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INVESTIGATION AND AUDIT DIVISION
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO

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RECEIVED-DOCKETING DIV
2008 OCT 29 AM 9:35
PUCO

Puco
180 E. Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215

Re: Utility Company rate increases

Both AEP and Columbia Gas have announced their desire to increase rates at a time when many of their customers are facing serious financial hardships.

Justification is based upon recovering costs of planned replacement of inadequate equipment. Power failure is a standard occurrence for AEP during almost any storm as well as on good weather days. The latest being four times in less than twenty four hours.

With record profits of $381,000,000.00, an increase of 260+% over their previous gain, makes it seem ludicrous to ask for more. AEP's extra $15 per month, per customer equates to a 52% increase over a relatively short time.

The ploy seems to be that by asking for such an inordinate amount, it allows AEP to assume it will prompt a counter offer when it doesn't warrant one at all.

Columbia Gas wants theirs as well, so between the two, the consumers can hope to just wave a magic wand and the money they need, will just appear.

Before my retirement, my career required preparing budgets, annually, for millions of dollars worth of properties owned by the company I worked for in Florida.

Each of these budgets contained an extensive section dedicated to planned replacement cost under the operating portion.

All budgets contain these items, or it's not a true projection of needs vs income.

The company I worked for was one of the largest of it's kind in Florida. Its profits were compatible after adjustments when applying realistic expenses and replacement costs.

AEP and Columbia Gas should do no less.

Sincerely,

Thomas B Tussner, a customer.