

**BEFORE THE
THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO**

In the Matter of the Application of)	
American Utility Management, Inc.)	Case No. 12-1925-GA-AGG
For a Certification As A Power Broker)	

**AMERICAN UTILITY MANAGEMENT INC.'S
MOTION FOR PROTECTIVE ORDER**

American Utility Management Inc. (“AUM”), pursuant to O.A.C. 4901-1-24(D), moves for a protective order keeping confidential certain financial information associated with its Certification Application for Competitive Retail Natural Gas Brokers/Aggregators (the “Application”). AUM has previously sought confidential treatment of Exhibit C-3 (financial statements) of the Application, and now seeks confidential treatment of Exhibit C-5 (forecast financial statements). Three (3) copies of Exhibit C-5 have been filed concurrently with this motion under seal.

Release of this confidential business information to the public, including AUM’s competitors, would cause significant prejudice and competitive harm to AUM. Thus, as forth in further detail in the attached Memorandum in Support, which is incorporated herein, AUM seeks a protective order preventing public disclosure of Exhibit C-5.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ N. Trevor Alexander

James F. Lang (0059668)

N. Trevor Alexander (0080713)

CALFEE, HALTER & GRISWOLD LLP

21 E. State St., Suite 1100

Columbus, OH 43215

614-621-1500

614-621-0010 (fax)

jlang@calfee.com

talexander@calfee.com

Attorneys for American Utility Management Inc.

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**MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT OF
AMERICAN UTILITY MANAGEMENT INC.'S
MOTION FOR PROTECTIVE ORDER**

I. Introduction

American Utility Management Inc. (“AUM”) has previously requested that Exhibit C-3 (financial statements) of its Certification Application for Competitive Retail Natural Gas Brokers/Aggregators (the “Application”) be designated as confidential pursuant to O.A.C. 4901-1-24(D).¹ AUM now seeks this same confidential treatment for Exhibit C-5 (forecast financial statements) filed under seal contemporaneously with this motion. The public release of its forecast financial statements would cause harm to AUM and its future operations, and so this information should be kept confidential.

II. LAW & ARGUMENT

As discussed in detail in AUM’s previous motion for protective order, the Commission has long protected trade-secret information.² The Commission has recognized the statutory obligation to protect trade secrets, even in the context of its preference for open proceedings and has previously carried out its obligations in this regard in numerous proceedings.³ The

¹ See Motion for Protective Order filed June 25, 2012.

² O.A.C. § 4901-1-24(A)(7).

³ See *In re: General Telephone Co.*, Case No. 81-383-TP-AIR (Entry, February 17, 1982) (recognizing necessity of protecting trade secrets); See, e.g., *Elyria Tel. Co.*, Case No. 89-965-TP-AEC (Finding and Order, September 21, 1989); *Ohio Bell Tel. Co.*, Case No. 89-718-TP-ATA (Finding and Order, May 31,

Commission has frequently granted protection to the trade secret financial information of potential brokers, rightly recognizing that these prospective brokers could be significantly harmed if their trade secret financial information were disclosed to the general public.⁴

AUM is a privately held company which does not disclose its financial statements to the general public. Exhibit C-5 contains AUM's confidential and proprietary forecast financial statements which are held in confidence in the normal course of business and which have never appeared in the public record. These documents have actual, substantial independent economic value to market participants and are not ascertainable by proper means by persons who would derive economic value from disclosure. AUM would be harmed if these documents were disclosed to the public.

These documents constitute trade secrets under Ohio law,⁵ and public disclosure of this forecast financial information would jeopardize AUM's business position and ability to compete. By way of example, by reviewing this information potential competitors could reasonably estimate AUM's forecasted growth, market share, and margins. In addition, public disclosure of

1989); *Columbia Gas of Ohio, Inc.*, Case No. 90-17-GA-GCR (Entry, August 17, 1990).

⁴ See, e.g., *In the Matter of the Application of McEnergy Inc. for Certification as a Competitive Retail Electric Generation Broker*, Case No. 12-825-EL-AGG, April 11, 2012 Entry (protecting financial information); *In the Matter of the Application of T.E.S. Energy Services, L.P. for Certification as a Competitive Retail Electric Service Broker Aggregator*, Case No. 11-2541-EL-AGG, June 20, 2011 Entry (same).

⁵ The factors to be considered in recognizing a trade secret include: (1) The extent to which the information is known outside the business; (2) The extent to which it is known to those inside the business, i.e., by the employees; (3) The precautions taken by the holder of the trade secret to guard the secrecy of the information; (4) The savings effected and the value to the holder in having the information as against competitors; (5) The amount of effort or money expended in obtaining and developing the information, and (6) The amount of time and expense it would take for others to acquire and duplicate the information. See *State ex rel. Perrea v. Cincinnati Pub. Sch.*, 123 Ohio St.3d 410, 414, 2009-Ohio-4762 (2009); *Pyromatics, Inc. v. Petruziello*, 7 Ohio App. 3d 131, 134-135 (Cuyahoga App. 1983) citing *Koch Engineering Co. v. Faulconer*, 210 U.S.P.Q. 854, 861 (Kansas 1980).

this financial information is not likely to assist the Commission in carrying out its duties, since the Commission and its Staff will already have access to this information.

III. CONCLUSION

The Commission has frequently granted protection to the trade secret financial information of other market participants. AUM requests that the Commission continue this policy and maintain Exhibit C-5 of the Application under seal.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ N. Trevor Alexander

James F. Lang (0059668)
N. Trevor Alexander (0080713)
CALFEE, HALTER & GRISWOLD LLP
21 E. State St., Suite 1100
Columbus, OH 43215
614-621-1500
614-621-0010 (fax)
jlang@calfee.com
talexander@calfee.com

Attorneys for American Utility Management Inc.

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Summary: Motion for Protective Order electronically filed by Mr. Nathaniel Trevor Alexander on behalf of American Utility Management, Inc.