

**BEFORE
THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO**

In the Matter of the Commission’s Review)
of the Ohio Power Company’s) Case No. 14-2275-EL-UNC
Distribution Investment Rider Work Plan)
Resulting from Commission Case No.)
13-2394-EL-UNC et al.)

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

The Office of the Ohio Consumers’ Counsel (“OCC”) moves to intervene in this case where a utility (Ohio Power Company) proposes a plan to spend money collected from customers to improve reliability.¹ OCC is filing on behalf of all of AEP’s approximately 1.3 million residential electric distribution customers.² The reasons the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (“PUCO”) should grant OCC’s Motion are further set forth in the attached Memorandum in Support.

¹ Case No. 14-2275-EL-UNC, Notice of Ohio Power company’s Commission Requested Distribution investment Rider Work Plan at 3 (December 15, 2014).

² 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

On August 8, 2012, the PUCO approved AEP Ohio’s Electric Security plan (“ESP”), which included a Distribution Investment Rider (“DIR”).³ The distribution investment rider is a charge for incremental capital spending for distribution infrastructure to maintain and improve customers’ service reliability. In approving the DIR, the PUCO directed the Utility to work with the PUCO Staff and to file the Work Plan for DIR-related spending.⁴ OCC has authority under law to represent the interests of all of AEP Ohio’s 1.3 million residential electric distribution 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 a plan for spending money collected from customers is being examined. Under the plan, the Utility is presenting a blueprint

³ *In the Matter of the Application of Columbus Southern Power Company and Ohio Power Company for Authority to Establish a Standard Service Offer Pursuant to Section 4928.143, Revised Code, in the Form of an Electric Security Plan*, Case No. 11-346-EL-SSO, Opinion and Order at 46 (August 8, 2012).

⁴ *Id.* at 47.

for how it will use millions of dollars collected from customers to improve customer service reliability. This proceeding should also examine customers' expectations regarding service reliability. Thus, this element of the intervention standard in R.C. 4903.221 is satisfied.

R.C. 4903.221(B) requires the Commission 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 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 AEP Ohio's residential customers in this case where the Utility is seeking approval of a work plan funded by customers that will determine how money will be spent to maintain and improve reliability. 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 utility rates should be no more than what is reasonable and lawful under Ohio law and that customers are entitled to reliable and affordable electric utility service under R.C. 4928.02. 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 the Utility is seeking approval of a work plan funded by customers that will determine how money will be spent to maintain and improve reliability.

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 ruling on an appeal in which OCC claimed the PUCO erred by denying its intervention. The Court found that the PUCO abused its discretion in denying OCC's intervention and that OCC should have been granted intervention.⁵

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 PUCO should grant OCC's Motion to Intervene.

Respectfully submitted,

BRUCE J. WESTON
OHIO CONSUMERS' COUNSEL

/s/ Joseph P. Serio

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⁵ See *Ohio Consumers' Counsel v. Pub. Util. Comm.*, 111 Ohio St.3d 384, 2006-Ohio-5853, ¶¶ 13-20 (2006).

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 15th day of January 2015.

/s/ Joseph P. Serio

Joseph P. Serio

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Summary: Motion Motion to Intervene by the Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel electronically filed by Ms. Deb J. Bingham on behalf of Serio, Joseph P. Mr.