9 <b>top (1)</b> 37:19 <b>total (2)</b> 26:21 29:11 <b>town (2)</b> 17:21 35:24 <b>track (1)</b> 33:17 <b>transcribed (1)</b> 8:3 <b>transcription (...)</b> 45:7,8 <b>traveling (1)</b> 21:1 <b>Treasurer (1)</b> 28:15 <b>tree (1)</b> 37:17 <b>trenched (1)</b> 37:25 <b>Trimble (1)</b> 35:11 <b>trouble (1)</b> 32:1 <b>true (1)</b> 45:8 <b>trust (1)</b>	20:20 <b>try (2)</b> 20:17 34:18 <b>trying (2)</b> 26:2 34:16 <b>Tucker (7)</b> 3:7 36:8,9,13,13 36:16 38:22 <b>turn (1)</b> 32:8 <b>TV (1)</b> 32:7 <b>twice (2)</b> 14:12 34:12 <b>two (8)</b> 12:13,21 14:15 21:17 24:24 25:25 36:18 43:23 <b>types (1)</b> 25:15  <b>U</b> <b>Umesh (5)</b> 3:7 35:4,6,10,10 <b>understand (7)</b> 16:18 21:4 22:24 32:12,15 36:2 43:1 <b>understanding...</b> 25:6 29:5 <b>unpredictable ...</b> 25:20 <b>upgraded (1)</b> 37:9 <b>upkeeps (1)</b> 18:15 <b>urge (4)</b> 11:3 27:18 30:7 30:12 <b>use (6)</b> 6:7 14:6,24 19:4 19:6 32:2 <b>utilities (7)</b> 1:2 2:3,5 4:2 5:16 20:17	32:9 <b>utility (3)</b> 5:5 20:19 22:1 <b>U-m-e-s-h (1)</b> 35:11  <b>V</b> <b>Valley (2)</b> 8:25 10:12 <b>versus (2)</b> 37:7 38:4 <b>Vietnam (2)</b> 14:11,16 <b>voicing (1)</b> 18:8  <b>W</b> <b>W (2)</b> 3:4 16:1 <b>Waiting (1)</b> 32:13 <b>wall (1)</b> 15:11 <b>want (6)</b> 8:10 16:10 20:24 21:11 33:9 40:11 <b>wants (1)</b> 34:17 <b>warm (1)</b> 32:3 <b>wasn't (2)</b> 32:14 34:12 <b>wasteful (1)</b> 42:13 <b>watch (1)</b> 32:7 <b>water (6)</b> 21:16,17,21 22:23 23:7 31:11 <b>way (5)</b> 5:11 18:13 25:12 33:17 40:2 <b>website (1)</b> 6:5	<b>weeks (2)</b> 6:17 9:9 <b>weigh (1)</b> 30:8 <b>went (1)</b> 13:1 <b>West (4)</b> 2:15 4:22 18:6 20:13 <b>we'll (1)</b> 44:8 <b>we're (10)</b> 5:22 17:2 19:4,5 23:18 29:3 31:24 36:22 37:25 40:11 <b>we've (3)</b> 23:9 41:5 43:12 <b>WHEREOF (1)</b> 45:15 <b>Whippowill (1)</b> 16:2 <b>whistles (1)</b> 10:10 <b>widow (1)</b> 31:11 <b>Wilcheck (7)</b> 3:3 11:14,15,19 11:19,23,24 <b>Willeke (7)</b> 3:6 23:25 24:1,5 24:6,10,11 <b>willing (2)</b> 9:19 19:5 <b>winter (1)</b> 23:10 <b>wire (3)</b> 37:18 38:2,13 <b>wires (2)</b> 37:12 38:9 <b>wish (2)</b> 7:24 19:22 <b>wishes (1)</b> 8:11 <b>witness (7)</b> 8:1,13 11:14
---	---	--	---	--

22:9 28:3 36:8 45:15 witnesses (3) 6:18,24 7:13 work (3) 31:2 34:21 40:3 worked (1) 41:9 working (1) 19:22 worthy (1) 13:15 wouldn't (2) 32:16 38:6 wrapped (1) 32:7 written (2) 8:6,7 wrong (1) 32:14 www.PUCO.o... 6:6	\$11.7 (1) 27:14 \$12,000 (2) 35:17,21 \$120,000 (1) 12:21 \$123 (1) 31:23 \$160 (1) 39:24 \$2,730 (1) 26:21 \$20,000 (1) 35:20 \$210,000 (1) 27:1 \$23,000 (1) 29:9 \$25,000 (1) 26:19 \$270,000 (1) 27:3 \$29,600 (1) 26:18 \$300 (1) 22:1 \$317,000 (1) 13:1 \$32,000 (1) 36:3 \$40 (1) 39:4 \$45,400 (1) 29:11 \$450 (2) 37:1,6 \$5,000-some (1) 34:10 \$500 (2) 37:23 38:3 \$57,330 (3) 26:13,22 27:3 \$60,000 (1) 10:24 \$62,503 (1) 13:4	\$68,400 (10) 29:13,15,17,17 29:18,20,22,23 30:1,3 \$70 (1) 39:4 \$700 (1) 42:12 <hr/> 0 07 (3) 34:5,18 35:14 07-551-EL-AI... 1:6 4:4 6:8 07-552-EL-AT... 1:7 07-553-EL-A... 1:8 07-554-EL-U... 1:9 08 (1) 12:25 <hr/> 1 1st (3) 35:18 41:20 45:16 1,688 (1) 32:2 1,700 (1) 31:12 1-800 (1) 19:15 1-800-686 (1) 6:10 10 (4) 2:15 4:21 32:16 43:4 10,000 (1) 35:21 1020 (1) 16:2 11-A (6) 41:12,22 42:6 43:3,21,25 11-B (6) 41:12,22 42:7	43:3,22,25 1111 (1) 40:24 12 (6) 6:11 16:8 26:4 29:20 32:13 42:14 12th (1) 6:12 12,000 (1) 36:3 121 (1) 11:21 14-A (3) 31:13,20,21 1452 (1) 13:25 1575 (1) 24:7 1650 (1) 30:23 1729 (1) 36:13 18 (1) 13:3 180 (1) 2:7 1800 (1) 2:15 1961 (1) 20:16 <hr/> 2 2 (3) 29:21 30:3 32:15 2,000 (1) 34:9 2,200 (1) 34:9 2006-2007 (1) 10:5 2007 (6) 5:13,21 32:2 35:18,22 41:21 2008 (4)	1:21 6:15 26:8 45:16 2008-2009 (1) 12:18 2010 (1) 45:24 24th (1) 1:21 248 (2) 12:12 24:23 249 (1) 27:12 2765 (1) 18:6 28(D) (1) 45:14 29th (1) 6:15 <hr/> 3 3 (1) 26:4 3.4 (1) 18:23 30 (2) 1:18 36:2 31st (1) 26:8 330/761-7735 (... 2:24 39 (1) 15:15 <hr/> 4 4th (1) 5:21 4.9 (1) 17:14 40,000 (1) 29:11 43215 (1) 2:8 43215-3485 (1) 2:16 44308 (1) 2:23 44805 (1)
<hr/> Y yeah (1) 37:11 year (18) 10:24 12:18,25 16:15 18:16 25:24 26:4,13 27:1,14 29:12 32:2 37:1,6 43:4,9,12,23 years (17) 9:13,22 10:2,15 12:14,22 16:9 18:17 24:25 25:25 31:4 32:13,16 33:16 36:18 41:15 42:14 year's (1) 27:2 young (1) 25:15 <hr/> \$				

24:8	<u>7</u>			
44813 (1)	7 (3)			
36:14	21:5 29:17			
44903 (2)	45:24			
18:7 22:17	7th (1)			
44905 (1)	5:13			
34:3	7:29 (1)			
44906 (3)	44:12			
16:3 28:9 35:12	70s (1)			
44907 (2)	41:4			
14:1 40:25	703 (1)			
45 (2)	22:17			
30:2 31:22	737 (1)			
457 (1)	20:13			
28:8	76 (1)			
	2:22			
<u>5</u>	<u>8</u>			
5 (2)	8 (1)			
26:20 42:10	21:5			
5.5 (1)	8,000 (1)			
18:23	35:16			
50 (3)	80s (1)			
15:15 22:2,21	41:4			
55 (1)	80-gallon (6)			
31:25	21:16,17,21			
555 (1)	22:23 23:6			
35:11	31:11			
580 (1)	800 (1)			
20:12	31:7			
<u>6</u>	85 (1)			
6 (1)	18:17			
42:10	880 (1)			
6.3 (3)	34:2			
17:12 18:21,23	<u>9</u>			
6.9 (1)	90s (1)			
18:23	41:5			
6:36 (1)	92 (1)			
1:21	9:1			
60 (2)	96 (1)			
6:18 39:3	24:7			
614/466-8574 (...)				
2:17				
614/752-9410 (...)				
2:9				
66 (1)				
15:12				