**BEFORE**

**THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO**

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| In the Matter of the Application of Duke Energy Ohio, Inc., for Authority to Adjust Its Power Future Initiatives Rider. | )  )  ) | Case No. 23-147-EL-RDR |

**MOTION TO INTERVENE**

**BY**

**OFFICE OF THE OHIO CONSUMERS’ COUNSEL**

The Office of the Ohio Consumers’ Counsel (“OCC”) moves to intervene[[1]](#footnote-2) in this case about Duke Energy Ohio, Inc. (“Duke” or the “Company”) charges to consumers under its Power Future Initiatives Rider (“PF Rider” or “Rider”). Duke seeks to modify the Rider to collect costs associated with providing customer energy usage data to marketers, third parties and consumers. OCC is filing on behalf of about 640,000 residential utility consumers of Duke. The reasons the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (“PUCO”) should grant OCC’s Motion are further set forth in the attached Memorandum in Support.

Respectfully submitted,

Bruce Weston (0016973)

Ohio Consumers’ Counsel

*/s/ Connor D. Semple*

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**BEFORE**

**THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO**

|  |  |  |
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| In the Matter of the Application of Duke Energy Ohio, Inc., for Authority to Adjust its Power Future Initiatives Rider. | )  )  ) | Case No. 23-0147-EL-RDR |

## MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT

Duke asks the PUCO to modify its Power Future Initiatives Rider so it can collect costs associated with providing customer energy usage data to marketers, third parties and consumers. OCC has authority under law to represent the interests of the about 640,000 Duke residential utility consumers, 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 consumers may be “adversely affected” by this case. This is especially so if consumers are unrepresented in a proceeding where the PUCO is reviewing whether proposed charges under the Power Future Initiatives rider are just and reasonable. 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) 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 proceedings; and

(4) Whether the prospective intervenor will significantly contribute to full development and equitable resolution of the factual issues.

First, the nature and extent of OCC’s interest is in representing the residential consumers of Duke in this case about charges under the PF Rider. 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 consumers will include, among other things, advancing the position that charges should be no more than what is just and reasonable under Ohio law, for service that is adequate under Ohio law. OCC’s position is therefore directly related to the merits of this case, which 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 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 O.A.C. 4901-1-11(A)(2). As the advocate for residential utility consumers, OCC has a real and substantial interest in this case where the PUCO may impose charges on consumers under Duke’s PF Rider.

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

O.A.C. 4901-1-11(B)(5) states that the PUCO 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 consumers. That interest is different from, and not represented by, any other entity in Ohio.

Moreover, the Supreme Court of Ohio (“Court”) 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.[[2]](#footnote-3)

OCC meets the criteria set forth in R.C. 4903.221, O.A.C. 4901-1-11, and the precedent established by the Supreme Court of Ohio for intervention. On behalf of Ohio residential consumers, the PUCO should grant OCC’s Motion to Intervene.

Respectfully submitted,

Bruce Weston (0016973)

Ohio Consumers’ Counsel

*/s/ Connor D. Semple*

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(willing to accept service by e-mail)

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I hereby certify that a copy of this Motion to Intervene was served on the persons stated below via electronic transmission, this 25th day of May 2023.

*/s/ Connor D. Semple*

Connor D. Semple

Assistant Consumers’ Counsel

The PUCO’s e-filing system will electronically serve notice of the filing of this document on the following parties:

**SERVICE LIST**

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| --- | --- |
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1. *See* R.C. Chapter 4911, R.C. 4903.221 and O.A.C. 4901-1-11. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. *See Ohio Consumers’ Counsel v. Pub. Util. Comm*., 111 Ohio St.3d 384, 2006-Ohio-5853, ¶¶ 13-20. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)