BEFORE

THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO

In the Matter of the Application of Duke Energy Ohio, Inc., for Authority to Adjust its Power Forward Rider.	)))	Case No. 19-1750-EL-UNC
In the Matter of the Application of Duke Energy Ohio, Inc., for Approval to Change Accounting Methods.	)))	Case No. 19-1751-GE-AAM

REPLY COMMENTS OF DUKE ENERGY OHIO, INC.

I. INTRODUCTION

This case concerns the Application, by Duke Energy Ohio, Inc. (Duke Energy Ohio or Company), for approval of its infrastructure modernization plan, adjustment to Rider PF, and requests for deferrals associated with its proposed programs. Staff of the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (Staff) reviewed the Company's application and, on April 15, 2020, issued its Staff Review and Recommendation (Staff Review and Recommendation). Comments were filed by the Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel (OCC), the Ohio Hospital Association (OHA), Armada Power (Armada), Environmental Law & Policy Center (ELPC), Ohio Environmental Council (OEC) and Sierra Club (SC), Ohio Energy Group (OEG), Interstate Gas Supply, Inc. (IGS), ChargePoint, Inc. (ChargePoint), The Kroger Company (Kroger), Ohio Manufacturers'

Association Energy Group (OMAEG), and Direct Energy Business, LLC (Direct Energy) on April 15, 2020 and April 16, 2020.

The following are the Company's reply comments.

II. CUSTOMER CONNECT IS ESSENTIAL TO THE COMPANY'S MODERNIZATION EFFORTS.

A. As the Commission has already recognized, the Company's transition to a modernized Customer Information System (CIS) constitutes an investment in grid modernization, recoverable through Rider PF.

The Commission has already recognized the importance of modernizing the Company's Customer Information System and identified this need as a proper item for recovery through Rider PF:

> Duke will establish Rider PF to recover costs associated with the "evolution of the distribution grid and an enhanced customer experience." The proposed rider has three components, the third of which is regarding the recovery of costs related to an infrastructure modernization plan. The plan will be filed in a separate proceeding and will include plans to upgrade Duke's CIS.[1]

Staff recognizes this directive, as well as the benefits offered by the proposed new CIS, Customer Connect, and supports the Company's inclusion of the CIS in its application:

> Duke ***was directed by the Commission to include a proposal to upgrade its CIS in the current case and recover the costs through Rider PF***. Staff believes that the Company's CIS replacement will enhance the customer experience, both among direct customers and business partners, and will enable new products and services for customers through the expanded functionality. The benefits associated with the implementation of the new CIS include automation of more complex billing options (e.g. net-metering and time-of-use rates) and more tailored customer preferences (e.g. new options for customers to state their communication preference and payment method). The project will also enable the Company to associate customer information with the individual, instead of the customer's premise. Finally, the new CIS will allow the Company to introduce the universal bill-format that was approved by the Commission. . . .[2]

[1] *In the Matter of the Application of Duke Energy Ohio, Inc., for an Increase in Electric Distribution Rates,* Case No. 17-32-EL-AIR, Opinion and Order, p. 84 (December 19, 2018) (Order).
[2] Staff Review and Recommendation, pp. 4-5.

Staff also "recommends that the Commission approve deferral authority for the CIS Program."[3]

Thus, OCC's argument that there is "no reason that Duke's electric customers should pay now for the new system . . . under the PowerForward Rider" is therefore contrary to both a standing Commission order and Staff's recommendation, making it a non-starter.[4] A Commission order is more than sufficient "justification . . . for charging customers . . . through a rider."[5]

Although Staff agrees with granting the Company deferral authority for its O&M expenses, it recommends that "the deferred O&M not be eligible for recovery until Staff deems the CIS is used and useful and placed into service."[6] The Company believes this restriction is unnecessary. However, as long as carrying charges are approved, the Company does not oppose this modification.

B. Customer Connect is capable of accommodating Supplier Consolidated Billing, once all applicable requirements are known.

Staff expressed concern that the Company's "CIS plan" does not "include[] enough information to fully explore the issues around supplier consolidated billing."[7] Additionally, IGS and Direct Energy suggest that the Company has not complied with the Order's directive to "accommodate" supplier consolidated billing.[8] But, as described below, the Company requires more information as to what form supplier consolidated billing might take in the unique context of a combination gas and electric utility, and how the needs of suppliers and customers are to be

[3] Id., p. 15.
[4] Comments by the Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel, p. 3 (April 15, 2020) (OCC Comments).
[5] Id., p. 4.
[6] Staff Review and Recommendation, p. 15.
[7] *See* Id., p. 5.
[8] Initial Comments of Direct Energy Business, LLC and Direct Energy Services, LLC, pp. 6-7 (April 15, 2020) (Direct Energy Comments); Initial Comments of Interstate Gas Supply, Inc., pp. 3-4 (April 15, 2020) (IGS Comments).

prioritized, before supplier consolidated billing can be implemented. However, the Company's CIS plan is capable of accommodating it.

Direct Energy attempts to compare apples to oranges when it demands that the Commission "order Duke to build the system using AEP and DP&L as the foundation."[9] The other utilities' programs do not address the unique needs of a combination utility, such as Duke Energy Ohio, which provides both electric and gas service to both shopping and non-shopping customers, and provides such customers a single bill for their service.[10] As explained by Company witness Ms. Hunsicker in her testimony, many of the Company's customers have different suppliers for electricity and natural gas, such that the Company is the only common thread.[11] Neither AEP nor DP&L had to face the questions that this raises, including but not limited to:

- Will customers be forced to receive separate gas and electric bills?
- How would purchases of assets receivable be handled?
- If customers are to receive a single "consolidated" bill from only one supplier, will that supplier bill on behalf of the other supplier also?
- If both the gas and electric supplier want to be the one issuing the consolidated bill, how will the Company decide between them?

Thus, the existing capabilities of AEP and DP&L do not provide a viable model or even starting point for the Company.

IGS believes that the Commission's Order required the Company to "include a proposal for supplier consolidated billing" in its Application in this case,[12] but this is not what the Order

[9] Direct Energy Comments, p. 7.
[10] *See* Direct Testimony of Retha Hunsicker, pp. 19-20 (September 24, 2019).
[11] Id., p. 19 (September 24, 2019).
[12] *See* IGS Comments, p. 3 ("Duke failed to make include [*sic*] a proposal for supplier consolidated billing in direct contravention of a Commission order.").

said. The Order acknowledged that "consolidated billing is complicated by Duke's unique status serving both electric and gas customers," and stated that "the proper forum in which to explore these issues fully" would be this proceeding.[13] Any such exploration would require the Company to know how the Commission wishes to approach the unique questions raised by the Company's combination utility status.

Contrary to IGS and Direct Energy's reading of the Order, the Commission's statement that "Duke's CIS plan should accommodate [supplier consolidated billing]" did not require the Company to produce a CIS plan that already included supplier consolidated billing functionality or a proposal for supplier consolidated billing. Not only would such an interpretation be contrary to the language in the Order anticipating "full[] explor[ation]" in this proceeding, but it would also be inconsistent with the commonly understood meaning of the word "accommodate" in this context. Designing a system to "accommodate" a function means designing a system capable of containing supplier consolidated billing, *i.e.*, a system that will not preclude implementing that function. The Commission was well aware at the time it issued the Order that IGS desired the CIS to "incorporate supplier consolidated billing into its program design," because it described IGS as so arguing.[14] However, the Commission specifically chose the word "accommodate," indicating only that it required the Company to present a CIS plan that preserved the possibility of implementing supplier consolidated billing, which the Company has. Given that Customer Connect meets the requirement to "accommodate" supplier consolidated billing, the Company will require guidance from the Commission and other parties to fully understand how the Commission

[13] Order, p. 86.
[14] *See* Order, p. 22.

desires customers to be treated and to evaluate the necessary functional and technical requirements required to implement the functionality.

IGS requests that the Commission "direct Duke to undertake a collaborative process to obtain additional details to properly design an SCB program and submit that proposal in a formal docketed proceeding."[15] The Company believes that a collaborative process in a separate docket would be an appropriate starting point for conducting a comprehensive assessment of the costs and benefits of supplier consolidated billing, comparing implementation options, and determining which option(s), if any, should be implemented. However, Customer Connect would need to be fully deployed and stabilized before the requirements could be assessed or functionality implemented.[16]

C. Customer Connect will improve the Company's ability to track customer grievances.

Staff suggests that customers would benefit from "the expanded functionality of a grievance redress system" and "recommends that the Company consider a grievance redress system as part of the CIS design."[17] The Company appreciates this input and would like to clarify that Customer Connect will have some complaint resolution capabilities, although not a full-fledged grievance redress system.

The existing complaint resolution process will remain in place, and the system used to track cases will be integrated into the Customer Connect platform using the customer engagement solution.[18] Integrating the complaint resolution process with the new Customer Connect system will allow formal complaints to be appended to a specific customer, providing improved visibility

[15] IGS Comments, p. 4.
[16] Direct Testimony of Retha Hunsicker, p. 20 (September 24, 2019).
[17] Staff Review and Recommendation, p. 5.
[18] *See* Attachment A, STAFF-DR-08-003.

into complaint history. Consumer Affairs will also have the ability to share components of a specific complaint directly with internal business groups to assist with complaint resolution and feedback.

D. The Company's discussion of waivers referred specifically to waivers necessary to improve the customer experience.

In response to a statement in Ms. Hunsicker's testimony regarding seeking waivers, Staff notes that it believes the new CIS should "comply with all the current Commission rules and if a waiver is requested during the 'build' phase, it should only be for a very limited period."[19] The Company believes this note is based on a misunderstanding. The Staff appeared to believe that Ms. Hunsicker was discussing waivers being sought to rectify technical deficiencies in Customer Connect, but that is not the case.

Ms. Hunsicker was referring specifically to the need for waivers to enable the Company to offer customers certain modern capabilities which the existing rules have not yet incorporated. Thus, for example, a waiver may be requested to allow the Company to provide specific communications to customers and/or third-parties using their preferred channel of communication, such as email, text message, and/or phone call in lieu of a traditional "snail" mailing. Additionally, as a combination utility, the Company may request waivers to align the customer experience for gas and electric customers. The Company would hope that any such waivers, along with any existing waivers, be permitted to remain in effect until the next round of applicable rule revisions (where hopefully such modernization could be incorporated into the rules).

[19] Staff Review and Recommendation, p. 5.

Insofar as there may be a need for waiver requests due to the need to implement additional technical capabilities (what appears to have been Staff's concern), the Company will endeavor to minimize the quantity and scope of any such requests.

E. The Company has been and will continue to fulfill its commitments with respect to CEUD and to comply with Commission regulations.

In complaining that the Company "has not delivered" on its commitments with respect to CEUD,[20] Direct Energy overlooks both the Company's ongoing progress through the five phases of CEUD provision envisioned in the Order and key language in the Stipulation.

First, the Company did not include supporting testimony and exhibits pertaining to CEUD in ***this*** case, because the Stipulation explicitly envisioned that the Company would demonstrate its compliance with its CEUD commitments in another docket, "separate from the case established for the infrastructure modernization plan associated with component three."[21] And indeed, the Company has done so. In that docket, Case No. 20-666-EL-RDR, the Company filed testimony demonstrating that it has already completed the implementation of Phases I and II and the functionality was made available on June 8, 2019 and March 27, 2020 respectively.[22] Additionally, Phase V.A has been completed, and Phase V.B is currently on track to be completed.[23] Thus, the Company is proceeding through the appropriate phases of implementing the Order's directives with respect to CEUD.

[20] *See* Direct Energy Comments, p. 4.
[21] *In the Matter of the Application of Duke Energy Ohio, Inc., for an Increase in Electric Distribution Rates*, Case No. 17-32-EL-AIR, Stipulation, p. 17 (April 13, 2018) (Stipulation).
[22] *See In the Matter of the Application of Duke Energy Ohio, Inc., for Authority to Adjust its PowerForward Rider*, Case No. 20-666-EL-RDR, Direct Testimony of Scott B. Nicholson, pp. 4-5 (March 31, 2020).
[23] *See In the Matter of the Application of Duke Energy Ohio, Inc., for Authority to Adjust its PowerForward Rider*, Case No. 20-666-EL-RDR, Direct Testimony of Douglas Hils, pp. 5-6 (March 31, 2020).

Second, Direct Energy makes a misleading omission in citing the completion dates given by the Stipulation for each phase of the CEUD work plan without noting the qualifying language in the Stipulation. The Stipulation explicitly permits the Company to adjust these dates: "The Company may adjust the work plan proposed in Stipulation Attachment F, as needed to accommodate resource availability and manage cost controls, though the total cost caps will not change."[24] Thus, even if a particular phase is completed somewhat after the planned date, this alone does not demonstrate a non-compliance with the Order.

Apart from the fact that Direct Energy's complaints regarding the Company's CEUD progress are baseless, Direct Energy is making them in the wrong proceeding. The Stipulation requires that the Company demonstrate that "the functionality associated with each phase has been successfully implemented"[25] in the ***second*** component filing, which is Case No. 20-666-EL-RDR. If Direct Energy wants to litigate this issue, it should do so in that docket, not this one.

Additionally, the Ohio Environmental Council and Sierra Club ask the Commission to "ensure that the mechanism implemented to provide access to this type of data [CEUD] is uniform across the Ohio utilities."[26] While the Company appreciates the value of uniformity, it would be neither fair nor practical for the Commission to make this a requirement for the Company's new CIS at this late stage.

Finally, IGS requests that the Company "be prohibited from utilizing customers' granular energy usage data for marketing purposes" and that "marketing associated with competitive services" be "bypassable" for shopping customers.[27] The Company disagrees with the inclusion

[24] Stipulation, p. 18.
[25] Id., p. 17.
[26] Comments of the Ohio Environmental Council & Sierra Club, p. 2 (April 15, 2020) (OEC & SC Comments).
[27] IGS Comments, p. 10.

of any specific prohibitions in this proceeding; it goes without saying that the Company will be bound to comply with all applicable Ohio laws and regulations, including those pertaining to use of customer usage data. If IGS seeks stricter regulations in this arena, it should do so in the appropriate rule review proceedings.

F. The Commission should reject IGS's request to require the Company to include non-jurisdictional service billing capability for suppliers in its CIS as premature and unsuited for this proceeding.

IGS asserts that the Company "must" modify Customer Connect to add the capability for non-commodity billing by suppliers, based on its reading of Ohio R.C. 4905.35(A) and 4928.17(A)(3).[28] But the Commission has never read these statutes to require, as a blanket rule, utilities to provide non-commodity billing capabilities to all suppliers. Rather, they prohibit "unreasonable" and/or "undue" preferences or advantages.[29] Thus, even where a utility appears to offer an "advantage" to an entity, the advantage must be "undue" or "unreasonable" to violate these statutes. Thus, the wording of the statutes themselves allows for reasonable distinctions to be made.

And even if the statutes left no room for reasonable distinctions, a blanket prohibition on discrimination would still not constitute a requirement to offer non-commodity billing. In support of its position, IGS cites the Commission's recent amendment to the rules, which added the statement that "An electric utility cannot discriminate or unduly restrict a customer's CRES provider from including non-jurisdictional charges on a consolidated electric bill."[30] As the Commission put it recently, when it approved this language, "this provision does not force the

[28] Id., pp. 4-7.
[29] *See* R.C. 4905.35(A) (prohibiting "any undue or unreasonable preference or advantage" and "undue or unreasonable prejudice or disadvantage"); R.C. 4928.17(A)(3) (requiring corporate separation plans to ensure that the utility will not "extend any undue preference or advantage . . ., including . . . [in] billing and mailing systems").
[30] IGS Comments, p. 5.

EDU to place the customer's CRES provider's non-jurisdictional service on the consolidated bill," but only requires "fairness to the CRES provider," which may lead to different outcomes in different cases, based on specific facts.

Additionally, it is simply premature to address the question of non-commodity billing in this proceeding while the broader question of how the Commission's rules will treat it remains in the air. The above-discussed amendment has been challenged by four utilities (including the Company) and by OCC from various angles. The Commission recently granted itself additional time to consider these applications for rehearing.[31] On rehearing, the Commission could reword or eliminate the new provision. It would not be appropriate for the Commission to add requirements to the Company's CIS in this proceeding based on a rule amendment that has not taken effect and is facing challenges on rehearing.

Logistically, this proceeding is also not the proper place to consider the implementation of non-commodity billing for suppliers. Before any such functionality can be implemented, a number of technical questions must be resolved. For example, data transactions must be handled in a manner that ensures non-commodity charges are not included in the purchase of asset receivables. Such changes are typically vetted through the Commission's EDI working group and implemented by multiple utilities, with input required from all stakeholders. Even if the Commission determined that all utilities must offer this capability, the proper sequence of implementation would be after the deployment and stabilization of Customer Connect.

[31] *In The Matter Of The Commission's Review Of Its Rules For Electrical Safety And Service Standards Contained In Chapter 4901:1-10 Of The Ohio Administrative Code*, Case No. 17-1842-EL-ORD, Entry on Rehearing, p. 2 (April 22, 2020).

III. THE PROPOSED LAND MOBILE RADIO SYSTEM WILL MODERNIZE THE DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM AND DIRECTLY BENEFIT CUSTOMERS.

Staff recommends against recovery of costs associated with the Company's proposed Land Mobile Radio (LMR) system in Rider PF because "Staff does not believe it is an investment in distribution infrastructure or modernization nor does it directly enhance the customer experience."[32] OCC similarly asserts that the LMR system "is not part of 'grid modernization.'"[33] Both, therefore, suggest that its costs should be recovered in base rates. But this conclusion rests on two mistaken assumptions: that the proposed LMR system will merely continue the existing service levels provided by the current legacy systems and that the proposed LMR will have no direct impact on the customer experience.

A. The proposed LMR system will not merely "provide basic utility service," but will contribute to grid modernization.

The proposed LMR system will do far more than merely "maintain[] the ability to have a reliable communications system for operations and outage restoration"[34] and "provide basic distribution utility service."[35] These descriptions rest on an assumption that the proposed LMR system would be a like-for-like replacement of the existing four, independent regional systems, with perhaps a few incremental improvements. This is not the case. While the new system will improve incrementally on the legacy systems' performance in terms of existing functionality such as wireless coverage, system reliability, and dispatch communication, the new system will also offer fundamentally new capabilities.

[32] *See* Staff Review and Recommendation, p. 6.
[33] *See* OCC Comments, p. 7.
[34] *See* Staff Review and Recommendation, p. 6.
[35] *See* OCC Comments, p. 7.

As described in Mr. Turner's testimony, the new capabilities of the proposed LMR system that were unavailable to the Company under the old system will include:

- Interoperability with non-native crews;
- Dispatch across regions;
- Interoperability with other utilities on P25 systems
- Redundancy across Duke Energy regions

These new capabilities represent modernization: a nimbler, more efficient LMR for increased flexibility in addressing outages and improved uniformity vis-à-vis other utilities.

B. The proposed LMR system will directly enhance the customer experience.

Staff believes that a new LMR does not "directly enhance the customer experience," but merely "maintain[s]" outage restoration communications.[36] However, the proposed new LMR will perceptibly improve the customer experience.

The most obvious component of the enhanced customer experience will be improved and more efficient outage restoration. There is a direct tie between the reliability of crew communications and the level of service and reliability provided to customers. The reliability and flexibility of the communications system impacts not only outage and restoration times, but also the timeliness of status updates on service restoration efforts and the ability to warn customers of potentially hazardous conditions, such as downed power lines. The proposed LMR system will improve all these aspects of the customer experience.

Electrical outages are often tremendously challenging for customers, and this is especially the case now, when so many customers are living, learning, and working at home. An outage of

[36] Staff Review and Recommendation, p. 6.

even a few hours may prevent a customer from cooking dinner for the family, completing a time-sensitive work assignment, or taking a college exam. A more prolonged outage may cause food spoilage, impact a customer's ability to care for and educate children, or compromise a customer's ability to care for elderly and/or disabled household members. Thus, improving the Company's ability to address outages is a direct enhancement of the customer experience.

C. Rider recovery and deferral authority for the LMR are warranted.

Because the proposed LMR system will provide modernization, it is an appropriate candidate for cost recovery through Rider PF. Staff suggests that base rates are sufficient to cover the expenses, that the costs requested to be deferred are insufficiently "material" in nature and that the Company would suffer no financial harm from denial of deferral authority. But it is not clear why Staff believes that .075% of operating expenses is *per se* not a material expense. The amount is significant to the Company. Furthermore, Staff acknowledges that a new LMR system is an atypical and infrequent activity.[37] And, although the Company "could have" updated the LMR system prior to its most recent distribution rate case (filed over three years ago), it would not necessarily have been prudent to do so while the existing systems promised to remain serviceable for some time still.

Additionally, OCC complains that rider recovery without "protections typically found in a base rate case" is inappropriate because "parties to this case will . . . have no opportunity to make recommendations" regarding the LMR, but fails to identify what recommendations it would have made, or to allege any technical shortfall in the proposed system that would have been improved by comments.[38] No party in this case challenges the capabilities of the proposed LMR or even

[37] Id., pp. 16-17.
[38] OCC Comments, p. 8.

purports to propose a superior alternative. OCC suggests—without any specific concerns cited—that the Company is attempting to "shift the financial risks associated with premature obsolescence . . . onto customers."[39] But, as Company witness Mr. Turner has testified, the proposed LMR system's lifespan aligns with the timeframe in which the industry expects viable technological alternatives to become available.[40]

IV. INVESTING IN SMART CITIES WILL FURTHER GRID MODERNIZATION AND BENEFIT ALL CUSTOMERS, AS WELL AS THE GENERAL PUBLIC, IN THE COMPANY'S SERVICE TERRITORY.

A. The benefits of a smart street lighting pilot will extend throughout the Company's service territory.

Neither Staff nor OCC deny the many beneficial uses of smart technologies,[41] that street lighting poles are inherently an efficient vehicle for the deployment of smart technologies,[42] or that smart street lighting systems are on the cutting edge of modernization. Indeed, Staff "appreciates the advancement that the installation of multi-use poles and smart cities technologies can provide."[43] Their primary concern appears to be that the benefits of smart street lighting will be limited solely to the early-adopter municipalities and their residents, rather than accruing to all ratepayers.[44] But this perspective overlooks the inherent value of a ***pilot*** program for emerging technology.

A pilot is not meant to be a commercial offering that directly touches every customer, but rather (1) an experiment to learn more about a technology's capabilities and limitations and (2) a means to remove the often intimidating barriers to early adoption. Thus, it is not comparable to

[39] OCC Comments, p. 7.
[40] Direct Testimony of Randy L. Turner, p. 16 (September 24, 2019).
[41] *See* Direct Testimony of Timothy J. Duff, pp. 6-7 (September 24, 2019).
[42] *See id.*, p. 9 (September 24, 2019).
[43] *See* Staff Review and Recommendation, p. 9.
[44] *See* Id.; OCC Comments, pp. 10-11.

an individual customer's request for a change to Company facilities that will benefit only that customer.[45] While the program—with approximately two hundred "smart" multi-use poles proposed—will by no means provide poles to every city within its service territory, this modest scope was set deliberately. The Company believes that the proposed size is large enough to permit, at minimal cost, a range of experimentation with various smart city attachments by multiple cities that will showcase the benefits of Smart Cities to residents, businesses, visitors, and other surrounding cities. After observing the pilot program's outcomes in the pilot, municipalities across the state will be better equipped to invest in smart street lighting and to select the optimal approach for their specific circumstances. But an initial experimental investment is necessary to get the ball rolling.

B. Although a pilot is necessary to overcome the initial barriers to investment, a successful pilot will stimulate public and private investment in smart cities technology.

The Company disagrees with the Commission Staff that the Company's existing Street Lighting Tariffs provide satisfactory options for cities to mitigate the up-front costs of early adoption of smart street lighting.[46] Survey data demonstrates that nearly 40% of municipalities struggle simply "to sustain even baseline maintenance," of infrastructure, even before the recent economic recession caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic.[47] While smart cities can ultimately be a profitable investment, there is often a considerable lag before the returns can be assessed. By demonstrating the benefits and profitability of smart cities investments, the proposed pilot would empower municipalities across the Company's service territory to make similar investments and

[45] *See* OCC Comments, p. 10.
[46] *See* Staff Review and Recommendation, p. 9.
[47] International City/County Management Association, *Innovations and Emerging Practices in Local Government 2016 Survey*, p. 9, *available at* https://icma.org/documents/icma-survey-research-innovations-and-emerging-practices-local-government-2016-survey (accessed May 15, 2020).

to recruit private entities to contribute. In turn, these investments in smart cities would improve the region's ability to attract new investment and development, which will be critical as municipalities emerge from the recent economic challenges brought by the pandemic.

The positive effects and positive financial impacts of investment in smart city technologies can take time to become apparent and require study to quantify. For example, in the city of Detroit, smart cities technology was used to achieve 50 percent reductions in violent crime in participating locations.[48] Reducing violent crime is profitable in many ways over the long term: improved safety attracts new businesses and residents, raises property values, and reduces law enforcement expenditures. But such impacts are not as immediately apparent and straightforward as, for example, collecting an additional tax or charging residents a set fee for a service. While smart cities have the potential to facilitate more efficient transportation, a sustainable and cleaner environment, less crime and a greater level of citizen engagement, the inherent lag in realizing such benefits is exactly why a pilot like the one proposed by the Company is crucial to tip the balance in favor of investment early on. A pilot can serve as a way to demonstrate the benefits on a small scale and reduce the lag between the initial investment and the city being able to monetize benefits.

The ultimate goal of the Company's pilot is to stimulate collaborative investment across the Company's service territory in smart cities infrastructure, including eventually contributions from private partners. In a 2017 study, three-quarters of municipal survey respondents said they considered public-private partnerships to be the most effective financing model for smart city

[48] Christine Ferretti, *Detroit, Comcast partner to expand Project Green Light* (September 8, 2016), *available at* https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/detroit-city/2016/09/08/greenlight/90016834/ (accessed May 15, 2020).

initiatives.[49] However, such private investment is unlikely to occur in the Company's service territory without an initiative, such as the proposed pilot, which is able to demonstrate the benefits of smart cities in nearby municipalities. A successful pilot will not only benefit the participant municipalities, but will enable other municipalities in the service territory to make stronger cases for private investment. Such public-private partnerships have occurred in other states, with participation and investment from both large publicly traded corporations and local businesses.[50] If the Company's pilot enables a handful of municipalities to demonstrate the benefits of smart cities in the Company's service territory, others will likely be able to attract private investors and follow suit.

C. Street lighting poles are a core component of utility service.

In arguing that smart street lighting has nothing to do "with providing safe and reliable electric utility service,"[51] OCC overlooks that street lighting poles have long been part of an electric utility's system while also serving as a vehicle for non-utility services due to the poles' location and availability. Where the utility's system can serve as a backbone for additional applications, it is sensible to encourage such efficiencies. This pilot does not seek to broaden the definition of utility service, but rather to remove a capital barrier to customers upgrading their existing poles, which are in fact part of utility service.

Even with a pilot to remove capital barriers to an initial, small number of smart poles, municipalities will have to pay for pole attachments and for the energy they consume. This

[49] Black & Veatch, *The Value of Smart City Initiatives Offer New Twist on Old Question of Affordability* (May 11, 2017), *available at* https://www.bv.com/perspectives/value-smart-city-initiatives-offer-new-twist-old-question-affordability (accessed May 15, 2020).
[50] SmartCitiesWorld, *Innovative partnership powers Atlanta's future* (September 16, 2019), *available at* https://www.smartcitiesworld.net/special-reports/special-reports/innovative-partnership-powers-atlantas-future (accessed May 15, 2020); *see supra*, Ferretti.
[51] OCC Comments, p. 9.

includes a wide range of attachments, such as security cameras, pedestrian counters, traffic control devices, air quality sensors, waste management sensors, gunshot detection sensors, parking space monitoring, digital banners, Wi-Fi networks, and small cell wireless. Providing poles that will permit a broader range of attachments is not fundamentally different than providing poles for the current, narrower range of attachments.

D. Pole attachment revenues generated by the pilot will benefit all customers.

OCC suggests that customers receive a credit in Rider PF for any pole attachment revenues generated by the new poles in the pilot.[52] This is unnecessarily convoluted. Just as it does today, Duke Energy Ohio will include these pole attachment revenues in its regulated utility revenues and thus the pole attachment revenues on the smart poles in this pilot will ultimately go back to customers under existing pole attachment tariffs. All customer will see the benefit of the pole attachment revenues when rates are set and the pole attachment fees are captured in the rate making process. The Company does not believe that a separate credit to Rider PF is necessary.

V. THE PROPOSED EV PILOT PROGRAM WILL EFFICIENTLY FACILITATE INVESTMENT IN EV CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE WITHOUT DETRIMENT TO COMPETITION.

A. Several parties and Staff see potential value for all ratepayers in the EV pilot program.

The Company's EV pilot program has garnered the general support of several environmental groups, as well as one of the largest competitive providers of charging stations.[53] It is also supported by the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments and the

[52] OCC Comments, p. 11.
[53] *See* OEC & SC Comments, pp. 3-4; Comments of the Environmental Law & Policy Center, p. 2 (April 15, 2020) (ELPC Comments); Public Comment of Green Umbrella Regional Sustainability Alliance (April 14, 2020); Public Comment of Clean Fuels Ohio (April 17, 2020); Comments of ChargePoint, Inc., p. 1 (April 15, 2020) (ChargePoint Comments).

Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber, demonstrating that the program will benefit the general public as well as businesses.[54] And although Staff suggests a number of modifications to the EV pilot program, Staff also notes overall that "a well-designed EV program can provide benefits to ratepayers and further state policy" and states that "there is value in exploring the impacts of EV charging infrastructure on the distribution system to help inform distribution system planning and rate design."[55]

OCC appears to be entirely opposed to any utility having any sort of EV program. OCC argues that such programs violate R.C. 4928.02(H) by constituting an "anticompetitive subsid[y] . . . to a product or service other than retail electric service."[56] But the Ohio Supreme Court has very recently explained—to OCC, in fact—that "R.C. 4928.02 neither imposes strict conditions on the PUCO nor requires anything," and that its provisions are merely "guidelines for the PUCO to weigh when it considers a utility proposal."[57] In that case, the Ohio Supreme Court upheld an electric vehicle pilot program implemented by Ohio Power Company, Inc. (Ohio Power Company), and found that "OCC fail[ed] to show. . . that [] the electric-charging-station program . . . is not, in fact, related to Ohio Power's distribution service, infrastructure, or modernization."[58] Additionally, the Commission has recently approved rider cost recovery for Dayton Power and Light of up to $1 million in "costs associated with investments for the meter and equipment in front of the meter to support EV charging stations."[59] Thus, both Ohio Supreme Court and

[54] Public Comment of Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber (April 29, 2020); Public Comment of Mark Policinski, on behalf of Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (March 24, 2020).
[55] Staff Review and Recommendation, p. 12.
[56] OCC Comments, p. 12.
[57] *In re Ohio Power Co.*, 2020-Ohio-143, ¶ 31 (internal quotation marks and alterations omitted).
[58] Id., ¶ 28.
[59] *In the Matter of the Application of The Dayton Power and Light Company for an Increase in its Electric Distribution Rates*, Case No. 15-1830-EL-AIR, Opinion and Order, p. 27 (September 26, 2018).

Commission precedent have established that investments in EV-supporting infrastructure and rebate incentives for charging equipment are a legitimate use of ratepayer funds.[60] Additionally, the Commission recognized in the PowerForward Roadmap that "the EV marketplace is in its infancy" and therefore allowed for the possibility of "limited EDU participation in the development of EV charging infrastructure."[61] Thus, OCC's argument that the competitive marketplace offers adequate opportunity for EVs to flourish[62] is unavailing.

B. The make-ready components of the EV Fast Charge, Electric Transit Bus, and Commercial Level II proposed programs are essential and will not compromise the competitive market; the Company will not own any charging stations.

Staff expresses concern regarding the "make-ready" portions of these three programs because it perceives "potential for anti-competitive practices associated with the Company installing, owning, and operating infrastructure behind the meter," and recommends on this basis that the Company limit itself to offering rebates for the make-ready work only.[63] Respectfully, the Company believes Staff may have misunderstood the limited nature of what was proposed.

It is important to clarify that Duke Energy Ohio would not be offering the final competitive product or service (the EV charging station) to the customer. Nor would the Company own any charging stations under any of the proposed programs.[64] The proposed make-ready investment would include only equipment and installation labor up to the stub-out point for the charging station, while still requiring the customer to procure, own, operate and maintain the charging

[60] *See also In the Matter of the Application of Ohio Power Company for Authority to Establish a Standard Service Offer Pursuant to R.C. 4928.143, in the Form of an Electric Security Plan*, Case No. 16-1852-EL-SSO, Opinion and Order, pp. 26-30 (April 25, 2018).
[61] PowerForward Ohio: A Roadmap to Ohio's Electricity Future, p. 20.
[62] OCC Comments, pp. 12-13.
[63] Staff Review and Recommendation, p. 12.
[64] *See* Direct Energy Comments, p. 7 (asking the Commission to require the Company to clarify that it will not own charging stations).

station. There is no reason to believe utility ownership of commoditized electrical infrastructure such as step-down transformers, electrical panels, wiring, conduit, and installation services such as trenching and boring would have any negative impacts on the competitive market for EV charging solutions.

Other state commissions have found that a minimal behind-the-meter investment in make-ready infrastructure does not constitute entry into or a threat to the competitive EV charging market.[65] As ChargePoint, Inc. explains in its comments, the make-ready aspect of the programs "will significantly reduce installation costs barriers for site hosts, while still leveraging private investment ***and choice in charging equipment and services***."[66]

Furthermore, Staff is mistaken in its belief that a rebate program will accomplish the same ends. Given the limited general knowledge of installing EV charging stations and the unpredicted development delays, the Company's assistance with the make-ready equipment is essential in simplifying the install for the site host. It will also ensure EV charging stations are installed with long-term operation in mind and reduce barriers to entry, while still requiring the host to invest in the actual charging station and permitting the host to independently procure whatever EVSE fits its needs.

---

[65] *See Application of San Diego Gas & Electric Company (U 902E) for Approval of SB 350 Transportation Electrification Proposals; And Related Matters*, Case No. 17-01-020, Decision on the Transportation Electrification Standard Review Projects, 2018 Cal. PUC LEXIS 234 (Cal. P.U.C. May 31, 2018) ("[W]e find that the modified programs will not unfairly compete with non-utility enterprises by allowing utility involvement in the installation of make-ready infrastructure both on the utility side and the customer side of the meter."); *see also Petition of NSTAR Electric Company and Western Massachusetts Electric Company for Approval of General Increases in Base Distribution Rates for Electric Service and a Performance Based Ratemaking Mechanism*, Case No. D.P.U. 17-05, Order Establishing Eversource's Revenue Requirement, 2017 Mass. PUC LEXIS 371, 688-690 (Mass. D.P.U. November 30, 2017).

[66] ChargePoint Comments, p. 5 (emphasis added).

OMAEG objects separately to the requirement that participants in the Commercial EV Charging program will need to request new service and a separate meter.[67] Requiring customers to purchase a networked EVSE would increase customers' costs and reduce competition for EV charging solutions by limiting the selection of EVSE that participating customers could choose from. Networked EVSE are more expensive than non-networked solutions and would require annual network subscriptions. Even where the relevant EVSE may have the capability to internally meter electric usage and is networked, this capability will not automatically transmit the data regularly to the Company in the streamlined manner that a separate utility meter will allow. Requiring a meter gives the customer the widest choice of hardware options. Submetering may be suitable in a few exceptions where the customer's infrastructure is already adequate, and the Company would be willing to consider such instances case by case. But overall, requiring the Company to obtain data only "upon request," and rely on internal meters would require burdensome and frequent impositions on the customer and impede the effectiveness of the pilot in collecting data.

OMAEG also objects to the Company retaining the right to own school bus batteries at the end of their useful life for transportation purposes,[68] but this is hardly a threat to the competitive market. The Company seeks to retain the right to repurpose the batteries primarily to study and evaluate them for potential future deployment as distribution grid assets, not for the purpose of earning revenue in the competitive market.

[67] Comments of The Ohio Manufacturers' Association Energy Group, p. 10 (April 15, 2020) (OMAEG Comments).
[68] *See* Id., p. 9.

C. The Company will prioritize locations likely to be most utilized, such as within the EV Alt Fuel Corridor.

Regarding the Company's proposed EV Fast Charge program, Staff expresses that it is "generally aligned [with the Company] on the potential benefits associated with providing incentives strategically to facilitate the development of intra- and inter-state corridor travel," and suggests modifying the program to "focus on" establishment of "corridor-ready" alternative fuel corridors, as defined by the Federal Highway Administration (FHA).[69] As depicted in Company witness Mr. Lang's testimony, in LWR-4, most of the priority locations already reside on or near FHA-designated corridors. But the Company agrees to prioritize locations that will be most utilized, which by nature will fall within these corridors.

ChargePoint suggests reducing minimum site requirements to "[a] minimum of 2 DCFC per location capable of charging a single vehicle at a combined 100 kW."[70] Respectfully, the Company prefers to keep the original minimum requirement of at least two charging stations capable of charging two cars at or over 100 kW, as all new EVs being introduced to the market at this point can accept charging rates in excess of 100kW. It is important for installations funded by the Pilot to be capable of charging two vehicles simultaneously at 100kW or above to ensure that infrastructure funded by the program does not become obsolete before the end of the useful life of the asset.

OMAEG requests that the Commission "ensure" any Ohio EPA Beneficiary Mitigation Plan funding obtained be used to refund ratepayers.[71] The Company has already agreed to use any such funds to offset program costs.

---

[69] Staff Review and Recommendation, p. 13.
[70] ChargePoint Comments, pp. 6-7.
[71] OMAEG Comments, p. 11.

D. The proposed residential pilot will benefit all customers, not just program participants.

Staff opposes the Residential Level II program out of concerns that the associated infrastructure will not be "made available to the public" or "in locations with multiple users."[72] However, The Company has demonstrated with the filed cost-benefit analysis of EV adoption (LWR-1) that incremental EV deployment can benefit all customers regardless of whether they drive an EV, by driving downward rate pressure through increased net revenue to the electric system along with (among other things) emissions reductions and increased energy independence. Additionally, Staff recognizes the value in exploring the impacts of EV charging infrastructure on the distribution system to help inform distribution system planning and rate design, and the Residential Rebate Program will be essential to studying grid impacts related to home charging, where upwards of 80% of charging occurs.

Staff appears to believe that the Company can incentivize residential EV customers by simply implementing the appropriate rate design offering(s). There is limited evidence suggesting rate design plays any role in incentivizing increased EV adoption as (unlike California, where EV-specific TOU rates originated) electricity costs in the Company's service territory are already far less expensive than equivalent gasoline costs. As described in LWR-1,[73] the benefits to all customers are increased when EV adoption is increased above the baseline scenario. Therefore one purpose of the Residential program is not just to gather data and develop EV load management capabilities, but also to investigate the ability of incentives to encourage incremental EV adoption. The residential program is necessary to first provide the baseline data that will equip the Company

[72] Staff Review and Recommendation, p. 13; *see also* OCC Comments, p. 14.
[73] Direct Testimony of Lang W. Reynolds, Attachment LWR-1 (September 24, 2019).

to fully study and evaluate EV customer charging behavior within its service territory to, in turn, enable it to study the potential for EV rate offerings. The Company will evaluate data post pilot to determine if an EV-specific residential rate is a worthwhile endeavor. Incorporating a metered residential tariff through a smart charging station creates significant billing and metering challenges. This approach also requires each participant to purchase a more expensive smart charging station. Thus, it does not make sense to offer such a rate before examining the data.

E. The Company is not opposed to making efforts to improve equity for its Transit Bus, School Bus, and Commercial programs.

The Ohio Environmental Council and Sierra Club suggest that including equity targets would "ensure the program improves access to clean transportation options for all customers."[74] Specifically, they suggest that the bus programs each fund at least two buses in a county designated by the Ohio EPA as "first priority" due to air quality and pollution concerns, and that the Commercial EV Charging program commit to deploying at least 10% of its charging ports in low-income geographic areas. The ELPC similarly suggests prioritizing school districts with a high concentration of low-income households for the school bus pilot.[75] The Company would be willing to commit to the 10% goal for the Commercial program. The Company would also be willing to attempt to allocate a proportion of school bus rebates towards districts with a high concentration of low-income households, as long as this does not compromise the program's effectiveness in obtaining useful pilot data.

[74] OEC & SC Comments, p. 5.
[75] ELPC Comments, p. 6.

The Ohio Environmental Council and Sierra Club also recommend the Commission require the Company to develop and file a new rate for EV transit. The Company believes that it would be premature to require development of such a rate before reviewing data from the pilot.

F. Any load reductions and corresponding revenues from the EV School Bus program would be negligible and therefore it would be inefficient to attempt to refund such revenues.

OMAEG suggests that the Company's provision of load management and grid curtailment services to the participants of the Electric School Bus program would constitute the Company's "participation in these [competitive] markets" and recommends that the Company be required to credit any resulting revenues to the rider.[76] The current state of electric school bus vehicle-to-grid market is only a concept; the pilot will provide a substantial view into the feasibility of this potential market. The purpose of the pilot is not to generate revenue, but to offer the state of Ohio a tangible "limited and controlled" opportunity to explore various benefits of connecting an electric school bus to the distribution grid. The Company intends to report on various grid impacts that can be studied with a limited deployment of electric buses. Any revenues would be negligible during this pilot, and therefore it would be inefficient to calculate and credit them to the rider.

G. Deferral of the O&M costs is warranted.

The Company reads Staff's recommendation as supporting cost recovery of program costs through Rider PF, and opposing only the granting of deferral authority. Recovery of program costs is a key component of the Company's proposal, crucial to ensuring that the Company is not financially harmed by offering this innovative pilot program. If Staff had intended to recommend

[76] OMAEG Comments, p. 11.

denial of cost recovery altogether, such a recommendation would have undercut a crucial element of the EV pilot proposal.

Although the Company believes that its proposed approach (with the make-ready components) is the best and most efficient way to structure the program for purposes of gathering data and simplifying participation, a rebate-focused program could be a viable alternative if cost recovery of program costs is available, even if deferral authority is denied. However, the Company believes deferral authority is warranted.

Staff acknowledges that the costs included in the Company's last electric rate case "do not specifically include costs associated with electric vehicle charging," and that this expenditure is atypical and infrequent, but recommends against deferral of the O&M costs associated with these programs "primarily" because it perceives that "the costs included in current rates are sufficient and the costs would not result in financial harm to the Company."[77] Staff appears to base these determinations primarily on the amount at issue in the Company's proposal, which is $4.5 million over three years. The Company believes that Staff is mistaken and that the EV programs meet the criteria for deferral authority, ***especially*** if Staff's recommendation to convert all the programs to rebates-only was accepted (which would triple the O&M costs).

Staff believes that costs in the first two years of 0.67% and 0.46% of operating expenses are "not material" and can be absorbed in current rates. Again, it is not clear whether Staff has made this criterion purely numerical. But if Staff's recommendation to convert the EV program to rebates-only is accepted, then surely the tripled O&M costs would be material.

[77] Staff Review and Recommendation, p. 17.

As to the sixth factor, Staff does not deny that the Commission could, here, encourage the utility to do something it would not otherwise do by granting deferral authority. Indeed, Staff "understands that the EV Program is part of the Company's broader goal of modernizing the electric grid" and "avers the Commission could encourage broader efforts to modernize the electric grid, including developing electric vehicle infrastructure."[78]

Given that not all six factors need to be present for deferral authority to be warranted, the Company believes it should be granted here, especially if Staff's recommendation to convert the program to rebates-only is accepted.

VI. THE COMPANY'S REQUESTS TO DEFER O&M COSTS ARE LAWFUL.

A. The Company's deferral requests for the CIS and LMR O&M comport fully with Ohio law on retroactive ratemaking and should be granted.

OCC argues that Ohio law bars the Company from deferring O&M costs incurred since January 1, 2018 for the development and implementation of Customer Connect and LMR because such a deferral would constitute retroactive ratemaking.[79] Kroger and OMAEG make similar arguments.

There is no concern about retroactive ratemaking here. As the Commission has explained:

> [T]his Commission's approval of an accounting modification, such as a deferral, does not constitute ratemaking and, thus, does not violate the rule against retroactive ratemaking. *Consumers' Counsel v. Pub. Util. Comm.*, 6 Ohio St.3d 377, 379, 453 N.E.2d 673 (1983).[80]

And there is ample precedent for permitting costs to be deferred and recovered after they were incurred. For example, in the Company's most recent gas base rate case, the Commission granted

[78] Staff Review and Recommendation, pp. 18-19.
[79] *See* OCC Comments, pp. 19-22.
[80] *In the Matter of the Application of The Dayton Power and Light Company for Approval of its Energy Efficiency and Peak Demand Reduction Portfolio Plan*, Case No. 16-649-EL-POR, Opinion and Order, p. 18 (September 27, 2017).

in 2013 recovery of environmental investigation and remediation expenses incurred "commencing January 1, 2008," even though the authority to defer those costs had not been granted until November 12, 2009 and had not even been requested until August 10, 2009.[81] Thus, there is no basis for extending the authorities cited by OCC, Kroger, and OMAEG to cost deferrals. The fact that the deferred amounts will be recovered via a rider does not change this.

Kroger suggests that the Company forfeited any possible request for deferral authority by not demanding such authority in its electric base rate case, and demands that the placeholder setting of Rider PF at zero remain in place.[82] But Kroger cites no authority for this. Indeed, as the Commission explained in the Order, "approv[ing] zero placeholder riders and subsequently populat[ing] the rate" is consistent with past Commission practice.[83]

B. The Company accepts Kroger and OMAEG's suggestions to use the long-term debt rate approved in the last rate case as the basis for carrying costs.

Kroger and OMAEG recommend that the Commission use the long-term debt rate approved in the last rate case for carrying costs, and not the actual cost of long-term debt.[84] The Company is willing to accept this recommendation and would agree to use the last approved long-term debt rates for gas and electric respectively.

[81] *See In the Matter of the Application of Duke Energy Ohio, Inc., for an Increase in its Natural Gas Distribution Rates*, Case No. 12-1685-GA-AIR, Opinion and Order, p. 59 (November 13, 2013); *In the Matter of the Application of Duke Energy Ohio, Inc., for Authority to Defer Environmental Investigation and Remediation Costs*, Case No. 09-712-GA-AAM, Finding and Order (November 12, 2009).
[82] Kroger Comments, p. 5.
[83] Order, p. 101 & n.8.
[84] Kroger Comments, p. 5 (April 15, 2020); OMAEG Comments, p. 7.

C. The Company prefers a simple rate design, with a percent distribution revenue basis.

OEG suggests that the Company adopt one of two rate designs that OEG believes would allocate costs more fairly among customers.[85] Duke Energy Ohio believes that this would add unnecessary complexity, and prefers to recover Rider PF costs, as proposed, on a percent distribution revenue basis. Duke Energy Ohio believes the proposed rate design fairly allocates among customers and it is unnecessary to add the complexity OEG is proposing.

VII. THE COMPANY OPPOSES IGS'S PROCEDURAL PROPOSAL FOR ELIMINATING A HEARING.

IGS recommends various procedural options to, in its view, eliminate the need for a hearing.[86] The Company respectfully submits that an evidentiary hearing is necessary, with an opportunity to cross examine witnesses, to ensure that all parties have an opportunity for due process and that the Commission has a complete record for its consideration. The Company is confident this could be accomplished safely, using existing procedural tools and supplemented by technology where necessary to maintain social distancing.

[85] Comments of Ohio Energy Group, pp. 1-2 (April 15, 2020).
[86] IGS Comments, p. 13.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The Company has demonstrated that its proposed programs further the goal of grid modernization and requests that its application be approved.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ *Larisa M. Vaysman*

Rocco O. D'Ascenzo (0077651)
Deputy General Counsel
(Counsel of Record)
Larisa M. Vaysman (0090290)
Senior Counsel
Duke Energy Business Services, Inc.
139 East Fourth Street, ML 1301
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202
Phone: 513-287-4320
Rocco.D' Ascenzo@duke-energy.com
Larisa.Vaysman@duke-energy.com

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that a copy of the foregoing Reply Comments of Duke Energy Ohio, Inc. was served on the following parties this 15th day of May 2020 by regular U. S. Mail, overnight delivery or electronic delivery.

/s/ *Larisa M. Vaysman*
Larisa M. Vaysman

John.jones@ohioattorneygeneral.gov
Thomas.lindgren@ohioattorneygeneral.gov
gpiacentino@wp-lawgroup.com
joe.oliker@igs.com
michael.nugent@igs.com
pdonlon@armadapower.com
dromig@armadapower.com
DBorchers@bricker.com
mfleisher@dickinson-wright.com
mleppla@oec.com
whitt@whitt-sturtevant.com
mpritchard@mcneeslaw.com
kboehm@bkllawfirm.com
dparram@bricker.com
ctavenor@theoec.org
paul@carpenterlipps.com
Christopher.Healey@occ.ohio.gov
Ambrosia.Logsdon@occ.ohio.gov
Steven.Darnell@ohioattorneygeneral.gov
paul@carpenterlipps.com
nvijaykar@elpc.org
ccox@elpc.org
bojko@carpenterlipps.com
bethany.allen@igs.com
james@dunnlegal.com
fykes@whitt-strurtevant.com
mkurtz@bkllawfirm.com
jkylercohn@bkllawfirm.com
jspottswood@bricker.com

Duke Energy Ohio
Case No. 19-1750-EL-UNC
STAFF Eighth Set of Data Requests
Date Received: February 12, 2020

STAFF-DR-08-003

REQUEST:

Does Duke Ohio's proposed CIS system include a grievance redress system?

RESPONSE:

The new CIS (Customer Connect Program) will include case management capabilities for escalated complaints and it is expected that escalated complaints handled by Consumer Affairs will be tracked in the new CIS once Customer Connect is fully deployed. The overall process for handling customer complaints is not expected to change as a result of the implementation of the Customer Connect Program.

PERSON RESPONSIBLE: Retha Hunsicker

Summary: Comments DEO Reply Comments electronically filed by Mrs. Debbie L Gates on behalf of Duke Energy Ohio Inc. and Vaysman, Larisa and D'Ascenzo, Rocco O. Mr. and Kingery, Jeanne W