

In the Matter of the Review of the )  
Minimum Gas Service Standards in Ohio ) Case No. 22-809-GA-ORD  
Adm. Code Chapter 4901:1-13. )

The Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel ("OCC") moves to intervene in the PUCO's review of the minimum gas service standards set forth in O.A.C. 4901:1-13.<sup>1</sup> The minimum gas service standards serve the important purpose of promoting, for millions of Ohio natural gas consumers, the availability of adequate, reliable, and reasonably priced natural gas services to consumers.<sup>2</sup> OCC is filing on behalf of all Ohio residential gas consumers. The reasons the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio ("PUCO") should grant OCC's Motion are further set forth in the attached Memorandum in Support.

<sup>2</sup> R.C. 4929.02(A)(1).

Respectfully submitted,

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Ohio Consumers' Counsel

/s/ William J. Michael

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

First, the nature and extent of OCC's interest is representing all of Ohio's residential gas consumers in this proceeding to establish standards for providing reliable gas service to the public. 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 will advance several consumer safeguards governed by O.A.C. 4901:1-13. OCC's position is therefore directly related to the merits of this case that is pending before the PUCO, the authority with regulatory control of public utilities' rates and service quality in Ohio.

Third, OCC's intervention will not unduly prolong or delay the proceedings. OCC, with its longstanding expertise and experience in PUCO proceedings, will duly allow for the efficient processing of the case with consideration of the public interest.

Fourth, OCC's intervention will significantly contribute to the full development and equitable resolution of the factual issues. OCC will obtain and develop information that the PUCO should consider for equitably and lawfully deciding the case in the public interest.

OCC also satisfies the intervention criteria in the Ohio Administrative Code (which are subordinate to the criteria that OCC satisfies in the Ohio Revised Code). To

intervene, a party should have a “real and substantial interest” according to Ohio Adm. Code 4901-1-11(A)(2). As the advocate for residential gas consumers, OCC has a very real and substantial interest in this case where the PUCO will review gas utilities’ obligations and consumer service requirements, as well as consumer rights.

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 consumers. 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.<sup>5</sup>

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 consumers, the PUCO should grant OCC’s Motion to Intervene.

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<sup>5</sup> 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 2<sup>nd</sup> day of November 2022.

/s/ William J. Michael  
William J. Michael  
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 Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel  
electronically filed by Mrs. Tracy J. Greene on behalf of Michael, William J.