

Application of Duke Energy Ohio, Inc.

July 26, 2022

THE OHIO POWER SITING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

Case No.21-887-EL-AIR



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1 THE OHIO POWER SITING BOARD

2 PUBLIC HEARING

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6 Case No.: 21-887-EL-AIR

7 IN THE MATTER OF: The Application of Duke
8 Energy Ohio, Inc. for an increase in its Electric
9 Distribution Rates.

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15 Before: Administrative Law Judge
Matthew Sandor

16 Attorney

17 Examiner: Nicholas Walstra

Commissioner: Dennis P. Deters

18 Date and Time: Tuesday, July 26, 2022
12:30 p.m.

19 Place: Cincinnati City Hall
801 Plum Street
Room 300

20 Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

21 Reporter: Tracy L. Allen, RPR, RMR

Notary Public - State of Ohio

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1 APPEARANCES OF COUNSEL:

2

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1 I N D E X

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3 TESTIMONY OF: PAGE

4	DOROTHY BUSH	10
	LENORE NEWLAND	12
5	JEREMIAH SQUIRE	15
	DAVID BOOKER	16
6	NINA CAPORALE	19
	MORGAN PETERSON	24
7	BRIAN GARRY	30
	MARY PARTEE	34

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1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 JUDGE SANDOR: The Public Utilities
3 Commission of Ohio has scheduled for
4 public hearing at this time and place,
5 Case No. 21-887-EL-AIR, which relates to
6 Duke Energy Ohio, Inc.'s application for
7 an increase in its electric distribution
8 rates.

9 My name is Matt Sandor and with me
10 is Nick Walstra. We are the attorney
11 examiners assigned by the Commission to
12 hear this case. Presiding with us today
13 is Commissioner Deters.

14 Commissioner Deters, would you like
15 to say a few words?

16 MR. DETERS: Thank you, Judge.

17 Welcome everybody to the public
18 hearing for Duke Energy's distribution
19 rate case.

20 The purpose of this hearing, as
21 Judge Sandor will illustrate, is to take
22 evidence and that evidence will be
23 considered by the Commission at a later
24 date.

25 It's important that everybody's here

1 and I'm happy to see so many faces that
2 are interested in Duke's case and I
3 appreciate your time today.

4 Thank you.

5 JUDGE SANDOR: There are also staff
6 members from the Commission assisting
7 with the hearing today, as well as
8 individuals from the Public Affairs
9 Department.

10 You likely passed them on your way
11 in today, but they are -- she's the
12 individual wearing a PUCO badge or shirt
13 in back. She's available if you have any
14 questions concerning the Commission's
15 process, if you need assistance in
16 accessing any of the documents submitted
17 in this case, or if you just have general
18 questions about the hearing today.

19 Also, representatives from Duke are
20 available today to answer questions that
21 you may have regarding the application.

22 Furthermore, there are also
23 representatives from the Ohio Consumers'
24 Counsel who are available for questions,
25 as well.

1 At this time, I would like to take
2 appearances on behalf of the parties.

3 Duke Energy Ohio, Inc.

4 MS. VAYSMAN: Thank you, your Honor.

5 On behalf of Duke Energy Ohio, my
6 name is Larisa Vaysman. My business
7 address is 139 East Fourth Street,
8 Cincinnati, Ohio 45202.

9 And not here today with us but also
10 appearing with me in this case are Rocco
11 D'Ascenzo, Jeanne Kingery, and Elyse
12 Akhbari representing Duke in this case.

13 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you.

14 Are there any other parties present
15 today that would like to make an
16 appearance?

17 MS. WILSON: Ambrosia Wilson and JP
18 Blackwood with Ohio Consumers' Counsel,
19 65 East State Street, Suite 700, Columbus
20 Ohio 43215.

21 Also on this case but not here today
22 is Angela O'Brien.

23 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you.

24 The subject of today's hearing is an
25 application filed by Duke seeking to

1 increase rates and charges. The
2 application was filed on October 1st,
3 2021. The Commission's staff filed a
4 report of investigation on May 19th,
5 2022.

6 This report is a recommendation of
7 the Commission's staff but does not
8 necessarily reflect what the Commission's
9 final determination in this case will be.

10 The purpose of today's public
11 hearing is to receive testimony about the
12 application from persons in the local
13 community who are affected by the
14 proposed rates but who are not parties to
15 the case.

16 Today's public hearing will not be
17 treated as a question-and-answer session,
18 but rather an opportunity to let the
19 Commission know what you think about
20 Duke's application.

21 Today's public hearing is only one
22 aspect of the process in this case. An
23 evidentiary hearing is scheduled to
24 commence on September 19, 2022 at the
25 Commission's offices in Columbus.

1 The purpose of the evidentiary
2 hearing is for the parties and the
3 Commission staff to provide testimony and
4 other evidence regarding the project.

5 Today's hearing is being transcribed
6 by a court reporter. If you plan to
7 testify, please speak clearly so that the
8 court reporter can accurately reflect
9 your comments on the record.

10 Also, if you have prepared a written
11 statement, it would be helpful if you
12 provided a copy to the court reporter for
13 reference to ensure the transcript is
14 accurate.

15 After I finish with the
16 introduction, we will begin by inviting
17 individuals on the sign-in sheet to
18 provide his or her testimony. Each
19 person who signed up to testify will be
20 permitted to speak once about the
21 proposed rates.

22 Before you present your testimony, I
23 will ask you to take an oath or
24 affirmation that what you're about to say
25 is the truth. I will also ask you to

1 state your name and address for the
2 record. You will then provide your
3 thoughts on the proposed rates.

4 The parties to the case,
5 Commissioner Deters and attorney
6 examiners, will be permitted to ask you
7 questions about your statement.

8 The testimony that you provide today
9 will be considered part of the official
10 record in this case and it will be
11 reviewed by the Commission before a final
12 decision is made on the application.

13 A couple of other notes; if you
14 decide that you do not want to testify
15 when we read your name from the sign-in
16 sheet, you can pass to the next witness.
17 If you decide that you prefer to file
18 written comments in the case docket, the
19 Commission staff can answer your
20 questions about how to do that.

21 Also, once you finish testifying or
22 if you're here just to observe, you may
23 leave at any time you wish.

24 The Commission appreciates your
25 participation in today's hearing, and we

1 want everyone who has signed up to
2 testify to have the opportunity to do so.
3 For that reason, please keep your
4 statement to a reasonable length of no
5 more than five minutes.

6 At this time, we'll begin with
7 testimony. Commissioner Deters will be
8 calling the names of each witness to
9 please come up.

10 And once you do come up, we do ask
11 that you hold the microphone button down
12 in order that we can hear you through the
13 microphone.

14 MR. DETERS: Dorothy Bush.

15 JUDGE SANDOR: Good afternoon. If
16 you could move the microphone just a
17 little bit closer to you. There you go.

18 Please raise your right hand.

19 (Witness sworn.)

20 JUDGE SANDOR: Please state and
21 spell your name for the record.

22 MS. BUSH: Dorothy Bush,
23 D-o-r-o-t-h-y B-u-s-h.

24 JUDGE SANDOR: And provide your
25 address.

1 MS. BUSH: 1729 Westwood Avenue.

2 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you.

3 Please proceed.

4 MS. BUSH: I paid my June bill on
5 July 1st. I got a bill from Duke saying
6 that I did not pay my June bill.

7 So because I'm a little bad with
8 numbers, I paid it again. A week later I
9 got a statement that I had a credit in
10 that amount.

11 In order to get that amount
12 refunded, I had to get an advocate
13 involved and she spent over an hour on
14 the phone with Duke trying to resolve
15 that, yes, indeed, I paid my bill in
16 full. On July 1st I had a zero balance,
17 but they charged me for it anyway.

18 If you raise it by 32 percent, I
19 can't pay it. It's that simple. I don't
20 get that much from social security.

21 People tell me to move into an
22 apartment. An apartment in the city is
23 \$1,800 a month. That's more than I get a
24 month. I can't afford it.

25 I don't know what to say. It's just

1 an untenable situation.

2 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you.

3 Are there any questions of counsel?

4 MS. BUSH: No.

5 Do you have any for me?

6 MS. VAYSMAN: No questions.

7 JUDGE SANDOR: No questions from

8 Duke or OCC. Any counsel from the bench

9 or Mr. Deters?

10 No. Thank you.

11 MS. BUSH: Thank you.

12 MR. DETERS: Next up is Lenore

13 Newland.

14 MS. NEWLAND: I'm lucky I don't need

15 this (indicating) all the time.

16 Should I press the button?

17 JUDGE SANDOR: I'll ask you to raise

18 your right hand.

19 (Witness sworn).

20 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you.

21 Please state and spell your name for

22 the record.

23 MS. NEWLAND: First name Lenore,

24 L-e-n-o-r-e. Last name Newland. Exactly

25 how it sounds, new land.

1 JUDGE SANDOR: And please provide
2 your address.

3 MS. NEWLAND: 4566 Innes Avenue,
4 Cincinnati 45223. That's Northside.

5 JUDGE SANDOR: And just to be clear
6 for the record, Newland, N-e-w-l-a-n-d?

7 MS. NEWLAND: Absolutely.

8 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you. Please
9 proceed.

10 MS. NEWLAND: As I said, I'm Lenore
11 Newland. I live, work, and now retire in
12 Cincinnati. It's been 58 years. It will
13 be this Christmas.

14 I never made much, but it's always
15 been enough to buy and update a modest
16 home in Northside, so it's increased
17 substantially.

18 I've been fortunate enough to pay my
19 bills. Even assist my late husband in
20 finishing college.

21 I also assisted him throughout a
22 long disability, paid his bills and
23 funeral expenses.

24 My income and moderate retirement
25 has so far sufficed. But now with

1 inflation and my own health problems -- I
2 lost my place -- I really doubt that I
3 can continue to meet payment deadlines if
4 this Duke increase goes through.

5 I am a skosh above the poverty line
6 but only a skosh, and I think this will
7 be put me on the other side of it.

8 With increasing health issues of my
9 own I have grave doubt that I'll be able
10 to continue.

11 And that's it. The increase is
12 outrageous, in my book.

13 JUDGE SANDOR: Any questions from
14 counsel?

15 MS. VAYSMAN: No questions, your
16 Honor.

17 MS. WILSON: No.

18 JUDGE SANDOR: Hearing none.

19 Any questions from Commissioner
20 Deters or bench?

21 Thank you.

22 Thank you, Ms. Newland.

23 MR. DETERS: Thank you.

24 Jeremiah Squire.

25 JUDGE SANDOR: Please raise your

1 right hand.

2 (Witness sworn).

3 JUDGE SANDOR: Please state your
4 name for the record.

5 MR. SQUIRE: Jeremiah Squire,
6 J-e-r-e-m-i-a-h S-q-u-i-r-e.

7 JUDGE SANDOR: Please provide your
8 address.

9 MR. SQUIRE: 3041 Worthington
10 Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio 45211.

11 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you. Please
12 proceed.

13 MR. SQUIRE: Where do I start?

14 First of all, veteran, disability,
15 and the things that's going on here,
16 which just is preposterous. There's
17 enough stuff going on in our country with
18 COVID and you want to jack up utilities.

19 You know, act of God, we can't help
20 that. Trees fall, we got storms, we
21 can't go out to work. But jacking up the
22 utility prices is not going to solve
23 anything. It's going to cause more
24 problems, more people are going to be on
25 the streets because they're on fixed

1 incomes. Big families.

2 You all need to look at that. Don't
3 let this crap happen. You may not be
4 stuck there because you in a
5 higher-paying bracket, but most of us
6 that are not.

7 Get in there when you see your city
8 start falling. Don't let that happen.

9 Thank you.

10 JUDGE SANDOR: Any questions from
11 counsel?

12 MS. VAYSMAN: No questions, your
13 Honor.

14 JUDGE SANDOR: Any questions from
15 the bench?

16 Thank you.

17 Thank you, sir.

18 MR. DETERS: Thank you.

19 David Booker.

20 JUDGE SANDOR: Please raise your
21 right hand.

22 (Witness sworn.)

23 JUDGE SANDOR: Please state and
24 spell your name for the record.

25 MR. BOOKER: David Booker, D-a-v-i-d

1 B-o-o-k-e-r.

2 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you.

3 Also, when you speak, if you could
4 just hold down the button in the
5 microphone, I'd appreciate it.

6 MR. BOOKER: Is that it? Is this
7 better?

8 JUDGE SANDOR: And then if you could
9 please provide your address?

10 MR. BOOKER: 2665 Harrison Avenue,
11 45211.

12 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you. Please
13 proceed.

14 MR. BOOKER: Okay. The concern that
15 I have is the impact the increase is
16 going to have on seniors throughout
17 Cincinnati.

18 My business is in North Fairmount.
19 And also we work with organizations where
20 there are a number of seniors.

21 I live in Westwood where also there
22 are a number of seniors. And right now
23 in Westwood there are more renters than
24 there are homeowners.

25 So this increase is going to have a

1 tremendous impact on the lives of a
2 number of people, especially those that
3 are on fixed incomes and those that are
4 seniors.

5 The senior's increase annually on
6 social security is 5.9 percent, annually.
7 So if you're looking at 5.9 and then you
8 look at the 32 percent increase, the
9 numbers tell you that there is going to
10 be a problem here in terms of like
11 prescriptions, all the utilities, food,
12 so on.

13 I think that at this time the
14 increase is very untimely. And as I
15 leave, I would like to ask one question;
16 what is the reason for the rate increase
17 during this time of inflation when cost
18 of goods and services are going up
19 whereas wages are not?

20 So if you could help me out on that,
21 I would greatly appreciate it. I'm sure
22 that seniors and those on fixed incomes,
23 they would also appreciate a response.

24 Thank you very much.

25 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you, sir.

1 Any questions from counsel?

2 MS. VAYSMAN: No questions, your
3 Honor.

4 JUDGE SANDOR: Or the bench?

5 All right. Thank you, sir, for your
6 testimony.

7 MR. DETERS: Thank you.

8 Nina Caporale.

9 JUDGE SANDOR: Please raise your
10 right hand.

11 (Witness sworn.)

12 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you.

13 Please state and spell your name for
14 the record.

15 MS. CAPORALE: Nina, N-i-n-a,
16 Caporale, C-a-p-o-r-a-l-e.

17 JUDGE SANDOR: Please provide your
18 address.

19 MS. CAPORALE: 938 Avondale Avenue.

20 JUDGE SANDOR: Go ahead with your
21 testimony.

22 MS. CAPORALE: Forgive me if this
23 seems a little long.

24 In about 2000 and 2001 my parents
25 separated. Their divorce proceedings

1 were not finalized until 2005. In 2004
2 we lost our family home to foreclosure.

3 I completed my degrees in 2008. I
4 graduated from high school in 2000, which
5 makes me a millennial. I'm now 40 years
6 old.

7 In 2010 my father was hospitalized.
8 He lost a lung. It was due to benign
9 tumors.

10 And he had suffered health
11 conditions degrading over time because he
12 was ignoring the fact that he had a
13 health problem. The tumors were located
14 in such a way they had to take an entire
15 lung. Today now he's disabled and he's
16 on social security.

17 His background, and while providing
18 for my family since he moved to
19 Cincinnati in the '70s, is in the arts;
20 filmmaker, photographer, writer.

21 His income started declining in the
22 '90s as his business stopped being as
23 profitable. And so the recession hit us
24 in around 2000 and onward, which is why
25 our house was foreclosed and taken away

1 in 2004.

2 In 2008 when I graduated with my
3 degrees, of course we were in another
4 recession. I understand that this makes
5 me a member of the current lost
6 generation.

7 I make the best of it, as I've
8 always done. I'm very resilient, but my
9 health is starting to suffer starting
10 around 2001, 2002 with digestive
11 dysfunction.

12 Today my doctors and I are
13 supporting the possibility of
14 dysautonomia, Ehlers-Danlos syndrome, a
15 variety of other concerns.

16 I now have long COVID. I got sick
17 in October of 2020. And a coworker got
18 me sick. I work in IT. It's absolutely
19 possible for everyone in IT to work from
20 home and be isolated from each other and
21 not be exposed to each other and not get
22 sick, but my workplace did not believe
23 COVID was real and I got sick from a
24 coworker.

25 So in November of 2020 I quit so I

1 would no longer be able to come back.

2 With long COVID it's very difficult
3 to work, especially even now my heart --
4 my pulse is racing. My condition is
5 different every day. It's unpredictable.

6 I suffer from fatigue. I suffer
7 sometimes from blackouts, literally
8 fainting. It's hard to maintain an
9 eight-hour workday, let alone what my
10 former employer was demanding, which was
11 in excess of 40 hours a week.

12 Working from home, of course, means
13 that someone like me will be paying
14 residential rate. Whether I run my own
15 business or I work for someone else, I'll
16 be paying residential rate to basically
17 work.

18 Your proposal right now gives a
19 break to businesses at the expense of
20 everyone working from home.

21 My father works from home. He never
22 made the right savings for retirement.
23 In 2010 when he lost his lung, he was
24 also anticipating having to move out of
25 the house he was renting.

1 So in 2011 when it became possible
2 for a house to be bought, I gave him
3 money out of my savings to make a down
4 payment and my grandfather bought the
5 house.

6 My father and I are tenants now in a
7 property my grandfather owns. My
8 grandfather is going to be 98 or 99 come
9 winter. We don't know how much longer he
10 will live. The house is still in his
11 name because my father can't afford it.

12 My father's on social security. He
13 works when he can, but he doesn't have
14 much work. People don't really believe a
15 man his age should be working. He'll be
16 80 in March.

17 I'm not really working. This will
18 hit us very hard. I don't know if he
19 will put us out. He might need to put me
20 out because I'm contributing to the
21 electric bill, among other bills that he
22 can't afford.

23 And I know a lot of families with
24 people around my age are living
25 intergenerationally. And people my age

1 who can work probably can't come in today
2 to testify, so please take my testimony
3 on their behalf. This is going to hit us
4 very hard.

5 JUDGE SANDOR: We appreciate you
6 coming out today and testifying.

7 Any questions from counsel?

8 MS. VAYSMAN: No questions, your
9 Honor.

10 JUDGE SANDOR: Or the bench?

11 All right. Thanks again.

12 MR. DETERS: Thank you.

13 Olivia Davis.

14 MS. DAVIS: Pass.

15 JUDGE SANDOR: Pass. Okay.

16 MR. DETERS: Morgan Peterson.

17 JUDGE SANDOR: Can you raise your
18 right hand?

19 (Witness sworn.)

20 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you.

21 Can you please state and spell your
22 name for the record?

23 MS. PETERSON: Morgan Peterson,
24 M-o-r-g-a-n P-e-t-e-r-s-o-n.

25 JUDGE SANDOR: Please provide your

1 address.

2 MS. PETERSON: 2000 Radcliff Drive,
3 Cincinnati, Ohio 45204.

4 JUDGE SANDOR: Please proceed.

5 MS. PETERSON: Thank you for
6 allowing me the opportunity to speak.

7 My name is Morgan Peterson and I'm
8 the operations manager with Hamilton
9 County Emergency Management and Homeland
10 Security Agency.

11 I've served with the county since
12 2016 and I've had the opportunity to work
13 with you several times throughout my
14 tenure.

15 I'm here today to share my
16 perspective on emergency management and
17 my experiences working with Duke Energy.

18 Resiliency is integral to Federal
19 Emergency Management. It relates to the
20 community's ability to adapt and overcome
21 disasters.

22 Recent disasters have only continued
23 to emphasize its importance. Nationally
24 this could be seen in the implementation
25 of the Federal Emergency Management

1 Agency's Building Resilient
2 Infrastructure and Communities grant
3 program which supports communities with
4 mitigation actions.

5 However, building a disaster
6 resistant and resilient community can
7 only be accomplished if all community
8 partners are involved.

9 Duke Energy, like all utilities, is
10 a valuable partner in this effort.

11 Duke is responsible for maintaining
12 the electrical grid which is critical to
13 the residents, businesses, and government
14 operations in Hamilton County.

15 Furthermore, vulnerable populations
16 and critical infrastructure, such as
17 hospitals, depend upon a strong and
18 reliable electrical grid.

19 Before during and after disasters,
20 Duke invests to making sure the
21 electrical grid is as resilient as
22 possible because they understand it's a
23 critical piece of infrastructure to the
24 communities that serve Hamilton County.

25 Duke also regularly invests their

1 time and resources in emergency
2 management initiatives that supports
3 building's that's disaster resistant and
4 a resilient community.

5 They participate in the development
6 and maintenance of Hamilton County's
7 mitigation plan and take actions to
8 mitigate hazards that could impact the
9 grid, such as trimming trees and
10 vegetation maintenance.

11 They discuss their annual vegetation
12 management plan with our agency which is
13 later filed with the Public Utilities
14 Commission of Ohio.

15 Additionally, Duke engages with
16 community partners like our agency and
17 prepares meetings, trainings, and
18 exercises.

19 They regularly attend the bimonthly
20 Southwest Ohio Emergency Management
21 Association meetings. Last year they
22 participated in a Hamilton County
23 Emergency Operations Center exercise.

24 We also work extensively with Duke
25 to understand the storm preparations at

1 their locations in the metro area. All
2 these measures make our community as
3 resilient as possible.

4 Additionally, Duke works tirelessly
5 with Emergency Management professionals
6 to respond to the needs of our
7 communities.

8 On a day-to-day basis, Duke ensures
9 their equipment and supplies are ready to
10 use so they can mobilize as quickly as
11 possible during an outage event.

12 This can be seen during July and
13 June severe weather events. On the
14 evening of Monday, June 13th, 2022,
15 Hamilton County experienced severe
16 thunderstorms that included high winds in
17 excess of 60 miles per hour.

18 Additionally, the severe weather
19 system on July 6, 2022, which later
20 produced the EF2 tornado in Clermont
21 County, prompted a severe thunderstorm
22 warning in Hamilton County for 60-mile
23 per hour wind gusts.

24 Both these systems caused widespread
25 power outages. In Hamilton County over

1 50,000 customers were without power
2 during both of these events.

3 During these events, and any power
4 outage event, our agency staff works
5 closely with Duke to remediate that
6 cause, understand the number of residents
7 without power, and stay informed with
8 expected restoration times.

9 This community should age with
10 maintaining situation awareness about an
11 event and assist with the proper spots to
12 high priority issues.

13 Relationships with our community
14 partners like Duke enhance our ability to
15 respond to disasters. At all times we
16 find Duke responsive to our questions and
17 needs.

18 In conclusion, Hamilton County
19 Emergency Management would like to thank
20 Duke and all the other utility providers
21 in Hamilton County for their continued
22 support for our agency.

23 As emphasized by recent severe
24 weather events, building resilient
25 communities is critical. However, it's a

1 long-term ongoing cycle that requires
2 multiple steps to accomplish it.

3 One of these steps is to
4 strategically protect the infrastructure.
5 Duke's focus on preparedness and response
6 is critical to our community.

7 We thank you for the role they play
8 in our community and the investments
9 they've made maintaining our electrical
10 grid.

11 Thank you.

12 JUDGE SANDOR: Any questions from
13 counsel?

14 MS. VAYSMAN: No questions, your
15 Honor.

16 JUDGE SANDOR: Or the bench?

17 Hearing none, thank you for your
18 testimony.

19 MR. DETERS: Thank you.

20 Brian Garry.

21 JUDGE SANDOR: Please raise your
22 right hand.

23 (Witness affirmed.)

24 JUDGE SANDOR: Please state and
25 spell your name for the record.

1 MR. GARRY: Brian Garry, B-r-i-a-n
2 G-a-r-r-y.

3 JUDGE SANDOR: Please provide your
4 address.

5 MR. GARRY: 178 Woolper Avenue,
6 Cincinnati, Ohio 45220.

7 JUDGE SANDOR: Please proceed.

8 MR. GARRY: So I'm Brian Garry,
9 director of Neighborhoods United.

10 I'm here today to share my
11 experience of working with Cincinnati's
12 most vulnerable population.

13 I'm not sure what each of your
14 incomes offer, but I can tell you that
15 the average income in Cincinnati is about
16 \$29,000 a year. It means 50 percent of
17 the people in Cincinnati make less than
18 \$29,000, and many, many make much less.

19 As an example, the West End, which
20 is the neighborhood just adjacent to the
21 building where we are, the average income
22 is \$15,000 per year.

23 To raise rates at a time of
24 unprecedented inflation like we haven't
25 seen since the 1980s, for COVID, which

1 is -- Hamilton County is rated as red
2 currently, and homelessness in
3 Cincinnati, people living out on the
4 streets, is increasing.

5 What this does is it twists a knife
6 and adds salt to the wound of a consumer
7 wound of the economic inflation that our
8 vulnerable population is experiencing
9 now.

10 Someone mentioned about renters.
11 Cincinnati is 62 percent renters. And,
12 again, of those renters, 41 percent
13 cannot afford their rent. Meaning that
14 they're paying more than 30 percent of
15 their income on rent.

16 We are asking Duke for a decrease,
17 especially during this time of people
18 suffering. And you all are asking for an
19 increase.

20 We've been rot with corruption on
21 the state level. In fact, dealing with
22 some of the investigations with PUCO and
23 our state legislature as well as our City
24 of Cincinnati legislature.

25 At this time when you are increasing

1 consumer energy cost, you are, in fact,
2 decreasing business energy cost, which
3 just lends itself to more of this
4 political and energy corruption that we
5 see.

6 I want to encourage you not to
7 increase at this time. That, in fact, go
8 with the recommendations of the Ohio
9 Consumer Counsel, which is to decrease
10 costs at this time.

11 On a daily basis I am assisting
12 those who cannot afford the energy costs
13 the way that they are. And to increase
14 them will only increase the burden that
15 they are currently experiencing.

16 Thank you.

17 JUDGE SANDOR: Any questions from
18 counsel?

19 MS. VAYSMAN: No questions, your
20 Honor.

21 JUDGE SANDOR: Or the bench?

22 All right. Thank you, sir.

23 All right. So that appears to be
24 everyone who's registered to testify
25 today.

1 At this time, is there anyone else
2 who would like to provide testimony?

3 All right. Would you please come
4 up?

5 MS. PARTEE: Good morning.

6 JUDGE SANDOR: Raise your right
7 hand.

8 (Witness affirmed.)

9 JUDGE SANDOR: You have to hold it
10 down the entire time you're speaking.

11 MS. PARTEE: My name is Mary Partee,
12 spelled M-a-r-y P-a-r-t-e-e. I live at
13 3335 Wabash.

14 JUDGE SANDOR: Please proceed.

15 MS. PARTEE: I wasn't going to speak
16 because I'm retiring from Duke Energy,
17 but I'm very disappointed asking this
18 increase.

19 I volunteer at St. Vincent De Paul.
20 And most of the time people come to
21 St. Vincent De Paul asking for assistance
22 in rent and gas and electric.

23 And I've also been involved with
24 CUFA, Communities United for Action, for
25 42 years. And we've been fighting and

1 trying to understand why gas and electric
2 is so high.

3 And at one point they were working
4 with us. Now they're asking for an
5 increase. I have problems with that,
6 especially now that I'm retired.

7 People giving up dogs and stuff they
8 can't afford. And like someone said,
9 homelessness -- we got 28,000 homeless in
10 the city.

11 I just feel like -- it's like the
12 rich are getting richer and the poor is
13 not getting anything.

14 So in regards to what they're asking
15 for, it should not increase, especially
16 at this time when we -- a lot come down
17 with diseases, people ain't working, a
18 lot of sickness.

19 And I just ask that, if nothing
20 else, that Duke be more compassionate to
21 the residents of Cincinnati.

22 JUDGE SANDOR: Any questions from
23 counsel?

24 MS. VAYSMAN: No questions, your
25 Honor.

1 JUDGE SANDOR: Or the bench?

2 Hearing none, thank you very much
3 for your testimony.

4 Is there anyone else that would like
5 to testify before we adjourn for the day?

6 Okay. Seeing none, we would like to
7 thank the Cincinnati City Hall for
8 allowing us to use their facilities in
9 order to conduct the public hearing.

10 Thank you everyone for coming out
11 today, those who provided testimony as
12 well.

13 Commissioner Deters, do you have any
14 additional thoughts before we conclude?

15 MR. DETERS: Thank you, Judge.

16 Gratefulness to the Public Utilities
17 Commission staff and coming down from
18 Columbus today and putting this important
19 hearing together.

20 Thankfulness for those who were
21 willing to come and tell your story and
22 testify. It's very important that the
23 Commission -- speaking on behalf of the
24 Public Utilities Commissioners -- that we
25 hear from you. And I appreciate everyone

1 who gave their input to make this
2 important decision.

3 Thank you.

4 JUDGE SANDOR: The hearing is now
5 concluded, and the transcript for today's
6 hearing will be submitted on the record.

7 Thank you again for coming out today
8 and have a nice rest of your day.

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1 C E R T I F I C A T E

2

3 STATE OF OHIO :
4 COUNTY OF HAMILTON : SS

5

6 I, Tracy L. Allen, RPR, RMR, the
7 undersigned, a duly qualified and commissioned
8 notary public within and for the State of Ohio,
9 do certify that the foregoing is the hearing
10 given at said time and place; that I am neither
11 a relative of nor employee of any of the
12 parties or their counsel, and have no interest
13 whatever in the result of the action.

14 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I hereunto set my hand
15 and official seal of office at Cincinnati, Ohio,
16 this 9th day of August, 2022.

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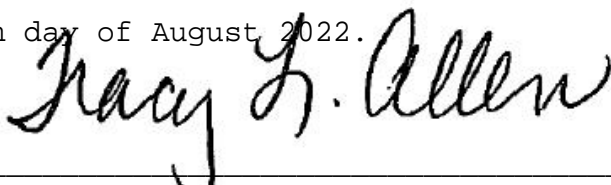
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Tracy L. Allen, RPR, RMR
Notary Public - State of Ohio
My commission expires July 29, 2023.

\$
\$1,800 11:23
\$15,000 31:22
\$29,000 31:16,18
1
139 6:7
13th 28:14
1729 11:1
178 31:5
19 7:24
1980s 31:25
19th 7:4
1st 7:2 11:5,16
2
2000 19:24 20:4,24 25:2
2001 19:24 21:10
2002 21:10
2004 20:1 21:1
2005 20:1
2008 20:3 21:2
2010 20:7 22:23
2011 23:1
2016 25:12
2020 21:17,25
2021 7:3
2022 7:5,24 28:14,19
21-887-EL-AIR 4:5
2665 17:10
28,000 35:9
3
30 32:14
3041 15:9
32 11:18 18:8
3335 34:13
4
40 20:5 22:11
41 32:12
42 34:25
43215 6:20
45202 6:8
45204 25:3
45211 15:10 17:11
45220 31:6
45223 13:4
4566 13:3

5
5.9 18:6,7
50 31:16
50,000 29:1
58 13:12
6
6 28:19
60 28:17
60-mile 28:22
62 32:11
65 6:19
7
700 6:19
70s 20:19
8
80 23:16
9
90s 20:22
938 19:19
98 23:8
99 23:8
A
ability 25:20 29:14
able 14:9 22:1
absolutely 13:7 21:18
accessing 5:16
accomplish 30:2
accomplished 26:7
accurate 8:14
accurately 8:8
act 15:19
Action 34:24
actions 26:4 27:7
adapt 25:20
additional 36:14
Additionally 27:15 28:4, 18
address 6:7 9:1 10:25 13:2 15:8 17:9 19:18 25:1 31:4
adds 32:6
adjacent 31:20
adjourn 36:5
advocate 11:12

Affairs 5:8
affirmation 8:24
affirmed 30:23 34:8
afford 11:24 23:11,22 32:13 33:12 35:8
afternoon 10:15
age 23:15,24,25 29:9
agency 25:10 27:12,16 29:4,22
Agency's 26:1
ahead 19:20
ain't 35:17
Akhbari 6:12
allowing 25:6 36:8
Ambrosia 6:17
amount 11:10,11
Angela 6:22
annual 27:11
annually 18:5,6
answer 5:20 9:19
anticipating 22:24
anyway 11:17
apartment 11:22
appearance 6:16
appearances 6:2
appearing 6:10
appears 33:23
application 4:6 5:21 6:25 7:2,12,20 9:12
appreciate 5:3 17:5 18:21, 23 24:5 36:25
appreciates 9:24
area 28:1
arts 20:19
asking 32:16,18 34:17,21 35:4,14
aspect 7:22
assigned 4:11
assist 13:19 29:11
assistance 5:15 34:21
assisted 13:21
assisting 5:6 33:11
Association 27:21
attend 27:19
attorney 4:10 9:5
available 5:13,20,24
Avenue 11:1 13:3 15:10 17:10 19:19 31:5
average 31:15,21
Avondale 19:19
awareness 29:10

B

B-O-O-K-E-R 17:1
B-R-I-A-N 31:1
B-U-S-H 10:23
back 5:13 22:1
background 20:17
bad 11:7
badge 5:12
balance 11:16
basically 22:16
basis 28:8 33:11
behalf 6:2,5 24:3 36:23
believe 21:22 23:14
bench 12:8 14:20 16:15
 19:4 24:10 30:16 33:21
 36:1
benign 20:8
best 21:7
better 17:7
Big 16:1
bill 11:4,5,6,15 23:21
bills 13:19,22 23:21
bimonthly 27:19
bit 10:17
blackouts 22:7
Blackwood 6:18
book 14:12
Booker 16:19,25 17:6,10,
 14
bought 23:2,4
bracket 16:5
break 22:19
Brian 30:20 31:1,8
building 26:1,5 29:24
 31:21
building's 27:3
burden 33:14
Bush 10:14,22 11:1,4 12:4,
 11
business 6:6 17:18 20:22
 22:15 33:2
businesses 22:19 26:13
button 10:11 12:16 17:4
buy 13:15

C

C-A-P-O-R-A-L-E 19:16
calling 10:8
Caporale 19:8,15,16,19,22
case 4:5,12,19 5:2,17 6:10,
 12,21 7:9,15,22 9:4,10,18

cause 15:23 29:6
caused 28:24
Center 27:23
charged 11:17
charges 7:1
Christmas 13:13
Cincinnati 6:8 13:4,12
 15:10 17:17 20:19 25:3
 31:6,15,17 32:3,11,24
 35:21 36:7
Cincinnati's 31:11
city 11:22 16:7 32:23
 35:10 36:7
clear 13:5
clearly 8:7
Clermont 28:20
closely 29:5
closer 10:17
college 13:20
Columbus 6:19 7:25 36:18
come 10:9,10 22:1 23:8
 24:1 34:3,20 35:16 36:21
coming 24:6 36:10,17
commence 7:24
comments 8:9 9:18
Commission 4:3,11,23 5:6
 7:19 8:3 9:11,19,24 27:14
 36:17,23
Commission's 5:14 7:3,7,
 8,25
Commissioner 4:13,14 9:5
 10:7 14:19 36:13
Commissioners 36:24
communities 26:2,3,24
 28:7 29:25 34:24
community 7:13 26:6,7
 27:4,16 28:2 29:9,13 30:6,
 8
community's 25:20
compassionate 35:20
completed 20:3
concern 17:14
concerning 5:14
concerns 21:15
conclude 36:14
conclusion 29:18
condition 22:4
conditions 20:11
conduct 36:9
considered 4:23 9:9
consumer 32:6 33:1,9
Consumers' 5:23 6:18
continue 14:3,10
continued 25:22 29:21

contributing 23:20
copy 8:12
corruption 32:20 33:4
cost 18:17 33:1,2
costs 33:10,12
counsel 5:24 6:18 12:3,8
 14:14 16:11 19:1 24:7
 30:13 33:9,18 35:23
country 15:17
county 25:9,11 26:14,24
 27:22 28:15,21,22,25
 29:18,21 32:1
County's 27:6
couple 9:13
course 21:3 22:12
court 8:6,8,12
COVID 15:18 21:16,23
 22:2 31:25
coworker 21:17,24
crap 16:3
credit 11:9
critical 26:12,16,23 29:25
 30:6
CUFA 34:24
current 21:5
currently 32:2 33:15
customers 29:1
cycle 30:1

D

D'ASCENZO 6:11
D-A-V-I-D 16:25
D-O-R-O-T-H-Y 10:23
daily 33:11
date 4:24
David 16:19,25
Davis 24:13,14
day 22:5 36:5
day-to-day 28:8
De 34:19,21
deadlines 14:3
dealing 32:21
decide 9:14,17
decision 9:12
declining 20:21
decrease 32:16 33:9
decreasing 33:2
degrading 20:11
degrees 20:3 21:3
demanding 22:10
Department 5:9
depend 26:17
determination 7:9

Deters 4:13,14,16 9:5
10:7,14 12:9,12 14:20,23
16:18 19:7 24:12,16 30:19
36:13,15
development 27:5
different 22:5
difficult 22:2
digestive 21:10
director 31:9
disability 13:22 15:14
disabled 20:15
disappointed 34:17
disaster 26:5 27:3
disasters 25:21,22 26:19
29:15
discuss 27:11
diseases 35:17
distribution 4:7,18
divorce 19:25
docket 9:18
doctors 21:12
documents 5:16
dogs 35:7
Dorothy 10:14,22
doubt 14:2,9
Drive 25:2
due 20:8
Duke 4:6,18 5:19 6:3,5,12,
25 11:5,14 12:8 14:4
25:17 26:9,11,20,25
27:15,24 28:4,8 29:5,14,
16,20 32:16 34:16 35:20
Duke's 5:2 7:20 30:5
dysautonomia 21:14
dysfunction 21:11

E

East 6:7,19
economic 32:7
EF2 28:20
effort 26:10
Ehlers-danlos 21:14
eight-hour 22:9
electric 4:7 23:21 34:22
35:1
electrical 26:12,18,21 30:9
Elyse 6:11
emergency 25:9,16,19,25
27:1,20,23 28:5 29:19
emphasize 25:23
emphasized 29:23
employer 22:10
encourage 33:6

energy 4:6 6:3,5 25:17
26:9 33:1,2,4,12 34:16
Energy's 4:18
engages 27:15
enhance 29:14
ensure 8:13
ensures 28:8
entire 20:14 34:10
equipment 28:9
especially 18:2 22:3 32:17
35:6,15
evening 28:14
event 28:11 29:4,11
events 28:13 29:2,3,24
everybody 4:17
everybody's 4:25
evidence 4:22 8:4
evidentiary 7:23 8:1
Exactly 12:24
examiners 4:11 9:6
example 31:19
excess 22:11 28:17
exercise 27:23
exercises 27:18
expected 29:8
expense 22:19
expenses 13:23
experience 31:11
experienced 28:15
experiences 25:17
experiencing 32:8 33:15
exposed 21:21
extensively 27:24

F

faces 5:1
facilities 36:8
fact 20:12 32:21 33:1,7
fainting 22:8
Fairmount 17:18
fall 15:20
falling 16:8
families 16:1 23:23
family 20:2,18
far 13:25
father 20:7 22:21 23:6,11
father's 23:12
fatigue 22:6
Federal 25:18,25
feel 35:11
fighting 34:25
file 9:17

filed 6:25 7:2,3 27:13
filmmaker 20:20
final 7:9 9:11
finalized 20:1
find 29:16
finish 8:15 9:21
finishing 13:20
First 12:23 15:14
five 10:5
fixed 15:25 18:3,22
focus 30:5
food 18:11
foreclosed 20:25
foreclosure 20:2
Forgive 19:22
former 22:10
fortunate 13:18
Fourth 6:7
full 11:16
funeral 13:23
Furthermore 5:22 26:15

G

G-A-R-R-Y 31:2
Garry 30:20 31:1,5,8
gas 34:22 35:1
general 5:17
generation 21:6
getting 35:12,13
gives 22:18
giving 35:7
go 10:17 15:21 19:20 33:7
God 15:19
goes 14:4
going 15:15,17,22,23,24
17:16,25 18:9,18 23:8
24:3 34:15
Good 10:15 34:5
goods 18:18
government 26:13
graduated 20:4 21:2
grandfather 23:4,7,8
grant 26:2
Gratefulness 36:16
grave 14:9
greatly 18:21
grid 26:12,18,21 27:9
30:10
gusts 28:23

H

Hall 36:7

Hamilton 25:8 26:14,24
27:6,22 28:15,22,25
29:18,21 32:1
hand 10:18 12:18 15:1
16:21 19:10 24:18 30:22
34:7
happen 16:3,8
happy 5:1
hard 22:8 23:18 24:4
Harrison 17:10
hazards 27:8
He'll 23:15
health 14:1,8 20:10,13
21:9
hear 4:12 10:12 36:25
hearing 4:4,18,20 5:7,18
6:24 7:11,16,21,23 8:2,5
9:25 14:18 30:17 36:2,9,
19
heart 22:3
help 15:19 18:20
helpful 8:11
high 20:4 28:16 29:12 35:2
higher-paying 16:5
hit 20:23 23:18 24:3
hold 10:11 17:4 34:9
home 13:16 20:2 21:20
22:12,20,21
Homeland 25:9
homeless 35:9
homelessness 32:2 35:9
homeowners 17:24
Honor 6:4 14:16 16:13
19:3 24:9 30:15 33:20
35:25
hospitalized 20:7
hospitals 26:17
hour 11:13 28:17,23
hours 22:11
house 20:25 22:25 23:2,5,
10
husband 13:19

I

ignoring 20:12
illustrate 4:21
impact 17:15 18:1 27:8
implementation 25:24
importance 25:23
important 4:25 36:18,22
Inc.'s 4:6
included 28:16
income 13:24 20:21 31:15,
21 32:15

incomes 16:1 18:3,22
31:14
increase 4:7 7:1 14:4,11
17:15,25 18:5,8,14,16
32:19 33:7,13,14 34:18
35:5,15
increased 13:16
increasing 14:8 32:4,25
indicating 12:15
individual 5:12
individuals 5:8 8:17
inflation 14:1 18:17 31:24
32:7
informed 29:7
infrastructure 26:2,16,23
30:4
initiatives 27:2
Innes 13:3
integral 25:18
interested 5:2
intergenerationally 23:25
introduction 8:16
investigation 7:4
investigations 32:22
investments 30:8
invests 26:20,25
inviting 8:16
involved 11:13 26:8 34:23
isolated 21:20
issues 14:8 29:12

J

J-E-R-E-M-I-A-H 15:6
jack 15:18
jacking 15:21
Jeanne 6:11
Jeremiah 14:24 15:5
JP 6:17
Judge 4:2,16,21 5:5 6:13,
23 10:15,20,24 11:2 12:2,
7,17,20 13:1,5,8 14:13,18,
25 15:3,7,11 16:10,14,20,
23 17:2,8,12 18:25 19:4,9,
12,17,20 24:5,10,15,17,
20,25 25:4 30:12,16,21,24
31:3,7 33:17,21 34:6,9,14
35:22 36:1,15
July 11:5,16 28:12,19
June 11:4,6 28:13,14

K

keep 10:3
Kingery 6:11

knife 32:5
know 7:19 11:25 15:19
23:9,18,23

L

L-E-N-O-R-E 12:24
land 12:25
Larisa 6:6
late 13:19
leave 9:23 18:15
legislature 32:23,24
lends 33:3
length 10:4
Lenore 12:12,23 13:10
let alone 22:9
level 32:21
line 14:5
literally 22:7
little 10:17 11:7 19:23
live 13:11 17:21 23:10
34:12
lives 18:1
living 23:24 32:3
local 7:12
located 20:13
locations 28:1
long 13:22 19:23 21:16
22:2
long-term 30:1
longer 22:1 23:9
look 16:2 18:8
looking 18:7
lost 14:2 20:2,8 21:5 22:23
lot 23:23 35:16,18
lucky 12:14
lung 20:8,15 22:23

M

M-A-R-Y 34:12
M-O-R-G-A-N 24:24
maintain 22:8
maintaining 26:11 29:10
30:9
maintenance 27:6,10
making 26:20
man 23:15
management 25:9,16,19,
25 27:2,12,20 28:5 29:19
manager 25:8
March 23:16
Mary 34:11
Matt 4:9

Meaning 32:13
means 22:12 31:16
measures 28:2
meet 14:3
meetings 27:17,21
member 21:5
members 5:6
mentioned 32:10
metro 28:1
microphone 10:11,13,16
 17:5
miles 28:17
millennial 20:5
minutes 10:5
mitigate 27:8
mitigation 26:4 27:7
mobilize 28:10
moderate 13:24
modest 13:15
Monday 28:14
money 23:3
month 11:23,24
Morgan 24:16,23 25:7
morning 34:5
move 10:16 11:21 22:24
moved 20:18
multiple 30:2

N

N-E-W-L-A-N-D 13:6
N-I-N-A 19:15
name 4:9 6:6 9:1,15 10:21
 12:21,23,24 15:4 16:24
 19:13 23:11 24:22 25:7
 30:25 34:11
names 10:8
Nationally 25:23
necessarily 7:8
need 5:15 12:14 16:2
 23:19
needs 28:6 29:17
neighborhood 31:20
Neighborhoods 31:9
never 13:14 22:21
new 12:25
Newland 12:13,14,23,24
 13:3,6,7,10,11 14:22
Nick 4:10
Nina 19:8,15
North 17:18
Northside 13:4,16
notes 9:13
November 21:25

number 17:20,22 18:2
 29:6
numbers 11:8 18:9

O

O'BRIEN 6:22
oath 8:23
observe 9:22
OCC 12:8
October 7:2 21:17
offer 31:14
offices 7:25
official 9:9
Ohio 4:3,6 5:23 6:3,5,8,18,
 20 15:10 25:3 27:14,20
 31:6 33:8
Okay 17:14 24:15 36:6
old 20:6
Olivia 24:13
once 8:20 9:21 10:10
ongoing 30:1
onward 20:24
operations 25:8 26:14
 27:23
opportunity 7:18 10:2
 25:6,12
order 10:12 11:11 36:9
organizations 17:19
outage 28:11 29:4
outages 28:25
outrageous 14:12
overcome 25:20
owns 23:7

P

P-A-R-T-E-E 34:12
P-E-T-E-R-S-O-N 24:24
P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S
 4:1
paid 11:4,8,15 13:22
parents 19:24
part 9:9
Partee 34:5,11,15
participate 27:5
participated 27:22
participation 9:25
parties 6:2,14 7:14 8:2 9:4
partner 26:10
partners 26:8 27:16 29:14
pass 9:16 24:14,15
passed 5:10
Paul 34:19,21

pay 11:6,19 13:18
paying 22:13,16 32:14
payment 14:3 23:4
people 11:21 15:24 18:2
 23:14,24,25 31:17 32:3,17
 34:20 35:7,17
percent 11:18 18:6,8
 31:16 32:11,12,14
permitted 8:20 9:6
person 8:19
persons 7:12
perspective 25:16
Peterson 24:16,23 25:2,5,7
phone 11:14
photographer 20:20
piece 26:23
place 4:4 14:2
plan 8:6 27:7,12
play 30:7
please 8:7 10:3,9,18,20
 11:3 12:21 13:1,8 14:25
 15:3,7,11 16:20,23 17:9,
 12 19:9,13,17 24:2,21,25
 25:4 30:21,24 31:3,7 34:3,
 14
point 35:3
political 33:4
poor 35:12
population 31:12 32:8
populations 26:15
possibility 21:13
possible 21:19 23:1 26:22
 28:3,11
poverty 14:5
power 28:25 29:1,3,7
prefer 9:17
preparations 27:25
prepared 8:10
preparedness 30:5
prepares 27:17
preposterous 15:16
prescriptions 18:11
present 6:14 8:22
Presiding 4:12
press 12:16
prices 15:22
priority 29:12
probably 24:1
problem 18:10 20:13
problems 14:1 15:24 35:5
proceed 11:3 13:9 15:12
 17:13 25:4 31:7 34:14
proceedings 19:25
process 5:15 7:22

produced 28:20
professionals 28:5
profitable 20:23
program 26:3
project 8:4
prompted 28:21
proper 29:11
property 23:7
proposal 22:18
proposed 7:14 8:21 9:3
protect 30:4
provide 8:3,18 9:2,8 10:24
 13:1 15:7 17:9 19:17
 24:25 31:3 34:2
provided 8:12 36:11
providers 29:20
providing 20:17
public 4:2,4,17 5:8 7:10,
 16,21 27:13 36:9,16,24
PUCO 5:12 32:22
pulse 22:4
purpose 4:20 7:10 8:1
put 14:7 23:19
putting 36:18

Q

question 18:15
question-and-answer 7:17
questions 5:14,18,20,24
 9:7,20 12:3,6,7 14:13,15,
 19 16:10,12,14 19:1,2
 24:7,8 29:16 30:12,14
 33:17,19 35:22,24
quickly 28:10
quit 21:25

R

racing 22:4
Radcliff 25:2
raise 10:18 11:18 12:17
 14:25 16:20 19:9 24:17
 30:21 31:23 34:6
rate 4:19 18:16 22:14,16
rated 32:1
rates 4:8 7:1,14 8:21 9:3
 31:23
read 9:15
ready 28:9
real 21:23
really 14:2 23:14,17
reason 10:3 18:16
reasonable 10:4

receive 7:11
recession 20:23 21:4
recommendation 7:6
recommendations 33:8
record 8:9 9:2,10 10:21
 12:22 13:6 15:4 16:24
 19:14 24:22 30:25
red 32:1
reference 8:13
reflect 7:8 8:8
refunded 11:12
regarding 5:21 8:4
regards 35:14
registered 33:24
regularly 26:25 27:19
relates 4:5 25:19
Relationships 29:13
reliable 26:18
remediate 29:5
rent 32:13,15 34:22
renters 17:23 32:10,11,12
renting 22:25
report 7:4,6
reporter 8:6,8,12
representatives 5:19,23
representing 6:12
requires 30:1
residential 22:14,16
residents 26:13 29:6 35:21
Resiliency 25:18
resilient 21:8 26:1,6,21
 27:4 28:3 29:24
resistant 26:6 27:3
resolve 11:14
resources 27:1
respond 28:6 29:15
response 18:23 30:5
responsible 26:11
responsive 29:16
restoration 29:8
retire 13:11
retired 35:6
retirement 13:24 22:22
retiring 34:16
reviewed 9:11
rich 35:12
richer 35:12
right 10:18 12:18 15:1
 16:21 17:22 19:5,10
 22:18,22 24:11,18 30:22
 33:22,23 34:3,6
Rocco 6:10
role 30:7

rot 32:20
run 22:14

S

S-Q-U-I-R-E 15:6
salt 32:6
Sandor 4:2,9,21 5:5 6:13,
 23 10:15,20,24 11:2 12:2,
 7,17,20 13:1,5,8 14:13,18,
 25 15:3,7,11 16:10,14,20,
 23 17:2,8,12 18:25 19:4,9,
 12,17,20 24:5,10,15,17,
 20,25 25:4 30:12,16,21,24
 31:3,7 33:17,21 34:6,9,14
 35:22 36:1
savings 22:22 23:3
saying 11:5
scheduled 4:3 7:23
school 20:4
security 11:20 18:6 20:16
 23:12 25:10
see 5:1 16:7 33:5
Seeing 36:6
seeking 6:25
seen 25:24 28:12 31:25
senior's 18:5
seniors 17:16,20,22 18:4,
 22
separated 19:25
September 7:24
serve 26:24
served 25:11
services 18:18
session 7:17
severe 28:13,15,18,21
 29:23
share 25:15 31:10
sheet 8:17 9:16
shirt 5:12
sick 21:16,18,22,23
sickness 35:18
side 14:7
sign-in 8:17 9:15
signed 8:19 10:1
simple 11:19
sir 16:17 18:25 19:5 33:22
situation 12:1 29:10
skosh 14:5,6
social 11:20 18:6 20:16
 23:12
solve 15:22
sounds 12:25
Southwest 27:20

speak 8:7,20 17:3 25:6 34:15
speaking 34:10 36:23
spell 10:21 12:21 16:24 19:13 24:21 30:25
spelled 34:12
spent 11:13
spots 29:11
Squire 14:24 15:5,9,13
St 34:19,21
staff 5:5 7:3,7 8:3 9:19 29:4 36:17
start 15:13 16:8
started 20:21
starting 21:9
state 6:19 9:1 10:20 12:21 15:3 16:23 19:13 24:21 30:24 32:21,23
statement 8:11 9:7 10:4 11:9
stay 29:7
steps 30:2,3
stopped 20:22
storm 27:25
storms 15:20
story 36:21
strategically 30:4
Street 6:7,19
streets 15:25 32:4
strong 26:17
stuck 16:4
stuff 15:17 35:7
subject 6:24
submitted 5:16
substantially 13:17
suffer 21:9 22:6
suffered 20:10
suffering 32:18
sufficed 13:25
Suite 6:19
supplies 28:9
support 29:22
supporting 21:13
supports 26:3 27:2
sure 18:21 26:20 31:13
sworn 10:19 12:19 15:2 16:22 19:11 24:19
syndrome 21:14
system 28:19
systems 28:24

T

take 4:21 6:1 8:23 20:14 24:2 27:7

taken 20:25
tell 11:21 18:9 31:14 36:21
tenants 23:6
tenure 25:14
terms 18:10
testify 8:7,19 9:14 10:2 24:2 33:24 36:5,22
testifying 9:21 24:6
testimony 7:11 8:3,18,22 9:8 10:7 19:6,21 24:2 30:18 34:2 36:3,11
thank 4:16 5:4 6:4,13,23 11:2 12:2,10,11,20 13:8 14:21,22,23 15:11 16:9, 16,17,18 17:2,12 18:24,25 19:5,7,12 24:12,20 25:5 29:19 30:7,11,17,19 33:16,22 36:2,7,10,15
Thankfulness 36:20
Thanks 24:11
things 15:15
think 7:19 14:6 18:13
thoughts 9:3 36:14
thunderstorm 28:21
thunderstorms 28:16
time 4:4 5:3 6:1 9:23 10:6 12:15 18:13,17 20:11 27:1 31:23 32:17,25 33:7,10 34:1,10,20 35:16
times 25:13 29:8,15
tirelessly 28:4
today 4:12 5:3,7,11,18,20 6:9,15,21 9:8 20:15 21:12 24:1,6 25:15 31:10 33:25 36:11,18
today's 6:24 7:10,16,21 8:5 9:25
tornado 28:20
trainings 27:17
transcribed 8:5
transcript 8:13
treated 7:17
trees 15:20 27:9
tremendous 18:1
trimming 27:9
truth 8:25
trying 11:14 35:1
tumors 20:9,13
twists 32:5

U

understand 21:4 26:22 27:25 29:6 35:1
United 31:9 34:24

unprecedented 31:24
unpredictable 22:5
untenable 12:1
untimely 18:14
update 13:15
use 28:10 36:8
utilities 4:2 15:18 18:11 26:9 27:13 36:16,24
utility 15:22 29:20

V

valuable 26:10
variety 21:15
Vaysman 6:4,6 12:6 14:15 16:12 19:2 24:8 30:14 33:19 35:24
vegetation 27:10,11
veteran 15:14
Vincent 34:19,21
volunteer 34:19
vulnerable 26:15 31:12 32:8

W

Wabash 34:13
wages 18:19
Walstra 4:10
want 9:14 10:1 15:18 33:6
warning 28:22
wasn't 34:15
way 5:10 20:14 33:13
we'll 10:6
we've 32:20 34:25
wearing 5:12
weather 28:13,18 29:24
week 11:8 22:11
Welcome 4:17
West 31:19
Westwood 11:1 17:21,23
widespread 28:24
willing 36:21
Wilson 6:17 14:17
wind 28:23
winds 28:16
winter 23:9
wish 9:23
witness 9:16 10:8,19 12:19 15:2 16:22 19:11 24:19 30:23 34:8
Woolper 31:5
words 4:15
work 13:11 15:21 17:19 21:18,19 22:3,15,17 23:14

24:1 25:12 27:24
workday 22:9
working 22:12,20 23:15,
17 25:17 31:11 35:3,17
workplace 21:22
works 22:21 23:13 28:4
29:4
Worthington 15:9
wound 32:6,7
writer 20:20
written 8:10 9:18

Y

year 27:21 31:16,22
years 13:12 20:5 34:25

Z

zero 11:16

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Summary: Transcript of Local Public Hearing held July 26, 2022, at 12:30 p.m. at Cincinnati City Hall, 801 Plum Street, Room 300, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202 before Attorney Examiner, Nickolas Walstra, and Commissioner Dennis P. Deters electronically filed by Ms. Donielle M. Hunter on behalf of Tracy L. Allen, Elite Reporting Agency