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PUCO

9886 Pebble Brook Lane  
Strongsville, Ohio 44149

October 31, 2010

PUCO

Attn: Docketing  
180 E. Broad St.  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Ohio Consumer's Council  
Attn: Consumer Services Division  
18<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Subject: Case No: 10-0176-EL-ATA

To Whom It May Concern;

First and foremost, I would like to express my appreciation for the opportunity to attend the public hearing at Strongsville High School on October 27, 2010 relative to the All Electric Discount issue prompted by 1<sup>st</sup> Energy's initiative to discontinue this program.

As a 30+ year resident, junior high school and long time senior high school principal in Strongsville, I have come to know many people within this community. However, I found it interesting to note Wednesday evening that of the estimated 800+ people in attendance just how many I had never before seen. I mention this only because the diversity of the people represented contrasted significantly with the consistency and singularity of their messages – how could so many different people have recalled such similar recollections had there not been a real basis for their memories? Though not at all adverse to public speaking, I determined by the break that much of what I might have contributed would have been redundant to the audience several times over. I would, however, like to be accepted on record relative to this issue.

My wife and I are the original owners of our all-electric home in the Strongsville Meadowood subdivision built by Bob Schmitt Homes and purchased in 1981. As a young couple with two toddlers and a single salary we were understandably very cost conscious. While many decisions go into the selection of such an investment there were two, specifically, that convinced us that this was our best

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choice. The first was that in 5 years as a young school administrator in Strongsville I had come to know Mr. Schmitt personally. He had earned a most enviable reputation for building a high quality home, at a fair market price and delivering it absolutely by the date declared. Most importantly, however, he was earning a reputation for designing and constructing homes that were energy efficient – a relatively new concept at the time. In fact, Mr. Schmitt's penchant for energy conservation resulted in what now strikes me as humorous disagreement. My wife and I were approving the final plans for the house when Mr. Schmitt was called in to give his approval. He became visibly and audibly upset when he saw extra tall windows for our family room. Moving from our first home – a 1930's home with limited windows, we had specifically requested these additionally long windows. Mr. Schmitt, however, was not pleased as these were completely inconsistent with his energy mantra. In the end, we got our windows but the incident evidences his early and consistent emphasis upon energy conservation.

The second major factor was, of course, the promise of the All Electric Discount being promoted by what was then the Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company (CEI – now part of the 1<sup>st</sup> Energy consortium) and embraced by Mr. Schmitt. Given Mr. Schmitt's abundant success with numerous housing developments and his considerable reputation at stake it is wholly unrealistic to think that he would have ever become a promoter of the "all electric home" without considerable conviction that CEI was sincere in its promotion that they could make the all-electric home competitive with gas.

Without the re-instatement of the full All Electric Discount my wife and I will find ourselves in the same predicament as so consistently described by others who chose to speak at the hearing – namely:

1. We are geographically "locked" within a community with no access to a gas alternative;
2. Even if gas were to become somehow available, the cost to retro-fit our home heating system and all appliances would be absolutely cost prohibitive;
3. Without the re-instatement of the full AED a prospective new buyer of our home could very realistically be considering a utility bill that might equal or exceed the monthly mortgage;
4. Given this, the unprecedented national decline in the current housing market and now coupled with the widespread knowledge of the 1<sup>st</sup> Energy initiative, the prospects of actually selling our home at a fair market value appears futile;
5. Now in my mid-60s, retired from my professional career and on a "fixed income" such a financial loss would be insurmountable.

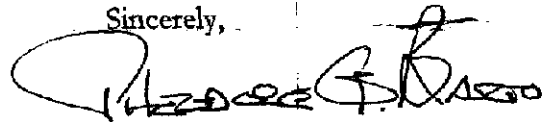
6. Should this decision be made in favor of those with the all-electric homes, the plan must reside with the property – not the owner. If the plan only exists for the current owner all of the preceding concerns will continue to prohibit future fair value sales of the home;
7. Lastly, consideration must also be given to a billing adjustment to reimburse those affected (we were budgeted) for the differences paid during the short period of the new rates.

As echoed by virtually every speaker Wednesday evening, none of us wishes that the full AED be reinstated for us with the cost differential being deferred to home owners or businesses with combined gas and electric utilities – that would be equally unfair. Like it or not, the financial burden of a reversal to the full AED must be borne by 1<sup>st</sup> Energy and its share holders. We believe that 1<sup>st</sup> Energy's corporate decision to abdicate an historical commitment that it has acknowledged for decades was short-sighted and made with little or no regard to the realities that it would impose upon their 100s of thousands of customers.

Finally, it is also most regrettable that the PUCO, a state agency designed in part to protect the interests of its citizenry, so thoroughly failed to stand by us. Had the hearings that have now been mandated been conducted prior to the PUCO's initial approval of 1st Energy's petition we would have had an opportunity to express ourselves before the rates escalated, the PUCO might have been much better informed and a great deal of emotional anxiety might have been negated. I regret that when faced with a rate request by a very large corporate taxpayer the people were given so little thought. Frankly, at this point, without the positive intervention of the PUCO on behalf of the AED customers, we will have been put into a financial headlock by 1<sup>st</sup> Energy from which there is no foreseeable escape – we very much need your help.

Thank you for affording me the opportunity to express my feelings and to become a part of the record in this proceeding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Theodore G. Barto', with a large, stylized initial 'T'.

Theodore G. Barto