

In the Matter of the Review of Duke)
Energy Ohio, Inc.'s Distribution Capital) Case No. 20-1205-EL-RDR
Investment Rider.)

The Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel ("OCC") moves to intervene¹ in this case where the amount Duke Energy Ohio, Inc. ("Duke" or "Utility") charges customers through its Distribution Capital Investment Rider ("DCI Charge") will be audited and reviewed. The intended purpose of the DCI Charge is for Duke to collect from customers money to fund its investment for the replacement of aging infrastructure and improve service reliability.² The audit of these charges should ensure that the collections from consumers are just and reasonable and that Duke's investment is used and useful in the provision of utility service. OCC is filing on behalf of Duke's approximately 639,000 residential utility customers. The reasons the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio ("PUCO") should grant OCC's Motion are further set forth in the attached Memorandum in Support.

² *In re Duke Energy Ohio, Inc.*, Case No. 14-841-EL-SSO, Opinion and Order (Apr. 2, 2015) at 72.

Respectfully submitted,

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Ohio Consumers' Counsel

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- (1) The nature and extent of the prospective intervenor's interest;
- (2) The legal position advanced by the prospective intervenor and its probable relation to the merits of the case;
- (3) Whether the intervention by the prospective intervenor will unduly prolong or delay the proceedings;

- (4) Whether the prospective intervenor will significantly contribute to full development and equitable resolution of the factual issues.

First, the nature and extent of OCC's interest is representing the residential customers of Duke in this case investigating the reasonableness of Duke's charges to customers under the DCI rider. 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 Duke should charge customers no more than what is reasonable and lawful 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 full development and equitable resolution of the factual issues. OCC will obtain and develop information that the PUCO should consider for equitably and lawfully deciding the case in the public interest.

OCC also satisfies the intervention criteria in the Ohio Administrative Code (which are subordinate to the criteria that OCC satisfies in the Ohio Revised Code). To intervene, a party should have a "real and substantial interest" according to Ohio Adm. Code 4901-1-11(A)(2). As the advocate for residential utility customers, OCC has a very real and substantial interest in this case where the PUCO will determine whether the

charges to customers under Duke's DCI rider are appropriate and whether the utility is providing adequate service for the amount it charges customers under Ohio law.

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.³

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.

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

Respectfully submitted,

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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 5th day of August 2020.

/s/ Amy Botschner O'Brien
Amy Botschner O'Brien
Assistant Consumers' Counsel

The PUCO's e-filing system will electronically serve notice of the filing of this document on the following parties:

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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 Botschner-O'Brien, Amy