

BEFORE
THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO

In the Matter of the Renewal)	
Application of Electricity Ratings, LLC's)	Case No. 17-1236-GA-AGG
Retail Natural Gas Broker License)	

MOTION FOR PROTECTIVE ORDER

In accordance with the provisions of Ohio Admin. Code 4901-1-24(D) and 4901:1-24-07, Electricity Ratings, LLC ("ER") respectfully moves the Commission to issue a protective order to protect the confidentiality of and prohibit the disclosure of certain documents filed simultaneously with this motion in the above-captioned docket. The documents in Exhibits C-3, "Financial Statements," C-5, "Forecasted Financial Statements," and C-7, "Credit Report," contain competitively sensitive and highly proprietary business information, which require confidential treatment. The documents have been clearly marked as confidential and are hereby filed under seal.

The grounds for the motion are set forth in the attached Memorandum in Support. Consistent with the requirements of the above-cited rule, two unredacted copies of the exhibits have been submitted under seal.

Date: May 16, 2019

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Robert Dove
Robert Dove (0092019)
Kegler Brown Hill + Ritter Co., L.P.A.
65 E State St., Ste. 1800
Columbus, OH 43215-4295
Office: (614) 462-5443
Fax: (614) 464-2634
rdove@keglerbrown.com
(Counsel willing to accept service by email)

Counsel for Electricity Ratings, LLC

MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT

On April 29, 2019, ER filed its Renewal Application for Certification as a Competitive Retail Natural Gas Broker. As part of its review of the application, the Commission requested additional information regarding ER's Financial Statements (Exhibit C-3), Forecasted Financial Statements (C-5) and Credit Report (Exhibit C-7).

ER has submitted the requested information under seal because the documents contain competitively sensitive and proprietary business information, which requires confidential treatment. Consequently, ER requests that the Commission maintain the confidential nature of the document and the information contained therein, and protect the document from public disclosure.

Ohio Admin. Code 4901-1-24(D) provides for the issuance of an order that is necessary to protect the confidentiality of information contained in documents filed at the Commission to the extent that state and federal law prohibit the release of such information and where non-disclosure of the information is not inconsistent with the purposes of Title 49 of the Revised Code. State law recognizes the need to protect information that is confidential in nature, as is the information contained in Exhibits C-3, C-5, and C-7. R.C. 4929.23(A) specifically permits the Commission to grant confidentiality to competitive information.¹ R.C. § 4901.12 and 4905.07

¹ R.C. § 4928.06(F) provides: "An electric utility, electric services company, electric cooperative, or governmental aggregator subject to certification under section 4928.08 of the Revised Code shall provide the commission with such information, regarding a competitive retail electric service for which it is subject to certification, as the commission considers necessary to carry out this chapter. An electric utility shall provide the commission with such information as the commission considers necessary to carry out divisions (B) to (E) of this section. The commission shall take such measures as it considers necessary to protect the confidentiality of any such information."

facilitate the protection of trade secrets in the Commission's possession.² R.C. §§ 4901.12 and 4905.07 reference R.C. §149.43, and therefore incorporate the provision that accepts from the public record information and records of which the release is prohibited by law.³ State law prohibits the release of information meeting the definition of a trade secret. Additionally, non-disclosure of the information will not impair the purposes of Title 49 as the Commission and its Staff will have full access to the requested information in order to complete their review process.

Exhibits C-3, C-5, and C-7 contain competitively sensitive and highly proprietary business information falling within the statutory characterization of a trade secret as defined by R.C. §1333.61(D). The definition of trade secret therein is as follows:

"Trade secret" means information, including the whole or any portion or phase of any scientific or technical information, design, process, procedure, formula, pattern, compilation, program, device, method, technique, or improvement, or any business information or plans, **financial information**, or listing of names, addresses, or telephone numbers, that satisfies both of the following:

(1) It derives independent economic value, actual or potential, from not being generally known to, and not being readily ascertainable by proper means by, other persons who can obtain economic value from its disclosure or use.

(2) It is the subject of efforts that are reasonable under the circumstances to maintain its secrecy.

R.C. § 1333.61(D) (emphasis added).

² R.C. § 4901.12 provides: "Except as otherwise provided in section 149.43 of the Revised Code and as consistent with the purposes of Title XLIX [49] of the Revised Code, all proceedings of the public utilities commission and all documents and records in its possession are public records." R.C. § 4905.07 provides: "Except as provided in section 149.43 of the Revised Code and as consistent with the purposes of Title XLIX [49] of the Revised Code, all facts and information in the possession of the public utilities commission shall be public, and all reports, records, files, books, accounts, papers, and memorandums of every nature of nature in its possession shall be open to inspection by interested parties or their attorneys."

³ R.C. § 149.43(A)(1)(v) provides in part: "'Public record' does not mean records the release of which is prohibited by state or federal law."

Exhibits C-3, “Financial Statements,” and C-5, “Forecasted Financial Statements,” contain highly sensitive financial information and are typically granted automatic protective treatment at the Commission and ER requests that it be granted such treatment here. Exhibit C-7, “Credit Report,” likewise contains sensitive business information that must be held confidential as trade secrets. Public disclosure of this information would jeopardize ER’s business position in negotiations with other parties and its ability to compete. ER asserts that this information is not generally known by the public and is held in confidence in the normal course of business. Therefore, ER reasonably requests that Exhibits C-3, C-5, and C-7 in this certificate renewal application be deemed to contain trade secrets, and thus, be treated as confidential by this Commission and its Staff.

WHEREFORE, ER respectfully requests that this Motion for Protective Order be granted for the reasons set forth herein.

Date: May 16, 2019

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Robert Dove
Robert Dove (0092019)
Kegler Brown Hill + Ritter Co., L.P.A.
65 E State St., Ste. 1800
Columbus, OH 43215-4295
Office: (614) 462-5443
Fax: (614) 464-2634
rdove@keglerbrown.com
(Counsel willing to accept service by email)

Counsel for Electricity Ratings, LLC

This foregoing document was electronically filed with the Public Utilities

Commission of Ohio Docketing Information System on

5/16/2019 11:30:06 AM

in

Case No(s). 17-1236-GA-AGG

Summary: Motion for a Protective Order electronically filed by Mr. Robert Dove on behalf of Electricity Ratings, LLC