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2 STATE OF NEW YORK

3 PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

4 CASE 22-E-0317 - Proceeding on motion of the
5 Commission as to the rates, charges, rules, and
6 regulations of the New York State Electric and Gas
7 Corporation for electric service.

8 CASE 22-G-0318 - Proceeding on motion of the
9 Commission as to the rates, charges, rules, and
10 regulations of New York State Electric and Gas
11 Corporation for gas service.

12 CASE 22-E-0319 - Proceeding on motion of the
13 Commission as to the rates, charges, rules, and
14 regulations of Rochester Gas and Electric
15 Corporation for electric service.

16 CASE 22-G-0320 - Proceeding on motion of the
17 Commission as to the rates, charges, rules, and
18 regulations of Rochester Gas and Electric
19 Corporation for gas service.

20 PUBLIC STATEMENT HEARING

21 DATE: September 15, 2022 at 5:01 p.m.

22 VENUE: WebEx

23 BEFORE: A.L.J. ERIKA BERGEN

24 A.L.J. LINDSEY OVERTON

25 Reported by Monique Hines

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2 (The hearing commenced at 5:01 p.m.)

3 A.L.J. OVERTON: Case 22-E-0317,
4 proceedings on motion of the Commission as to the
5 rates, charges, rules, and regulations of New York
6 State Electric & Gas Corporation for electric
7 service.

8 Case 22-G-0318, proceeding on motion
9 of the Commission as to the rates, charges, rules,
10 and regulations of New York State Electric & Gas
11 Corporation for gas service.

12 Case 22-E-0319 proceeding on motion of
13 the Commission as to the rates, charges, rules, and
14 regulations of Rochester Gas and Electric Corporation
15 for electric service.

16 And case 22-G-0320 proceeding on
17 motion of the Commission as to the rates, charges,
18 rules, and regulations of Rochester Gas and Electric
19 Corporation for gas service.

20 Good evening and welcome. My name is
21 Lindsey Overton and I am an Administrative Law Judge
22 with the New York State Department of Public Service.
23 With me is Administrative Law Judge Erika Bergen and
24 together we are responsible for -- for presiding over
25 the hearings in this case, and the development of a

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2 complete record on these proceedings.

3 We are here today for a public
4 statement hearing that was noticed on August 19th,
5 2022, New York State Electric & Gas Corporation which
6 I will refer to as NYSEG and Rochester Gas & Electric
7 Corporation, which I will refer to as RG&E filed
8 amendments to their electric and gas tariffs
9 schedules on May 26th, 2022, proposing to increase
10 their annual electric and gas delivery revenues
11 effective May 1st, 2023.

12 NYSEG proposes to increase its annual
13 electric delivery revenues by approximately \$274
14 million which is a 31.2 percent increase in base
15 delivery revenues or 16.8 percent increase in total
16 revenues. NYSEG requests an increase in its annual
17 gas delivery revenues of approximately \$43 million
18 which is 20.7 percent increase in base delivery
19 revenues or 9.8 percent increase in total revenues.

20 RG&E requests an annual increase in
21 electric delivery revenues of approximately 93.8
22 million, which is a 19 percent increase in delivery
23 revenues or 11.3 percent increase in total revenues.
24 RG&E also requests an annual increase in gas delivery
25 revenues of approximately \$37 million which is 20.9

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2 percent increase in base delivery revenues or 9.7
3 percent increase in total revenue.

4 We are holding this hearing so that
5 you can provide your comments on these proposals for
6 the Public Service Commission's consideration. The
7 Commission will decide the terms and conditions of
8 service for NYSEG and RG&E.

9 The Commission consists of seven
10 members, the Chair, Rory Christian, and Commissioners
11 Diane Burman, James Alesi, Tracey Edwards, John
12 Howard, David Valesky, and John Maggiore. We are
13 fortunate today to have both Chair Christian and
14 Commissioner Maggiore with us. I will briefly stop
15 and pause and ask whether each would like to address
16 the participants today. Chair Christian?

17 CHAIR CHRISTIAN: Thank you, Judge
18 Overton. I want to thank all of you who join this
19 call today to exercise your rights citizens and ...
20 of the issues before us today. We're going through a
21 very unique time in our history and the decisions
22 we'll be making will be taking your feedback into
23 account.

24 And so we want to -- we want you to be
25 heard, and we want to hear what you have to say. And

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2 I'm looking forward to a healthy and active
3 discussion this evening. And I appreciate you all
4 making the time to be here. Thank you.

5 A.L.J. OVERTON: Thank you, Chair.
6 Commissioner Maggiore, would you like to make any
7 remarks?

8 COMMISSIONER MAGGIORE: Thank you very
9 much. I would join the chair and thank, you know,
10 all the participants for showing up tonight. You
11 know we greatly value public comment on significant
12 matters such as the item before us today, which I
13 know is going to effect a lot of people's lives.

14 I'm here to listen -- I'm here to
15 listen to what you have to say. So you're not going
16 to hear from me during the course of this hearing but
17 I'd like to join the chair and thanking you for
18 participating. Thank you very much.

19 A.L.J. OVERTON: Thank you,
20 Commissioner Maggiore. Now, I will take a brief
21 moment to explain the process that we're going to
22 follow today. As I explained before, the purpose of
23 this hearing is to provide you with an opportunity to
24 tell the Commission your thoughts on NYSEG's and
25 RG&E's rate proposals.

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2 The statements you make today will
3 become part of the case record. We have a court
4 reporter on the line who will prepare a transcript of
5 the hearing, which will be included in the official
6 record of these -- of these proceedings so that your
7 comments can be considered by the members of the
8 Commission.

9 When it is ready, the transcript will
10 be publicly available for viewing on the Department
11 of Public Service's website. This hearing is not an
12 evidentiary hearing with cross examination, or a
13 question and answer session, but really a forum to
14 hear comments from you.

15 This, however, is not the only
16 opportunity for comments. If you did not pre-
17 register to speak at today's hearing, but would like
18 to -- your views included in the record, there are a
19 variety of other ways to comment as explained in the
20 public notice for today's events.

21 You can submit comments through the
22 department's website, by email, by regular mail, or
23 by telephone. All comments will be given equal
24 consideration regardless of how they are submitted.
25 Because we are holding this public statement

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2 virtually we have asked people to pre-register to
3 make a public statement at today's hearing.

4 If we get through those who have
5 registered to speak we will then open the floor up
6 for those on the line who did not pre-register for
7 today's hearing but would like to make a comment. We
8 ask that you please summarize any lengthy written
9 statements orally and submit the full written
10 statement by email or by mail.

11 We are now ready to begin. If you're
12 going to speak, you should only use one audio input
13 and one audio output at your end. Otherwise, you may
14 experience problems with feedback when you're
15 speaking. I will call the seven individuals who have
16 pre-registered one by one to speak. If someone is
17 not available when I call them I will continue on
18 with the next person, and we'll come back to those
19 people who were not available at the end.

20 After I call your name, we will
21 unmute your line and let you know that you are
22 unmuted. Please remember that if you have put your
23 own telephone line or computer on mute, you will also
24 have to unmute your line on your end before you begin
25 to speak.

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2 Again, please speak slowly and clearly
3 so that the court reporter can accurately capture
4 your statement for the record. When your line is
5 unmuted, please state your name. And if you're
6 speaking on behalf of an organization please identify
7 the name of the organization -- organization which
8 you represent.

9 Okay, so we will begin with the first
10 speaker. And that is Marilyn Hanna. Marilyn, if you
11 called in if you could please hit star 3 on your
12 phone so that we can recognize you and unmute your
13 line.

14 MS. KAILAS: No raised hand, Your
15 Honor.

16 A.L.J. OVERTON: No raised hand.
17 Okay, I'm not seeing any either. Okay, so we'll move
18 on to the next individual and we'll come back to
19 Marilyn.

20 The next one is Wilfred Witt Again,
21 if you've called in, Mr. Witt if you could please hit
22 star 3 on your telephone so that we can see the raise
23 hand icon and unmute your line. Sangeetha, do you
24 see any raised hands? I'm not seeing any.

25 MS. KAILAS: No raised hand, Your

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2 Honor.

3 A.L.J. OVERTON: Okay. Okay, so we'll
4 come back to Mr. ... Tina Jackson.

5 MS. KAILAS: Tina Jackson, if you have
6 called into this public statement hearing please
7 press star 3 on your phone. No raised hand, Your
8 Honor.

9 A.L.J. OVERTON: Okay, we'll move to
10 the next speaker, David Parrish. David, if you are
11 on the line if you could please hit star 3 on your
12 phone so that we can unmute you?

13 MS. KAILAS: No raised hand, Your
14 Honor.

15 A.L.J. OVERTON: Okay, I see that Tina
16 Jackson has just joined. She raised her hand.

17 MS. JACKSON: Okay, yes, this is Tina.

18 A.L.J. OVERTON: Hi, good afternoon.
19 Are you ready to provide your comments?

20 MS. JACKSON: Yes.

21 A.L.J. OVERTON: Okay, great. Go
22 ahead.

23 MS. JACKSON: Thank you. Good
24 afternoon. My name is Tina Jackson. I live in
25 Monroe County and I work as a childcare worker. I am

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2 a delegate to Monroe County Workers Benefit Council
3 and in the capacity, I am here today to speak on
4 behalf of more than 25,000 low-income workers and
5 their families throughout Monroe County.

6 I am here with some of -- some of them
7 right now. And their names are Linda Herchel, Raquel
8 Rowley, David Parrish, Cherrie McCown, Faith Bennett,
9 Marilyn Hannah, Cynthia Cox, Nick Cappuccino. The
10 worker -- the Workers Benefit Council express our
11 empathy opposition to RG&E and NYSEG shameless 580
12 million rate hikes.

13 Furthermore, we demand the Public
14 Service Commission to do its job and deny this
15 unforbidable and unsustainable rate increase. We are
16 the home health aide, nurse's aide working in nurse
17 homes, childcare workers, full service and retail
18 workers. They started calling us essential workers
19 during the pandemic. But we don't -- we don't -- I -
20 - we don't get paid enough for the essential like
21 home energy.

22 And so adding another \$20 and \$22 to
23 our monthly bills is absolutely out of the question.
24 For over 12 years we called on the Public Service
25 Commission to follow its own legal mandate to both

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2 protect the utility consumers from potential abuse of
3 monopoly power to quote to protect the rights of New
4 Yorkers while ensuring access to reliable and low-
5 income utility workers.

6 But all during the time, the P.S.C.
7 had broken this mandate to the -- to guarantee a
8 certain rate of return on investments for the utility
9 monopoly shareholders the guaranteed profit was 9
10 percent last we heard. And a result of the state
11 guaranteeing this extra -- extra profit for energy
12 mandatory -- monopoly, compounding with stagnant
13 wages and fixed incomes not keeping up.

14 The New York has seen -- the New York
15 has seen 3,000 utility customers being shut off each
16 year, 2000 of those right here in our region shut off
17 by ... RG&E and NYSEG. But ... parent companies in
18 Spain ... got 4.4 billion in profit for its
19 shareholders and paid its C.E.O.s \$10 billion year
20 after year.

21 During the pandemic as an energy
22 measure, the state instituted a mandatory on shut off
23 which our W.B.C. has already been demanding for 12
24 years by petitioning letters and justifying at public
25 hearings. However, at the beginning of 2022, the

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2 state lifted the moratorium, so shut off again --
3 again.

4 The COVID-19 pandemic made its worse
5 with thousands losing their jobs and hundreds of
6 small businesses closing down so it's not time to
7 allow shut off. It's time to stop shut off forever
8 for those in need. During the pandemic, according to
9 our RG&E's own 2020 and '21 final Reports, they
10 success -- they successfully increased their net
11 revenue by 32 percent and increased their
12 stockholder's wealth by over 27 percent.

13 We know how they did that. Now, 13
14 percent of all utility customers owe more than 2.1
15 billion double what was owed at that same time in
16 2021. So the W.B.C. is here today again, after more
17 than a decade of the hearings and petitions to
18 continue demanding a permanent year-round moratorium
19 on all shut-offs for low to moderate-income
20 ratepayers.

21 This isn't just about financial debt,
22 some of us are paying with our lives and our health.
23 Everyone -- everyone in central and western New York
24 this is a predictable death toll due to house fire
25 and carbon monoxide poisoning of people who have

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2 restored -- resorted to unsafe heating methods after
3 being checked off by RG&E, NYSEG and other other
4 shareholders owned utilities.

5 Every -- every summer, the number of
6 individuals in the U.S. ending in emergency rooms and
7 even dying. Heat-related deaths killed more people
8 than hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, and earthquakes
9 combined. It is a silent killer. There is no report
10 on the deaths from heatwaves the P.S.C. allow.

11 Utilities kicked in but somehow they
12 are allowed to actually bill us for that 6 percent
13 through additional surcharges to pay off our debt.
14 The P.S.C. should -- the P.S.C. could make utilities
15 affordable and -- and -- and ... sustainable in the
16 interests of poor and working people throughout New
17 York if it was truly a priority to them.

18 This year -- this year the Public
19 Service Commission has another chance to live up to
20 its legal mandate, do what it was created to do,
21 serve the public. The Monroe County Worker Benefit
22 Council is here today to demand the P.S.C.

23 One) Deny RG&E, NYSEG rate like
24 request outright to take the next step, lower the
25 rate. Two) and add a permanent year-round

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2 moratorium on utility shut-offs for New York
3 residents whose income are at or below 250 percent of
4 the federal poverty level. And three) transition
5 New York State's energy grid to 100 percent renewable
6 energy by 2030 while ensuring service is both
7 affordable and accessible to even the lowest income
8 residents. Thank you for your time.

9 A.L.J. OVERTON: Thank you for your
10 comments, Ms. Jackson. You mentioned Mr. Parrish.
11 Is he with you right now?

12 MS. JACKSON: Yes.

13 MR. PARRISH: Yes, I am.

14 A.L.J. OVERTON: David Parrish.

15 MR. PARRISH: Yes, I am. I'm right
16 here.

17 A.L.J. OVERTON: Okay, well, you're
18 up.

19 MR. PARRISH: Hello. Good afternoon.
20 My name is David and I live in the 14621 area of
21 Rochester. And I am -- fall under the category of
22 disabled. Before I get started, P.S.C., who do you
23 answer to, the people or monopolies? ... the truth
24 that you have to create. You see, I understand under
25 the impression that I've been giving, you are here

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2 for the people of New York State entities rates
3 affordable for all New Yorkers.

4 There is ... that goes back to the
5 1970s as far as I know. I know that this seems
6 fitting for this utility rate hike requests, and then
7 saying ... you can't get blood out of stone referring
8 to costs. Well, that stone, P.S.C. has turned to
9 dust. Do not give -- do not give the money they
10 want.

11 The costs skyrocketing across the
12 board and for everything. Less income -- our small
13 businesses in our community are hurting. Please do
14 not do us all a favor, go out there into the
15 communities and really talk with the people before
16 you give these utilities even one more payment ... do
17 not need in comparison to us out here in the real
18 world.

19 I know -- I hope -- happen to know a
20 lot of small business owners in Rochester. And I
21 also happen to be very curious overall. And I talked
22 to people. I know about what they are going through.
23 And do you know what these small businesses owners
24 are telling me? They're telling me that businesses
25 are being killed by the actions you and others who

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2 control the cost we all pay.

3 Businesses are ... by utility costs
4 three times over, which are personal use for their
5 own homes, the cost that they use for their business,
6 and the consumer who has less money to spend in those
7 businesses. There were smaller businesses out here
8 that are helping keep our state's economy float and
9 then survived under these conditions set forth by
10 your policies, which drives up our cost, which ...
11 have no control over.

12 A local coffee shop here ... said that
13 she gets buying coffee marked up 300 percent over
14 last year. But she knows that our customers can't
15 afford the extra costs. And so she can't just pass
16 it to the customers or they won't come back again. I
17 have spoken to a number of local business owners who
18 said they wish they could pay their employees a
19 living wage.

20 But they just can't do that under
21 these circumstances. The number of homeless in our
22 community is on a -- on a rise daily with less and
23 less money available to non-profits. They were the
24 backbone by keeping those who are turning to the
25 streets ... and turning us back into like the Great

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2 Depression.

3 We cannot afford or settle for a rate
4 hike when these utilities are guaranteed a 9 percent
5 income of the cost. Why do they really need a rate
6 hike, I ask you. Is it for what they are telling you
7 or for having more pockets of investors and those who
8 are running this time corporations?

9 Maybe they should think about living
10 in the real world with the rest of us. Personally --
11 personally, I do not pay an electric bill directly.
12 But I do ... the cost because just to saying my rent
13 in my apartment has gone up \$50 this month, where in
14 years past it's only gone up \$1 or \$2 due to the
15 interest costs thrown upon the owners of the
16 building.

17 I'm about to move into an apartment on
18 my own and I will be responsible for my own utility
19 bills. So I heard from the media that the cost of
20 heating is going up \$50 a month this year. With this
21 rate request of \$20 to \$22 a month on the average
22 household, you are looking at between \$70 and \$72 a
23 month extra coming out at the average Central New
24 Yorkers and the NYSEG, RG&E and National Grid
25 coverage area.

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2 Where are we supposed to get this --
3 this kind of money? Can you tell me? Maybe you'd
4 like to pay my utility bills. I ask you please tell
5 these corporate giants that the day of living high on
6 the hog is numbered. Say no to these rate hikes.
7 Say no more 9 percent guaranteed income above costs
8 drop their percentage down to 5 percent.

9 ... make up every extra cost RG&E
10 charge their customers here in the Rochester area
11 which the New York State is investigating. Before I
12 go I want you to be aware of what a rising costs can
13 do. There is a senior woman here in Rochester, who
14 needs a number of machines to keep her daily life
15 going. These machines are medical necessity.

16 And the insurance does not cover any
17 of the costs of this electricity she's using to run
18 these medically approved appliances. It's too
19 expensive. It's costing her over \$300 a month to run
20 these machines. This lady is going into debt.
21 Insurance ... for her to be in a medical facility
22 where the insurance company won't cover these costs.

23 She says she is going deep in debt
24 over these utilities to raise a rate. What are you
25 telling her ... telling you get -- she only gets

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2 social security and ... no other income. Please tell
3 the utilities not to take us to the cleaners.

4 A.L.J. OVERTON: Thank you for your
5 comments, Mr. Parrish.

6 MR. PARRISH: I am not done. I'm not
7 through.

8 A.L.J. OVERTON: Okay, so --

9 MR. PARRISH: And that is why --

10 A.L.J. OVERTON: ...

11 MR. PARRISH: And that is why a demand
12 of the Monroe County Workers Benefit Council consent
13 concealed the rate ... insist a more -- year-round
14 moratorium ... and three, transmission to 100 percent
15 renewable energy grid by 2030 while a growing rates
16 be -- be affordable for even the lowest paying tax
17 ...

18 A.L.J. OVERTON: Thank you, Mr.
19 Parrish. Moving on to our next speaker Linda
20 Henschel. Linda, if you called in this evening if you
21 could please hit star 3 on your phone so that we can
22 recognize you and unmute your phone?

23 MS. KAILAS: Your Honor, Tina
24 Jackson's hand is up. Do you want me to unmute to
25 see if she's a member there?

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2 A.L.J. OVERTON: Oh. Yes, please.

3 MS. KAILAS: Okay.

4 A.L.J. OVERTON: Ms. Jackson, is Linda
5 Henchel with you as well?

6 MS. HENCHEL: I'm right here.

7 A.L.J. OVERTON: Oh, great. Okay, go
8 ahead. Thank you.

9 MS. HENCHEL: Good afternoon. My name
10 is Linda Henchel. I live in 14609. And I'm here
11 with the Monroe County Workers Benefit Council.
12 Essential workers are lower-income workers with no
13 benefits. Two groups of essential workers are health
14 aid workers and daycare workers.

15 I was a daycare worker, New York State
16 certified for 10 years. At no time, did I make a
17 living wage. I ended up moving home with my parents
18 to my parents' house where I looked after my father
19 until he died and my mother until she died three
20 years ago.

21 Although the house was well-looked
22 after, fully insulated, new furnace, air
23 conditioning, I could not afford to stay at my
24 family's house. I now live in a senior living
25 situation where the essential workers are healthcare

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2 aides are poorly paid with no benefits. I no longer
3 pay the RG&E directly, but they have to pay their
4 bill.

5 As a result, they were not just one
6 job, but two, even three to make the ends meet. And
7 still they have trouble. The \$20 you proposed is
8 equal to a meal for three people made at home. The
9 telephone bill or even the RG&E bill will be
10 effected. If you think that we could take a bus,
11 think again.

12 \$20 is a bus pass for a week. Uber is
13 definitely out of the question. Don't think
14 essential workers can remain independent, moving home
15 with the folks remains the only solution if they can
16 afford to take them in. And don't think we're fooled
17 by accepting our taxes being used to cover heat grant
18 and debt forgiveness programs.

19 The money should come out of our RG&E
20 excessive profits. They have enough money to pay for
21 the debt forgiveness, along with new insulation,
22 windows and upgraded heating and cooling systems for
23 low to moderate income homeowners.

24 Most of the dilapidated housing in
25 need of this work is in the low income neighborhoods

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2 in Rochester, where poverty is concentrated due to
3 redlining policies, the government passed many years
4 ago. ... you created this problem, not us. Or you
5 must bear the burden of fixing it, not us.

6 We just get the money from RG&E and
7 their parent company to pay for the infrastructure
8 upgrades, tree trimming and going green initiatives.
9 Do not try to get the money from us. The working
10 people who already cannot afford the rate they have.
11 That is why I endorsed the demands of Monroe County
12 Workers Benefit Council cancel this rate hike
13 entirely.

14 So a year round moratorium ... and
15 transition to 100 percent renewable energy grid by
16 2030 while keeping rates affordable for even the
17 lowest income payers.

18 A.L.J. OVERTON: Thank you for your
19 comments, Ms. Henschel.

20 MS. HENCHEL: Okay.

21 A.L.J. OVERTON: Our next speaker is
22 Daniel Russel.

23 MR. RUSSEL: Good evening Chair
24 Christian, Commissioner Maggiore, Administrative Law
25 Judges Bergen and Overton. My name is Daniel Russel

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2 and I'm a legal expert with the Public Utility Law
3 Project of New York or PULP ...

4 PULP is a 40-year-old non-profit with
5 a mission of educating, advocating and litigating on
6 behalf of New York State's low income utility
7 consumers. PULP thanks the Department of Public
8 Service for the opportunity to testify in relation to
9 New York State's Electric and Gas Corporations,
10 Electric and Gas rate cases 22-E-0317, 22-G-0318 and
11 Rochester Gas & Electric Corporations, Electric and
12 Gas rate cases 22-E-0319 and 22-G-0320.

13 PULP is an active party in all four
14 cases and we will be filing our expert testimony on
15 September 26. PULP has several concerns that we will
16 address in today's hearing that was expanded upon in
17 our written testimony.

18 When the companies filed on May 26, it
19 post double digit increases in revenues across the
20 companies. This proposed increases would put further
21 strain on ratepayers particularly low income
22 consumers.

23 On May 26, Governor Hochul released a
24 press statement in response to NYSEG and RG&E's 2022
25 rate case. Governor Hochul stated, it's an

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2 outrageous and unacceptable that utility companies
3 are proposing the largest rate increase in recent
4 history for more than 1.2 million consumers in
5 upstate New York.

6 Additionally, Governor Hochul urged
7 the Department of Public Service to scrutinize every
8 number and word of this proposal to protect New York
9 families from unjustified and unfair rate increases.
10 PULP thanks Governor Hochul for strong response. As
11 customers of NYSEG and RG&E simply cannot afford to
12 pay more for their electricity and national gas.

13 PULP has pulled the actual statistics
14 from New York State's Community Action Associations
15 2022 poverty report, United Way ALICE Project in the
16 New York State Department of Education's County
17 Statistics. The reality is that people are
18 struggling financially.

19 For example, in Tompkins County, 17.5
20 percent of residents are living below the poverty
21 line. This includes 4.5 percent of seniors and HCC 5
22 percent or more, 23.9 percent of female headed
23 families with children also live in poverty, and 40
24 percent of children qualify for free and reduced
25 costs lunch under the federal guidelines.

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2 When you add in the category and
3 working for that approximately 46.2 percent of
4 residents at Tompkins County are unable to pay their
5 bills and must often choose which bills remain unpaid
6 at the end of the month. In the City of Ithaca,
7 these numbers are even more consorted.

8 37.5 percent of Ithaca residents live
9 in poverty. This includes 12.5 percent of seniors,
10 18.6 percent of children living in the city. NYSEG's
11 own collections activity report shows that as of July
12 2022 106,328 residential consumers are behind on
13 their bills by 60 days or more.

14 For a total of \$58,698,477 of
15 residential arrears, RG&E's collections activity
16 report show that as of July 2022, 65,274 residential
17 consumers are behind on their bills by 60 days or
18 more, and these equate to a total of \$43,664,256 in
19 the residential arrears.

20 Commission has set an important goal
21 for a target for affordability with that goal,
22 meaning no low income customer will spend more than 6
23 percent of their income on energy, even before any
24 rate increases that may result from the company's
25 filings. Low income consumers in the territories are

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2 already spending much more than 6 percent of their
3 income on energy bills.

4 PULP is currently working on testimony
5 that will show that the average low income NYSEG
6 customer spends 9.7 percent of their income on
7 energy. This is 62 percent higher than the target
8 set by the Commission. These energy burdens may be
9 even more exaggerated in disadvantaged communities
10 across company's territories.

11 The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic
12 are still heavily felt across the company's
13 territories. Every day ratepayers are struggling
14 with bills that are unaffordable and in these
15 unprecedented times post urges the Commission to
16 scrutinize NYSEG, RG&E's rate request to make sure
17 that these rates consumers are paying just reasonable
18 affordable ... Thank you for your time.

19 A.L.J. OVERTON: Thank you for your
20 comments, Mr. Russel. Next we have Raquel Rowley.
21 Again, Raquel if you called in, if you can please
22 press star 3 on your phone so we can identify you and
23 unmute your line.

24 MS. ROWLEY: Hi, my name is Raquel
25 Rowley. I live in Rochester, New York. I used to

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2 work as a ... and later as a teacher aide. I am here
3 with the Monroe County Worker Benefit Council. I am
4 talking about RG&E raising people bill, what is that?
5 Why you guys always putting the bill up, people can
6 say no more ... to be paid.

7 It is difficult to understand what
8 RG&E is doing with all the money they get from us.
9 My husband -- my husband and I live on fixed income,
10 it's ridiculous. And then my son came to live with
11 us with ... the rate increase make -- make it hard
12 for us to get another items like food, clothing, this
13 is ridiculous, what you guys think about.

14 ... the RG&E more and more and more,
15 what you going to say ... completely, hey, the rate
16 increase make hard for us to get another item like
17 food, clothing and medical care, it's hard. ... you
18 know what it is, my husband ... because he loves to
19 drive, but we cannot drive no more in order to help,
20 we got -- need to help, you go to employment and
21 getting grocery, this is ridiculous.

22 Well, we used to do because of ...
23 RG&E because ... everything is going up, you know,
24 what you guys going to do, are you going to take
25 everybody's money and keep put in your pocket.

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2 Racist people, this is not fair, okay. We have no
3 choice, but to use RG&E, that's how you guys do it,
4 so we got to use that, we got to have RG&E.

5 Please stop, okay. That is ... of the
6 Monroe County Workers Benefit Council, cancel this --
7 number one, cancel this rate hike entirely. Two, is
8 that a year round moratorium ... Three, is ... of
9 200 percent renewable energy grid by 2030 while
10 keeping rates affordable for even the lowest income
11 taxpayer -- ratepayer.

12 ... stop putting that bill out, we
13 don't need that no more. Thank you, bye.

14 A.L.J. OVERTON: Thank you for
15 comment, Ms. Rowley. We have gotten through the list
16 of seven registered participants, so I'm going to go
17 back to the beginning and see if the initial two have
18 since joined us. That would be Marilyn Hannah.

19 Marilyn, are you -- if you are on the
20 line, if you could press star 3 so that we can
21 identify you if you called in.

22 MS. HANNAH: This is Marilyn Hannah.
23 Can you hear me?

24 A.L.J. OVERTON: Yes, I can. Go
25 ahead, please.

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2 MS. HANNAH: Good afternoon, my name
3 is Marilyn Hannah. I live in Rochester, New York, in
4 a area called 14611. And I am here at the Monroe
5 County Worker Benefit Council to inform you that I
6 have been diagnosed with M.S., I have been -- I'm
7 disabled since 2014. I have a fixed income of
8 disability -- social security disability and it's
9 just for me, not to exceed over for RG&E to take it.

10 I have been living in Section 8 for
11 the last 6 years. Section 9 if I don't pay my RG&E,
12 or I get behind RG&E, Section 8 will put me out.
13 Where am I going to go? I cannot afford apartment or
14 house in Rochester, New York. They're raising the
15 rate in Rochester, New York so that you cannot live
16 here.

17 And if we can't have RG&E, what are we
18 going to do. The winter month here is freezing cold.
19 We cannot live on the street. And I'm just here to
20 let you know that heat, when heat pay up our portion
21 for us in the wintertime, the ... RG&E come in and
22 ... income and we cannot afford this. I cannot
23 afford this.

24 It is ridiculous, ridiculous and they
25 don't live here in Rochester, New York with us. They

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2 don't know what we're going through. RG&E is a
3 highway robbery. It is ... cannot afford insurance
4 for my car, pay RG&E it's right up there with ... my
5 rental. Section 8 pay a portion of my rental, I pay
6 the other half and RG&E get the other.

7 What am I going to eat if I don't go
8 to the pantry. You don't understand, I can't even go
9 to the store and get me a nice pair of shoe because
10 RG&E is taking it. And I just want you to stop. We
11 are -- we are all here because -- for the same
12 reason, we're here for the same reason.

13 And this reason is because RG&E is --
14 simply if I can just say ... And I wanted to stop
15 and I hope my voice is heard as long as around --
16 with other people that live here. And I hope you
17 have a good day. Thank you for listening.

18 A.L.J. OVERTON: Thank you for your
19 comments, Ms. Rowley. And then our last registered
20 speaker Wilfred Witte (phonetic spelling). Mr.
21 Witte, if you've called in, please hit star 3 on your
22 telephone, so we can identify you and unmute your
23 line. I am not seeing a hand raised. Sangeetha, do
24 you see any?

25 MS. KAILAS: No raised hand, Your

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2 Honor.

3 A.L.J. OVERTON: Okay. So at this
4 point, now that we have gone through the individuals
5 who have pre-registered to speak today, we will open
6 up the hearing to anyone in attendance who would like
7 to speak, but did not pre-register to do so. If
8 you'd like to make a statement, please click the
9 raised hand icon in the bottom right corner of your
10 screen.

11 Or if you have called in please press
12 star 3 on your telephone. Either option will enable
13 us to recognize you and unmute you so that you can
14 make your statement.

15 MS. KAILAS: No raised hand.

16 MS. COX: Hi, my name is Cynthia Cox.
17 I live in 1 Jason Terrace. I am here for the Monroe
18 County Workers Benefit Corp. I'm here because I'm a
19 senior citizen and RG&E is so hard on me. I don't
20 know if I should pay my rent or RG&E. I'm on a fixed
21 income. I can't afford to pay both.

22 I'm almost like being on the street,
23 because it's hard for me. Every month, it goes up
24 and up and up and up. And it's hard for me. I don't
25 know what to do at this point, is a struggle. Do I

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2 feed myself, do I pay rent, or do I pay RG&E? I
3 can't afford all three. And that's hard for me.

4 And I'm just tired of it. I don't
5 know what to do at this point. RG&E is getting
6 higher, higher, higher, higher and it's -- it's not
7 good for me. I'm a senior citizen. I don't know
8 what to do with at this point. And it's hard. So I
9 would like to -- what are you going to do?

10 Help us, because you -- they're
11 charging, I pay -- when I pay one thing and I get the
12 bill in the mail and it's something else. It's
13 summer -- it's summertime now. I don't use heat now.
14 I'm scared to turn my gas on in the winter. I don't
15 know how much it's going to be. You pay one thing
16 and next month it's even is double, that's not good.

17 So what do we do? What do the people
18 do in Rochester? What do we do? Tell me. Do we
19 just live in the cold, not eat, not paying -- not
20 paying rent? What do we do? You need to lower the
21 rate so we can live. So we can live. Right now is a
22 struggle. I don't know what to do? Should I pay
23 rent? Should I pay RG&E? Should I eat? What do I
24 do? What do I do, tell me. Thank you. Have a nice
25 day.

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2 A.L.J. OVERTON: Thank you. Thank you
3 for your comments, Ms. Cox. Is there anybody else on
4 the line who would like to make a statement? Again,
5 please click the raised hand icon or press star 3 on
6 your telephone if you called in this evening.

7 MS. KAILAS: Raised hand.

8 A.L.J. OVERTON: ...

9 MR. : We have Ms. Cynthia Middleton,
10 different Cynthia. Go ahead.

11 MS. MIDDLETON: Hi, good afternoon.
12 My name is Cynthia Middleton. I live in ... Street.
13 And I am here for the Workers' Benefit Council. And
14 you know, it's just a ... how frequent and -- and --
15 and -- and what bothers me the most, they got on In
16 God We Trust, we're not trusting in God the way
17 they're treating us.

18 And it really doesn't make and it is
19 hard. And I'm ... and you know we don't pay that
20 way, and it shouldn't have to be this hard for us.
21 And like -- and like one of the coworker spoke for
22 savings, you gave a bill one month, it's something
23 and is another bill, they turn my lights O-F-F, off.
24 Off, turn them off and I don't pay what they tell me
25 to pay.

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2 But they make a mistake. Now, you
3 know, I'm making a mistake not ... but ever since
4 this new company came they don't give nothing about
5 nobody, just making money. And it's not about that,
6 it's not RG&E ... The people that was running ...
7 like that and it's sad though that we got to live
8 like this. This is sad. This is sad we got to live
9 like this.

10 It is so sad, but you know one thing
11 I'm going to say that God ... and he sees how
12 everybody treat everybody and the people that we
13 elect in office, you guys sitting back and allowing
14 it to happen and it should be. This is -- and that
15 nobody ... You hear what I say and I want to repeat
16 that again.

17 ... person knock on my door and say
18 that what they do and how they're lying. They're
19 going to lie to us for so long and it's just
20 ridiculous that we got to live like this and got --
21 and got people in office that are supposed to do
22 something, but you know, they're not doing it because
23 they don't want to get out office, they don't want to
24 -- they don't want to seem as though they are being
25 the person that's not and it's all about the dollar

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2 bill.

3 All about that dollar bill. And got
4 our vote, they got our vote ... and they don't make
5 no ... but we're going to reap what we sow, okay.
6 Don't forget that, you're going reap what you sow.
7 And if you don't -- and you don't your children,
8 children ... and I'm saying it again, you're going to
9 reap what you sow.

10 And it don't make sense how we being
11 treated, it don't make no kind of sense how we been
12 treated, now we ain't got no ... RG&E and then it
13 made us go ahead and work as it is. ... Something
14 needs to be done, okay. And we're here -- and we are
15 here today -- and we are here today, we're protesting
16 this ... And they don't make no sense.

17 And this is the reason why I'm doing
18 this, the demands of the Monroe County where it's
19 going to be. You cancel rate and you know the rate
20 hike, rate hike cancel it altogether ... and
21 transition to a 100 percent renewable energy grid by
22 2030 while keeping rates affordable, but even the low
23 income ratepayer.

24 Thank you and I hope you all heard me.

25 A.L.J. OVERTON: Thank you for your

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2 time, Ms. Middleton. Is there anybody else on the
3 line who would like to make a comment this evening?

4 MS. KAILAS: No raised hand, Your
5 Honor.

6 A.L.J. OVERTON: Okay. Seeing no
7 raised hand, I want to thank everyone for their
8 comments today. That concludes our hearing this
9 evening. I would like to remind anyone listening --

10 MS. KAILAS: Your Honor, one more
11 raised hand.

12 A.L.J. OVERTON: Oh, okay.

13 MS. MCCOWN: Hello, can you hear me?

14 A.L.J. OVERTON: We can.

15 MS. MCCOWN: Hi. Good afternoon. My
16 name is Cherrie McCown. I live in Rochester, New
17 York. I am a social worker.

18 A.L.J. OVERTON: Cherrie, can I just
19 stop you for one minute, please? Can you please
20 spell your name for the court reporter?

21 MS. MCCOWN: C-H-E-R-R-I-E M-C-C-O-W-
22 N.

23 A.L.J. OVERTON: Thank you. Go ahead.

24 MS. MCCOWN: Hi, my name is Cherrie
25 McCown. I am a social worker ... A couple of weeks

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2 ago, we -- they decided to give the nursing home and
3 the hospital \$3500 for C.N.A.s and nurses ... being a
4 contract worker I didn't qualify for the \$3500 so I
5 can pay you guys \$250.

6 So at this point in time, I need help.
7 By me going out helping everybody that I can out here
8 in the nursing field, and by everybody that need our
9 help like elderly, handicapped, disability people so
10 that we work hard to provide care for them in the
11 healthcare system. And for me, I can't even afford a
12 150 RG&E bill.

13 It's not fair for us to go through
14 this. It's not fair for our community to go through
15 this. And how would you feel in the middle of winter
16 when somebody comes into your RG&E office, they have
17 a daughter that's going to school to be -- and 2-
18 year-old granddaughter that's in the household.

19 So when you get your RG&E cut off, let
20 me know how I feel because I know all these people
21 out here got their RG&E cut off before. How many of
22 you all got your RG&E cut off. So I adore Monroe
23 County Workers Benefit Council.

24 Number 1, the council that rate --
25 high rate entirely ... a year round moratorium set

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2 off and transition to a 100 percent renewable energy
3 grid by 2030 while keeping the rates affordable for
4 every low income person.

5 If you love us like we love God, and
6 you never know when you come to have to come into the
7 ... disease of monkey pox or COVID or that I'm going
8 to be the one that take care of you, but I can't
9 afford my RG&E. So please help us out and look out
10 for us, the essential workers that don't get the
11 \$3500 that's working for them and we need help.

12 Can you help us? So you can because
13 we -- we pay our bills ... help us. Thank you so
14 much.

15 A.L.J. OVERTON: Thank you for your
16 comments. Is there anybody else on the line, Ms.
17 Jackson, with you who would like to make a comment?

18 MS. BENNETT: Yes, hi.

19 A.L.J. OVERTON: Hi.

20 MS. BENNETT: Hi, my name is Faith
21 Bennett. Can you hear me?

22 A.L.J. OVERTON: Yes, we can hear you.
23 Go ahead.

24 MS. BENNETT: Okay. Again, my name is
25 Faith Bennett. And I live in Gates, Rochester, New

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2 York. And I am a senior and I am presently working a
3 temporary job also the board of elections.

4 Dear P.S.C., I am here with the Monroe
5 County Workers Benefit Council and being a senior and
6 living on fixed income and trying to pay my bills and
7 also my RG&E bill, I have had to at the age of 70
8 taken another part-time job in order to cover these
9 things.

10 Our group of seniors engaged are very
11 vulnerable people. Very vulnerable and living on a
12 fixed income it is very difficult to choose from
13 paying the RG&E bills the way they are without the
14 rate hike and also covering our food. A lot of times
15 we are exchanging our food to pay our RG&E bill.

16 And we are the most vulnerable and
17 dear -- dear P.S.C., I endorsed the demands of the
18 Monroe County Workers Benefit Council ... a year
19 round moratorium on shut off and transition to a 100
20 percent renewable energy grid in 2030 while keeping
21 the rates affordable for lowest income taxpayers ...

22 Dear P.S.C., do your job, protect the
23 people ...

24 A.L.J. OVERTON: Thank you for your
25 comment, Ms. Bennett. Is there anybody else in the

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2 group that would like to make a comment tonight?

3 MS. ANDERSON: Yes.

4 A.L.J. OVERTON: Can you please state
5 your name for the record?

6 MS. ANDERSON: Hi, my name is Jenny
7 Anderson. And I live in 10621 Area. I am -- I am
8 here with Monroe County Workers Benefit Council. And
9 I'm here today to speak of ... and family. Even
10 though the shut off is coming and everything and all
11 that. ... the whole family.

12 But when your family and your parents
13 are not doing well, the family gets broken. So I
14 believe that we -- you guys should leave ... too many
15 shut off, too much poverty in the city and too much
16 everything in city, crimes ... crimes, but crimes
17 from being disabled and just mistreated.

18 And I believe that we should do
19 something better to help the people. Don't you want
20 to see a different and a change in the city, yes we
21 do. And I believe that you can do it, but just don't
22 shut off, we don't have enough money to try to make
23 ends meet now. But with this craze in this energy it
24 make a mess of ...

25 So I believe that if you do a favor

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2 for us, everybody should be treated the same because
3 there is no ... person because we all are the same.
4 We maybe people with different background, but we
5 still have ... we want to live and want to be happy
6 and want our families to be happy.

7 So please help us because we need the
8 help. And right now we're not going take it, we're
9 not going to sit back, we're going to do what we have
10 to do to make a difference. And now more shut off.
11 No more shut off.

12 And I hope you're listing to what
13 we're saying, because we mean it and we're not going
14 to stop, ... will continue until it get done. God
15 bless you. And no more shut off, please, please.

16 MS. : No more rate hike.

17 MS. ANDERSON: No more rate hike, no
18 more raising -- no more raising the prices. No more
19 raising the prices ... the Monroe County Worker
20 Benefit Council, cancel this rate hike entirely, it's
21 all year round moratorium on the shut off and
22 transition to 100 renew energy grid to 2030 while
23 keeping rates affordable to even the lowest income
24 ratepayer. No more shut off. No more shut off.

25 A.L.J. OVERTON: Thank you for your

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2 comment, Ms. Anderson. Is there anybody else on the
3 line that would like to make a comment for the
4 record?

5 MS. ANDERSON: No more shut off.

6 A.L.J. OVERTON: Okay. So Sangeetha,
7 I'm going to ask that you mute Ms. Jackson's line,
8 it's sounds like they are done. Again, I want to
9 thank everyone for their comments today, that
10 concludes our hearing this evening.

11 I would like to remind anyone
12 listening that you may also submit comments by other
13 means -- by the other means described earlier in the
14 hearing today, and in the August 19th Notice of
15 Public Statement Hearing.

16 In addition to this evening's hearing,
17 we will be holding additional public statement
18 hearings on September 28th and October 18th, both at
19 one o'clock and five o'clock each day. Judge Bergen
20 and I thank everyone for their interest here today.
21 We also thank Chair Christian and Commissioner
22 Maggiore for participating, our Consumer Services
23 Office for administering the session and our court
24 reporter.

25 The public statement hearing is now

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2 concluded and we are off the record.

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you.

4 A.L.J. OVERTON: Thank you have a
5 great night.

6 (The hearing concluded at 6:02 p.m.)

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2 STATE OF NEW YORK

3 I, MONIQUE HINES, do hereby certify that the foregoing was
4 reported by me, in the cause, at the time and place, as
5 stated in the caption hereto, at Page 1 hereof; that the
6 foregoing typewritten transcription consisting of pages 1
7 through 43, is a true record of all proceedings had at the
8 hearing.

9 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto
10 subscribed my name, this the 21st day of September, 2022.

11

12 MONIQUE HINES, Reporter

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