

**BEFORE THE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO**

In the Matter of the Application of)	
Columbia Gas Ohio, Inc. for Authority)	Case No. 21-637-GA-AIR
to Amend its Filed Tariffs to Increase the)	
Rates and Charges for Gas Services and)	
Related Matters.)	
In the Matter of the Application of)	
Columbia Gas of Ohio, Inc. for Approval of an)	Case No. 21-638-GA-ALT
Alternative Form of Regulation.)	
In the Matter of the Application of)	
Columbia Gas of Ohio, Inc. for Approval)	Case No. 21-639-GA-UNC
Of a Demand Side Management Program.)	
In the Matter of the Application of)	
Columbia Gas of Ohio, Inc. for Approval)	Case No. 21-640-GA-AAM
to Change Accounting Methods.)	

**DIRECT TESTIMONY
OF
THOMAS BULLOCK**

**On Behalf of
Citizens Utility Board of Ohio**

Respectfully Submitted,

/s/Trent Dougherty

Trent Dougherty (0079817)

Counsel of Record

Hubay|Dougherty

1391 Grandview Ave. #12460

Columbus, Ohio 43212

(614) 330-6752 - Telephone

***Counsel for the Citizens' Utility Board of
Ohio***

1 **INTRODUCTION**

2 **Q. PLEASE STATE YOUR NAME AND BY WHOM YOU ARE**
3 **CURRENTLY EMPLOYED, AND WHAT IS YOUR JOB TITLE?**

4 A. My name is Tom Bullock. I am employed by Citizens Utility Board of Ohio
5 (“CUB Ohio”) as Executive Director.
6

7 **Q. PLEASE BRIEFLY DESCRIBE YOUR EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND**
8 **AND YOUR RELEVANT PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE.**

9 A. I have a B.A. in Political Science from The American University in Washington,
10 D.C. and an M.A. in Classics from the University of London, Royal Holloway. I have
11 more than twenty-five years’ experience in policy, communications, and advocacy, and I
12 have worked with top Ohio leaders and on Capitol Hill as a congressional aide, with
13 energy and utility policy being a focus for a majority of that time. And for fifteen years, I
14 have served in local elective office as city councilman in my hometown of Lakewood,
15 Ohio.
16

17 **Q. ON WHOSE BEHALF ARE YOU TESTIFYING?**

18 A. I am testifying on behalf of CUB Ohio, an intervenor in this case and opponent of
19 the Joint Stipulation and Recommendation (“Stipulation”) filed by Columbia Gas of
20 Ohio, Inc. (“Columbia” or “the Company”) and other parties in this proceeding.
21

22 **Q. HAVE YOU SUBMITTED TESTIMONY IN ANY PREVIOUS CASES**
23 **BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO (“COMMISSION”)?**

1 A. No; however, I have recently testified before the Commission's Energy Efficiency
2 Workshops in March of 2022.

3
4 **Q. CAN YOU PLEASE DESCRIBE CUB OHIO AND ITS INTERESTS?**

5 A. Yes. CUB Ohio is a consumer organization working on behalf of residential and
6 small business utility customers to ensure cheaper bills, reliable service, transparency,
7 consumer rights, and clean, healthy energy delivered equitably. We are a nonpartisan
8 nonprofit with membership across the state, and we strive, as part of our work, to address
9 the climate crisis and to combat systemic racism by working for environmental justice.
10 We seek to improve utility policies to deliver long term cost savings through the smart
11 and rapid implementation of supply- and demand-side technology for consumers, both
12 from emerging and established solutions, whether hardware, software, or behavioral.
13 Energy efficiency plays a vital role since the cheapest and cleanest unit of power is the
14 one we save—the one we don't have to use. Energy efficiency and Demand Side
15 Management is essential for residential consumers to see lower costs, long-term savings,
16 more equitable monthly bills, and a healthier environment.

17
18 **Q. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF YOUR TESTIMONY?**

19 A. The purpose of my testimony is to explain CUB Ohio's opposition to the
20 Stipulation's high fixed charges to residential consumers and the elimination of the
21 Company's Demand Side Management ("DSM") programs for non-low-income
22 residential customers. Because of these flaws I recommend that the Commission reject

1 the Stipulation's elimination of the non-low-income residential DSM program, and
2 review the use of high fixed charge rate design for residential consumers.

3
4 **Q. WHAT CRITERIA DOES THE PUCO RELY UPON FOR CONSIDERING**
5 **WHETHER TO ADOPT A SETTLEMENT?**

6 A. It is my understanding that the Commission will adopt a settlement only if it meets
7 all of the three following criteria: 1.) Is the settlement a product of serious bargaining
8 among capable, knowledgeable parties? 2.) Does the settlement, as a package, benefit
9 customers and the public interest? 3.) Does the settlement package violate any important
10 regulatory principle or practice?

11
12 **Q. DOES THE STIPULATION FILED IN THIS PROCEEDING MEET ALL**
13 **THREE CRITERIA?**

14 A. No. However, the focus of my testimony will be on the implications of the fixed
15 charge and elimination of the DSM Program on the last two criteria. CUB Ohio may,
16 nonetheless, choose to opine further on all three criteria in its brief in this case.

17
18 **FIXED CHARGE**

19 **Q. WHAT IS YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE STIPULATION**
20 **REGARDING FIXED CHARGES FOR SMALL GENERAL SERVICE CUSTOMERS?**

21 A. It is my understanding that the Stipulation recommends a full Straight Fixed
22 Variable ("SFV") rate design, where the entire base distribution revenue assigned to
23 residential customer class would be recovered through a fixed charge. The fixed customer
24 charge is made of three parts: the Monthly Delivery Charge, the Infrastructure
25 Replacement Program Rider and the Capital Expenditure Program Rider. Based on a

1 review of the Stipulation, the proposed fixed charges will ramp up in the fifth year to a
2 total of \$56.51 per month (Infrastructure Replacement Program Rider: \$8.47 (Stipulation
3 at page 15); Capital Expenditure Program Rider: \$8.74 (Stipulation at page 17); and
4 Monthly Delivery Charge: \$39.30 (Stipulation at Appendix C, page 38)).
5

6 **Q. DO YOU BELIEVE THAT THE PROPOSED FIXED CUSTOMER**
7 **CHARGES ARE IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST?**

8 A. No. High fixed charges hurt low usage customers more than high usage
9 customers, almost by definition. Yet, in this case, both low and high use customers lose.
10 High fixed charges can significantly reduce incentives for consumers to reduce their
11 consumption of natural gas. Thus, low usage customers will experience a greater
12 percentage increase when fixed charges are increased. Thus, it is not in the public interest
13 to force upon customers' rates that target those that use less energy for higher bills, and at
14 the same time discriminate against those low and moderate income customers who are
15 already having a difficult time making ends meet. Likewise, high fixed charges hurt
16 current high use customers who wish to take control of their costs and use by removing
17 the price signal that would provide the short term incentive to change behavior or
18 investing in technology.

19
20 **Q. DO YOU BELIEVE THAT THE HIGH FIXED CHARGES PROPOSED IN**
21 **THE SETTLEMENT VIOLATE ANY IMPORTANT REGULATORY PRINCIPLE OR**
22 **PRACTICE?**

23 A, Yes. The Stipulation's fixed charges run contrary to the Commission's efforts to
24 provide consumers more control over their energy usage. The codified policies of the

1 state as to natural gas service are replete with dedicated goals that encourage: the
2 promotion of the availability of unbundled and comparable natural gas services and
3 goods that provide wholesale and retail consumers with the supplier, price, terms,
4 conditions, and quality options they elect to meet their respective needs; diversity of
5 natural gas supplies and suppliers, by giving consumers effective choices over the
6 selection of those supplies and suppliers; facilitation of additional choices for the supply
7 of natural gas for residential consumers, including aggregation; and alignment of natural
8 gas company interests with consumer interest in energy efficiency and energy
9 conservation. Similarly, O.R.C. 4905.70 requires the Commission to “initiate programs
10 that will promote and encourage conservation of energy and a reduction in the growth
11 rate of energy consumption, promote economic efficiencies, and take into account long-
12 run incremental costs.” This means the PUCO must allow utilities to provide programs
13 that extend the reach of efficiency to more customers and are cost effective when doing
14 so. Under this statutory authority and the mission of the PUCO to assure all residential
15 and business consumers access to adequate, safe and reliable utility services at fair prices,
16 the Commission must use its broad discretion to ensure that energy is not wasted and that
17 cost savings are maximized. Because ratepayers—whether they live in a small 800 square
18 foot apartment or a 4,000 square foot house—pay the same cost, the policies of the state,
19 and the goals of the Commission are wholly undermined.

20
21 **Q. WHAT IS YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE COMPANY’S DSM**
22 **PROGRAM IN ITS APPLICATION?**

23 A. In its application, the Company proposed continuation of its portfolio of DSM
24 Programs, which was previously approved by the Commission in Case Nos. 08-833-GA-

1 UNC, 11- 5028-GA-UNC, and 16-1309-GA-UNC. The proposed DSM Program,
2 according to Company Witness Poe, provides cost-effective, customer-oriented energy
3 efficiency services for residential and commercial customers.

4 **DSM PROGRAM**

5 **Q. WHAT IS YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF HOW THE COMPANY’S DSM**
6 **PROGRAM BENEFITS CUSTOMERS AND THE PUBLIC INTEREST?**

7 A. According to the Company’s own statements in the Commission’s recent Energy
8 Efficiency Workshops, “DSM programs will save customers over 113.1 BcF of natural
9 gas over the life of the measures.” This equates, according to the Company’s comments,
10 a total annual savings of approximately \$780 million. The Company has presented before
11 the Commission that its DSM Programs have delivered rebates on Smart Thermostats to
12 over 100,000 customers, and over 52,000 appliance rebates. Beyond these savings, the
13 Company’s Witness Poe has explained that the DSM Program “provides Columbia’s
14 customers and society with multiple benefits beyond individual customer energy and
15 utility bill savings.” Witness Poe continues by identifying that “the savings from
16 Columbia’s energy efficiency programs are equivalent to avoiding over 6,700,000 tons of
17 carbon dioxide over their lifetime, and additionally the carbon dioxide reductions of the
18 Application’s proposed Programs covering 2023 – 2027 *was* estimated to be over
19 3,400,000 tons over its lifetime, the equivalent of taking over 675,000 automobiles off
20 the road for one year or planting more than 3.8 million acres of trees.

21
22 **Q. WHAT IS YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF HOW THE STIPULATION**
23 **CHANGES THE COMPANY’S DSM PROGRAM?**

1 A. The Stipulation removes all non-low-income DSM programs after an unspecified
2 ramp down period in early 2023.

3 **Q. DO YOU BELIEVE THAT THE REMOVAL OF THE NON-LOW-**
4 **INCOME DSM PROGRAM IS IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST?**

5 A. No. By the Company's own words and testimony in this case to support its
6 application, there are customer cost savings, energy savings, and environmental benefits
7 stated above that, because of the removal of the DSM Program, will be lost to residential
8 customers.

9 Furthermore, removal of the DSM program is contrary to the codified policy of
10 the state of Ohio and the current position of the Commission. Ohio Revised Code Section
11 4929.02(A)(12) states that it is the policy of the state of Ohio to Promote an alignment of
12 natural gas company interests with consumer interest in energy efficiency and energy
13 conservation.

14 Furthermore, and as stated earlier, under Ohio Revised Code §4905.70: "The
15 public utilities commission shall initiate programs that will promote and encourage
16 conservation of energy and a reduction in the growth rate of energy consumption,
17 promote economic efficiencies, and take into account long-run incremental costs."
18 Nevertheless, the Stipulation supports a position that flies in the face of the policy of the
19 state of Ohio and the Commission's general authority as it relates to the conservation and
20 efficient use of energy. The proposed Stipulation further undercuts Chair French's
21 encouragement of parties to incorporate energy efficiency into comprehensive or
22 standalone proceedings for the Commission's consideration and the apparent intent of the

Commission in being receptive to these proposals. The proposed stipulation would amputate this policy before Commissioners could ever consider it.

Q. WHAT ELSE IS PROBLEMATIC ABOUT THE STIPULATION'S DSM PROVISIONS?

A. Under the Stipulation, Columbia agrees not to pursue (and not to support others' pursuit of) consumer-funded, low-income and consumer-funded, non-low-income energy efficiency programs (including demand side management programs) through legislation or other regulatory initiatives until Columbia files its next base rate case. As a nonprofit advocacy organization, we know the importance of ensuring that every voice is heard in regulatory debates and legislation. This one-sided silencing—a gag order— of a utility who has successfully offered energy savings to its customers for 40 years is unjust, unreasonable, and against public policy. It should not be part of a stipulation in a rate case to silence any party in proceedings outside of the context of the PUCO (as in legislation) or a regulatory action. Further, it should not be the Commission's role to approve and enforce a provision that is against good public policy.

Q. WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF THE HIGH FIXED CHARGE AND THE LOSS OF DSM PROGRAMS TOGETHER ON CUSTOMERS?

A. Increased fixed charges, alone, reduce the incentive to conserve energy as customers see little impact of those volumetric reductions on their monthly bills. Adding more fixed charges and reducing energy efficiency programs goes against both the letter and spirit of the Commission's charge to initiate programs that will promote and encourage conservation of energy and a reduction in the growth rate of energy

1 consumption, promote economic efficiencies, and take into account long-run incremental
2 costs. Customers should not be punished for being either lower than average energy users
3 or customers wanting to curb their energy use.

4 **Q. WHY ELSE DO YOU BELIEVE THE HIGH FIXED CHARGE AND**
5 **REMOVAL OF DSM PROGRAMS IS AGAINST CUSTOMERS AND THE PUBLIC**
6 **INTEREST?**

7 A. You need only look at the voluminous public comments submitted in this
8 proceeding to determine how it impacts the public. In lieu of attaching the thousands of
9 pages of public record, I incorporate by reference the hundreds of comments received
10 from around the Company's large service territory. Many of those comments express
11 great frustration with rising energy costs and concern that future increases at this time
12 will make it difficult to make ends meet. Many even express the inability to control their
13 utility bills even if and when they reduce usage. Despite incorporating all public
14 comments in the public record by reference in footnote 13, I have also attached (in
15 Attachment TB-1) a small number of those comments to this testimony as examples, and
16 urge the Commission to take this public concern over fixed charges into account as they
17 review this Stipulation. Corey Lee worries that the "rise in fixed rates does not give
18 consumers a choice to decrease their costs through less usage." One customer expressed
19 that she thinks the amount of fixed fees and infrastructure fees that [the Company]
20 already collects are too high, and that there is nothing she can do to ever decrease this bill
21 in relation to the amount of gas she uses each month. This type of frustration gets to the
22 key public interest concern about high fixed charges with limited DSM opportunities.
23 This and many feelings of customers can be summed up by Christopher Stacy who

1 commented that allowing Columbia Gas to lock customers into “higher baseline charges
2 while increasing rates is unthinkable” and asks the essential question” . . .when is enough
3 enough?”

4 Again, when determining public interest in its analysis, I urge the Commission to review
5 the hundreds of public comments in this proceeding. While many of the claims cannot be
6 verified as true, the fact that customers and members of the public take the time to voice
7 their concerns should be provided necessary weight by the Commission and are an
8 expression of the significance of financial difficulty imposed by the potential cost
9 increases.

10
RECOMMENDATIONS

12 **Q. WHAT IS CUB OHIO’S RECOMMENDATION REGARDING THE**
13 **COMPANY’S FIXED CUSTOMER CHARGE?**

14 A. The COVID pandemic, inflation, and already high energy costs have hit everyone
15 hard. Now more than ever, consumers need more control over their costs. The fixed
16 charges in this Stipulation continue this financial hardship for at least the next five years.
17 It is time to reconsider and modify the SFV rate design. Thus, I recommend that the
18 Commission take this as an opportunity to take a second look at SFV and reconsider its
19 policy of requiring full SFV distribution rates on residential natural gas customers. The
20 base distribution revenue requirement for the residential class of customers should be
21 recovered through a partially fixed charge and a partially volumetric charge.

22 Further, through a process of revisiting SFV rate design, CUB Ohio believes that
23 the Company and Commission should investigate whether and how such high fixed
24 charges are reasonable when taking into account the issue of equity. With a Company

1 footprint which serves approximately 1.4 million customers from Cuyahoga County in
2 the north down to Lawrence County in the South, a targeted inquiry into the implications
3 (benefits and harms) of higher and higher fixed prices on residential customers cuts along
4 economic, social, racial, and urban/suburban/rural lines is reasonable to fully understand
5 the implications of the fixed charges.

6
7 **Q. WHAT IS CUB OHIO'S RECOMMENDATION REGARDING THE**
8 **COMPANY'S DSM PROGRAM?**

9 A. I believe, as CUB Ohio stated in its responses to the Staff Report, that an *increase*
10 *(and certainly no decrease)* in offered programs would be most reasonable at this time of
11 high costs and high inflation for customers. An increase or even status quo would
12 continue to provide customers with the energy and cost savings they have been
13 accustomed to for decades. Columbia Gas' DSM program has ranked among the best in
14 the state for years, and the company has an admirable record of delivering savings to
15 consumers and benefits system-wide that the stipulation should not incentivize or coerce
16 them into walking away from, to the consumers' detriment. Therefore, since a wholesale
17 removal of non-low-income DSM programs will result in an unconscionable loss of
18 potential cost savings, I recommend that the Commission reject the Stipulation's removal
19 of the non-low-income DSM programs and allow for all residential customers to be
20 provided the opportunity to reap the benefits of energy savings. Also, the Commission
21 should reject the Stipulation's "gag order" agreement that Columbia may not support
22 future legislation or regulatory initiatives that promote DSM and energy efficiency as
23 against good public policy.

1 **Q. DOES THIS CONCLUDE YOUR PRE-FILED DIRECT TESTIMONY?**

2 A. Yes.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a copy of this filing will be electronically served today, November 14, 2022, via the Public Utility Commission of Ohio's e-filing system on all parties referenced in the service list of the docket.

/s/ Trent Dougherty
Trent Dougherty

From: [PUCO Consumer Call Center](#)
To: [Puco Docketing](#)
Subject: PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO - CASE #: 00761693 [ref:_00Dt0GzXt_5008y4Ju6r:ref]
Date: Friday, June 3, 2022 2:17:57 PM



**PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO
Consumer Service Division
Memorandum**

CASE ID: 00761693
CUSTOMER: Christopher Stacy
ADDRESS: , , Ohio
SERVICE ADDRESS: , , Ohio
AIQ: Columbia Gas of Ohio
NIQ: 6145514215

To ensure your response attaches to the appropriate case, please reply to this email without changing the subject line. Thank you!

DOCKETING CASE #: 21-0637-GA-AIR

SUBJECT:

Please docket the associated customer comment and/or attached in the case number referenced above under "Public Comments". This information was received by the Consumer Services Division through alternate channels and is being forwarded to be filed formally. This information is not the opinion of Staff and should not be viewed as such.

Description: Allowing Columbia Gas to price gouge customers and lock us into higher base line charges while increasing rates is unthinkable. My gas is already so expensive. I am fortunate enough to have a good job, but between inflation, raising costs of housing, food, and gas, now this, when is enough enough?

Sincerely,

Bradley Berner

Public Utilities Commission of Ohio
Service Monitoring and Enforcement Department
Customer Service Investigator
(800) 686-PUCO (7826)
www.PUCO.ohio.gov

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6/3/2022 2:43:42 PM

in

Case No(s). 21-0637-GA-AIR

Summary: Public Comment of Christopher Stacy, via website, electronically filed by
Docketing Staff on behalf of Docketing

From: [PUCO Consumer Call Center](#)
To: [Puco Docketing](#)
Subject: PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO - CASE #: 00761680 [ref:_00Dt0GzXt._5008y4JiXj:ref]
Date: Friday, June 3, 2022 2:57:36 PM



**PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO
Consumer Service Division
Memorandum**

CASE ID: 00761680
CUSTOMER: Cory Lee
ADDRESS: 6815 Ravine Circle, Worthington, Ohio 43085
SERVICE ADDRESS: 6815 Ravine Circle, Worthington, Ohio 43085
AIQ: Columbia Gas of Ohio
NIQ: 7403612946

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DOCKETING CASE #: 21-0637-GA-AIR

SUBJECT: Columbia Gas of Ohio - Protest Rate Case

Please docket the associated customer comment and/or attached in the case number referenced above under "Public Comments". This information was received by the Consumer Services Division through alternate channels and is being forwarded to be filed formally. This information is not the opinion of Staff and should not be viewed as such.

Below is the customer's comments:

Gas prices have already increased the last 6 months and now CGO wants MORE money. They want almost 300% more with this request and then \$80/month in five years BEFORE I even get to use natural gas. This rise in fixed rates does not give consumers a choice to decrease their cost through less usage. Not to mention other financial burdens from inflation, pandemic, and a possibility of a recession. What is this increase going to be used for? Executives' bonuses?

Also, why does CGO keep emailing me about "saving energy with a smart

thermostat" or "save energy with a home energy audit" if all they are going to do is increase fix costs?

Show us you care about Ohio residents by protecting us from price gouging from corporations who we have no choice but to use. Just like everyone else, CGO should learn how to manage their money and assets better before just asking for more money.

Sincerely,

Michael Lumbard

Public Utilities Commission of Ohio
Service Monitoring and Enforcement Department
Customer Service Investigator
(800) 686-PUCO (7826)
www.PUCO.ohio.gov

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6/3/2022 5:22:41 PM

in

Case No(s). 21-0637-GA-AIR

Summary: Public Comment of Cory Lee, via website, electronically filed by
Docketing Staff on behalf of Docketing

From: [PUCO Consumer Call Center](#)
To: [Puco Docketing](#)
Subject: PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO - CASE #: 00761366 [ref:_00Dt0GzXt._5008y4IGwt:ref]
Date: Friday, June 3, 2022 3:07:27 PM



**PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO
Consumer Service Division
Memorandum**

CASE ID: 00761366
CUSTOMER: Julie Grasson
ADDRESS: 749 Cloverdale Road, Toledo, Ohio 43612
SERVICE ADDRESS: 749 Cloverdale Road, Toledo, Ohio 43612
AIQ: Columbia Gas of Ohio
NIQ: 4194070345

To ensure your response attaches to the appropriate case, please reply to this email without changing the subject line. Thank you!

DOCKETING CASE #: 21-0637-GA-AIR

SUBJECT: Columbia Gas of Ohio - Protest Rate Case

Please docket the associated customer comment and/or attached in the case number referenced above under "Public Comments". This information was received by the Consumer Services Division through alternate channels and is being forwarded to be filed formally. This information is not the opinion of Staff and should not be viewed as such.

Description: An increase of over 27% would be detrimental to non profit business, senior citizens, individuals living in poverty and to the average resident. During a time when the cost of everything is soaring from food to gas, the last thing any of us needs is a significant increase to heat our home and/or cook our food. This is pure greed by a large corporation that has a monopoly already

Sincerely,

Bradley Berner

Public Utilities Commission of Ohio
Service Monitoring and Enforcement Department
Customer Service Investigator
(800) 686-PUCO (7826)
www.PUCO.ohio.gov

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6/3/2022 5:24:28 PM

in

Case No(s). 21-0637-GA-AIR

Summary: Public Comment of Julie Grasson, via website, electronically filed by
Docketing Staff on behalf of Docketing

From: [Angela Donnellan](#)
To: [Puco Docketing](#)
Subject: PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO - CASE #: 00762234 [ref:_00Dt0GzXt._5008y4LzdC:ref]
Date: Tuesday, June 7, 2022 1:04:58 PM



**PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO
Consumer Service Division
Memorandum**

CASE ID: 00762234
CUSTOMER: Sarah Mirkovic
ADDRESS: 6401 Woodbury Hills Drive, Parma, Ohio 44134
SERVICE ADDRESS: 6401 Woodbury Hills Dr, Parma, Ohio 44134
AIQ: Columbia Gas of Ohio
NIQ: 3307050765

To ensure your response attaches to the appropriate case, please reply to this email without changing the subject line. Thank you!

DOCKETING CASE #: 21-0637-GA-AIR

SUBJECT: Columbia Gas of Ohio - Protest Rate Case

Please docket the associated customer comment and/or attached in the case number referenced above under "Public Comments". This information was received by the Consumer Services Division through alternate channels and is being forwarded to be filed formally. This information is not the opinion of Staff and should not be viewed as such.

Description: I read an article that stated that Columbia Gas is seeking to raise the base rate that they charge for gas hookup— they're delivery charge. They are intending to nearly triple this charge, which will have a detrimental effect to not only myself and my family, but countless others in this community and the state of Ohio. Given the current economic climate, it is hard enough to stay afloat with rising gas prices (for cars), and rising prices for everyday necessities like groceries

and household items. Many of us are just scraping by, and in order to save money during tough months we set our thermostats to uncomfortable numbers only so that we might be able to save some money on our bills. With this proposal by Columbia, even the agency we once had to try to save money and owed our bills will be taken from us. With a \$46 base cost, can you imagine what that would do? This winter my gas bills were regularly over \$200 for my 1276 square foot home. We had many days where we turned our heat way down and snuggled up with blankets to try to get that number down, and we even have a smart thermostat to help us with that goal. Still, our bills were over \$200 multiple months in a row. Now that summer has rolled around and our heat will be off for the next few months, we will still have to pay just for the hookup. Why should we have to pay \$46 or \$80 for a hookup in the summer months when we are not even using our heat at all? It would be nice to have a break after paying such steep prices in the winter, but unfortunately those prices will be up in the \$300s next winter if this proposal is allowed to go through. Please do not allow this company with billion-dollar profits to take more from the consumer. Ohio's middle class is shrinking and suffering every day based on the decisions made by hidden figures. Please look out for the people that need help and do not let us be taken advantage of by this company with a monopoly over us!

Sincerely,

Angela Donnellan

Public Utilities Commission of Ohio

Service Monitoring and Enforcement Department

Customer Service Investigator

(800) 686-PUCO (7826)

www.PUCO.ohio.gov

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From: [PUCO Consumer Call Center](#)
To: [PucO Docketing](#)
Subject: PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO - CASE #: 00783832 [ref:_00Dt0GzXt_5008y5eleP:ref]
Date: Tuesday, October 18, 2022 2:53:49 PM



**PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO
Consumer Service Division
Memorandum**

CASE ID: 00783832
CUSTOMER: Paula Blickle
AIQ: Columbia Gas of Ohio
NIQ: 4406384500

To ensure your response attaches to the appropriate case, please reply to this email without changing the subject line. Thank you!

DOCKETING CASE #: 21-0637-GA-AIR

SUBJECT: Columbia Gas of Ohio - Rates & Tariffs

Please docket the associated customer comment "I want to protest the ridiculous monthly fixed rate increase by Columbia Gas of Ohio. Increasing this fee from \$16.75 to \$46.31 and then to \$80 within 5 years is a greedy cash grab by Columbia Gas. Last month my bill was \$43.24 and \$39.00 of the bill was monthly fixed fees collected by Columbia Gas, only \$4.24 of the bill had anything to do with the amount of gas I used. Under this proposed rate increase I would have paid \$72.80 with \$68.56 in fixed costs and \$4.24 in fees actually attached to the gas I used. I think the amount of fixed fees and infrastructure fees that they already collect are too high. There is nothing I can do to ever decrease this bill in relation to the amount of gas I use each month." attached in the case number referenced above under "Public Comments". This information was received by the Consumer Services Division through alternate channels and is being forwarded to be filed formally. This information is not the

opinion of Staff and should not be viewed as such.

This message and any response to it may constitute a public record and thus may be publicly available to anyone who requests it.



ref:_00Dt0GzXt._5008y5eleP:ref

CAUTION: This is an external email and may not be safe. If the email looks suspicious, please do not click links or open attachments and forward the email to csc@ohio.gov or click the Phish Alert Button if available.

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10/20/2022 8:52:28 AM

in

**Case No(s). 21-0637-GA-AIR, 21-0638-GA-ALT, 21-0639-GA-UNC, 21-0640-GA-
AAM**

Summary: Public Comment of Paula Blickle, via website, electronically filed by
Docketing Staff on behalf of Docketing

**This foregoing document was electronically filed with the Public Utilities
Commission of Ohio Docketing Information System on**

11/14/2022 5:00:56 PM

in

Case No(s). 21-0637-GA-AIR, 21-0638-GA-ALT, 21-0639-GA-UNC, 21-0640-GA-AAM

Summary: Testimony Testimony of Thomas Bullock on Behalf of Citizens Utility Board of Ohio electronically filed by Mr. Trent A. Dougherty on behalf of Citizens' Utility Board of Ohio