

**BEFORE
THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO**

In the Matter of the Application of Ohio)
Power Company to Update its) Case No. 15-1513-EL-RDR
gridSMART Rider Rates.)

**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 the Ohio Power Company's ("Ohio Power" or "Utility") gridSMART Phase 1 program will be evaluated. In addition, Ohio Power has requested to transfer the approved capital cost balance of its gridSMART Phase 1 rider to its Distribution Investment Rider ("DIR"), allowing the utility to collect its costs from customers.¹ Ohio Power has also requested that the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio ("PUCO") forgo a hearing for this proceeding. OCC is filing on behalf of all the residential utility customers of Ohio Power who pay for the gridSMART initiative. The reasons the PUCO should grant OCC's Motion are further set forth in the attached Memorandum in Support.

¹ See R.C. Chapter 4911, R.C. 4903.221 and Ohio Adm. Code 4901-1-11.

Respectfully submitted,

BRUCE J. WESTON (0016973)
OHIO CONSUMERS' COUNSEL

/s/ Kyle L. Kern

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**BEFORE
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MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT

In its Application for this case, the PUCO will evaluate Ohio Power’s gridSMART Phase 1 program. In addition, Ohio Power has requested to transfer the approved capital cost balance of its gridSMART Phase 1 rider to its DIR.² Ohio Power has also requested that the PUCO forgo a hearing for this proceeding.³ OCC has authority under law to represent the interests of all the residential utility customers of Ohio Power, 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 Ohio Power’s gridSMART Phase 1 program, and charges associated with this program, are being evaluated. 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 Application at 2.

³ Id. at 4.

- (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 the residential customers of Ohio Power in this case involving Ohio Power's request to transfer the approved capital cost balance of its gridSMART Phase 1 rider to its DIR, and to examine the charges that customers will pay for the gridSMART program. 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 rates should be no more than what is reasonable and lawful under Ohio law, for service that is adequate under Ohio law. 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 Ohio Power’s gridSMART Phase 1 program, paid for by residential consumers, will be evaluated.

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 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 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 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.⁴

⁴ See *Ohio Consumers’ Counsel v. Pub. Util. Comm.*, 111 Ohio St.3d 384, 2006-Ohio-5853, ¶¶13-20.

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 (0016973)
OHIO CONSUMERS' COUNSEL

/s/ Kyle L. Kern

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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 6th day of October, 2015.

/s/ Kyle L. Kern

Kyle L. Kern

Assistant Consumers' Counsel

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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 Kern, Kyle L.