

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO

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In the Matter of the :
Joint Application for :
Approval of an Economic :
Development Arrangement : Case No. 17-2132-EL-AEC
Between Ohio Power :
Company and Acero :
Junction, Inc. :

- - -

PROCEEDINGS

Before Dick Bulgrin, Attorney Examiner, at the Public
Utilities Commission of Ohio, 180 East Broad Street,
Room 11-C, Columbus, Ohio, called at 9:00 a.m. on
Wednesday, March 14, 2018.

- - -

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APPEARANCES:

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By Thomas W. McNamee, Esq.
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Columbus, Ohio 43215

On behalf of the Staff of the PUCO.

Boehm, Kurtz & Lowry
By Michael L. Kurtz, Esq.
Jody Kyler Cohn, Esq.
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On behalf of Acero Junction, Inc.

American Electric Power
By Steven T. Nourse, Esq.
Christen M. Blend, Esq.
1 Riverside Plaza
Columbus, Ohio 43215

On behalf of the Ohio Power Company.

Carpenter, Lipps & Leland, LLP
By Brian W. Dressel, Esq.
280 Plaza, Ste. 1300
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Columbus, Ohio 43215

On behalf of the Ohio Manufacturers
Association Energy Group.

McNees, Wallace & Nurick
By Frank Darr, Esq.
21 East State Street, 17th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

On behalf of the Industrial Energy
Users, Akron, Ohio.

1 APPEARANCES (Continued):

2 Bruce J. Weston, Consumers' Counsel
3 Office of the Ohio Consumer's Counsel
4 By Maureen Willis, Esq.
5 Senior Regulatory Counsel
6 65 East State Street, 7th Floor
7 Columbus, Ohio 43215

8 On behalf of the Residential Customers
9 of Ohio Power Company.

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1 Wednesday Morning Session,
2 March 14, 2018.

3 - - -

4 ATTORNEY EXAMINER BULGRIN: Let's go on
5 the record then.

6 This is in the Matter of the Application
7 of Acero Junction, Inc. and Ohio Power Company for
8 Approval of a Unique Economic Development
9 Arrangement, Case No. 17-2132-EL-AEC.

10 My name is Dick Bulgrin, I'm the
11 Attorney-Examiner assigned by the Commission to
12 conduct the hearing this morning.

13 Let's begin with appearances from the
14 parties. Mr. Nourse.

15 MR. NOURSE: Thank you, Your Honor. On
16 behalf of Ohio Power Company, Steven T. Nourse,
17 Christen M. Blend, 1 Riverside Plaza, Columbus, Ohio
18 43215.

19 ATTORNEY EXAMINER BULGRIN: Just go
20 around the table.

21 MR. DRESSEL: Thank you, Your Honor. On
22 behalf of the Ohio Manufacturers Association Energy
23 Group, Brian Dressel of the law firm Carpenter,
24 Lipps & Leland, 280 North High Street, Suite 1300,
25 Columbus, Ohio 43215.

1 MR. DARR: On behalf of Industrial
2 Energy Users Ohio, Frank Darr of the law firm McNees,
3 Wallace & Nurick, 21 East State Street, Columbus,
4 Ohio.

5 MS. WILLIS: Thank you, Your Honor. On
6 behalf of the Residential Customers of the Ohio Power
7 Company, Maureen Willis, Senior Regulatory Counsel,
8 the Office of Consumers' Counsel, Bruce J. Weston,
9 Consumers' Counsel, 65 East State Street, Columbus,
10 Ohio 43215. Thank you.

11 MR. KURTZ: Good morning, Your Honor.
12 For Acero, the Applicant, Mike Kurtz and Jody Cohn,
13 Boehm, Kurtz & Lowry, 1510 URS Center, Cincinnati,
14 45202.

15 MR. McNAMEE: On behalf of the staff the
16 Public Utilities Commission of Ohio, I am Thomas W.
17 McNamee, the address is 30 East Broad Street, 16th
18 Floor, Columbus, Ohio 43215.

19 ATTORNEY EXAMINER BULGRIN: All right.
20 I think that's everybody.

21 I don't know that we have any
22 outstanding motions or any of that stuff; so let's
23 begin.

24 MR. McNAMEE: Yes, Your Honor. I
25 believe the first thing we should do is mark the

1 application, which I don't have. Ask to have marked
2 as Joint Exhibit 1 the application filed in this
3 case. And Ms. Kyler Cohn has that, I believe.

4 ATTORNEY EXAMINER BULGRIN: Are we going
5 to mark this Joint Exhibit 1?

6 (EXHIBIT MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION.)

7 MR. McNAMEE: Okay. Then I would also
8 ask to have marked for identification as Joint
9 Exhibit 2 the stipulation filed in this case.

10 ATTORNEY EXAMINER BULGRIN: All right.

11 MR. McNAMEE: I believe copies have been
12 provided to everybody of both of these, at least I
13 hope so.

14 ATTORNEY EXAMINER BULGRIN: I think I've
15 got one.

16 (EXHIBIT MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION.)

17 MR. McNAMEE: Then I believe,
18 Ms. Willis, did you want to --

19 MS. WILLIS: Yes, Your Honor. OCC would
20 like to have marked for identification purposes as
21 OCC Exhibit No. 1 the correspondence filed this
22 morning in the docket explaining OCC's position. I
23 will note that the date on the letter is in error, it
24 says March 14th, 2017. I believe it should be 2018.

25 ATTORNEY EXAMINER BULGRIN: Okay. That

1 will be so noted and so marked.

2 (EXHIBIT MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION.)

3 MS. WILLIS: Thank you.

4 MR. McNAMEE: At this point, Your Honor,
5 the staff would call to the stand Mr. Howard
6 Petricoff.

7 ATTORNEY EXAMINER BULGRIN: Mr. Petricoff,
8 first time.

9 MR. PETRICOFF: Much different
10 perspective from this part of the room.

11 ATTORNEY EXAMINER BULGRIN: Would you
12 raise your hand?

13 (Witness placed under oath.)

14 THE WITNESS: I do. I do.

15 ATTORNEY EXAMINER BULGRIN: Please be
16 seated.

17 - - -

18 M. HOWARD PETRICOFF,
19 being first duly sworn, as hereinafter certified,
20 deposes and says as follows:

21 DIRECT EXAMINATION

22 BY MR. McNAMEE:

23 Q. Mr. Petricoff, could you state and spell
24 your name for the record, please?

25 A. Yes. My name is M. Howard Petricoff,

1 P-e-t-r-i-c-o-f-f, and my business address is 180
2 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio.

3 Q. By whom are you employed and in what
4 capacity?

5 A. Okay. I am employed by the Public
6 Utilities Commission of Ohio, I am the chief analyst,
7 and I oversee the professional staff in the
8 development of Commission policy -- Commission staff
9 policy.

10 Q. Okay. Mr. Petricoff, let me call your
11 attention to what's been marked for identification as
12 Joint Exhibit 2, that being the stipulation in the
13 case.

14 A. Yes. I am familiar with that document.

15 Q. You're familiar with that document,
16 good.

17 Were you involved in the negotiations
18 that led to the creation of that document?

19 A. Yes, I was.

20 Q. Okay. Are you familiar with the parties
21 who were involved in the negotiations surrounding the
22 creation of that document?

23 A. Yes, I was.

24 Q. Are they all knowledgeable and informed
25 individuals who are sophisticated and aware of

1 utility practice?

2 A. They are experienced veterans who I've
3 worked with before.

4 Q. And you, yourself, are an experienced
5 veteran, are you not?

6 A. Spent many years here.

7 Q. How many years -- not here specifically.
8 How many years have you been involved in the
9 practice --

10 A. About 40.

11 Q. -- of regulatory law. Pardon?

12 A. About 40.

13 Q. Forty, okay.

14 Turning to the details of what's
15 presented in what's been marked for identification as
16 Joint Exhibit 2. Would the adoption of that Joint
17 Exhibit 2 resolve all the issues in this case?

18 A. I believe so.

19 Q. Okay. Would the adoption of that --
20 what's been marked for identification as Joint
21 Exhibit 2 violate any regulatory policy or practice?

22 A. Not to my knowledge.

23 Q. Okay. Would the adoption of what's been
24 marked for identification as Joint Exhibit 2 benefit
25 the public?

1 A. It is the belief of the staff that after
2 review of this, it would.

3 Q. Okay. And what would those benefits be?

4 A. Basically we would have both economic
5 development, assuming that the project is built as
6 described in the application. There would also be a
7 unique arrangement which better addresses the costs
8 and risks of providing service to this customer.

9 Q. Okay. What was the focus of the staff's
10 review of the application?

11 A. I'm sorry, I didn't hear the question.

12 Q. Should be familiar with it.

13 What was the focus of the staff's review
14 of the application?

15 A. Yes. The -- the staff basically sought
16 to verify seven key facts needed to meet the criteria
17 for economic development and unique arrangements as
18 that appears in the Commission's Rule 4901:1-38,
19 Subsections 3 to 5.

20 The seven key factual findings that we
21 sought to review were whether the Applicant's
22 business is acutely energy intensive or has a
23 distinct energy profile; two, whether the Applicant
24 has made a commitment to investing in Ohio either in
25 a new investment or support of a new industry; three,

1 whether the economic impact of the Applicant's
2 project on the region will be significant and meets
3 the minimum requirements of Ohio Revised Code Section
4 4901:1-38-03, that's the economic development rule;
5 whether the Applicant has --

6 Q. If I might interrupt you just for one
7 second. I think you said Ohio Revised Code.

8 A. Oh, no, I'm sorry, Ohio Administrative
9 Code. Thank you.

10 Q. I'm sorry. Go ahead.

11 A. Four, whether the Applicant has explored
12 or taken advantage of other opportunities for
13 operational savings such as a basic budgetary
14 management, shopping for or self-generating
15 electricity, energy efficiency, and participation in
16 utility or regional transmission organizations
17 conservation or reliability programs; five, whether
18 the fees paid to the utility cover all incremental
19 costs of service and contribute to the payment of
20 fixed costs; six, whether the benefits to the
21 community and the project outweigh the costs imposed
22 on other retail customers because of the reasonable
23 arrangement; and, seven, whether the program in the
24 application is for a set term which will allow the
25 project to consider -- to continue after that without

1 subsidies.

2 Q. Please describe the review of the
3 application that was conducted by the Commission
4 staff on the joint Acero application.

5 A. Prior to the filing of the joint
6 application, the Commission staff was contacted by
7 JobsOhio who had been working with Acero to reopen
8 the electric arc furnace at Mingo Junction. The
9 proposed operation is situated on the Ohio River, and
10 for decades it had been a center of steel making and
11 had been an economic keystone for the surrounding
12 area.

13 Since the electric energy is a major
14 expense for the proposed arc furnace, JobsOhio had
15 inquired of the staff what programs were available
16 that could be incorporated in a development package
17 for Acero. In addition to meeting with JobsOhio
18 officials, the Commission staff met several times
19 with Acero's management team, many of whom I might
20 note were former executives or executives with the
21 former steel operations at that site.

22 The discussion focused on both tariff
23 offerings and the unique usage factors that the
24 proposed arc furnace would make were it to be put
25 back into service.

1 Q. Mr. Petricoff, could you explain the
2 types of reasonable arrangements which are available
3 under the Commission's rules?

4 A. Yes. The Commission has separate rules
5 for economic development arrangements -- let me go
6 back.

7 First we have the basic statute, which
8 is Revised Code Section 4905.31, which allows for
9 reasonable arrangements. And the Commission's rules,
10 which are Ohio Administrative Code 4901:1-38-03
11 through 05, allow for three types: There is economic
12 development, that's Subsection 03; energy efficiency,
13 Subsection 04; and unique arrangements, 05. And this
14 application we believe involves 03 and 05.

15 The economic development rule provides
16 for a minimum number of full-time jobs or full-time
17 job equivalents and has wage parameters. The unique
18 arrangement rule provides for custom made rates and
19 service terms to address customers' electric uses
20 that do not fit established tariff patterns, most
21 retail tariffs that do have prescribed usage patterns
22 like minimum kilowatt-hours of -- minimum kilowatts
23 of demand, voltage levels, time of use or other usage
24 considerations.

25 If a customer has a pattern or equipment

1 that does not fit any of the available tariffs, then
2 basically under Revised Code Section 4905.31 and Ohio
3 Administrative Code 4901:1-38-05, the Commission can
4 authorize a special arrangement to address those
5 unique factors.

6 Q. Okay. What steps did the staff take to
7 review the merits of the joint Acero reasonable
8 arrangement application?

9 A. Well, in addition to the two management
10 interviews, which I previously discuss in our
11 meetings with JobsOhio, the staff did require Acero
12 to file a detailed questionnaire, and then also serve
13 separate interrogatories and discovery requests which
14 were aimed at verifying certain claims that were made
15 in the application.

16 Q. What was the staff's first factual
17 finding?

18 A. The staff found that the arc furnace, if
19 brought online, will be a major power consumer, will
20 take a transmission level voltage, and further that
21 the products -- that in the products produced, that
22 the final cost of those products, that energy will be
23 a significant portion.

24 Q. Does Acero have a distinctive energy
25 profile?

1 A. Yes, it does. It has both -- it's both
2 energy intensive and has a unique use pattern which
3 I'll discuss later.

4 Q. Okay. Based on staff's review, does the
5 joint Acero application have a commitment to
6 investing in Ohio?

7 A. Yes. Acero is going to reopen the --
8 the -- an Ohio facility. Actually it is reopened.
9 It will reopen the electric arc furnace, which, you
10 know, permits a different type of -- of production.
11 It will -- it will hire a number of employees, enough
12 to meet more than the minimum called for in the
13 rules, and the wages will exceed the requirements
14 also in the rule.

15 Q. Based on the staff's review, will the
16 joint Acero application have significant economic
17 impact in the region?

18 A. Yes. The staff reviewed the proposed
19 hirings, the projected tax payments, the purchase of
20 local goods and services, and because this is a type
21 of service which would fit the economic definition of
22 a -- of having a multiplier effect, what the effect
23 would be on the surrounding area.

24 Q. What other advantage to the community
25 would the Acero project produce?

1 A. In addition to the economic development,
2 Acero has the capability to quickly shut down its
3 power use and is willing to participate in an
4 interruptible power program which is now -- approval
5 of which is now pending before the -- before the
6 Commission. The ability to quickly interrupt in
7 order to support firm service customers does provide
8 a service to other customers and it also would lower
9 the cost of providing utility service to Acero.

10 Q. Based on staff's review, does the joint
11 Acero application cover its incremental costs?

12 A. If the information supplied in the
13 application and in the discovery requests in the
14 questionnaire is correct, it should more than cover
15 the incremental costs of service.

16 Q. Okay. Has the staff -- staff reviewed
17 the impact of the application on other retail
18 customers of Ohio Power?

19 A. It has, and we've looked at the -- at
20 the special arrangements and the cost impact on -- on
21 other customers and calculated what we think that
22 impact would be.

23 Q. So is it true that customers will not be
24 at risk for developmental -- development costs?

25 A. Well, I think it is fair to say that the

1 benefits that will flow from the project will
2 outweigh the costs.

3 Q. Okay. Has staff reviewed the term of
4 the proposed agreement?

5 A. It has. The application is for a set
6 term, it does not automatically renew. And if the
7 facts that are in the application -- the proposed
8 terms and the projected facts come to pass, it should
9 be economically viable.

10 Q. Based on the staff's review of the joint
11 Acero application, does staff have a recommendation?

12 A. Yes. Staff suggests that the Commission
13 accepts the joint application as submitted.

14 Q. Thank you, Mr. Petricoff.

15 MR. McNAMEE: Staff has no further
16 questions.

17 ATTORNEY EXAMINER BULGRIN: Thank you,
18 sir.

19 MR. NOURSE: No questions.

20 MR. DARR: No questions, Your Honor.

21 MR. KURTZ: No questions.

22 ATTORNEY EXAMINER BULGRIN: You may step
23 down.

24 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

25 ATTORNEY EXAMINER BULGRIN: Would you

1 raise your right hand?

2 (Witness placed under oath.)

3 THE WITNESS: Yes.

4 ATTORNEY EXAMINER BULGRIN: Please be
5 seated. Mr. McNamee.

6 - - -

7 STEVEN D. GUZY,
8 being first duly sworn, as hereinafter certified,
9 deposes and says as follows:

10 DIRECT EXAMINATION

11 BY MR. McNAMEE:

12 Q. Mr. Guzy, could you state and spell your
13 name for the record, please?

14 A. It's Steven, S-t-e-v-e-n, Guzy, G-u-z-y.

15 Q. But by whom are you employed?

16 A. Acero Junction, Incorporated, 1500
17 Commercial Avenue, Mingo Junction, Ohio.

18 Q. And what is your job title?

19 A. I'm general manager.

20 Q. Okay. And what are your duties as
21 general manager?

22 A. All the operations of the plant,
23 environmental, safety, operating, employment.

24 Q. Okay. Mr. Guzy, let me draw your
25 attention to what's been marked for identification as

1 Joint Exhibit 1. That's the -- that's the
2 application. Were you involved in the creation of
3 that document?

4 A. Yes, sir.

5 Q. Are the contents of that true to the
6 best of your knowledge and belief?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Is there anything that you'd change in
9 it now? Any corrections?

10 A. The only thing is is we said 270
11 employees. That number looks to be, when the
12 electric arc furnace is started, closer to 375.

13 Q. Really?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Oh, wow. That's very good news. I like
16 that change.

17 A. The number of contractors may decrease
18 slightly, but not to the extent -- it's not an even
19 offset.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. As we've gone through and evaluated, you
22 know, our needs, it appears closer to 375.

23 Q. Okay. With that being noted, the
24 contents of what's been marked for identification as
25 Joint Exhibit 1 are true to the best of your

1 knowledge and belief?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Okay. Now, let's turn to Joint Exhibit 2.
4 First let me ask you a question about yourself: How
5 long have you been involved in the steel industry?

6 A. Forty years.

7 Q. Forty years, okay.

8 Would you say that you're a
9 sophisticated individual about the production of
10 steel and the usage of energy in that production?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Okay. Could you describe for me some of
13 the economic benefits of the approval of the proposed
14 stipulation in this case? What would reopening this
15 plant do?

16 A. Sure. Well, first off, Mingo Junction's
17 located in Jefferson County, Ohio on the eastern
18 border. I believe that in the 2010 census, the
19 average income -- household income in Jefferson
20 County was in the \$37,000 range, okay. We are going
21 to --

22 Q. That's per household?

23 A. Per household.

24 Q. Really. Okay.

25 A. I believe that was in the economic

1 study, okay, or maybe it was per capita. But anyhow,
2 we propose, you know, upwards of 375 jobs; and at
3 full production when the incentive rates and whatnot
4 kick in, it's going to be approximately \$81,000 per
5 employee, that's including benefits; also,
6 approximately \$375 million annually in purchases,
7 whether MRO energy, whatever; the creation of 1,200
8 additional jobs other than the ones we have,
9 satellite jobs, so to speak, in the Steubenville,
10 Jefferson County area, as well as 3,100 additional
11 jobs in the state of Ohio.

12 Q. Okay. Very good.

13 The Mingo Junction site has previously
14 been used for steel production in the past, has it
15 not?

16 A. Yes, sir.

17 Q. Do you have any idea how long it was
18 used for steel production?

19 A. Well, yeah. It actually was part of the
20 Carnegie, Illinois prior to being --

21 Q. Really?

22 A. Yeah, prior to being acquired by at the
23 time Wheeling Steel. The Steubenville complex is
24 made up of -- was made up of three different mills;
25 the one in Steubenville, Ohio, and Follansbee, West

1 Virginia was the coplant. Those two facilities were
2 part of the LaBelle Iron Works that dates back before
3 the turn of the century. As a matter of fact, I know
4 that there are drawings that are dated in the 1900,
5 1901 range in the drawing files. Mingo Junction was
6 probably in the same timeframe, maybe a little later,
7 but the entire facility I should say was pretty much
8 rebuilt in the mid '60s with the addition of a basic
9 oxygen furnace and an 80-inch hot strip mill; then in
10 1983, continuous caster; and then in 2004, with the
11 electric arc furnace.

12 Q. Okay. What will the -- the premise, I
13 guess, of what's been marked for identification as
14 Joint Exhibit 2 here is to allow the startup of the
15 electric arc furnace.

16 A. Yes, sir.

17 Q. What will the startup of the electric
18 arc furnace mean for Acero's operations?

19 A. The electric arc furnace has a capacity
20 of approximately one-and-a-half million tons of raw
21 steel.

22 Q. Annually?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. That would be converted, of course, into

1 slabs for the continuous caster and rolled on a hot
2 strip mill into hot bands or hot rolled coils.

3 Q. What will the availability of this
4 electric arc furnace do for Acero that Acero can't do
5 now?

6 A. Well, currently you have to purchase
7 slabs in order to roll them on our hot strip mill,
8 which the hot strip mill is running. It was the
9 first phase of the restart. With the recently
10 announced tariffs of 25 percent on imported steel, a
11 rather large savings.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. And the ability to --

14 Q. Where does the steel come from now that
15 your hot strip mill uses?

16 A. It has come from several different
17 places; Canada, Brazil, and India.

18 Q. Okay. So essentially you'll be
19 substituting American steel for foreign steel as a
20 result of this?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. That's all the questions that I have.
23 Thank you, Mr. Guzy.

24 ATTORNEY EXAMINER BULGRIN: Anything
25 further?

1 MR. NOURSE: No questions.

2 MR. KURTZ: Thank you, Mr. McNamee. I
3 have no questions.

4 ATTORNEY EXAMINER BULGRIN: Thank you.
5 You may step down.

6 MR. McNAMEE: Your Honor, at this time
7 the staff would move for the admission of Joint
8 Exhibits 1 and 2.

9 MR. DARR: One clarification, Your
10 Honor.

11 ATTORNEY EXAMINER BULGRIN: Yes.

12 MR. DARR: The reference to these being
13 joint exhibits, there are a number of parties,
14 including IEU Ohio, that is not supporting or
15 opposing the application. I'd just like the record
16 to be clear that the joint -- as to who the joint
17 parties are that are sponsoring these exhibits.

18 MR. McNAMEE: Makes eminent sense, yes.
19 We don't mean to imply anyone's position other than
20 the actual signatories to the documents.

21 ATTORNEY EXAMINER BULGRIN: Okay. So
22 with that clarification.

23 MR. McNAMEE: Thought it was clear, but
24 sorry.

25 ATTORNEY EXAMINER BULGRIN: Any further

1 objections? Okay. They will be so admitted.

2 (EXHIBITS ADMITTED INTO EVIDENCE.)

3 MS. WILLIS: Yes. Thank you, Your
4 Honor. At this time, OCC would move for the
5 admission of OCC Exhibit No. 1.

6 ATTORNEY EXAMINER BULGRIN: And if
7 there's no objections, that will also be admitted.

8 (EXHIBIT ADMITTED INTO EVIDENCE.)

9 MS. WILLIS: Thank you.

10 ATTORNEY EXAMINER BULGRIN: Anything
11 further --

12 MR. McNAMEE: Nothing further from
13 staff, Your Honor.

14 ATTORNEY EXAMINER BULGRIN: -- for the
15 good of the order?

16 All right then. Thank you all very
17 much. This case will be submitted to the Commission.

18 MR. KURTZ: Thank you, Your Honor.

19 MR. NOURSE: Thank you.

20 (Thereupon, the hearing was
21 concluded at 9:26 a.m.)

22 - - -

23

24

25

CERTIFICATE

I do hereby certify that the foregoing
is a true and correct transcript of the proceedings
taken by me in this matter on Wednesday, March 14,
2018, and carefully compared with my original
stenographic notes.

Carolyn D. Ross
Carolyn D. Ross,
Registered Professional
Reporter and Notary
Public in and for the
State of Ohio.

My commission expires April 3, 2019.
(CDR-86394)



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Case No(s). 17-2132-EL-AEC

Summary: Transcript In the Matter of the Joint Application for Approval of an Economic Development Arrangement Between Ohio Power Company and Acero Junction, Inc., hearing held on March 14, 2018. electronically filed by Mr. Ken Spencer on behalf of Armstrong & Okey, Inc. and Ross, Carolyn D.