

**BEFORE
THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO**

In the Matter of the Application of The)
East Ohio Gas Company d/b/a/ Dominion)
East Ohio For Approval of Tariffs to) Case No. 14-2125-GA-RDR
Adjust its Automated Meter Reading Cost)
Recovery Charge and Related Matters.)

**MOTION TO INTERVENE
BY
THE OFFICE OF THE OHIO CONSUMERS' COUNSEL**

The Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel ("OCC") intervenes in this case filed by Dominion East Ohio ("Dominion" or "the Utility") because the Automated Meter Reading ("AMR") rider rate charged to residential customers will be reviewed and established.¹ AMR devices enable the Utility to read customers' meters remotely rather than having to manually read them, thus making the process more efficient. That greater efficiency should lead to Operation and Maintenance ("O&M") cost savings. The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio ("PUCO") review in this case, will ensure that those O&M cost savings flow to customers through the AMR Rider rate on an expedited basis. The OCC moves to intervene in this case on behalf of all of Dominion's 1.1 million residential utility customers. The reasons the PUCO should grant OCC's Motion are further set forth in the attached Memorandum in Support.

¹ See R.C. Chapter 4911, R.C. 4903.221 and Ohio Adm. Code 4901-1-11.

Respectfully submitted,

BRUCE J. WESTON
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/s/ Joseph P. Serio

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MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT

In its Application, Dominion asked the PUCO to modify and decrease its AMR rider rate for residential customers from \$0.56² per customer per month to \$0.55 per customer per month.³ OCC has authority under Ohio law to represent the interests of all of Dominion’s 1.1 million residential utility customers pursuant to R.C. Chapter 4911.

R.C. 4903.221 provides, in part, that any person “who may be adversely affected” by a PUCO proceeding is entitled to seek intervention in that proceeding. The interests of Ohio’s residential customers may be “adversely affected” by this case, especially if the customers were unrepresented in a proceeding where Dominion’s AMR rider rate for residential customers will be reviewed and established. Thus, this element of the intervention standard in R.C. 4903.221 is satisfied.

R.C. 4903.221(B) requires the PUCO to consider the following criteria in ruling on motions to intervene:

- (1) The nature and extent of the prospective intervenor’s interest;

² *In re Dominion 2011 AMR Case*, Case No. 11-5843-GA-RDR, Opinion and Order at 19 (October 3, 2012).

³ Dominion Application at 1.

- (2) The legal position advanced by the prospective intervenor and its probable relation to the merits of the case;
- (3) Whether the intervention by the prospective intervenor will unduly prolong or delay the proceeding; and
- (4) Whether the prospective intervenor will significantly contribute to the full development and equitable resolution of the factual issues.

First, the nature and extent of OCC's interest is representing the residential customers of Dominion in this case involving the review and establishment of the Utility's AMR rider rate. This interest is different than that of any other party and especially different than that of the Utility whose advocacy includes the financial interest of stockholders.

Second, OCC's advocacy for residential customers will include advancing the position that Dominion's AMR rider rate for residential customers should not be more than what is reasonable and lawful under Ohio law, for service that is adequate under Ohio law. OCC's position is therefore directly related to the merits of this case that is pending before the PUCO, the authority with regulatory control of public utilities' rates and service quality in Ohio.

Third, OCC's intervention will not unduly prolong or delay the proceedings. OCC, with its longstanding expertise and experience in PUCO proceedings, will duly allow for the efficient processing of the case with consideration of the public interest.

Fourth, OCC's intervention will significantly contribute to the full development and equitable resolution of the factual issues. OCC will obtain and develop information that the PUCO should consider for equitably and lawfully deciding the case in the public interest.

OCC also satisfies the intervention criteria in the Ohio Administrative Code (which are subordinate to the criteria that OCC satisfies in the Ohio Revised Code). To intervene, a party should have a “real and substantial interest” according to Ohio Adm. Code 4901-1-11(A)(2). As the advocate for residential utility customers, OCC has a very real and substantial interest in this case where Dominion’s AMR rider rate will be reviewed and established.

In addition, OCC meets the criteria of Ohio Adm. Code 4901-1-11(B)(1)-(4). These criteria mirror the statutory criteria in R.C. 4903.221(B) that OCC already has addressed and that OCC satisfies.

Ohio Adm. Code 4901-1-11(B)(5) states that the Commission shall consider the “extent to which the person’s interest is represented by existing parties.” While OCC does not concede the lawfulness of this criterion, OCC satisfies this criterion in that it uniquely has been designated as the state representative of the interests of Ohio’s residential utility customers. That interest is different from, and not represented by, any other entity in Ohio.

Moreover, the Supreme Court of Ohio confirmed OCC’s right to intervene in PUCO proceedings, in deciding two appeals in which OCC claimed the PUCO erred by denying its interventions. The Court found that the PUCO abused its discretion in denying OCC’s interventions and that OCC should have been granted intervention in both proceedings.⁴

⁴ See *Ohio Consumers’ Counsel v. Pub. Util. Comm.*, 111 Ohio St.3d 384, 2006-Ohio-5853, ¶¶13-20 (2006).

OCC meets the criteria set forth in R.C. 4903.221, Ohio Adm. Code 4901-1-11, and the precedent established by the Supreme Court of Ohio for intervention. On behalf of Ohio residential customers, the Commission should grant OCC's Motion to Intervene.

Respectfully submitted,

BRUCE J. WESTON
OHIO CONSUMERS' COUNSEL

/s/ Joseph P. Serio

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a copy of this *Motion to Intervene* was served on the persons stated below *via* electronic mail this 27th day of March 2015.

/s/ Joseph P. Serio

Joseph P. Serio
Assistant Consumers' Counsel

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Summary: Motion Motion to Intervene by the Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel electronically filed by Patti Mallarnee on behalf of Serio, Joseph P.