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BEFORE THE
ILLINOIS COMMERCE COMMISSION
BENCH SESSION
(PUBLIC UTILITIES)
Springfield, Illinois
March 11, 2015

Met, pursuant to notice, at 10:30 a.m. at 527 East
Capitol Avenue, Springfield, Illinois.

PRESENT:

- MR. BRIEN J. SHEAHAN, Chairman
- MS. ANN McCABE, Commissioner (by video)
- MR. MIGUEL del VALLE, Commissioner (by video)
- MS. SHERINA E. MAYE, Commissioner (by video)

MIDWEST LITIGATION SERVICES, by
Angela C. Turner, Reporter
CSR #084-004122

PROCEEDINGS

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CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Good morning. Are we ready to proceed in Chicago?

COMMISSIONER DEL VALLE: Yes, we're ready.

CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Pursuant to the Open Meetings Act, I call the March 11, 2015, Bench Session of the Illinois Commerce Commission to order. Commissioners McCabe, del Valle, and Maye are present in Chicago. I am in Springfield via video conference. We have a quorum.

We have no public comments.

(The Transportation portion of the proceedings was held at this time and is contained in a separate transcript.)

CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Moving on to Public Utilities.

I believe we do have some corrections to the minutes of our February 11, 2015, Bench Session.

Are there any objections to making those changes?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Hearing none, those edits are adopted.

1 Are there any objections to the approval of
2 the minutes, as edited, for February 11, 2015?

3 (No response.)

4 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Without objection, those
5 minutes are approved.

6 Are there any objections to or corrections
7 of the minutes for February 25, 2015?

8 (No response.)

9 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Hearing none, those
10 minutes are also approved.

11 Moving on to the Electric Agenda. Items E-1
12 and E-2 involve routine corrections and revisions to
13 rates or riders.

14 Are there any objections to not suspending
15 the filings in E-1 and E-2?

16 (No response.)

17 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Without objection,
18 they're approved.

19 Let me just clarify. Without objection,
20 those are not suspended.

21 Item E-3 concerns our adoption of Staff's
22 ComEd 2012 Reliability Performance Report.

23 Is there any objection to entering an Order
24 to approve the report?

1 (No response.)

2 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Hearing none, the Order
3 is approved.

4 Item E-4 is Ameren Transmission's Petition
5 Authorizing the Use of Eminent Domain.

6 Let's have a motion on this. Is there a
7 motion to grant the petition?

8 COMMISSIONER McCABE: So moved.

9 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Is there a second?

10 COMMISSIONER MAYE: Second.

11 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Is there any discussion?

12 (No response.)

13 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: All those in favor say
14 aye.

15 (Chorus of ayes.)

16 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Opposed say no.

17 (No response.)

18 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Motion carries.

19 Items E-5 and E-6 are Joint Motions to
20 Dismiss billing complaints.

21 Is there any objection to considering and
22 approving these two items together?

23 (No response.)

24 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Hearing none, those

1 motions are granted.

2 Item E-7 is a proposed Order granting D&G
3 Real Estate of Moline a waiver for separate metering
4 facilities.

5 Are there any objections to granting the
6 requested relief?

7 (No response.)

8 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Hearing none, the
9 requested relief is granted.

10 Item E-8 through E-19 are all Orders
11 granting Certificates for Licensure, Installers, and
12 Authority to provide a service.

13 Are there any objections to considering
14 these items together and approving the proposed
15 Orders?

16 (No response.)

17 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Hearing none, the Orders
18 are granted.

19 Items E-20 and 21 are both Petitions for
20 Confidential Treatment of various reports.

21 Are there any objections to considering 20
22 and 21 together and entering the proposed Orders?

23 (No response.)

24 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Without objection, the

1 Orders are granted.

2 Moving on to the Gas Agenda, Items G-1 and
3 G-2 have been withdrawn.

4 Item G-3 is a petition to keep TERM Energy's
5 2012 Dekatherm Report confidential for a period of
6 two years.

7 Are there any objections to granting the
8 petition?

9 (No response.)

10 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Hearing none, the
11 petition is granted.

12 Items G-4 through 7 are all Motions to
13 Dismiss gas complaints.

14 Are there any objections to granting the
15 motions?

16 (No response.)

17 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: The motions are therefore
18 granted.

19 Items G-8 and 9 are Orders dismissing
20 complaints.

21 Are there any objections to entering the
22 Orders?

23 (No response.)

24 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Without objection, the

1 Orders are entered.

2 Item G-10 involves two Petitions for
3 Interlocutory Review and a data request from
4 Commissioners.

5 First, is there a motion to deny the City,
6 AG, and CUB's Petition for Interlocutory Review
7 regarding the scope of testimony, discovery, and
8 examination regarding the interim audit report?

9 COMMISSIONER McCABE: So moved.

10 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Is there a second?

11 COMMISSIONER MAYE: Second.

12 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Is there any discussion?

13 (No response.)

14 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: All those in favor say
15 aye.

16 (Chorus of ayes.)

17 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Opposed say no.

18 (No response.)

19 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Motion carries.

20 Can we have a Motion to Deny the City, AG,
21 and CUB's Petition for Interlocutory Review regarding
22 the confidentiality of the interim report?

23 COMMISSIONER MAYE: So moved.

24 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Is there a second?

1 COMMISSIONER McCABE: Second.

2 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Any discussion?

3 (No response.)

4 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: All those in favor say
5 aye.

6 Aye.

7 COMMISSIONER MAYE: Aye.

8 COMMISSIONER McCABE: Aye.

9 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Opposed say no.

10 COMMISSIONER DEL VALLE: No.

11 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: The vote is 3 to 1, and
12 the Motion to Deny passes.

13 Our second item with respect to G-10 is a
14 data request from the Commissioners.

15 Commissioner del Valle, I believe you have
16 some discussion.

17 COMMISSIONER DEL VALLE: Yes. Thank you,
18 Mr. Chairman.

19 I would like to move pursuant to Section
20 200.870 of our rules that the Commission direct the
21 ALJ to issue a data request for the parties in this
22 proceeding.

23 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Is there a second?

24 COMMISSIONER MAYE: Second.

1 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Any discussion?

2 (No response.)

3 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: All those in favor say
4 aye.

5 (Chorus of ayes.)

6 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Opposed say no.

7 (No response.)

8 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Motion carries.

9 Item G-11 concerns an investigation into an
10 anonymous letter alleging misconduct and
11 improprieties related to The Peoples Gas Light and
12 Coke Company's Accelerated Main Replacement Program.

13 I believe we have Gene Beyer here to
14 discuss.

15 Mr. Beyer, can you update us?

16 MR. BEYER: Good morning. This is Gene
17 Beyer in Springfield.

18 Last Friday, on March 6th, Staff sent to you
19 the Staff report and draft initiating Order
20 recommending an investigation into the allegations
21 contained in the anonymous letter.

22 Yesterday, Staff notified you that our
23 Office of General Counsel has received a second
24 anonymous letter that presents similar allegations.

1 That letter has been posted on e-Docket, as was the
2 first letter that prompted Staff's recommendation for
3 an investigation.

4 I am here to answer any questions today you
5 may have; and would like to point out that if you
6 decide to initiate the investigation docket, the
7 draft initiating Order may require modifications to
8 expand the scope of the investigation to address the
9 second letter's allegations and possible subsequent
10 allegations.

11 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Thank you, sir.

12 Do we have any questions?

13 COMMISSIONER MAYE: Mr. Chairman, I do
14 recommend that the Order be modified to expand the
15 scope. I agree generally with your recommendations,
16 Gene, and I did circulate some edits for the
17 initiating Order to the other offices to expand that
18 scope to address the second letter.

19 I move the adoption of those edits and to
20 direct OGC to incorporate them at this time.

21 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Is there a second?

22 COMMISSIONER DEL VALLE: Second.

23 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Any discussion?

24 (No response.)

1 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: All those in favor say
2 aye.

3 (Chorus of ayes.)

4 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Opposed to say no.

5 (No response.)

6 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Motion carries.

7 Let's have a motion then to -- we have had a
8 motion to amend the initiating Order. Let's have a
9 motion to adopt the Order as amended.

10 COMMISSIONER DEL VALLE: So moved.

11 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Is there a second?

12 COMMISSIONER McCABE: Second.

13 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Any further discussion?

14 COMMISSIONER McCABE: This is Commissioner
15 McCabe. I would just note that in addition to the
16 second letter, this would also include any future
17 letters.

18 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Correct. That's my
19 understanding as well.

20 MR. BEYERS: Yes.

21 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Great.

22 All those in favor say aye.

23 (Chorus of ayes.)

24 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Opposed say no.

1 (No response.)

2 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Motion carries.

3 Thank you.

4 Moving on to the Telecommunications Agenda.

5 Item T-1 is an Application to provide cable service
6 in the City of Taylorville.

7 Is there an objection to approving the
8 Application?

9 (No response.)

10 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Hearing none, the Order
11 is entered.

12 Item 2 is an Application to Operate as a 911
13 System Provider.

14 Are there any objections to entering the
15 proposed Order?

16 (No response.)

17 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Hearing none, the Order
18 is approved.

19 Items 3 and 4 are Petitions for Cancelation
20 of Certificates.

21 Is there any objection to considering these
22 items together and entering the proposed Orders?

23 (No response.)

24 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Hearing none, the Orders

1 are entered.

2 Items T-5 through 8 are Petitions to Modify
3 911 System Providers.

4 Is there any objection to considering these
5 items together and entering the proposed Orders?

6 (No response.)

7 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Hearing none, the Orders
8 are entered.

9 Items T-9 through 14 are Petitions for
10 Confidential Treatment of various reports.

11 Are there any objections to considering
12 these items together and entering the proposed
13 Orders?

14 (No response.)

15 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Hearing none, the Orders
16 are entered.

17 Items T-15, 16, and 17 are Joint Petitions
18 for amendments to interconnection agreements.

19 Are there any objections to considering
20 these items together and entering the proposed
21 Orders?

22 (No response.)

23 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Hearing none, the Orders
24 are entered.

1 T-18 and 19 are show-cause proceedings
2 concerning failure to file required reports under
3 WETSA.

4 Are there any objections to considering
5 these items together and granting the Motions to
6 Dismiss?

7 (No response.)

8 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Hearing none, the motions
9 are granted.

10 Moving on to our Water Agenda. Item 1 is a
11 filing to consolidate the Chicago Metro District.

12 Are there any objections to not suspending
13 the filing?

14 (No response.)

15 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Hearing none, the filing
16 is not suspended.

17 Item 2 is Aqua Illinois' proposed increase
18 in water rates.

19 The Commission has already granted the
20 party's request for Oral Argument.

21 Is there a motion to deny Staff's Motion for
22 Leave to file a corrected brief on exceptions?

23 COMMISSIONER MAYE: So moved.

24 COMMISSIONER McCABE: Second.

1 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Is there any discussion?

2 (No response.)

3 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: All those in favor say
4 aye.

5 (Chorus of ayes.)

6 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Opposed say no.

7 (No response.)

8 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Motion carries.

9 The remainder of this item will be held for
10 disposition at a future Commission proceeding.

11 Item W-3 will also be held at a future
12 meeting for consideration.

13 Item W-4 is a Motion to Dismiss a consumer
14 complaint.

15 Are there any objections to granting the
16 Motion to Dismiss?

17 (No response.)

18 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Hearing none, the motion
19 is granted.

20 We have got a miscellaneous section of our
21 agenda --

22 COMMISSIONER DEL VALLE: Mr. Chairman.

23 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Yes, sir.

24 COMMISSIONER DEL VALLE: Could we go back to

1 that one quickly?

2 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Sure.

3 COMMISSIONER DEL VALLE: That's the Nunda --

4 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Nunda.

5 COMMISSIONER DEL VALLE: -- utility

6 complaint.

7 There was a concern expressed about Nunda
8 refusing to or not appearing at the hearings. And I
9 think that it's important that we convey a strong
10 message that this is not acceptable behavior on the
11 part of any utility to ignore these complaints. Even
12 though they're, in this case, on the winning side, I
13 think it's important to send that message that they
14 should respond. At least return phone calls.

15 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Thank you, Commissioner.

16 We'll make sure that that message is
17 conveyed in a formal way.

18 Under Miscellaneous, we have one
19 miscellaneous item on today's agenda. Item M-1 is
20 our proceeding to approve the Illinois Statewide
21 Technical Reference Manual for Energy Efficiency.

22 Are there any objections to entering the
23 Order to initiate a proceeding?

24 (No response.)

1 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Hearing none, the Order
2 is entered.

3 Under Petitions for Rehearing, Item PR-1 is
4 North Shore Gas and Peoples Gas proposed general rate
5 increase.

6 Is there a motion to deny the City of
7 Chicago and CUB's petition?

8 COMMISSIONER MAYE: So moved.

9 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Is there a second?

10 COMMISSIONER McCABE: Second.

11 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Any discussion?

12 (No response.)

13 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: All those in favor say
14 aye.

15 (Chorus of ayes.)

16 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Opposed say no.

17 (No response.)

18 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Motion carries.

19 Is there a motion to deny the AG's petition
20 in the same case?

21 COMMISSIONER McCABE: So moved.

22 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Is there a second?

23 COMMISSIONER MAYE: Second.

24 COMMISSIONER DEL VALLE: Mr. Chairman, I

1 need to record as no -- or yes on --

2 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Okay. The motion was to
3 deny.

4 COMMISSIONER DEL VALLE: No on denial.

5 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: So the record will
6 reflect that on the motion to deny the City of
7 Chicago and CUB's petition, Commissioner del Valle
8 voted no.

9 The motion to deny passes 3 to 1.

10 We're prepared to take a vote on the second
11 motion to deny.

12 All those in favor say aye.

13 Aye.

14 COMMISSIONER McCABE: Aye.

15 COMMISSIONER MAYE: Aye.

16 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Opposed say no.

17 COMMISSIONER DEL VALLE: No.

18 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: The motion passes 3 to 1.

19 Item PR-2 is Mary Weathersby's complaint
20 against AT&T.

21 Is there a motion to deny the Petition for
22 Rehearing?

23 COMMISSIONER McCABE: So moved.

24 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Is there a second?

1 COMMISSIONER MAYE: Second.

2 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Any discussion?

3 (No response.)

4 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: All those in favor say
5 aye.

6 (Chorus of ayes.)

7 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Opposed say no.

8 (No response.)

9 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Motion carries.

10 Our final section -- first section of other
11 business on today's agenda is our "Fix-a-Leak Week"
12 Resolution.

13 Commissioner Maye, would you like to
14 introduce this?

15 COMMISSIONER MAYE: Yes. Thank you,
16 Mr. Chairman.

17 In 2006, U.S. EPA developed its WaterSense
18 program, which seeks to build partnerships with
19 various stakeholders over the issue of water
20 conservation and efficiency. The program aims to
21 coordinate groups to promote the value of water
22 efficiency, provide consumers with easy ways to
23 conserve, and encourage innovation in manufacturing.

24 As you know, this Commission and others

1 around the country are dealing with our water
2 infrastructure needs. Obviously, a large part of
3 that will be the investment that public and private
4 water companies will need to make in the future. But
5 another aspect are the efforts we undertake now to
6 use water more efficiently to reduce demands so that
7 our infrastructure needs may not be as great.

8 Another important factor in water
9 conservation is the nexus water has with energy
10 usage. The Alliance for Water Efficiency estimates
11 that in the average home, heating water accounts for
12 15 percent of the total household energy usage.
13 Decreasing water usage through more efficient
14 appliances and reduced water loss measures clearly
15 have a potential to reduce electric demand, which can
16 save money and resources.

17 One essential element of water conversation
18 is raising public awareness about the value of water
19 and the ways that water can be used more efficiently.
20 The U.S. EPA estimates that the amount of water
21 leaked from U.S. homes exceeds more than 1 trillion
22 gallons per year. This is equal to the annual water
23 usage of Los Angeles, Miami, and Chicago combined.

24 Here are a few more facts from the EPA that

1 shed light on just how much water leaks out of our
2 systems. Leaks can account for, on average, 10,000
3 gallons of water wasted in the home every year. Ten
4 percent of homes have leaks that waste 90 gallons or
5 more per day. The most common types of household
6 leaks are easily correctable, like dripping faucets,
7 leaking toilet flappers, and leaking showerheads.
8 And a leaky faucet that drips at one drip per second
9 can waste more than 3,000 gallons per year. An
10 additional fact that most of you may not know is that
11 it takes 21 billion gallons of water to produce
12 electricity each year.

13 So what can we do as consumers to stop or
14 prevent water loss from leaks? Well, the good news
15 is that most of the remedies are fairly simple and
16 inexpensive. Do a check of your water system at
17 least once each year. Take a look at your winter
18 water usage. If a family of four is using more than
19 12,000 gallons a month in the winter, then it's
20 likely there could be a leak. Check your water
21 meter before and after a two-hour period when no
22 water is being used. If the meter does not read
23 exactly the same, then you most likely have a leak.
24 More information can be found on the U.S. EPA's

1 WaterSense website.

2 For the foregoing reasons I mentioned, we
3 have drafted a Resolution stating that the Illinois
4 Commerce Commission supports the week of March 16th
5 through the 22nd as the seventh annual "Fix-a-Leak
6 Week." And we do encourage all customers and
7 businesses to check their water systems for leaks.

8 Mr. Chairman, Commissioners, I do move for
9 the Commission to adopt the Resolution that I will
10 read.

11 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Is there a --

12 COMMISSIONER MAYE: Whereas --

13 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: I am sorry.

14 COMMISSIONER MAYE: Would you like me to
15 read the Resolution?

16 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Sure.

17 COMMISSIONER MAYE: WHEREAS, water is a
18 vital public resource and is essential to healthy
19 lives and the environment; and

20 WHEREAS, the U.S. EPA estimates that 10
21 percent of the homes have leaks that waste 90 gallons
22 of water or more per day; and

23 WHEREAS, the average household's leaks can
24 account for more than 10,000 gallons of water every

1 year, enough water to wash 270 loads of laundry; and

2 WHEREAS, the Illinois Commerce Commission is
3 uniquely situated to encourage the adoption of
4 programs and offering of products that will promote
5 water efficiency and reduce the amount of electricity
6 used by water treatment facilities; and

7 WHEREAS, the U.S. EPA launched the
8 WaterSense initiative to make it easy for American
9 consumers and businesses to save water and protect
10 the environment by establishing water efficiency
11 standards; and

12 WHEREAS, the EPA's WaterSense program
13 announced its seventh annual energy efficiency
14 initiative: "Fix-a-Leak Week," March 16 through the
15 22, 2015; and

16 WHEREAS, fixing easily corrected household
17 water leaks can save homeowners more than 10 percent
18 on their water bills.

19 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the
20 Illinois Commerce Commission supports the week of
21 March 16th through the 22nd, 2015, as "Fix-a-Leak
22 Week" and encourages all consumers and businesses to
23 check their plumbing and irrigation systems annually
24 to reduce unnecessary water leakage.

1 Chairman and Commissioners, I move that the
2 Commission adopt the aforementioned Resolution and do
3 ask for your support. Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Thank you.

5 Is there a second?

6 COMMISSIONER McCABE: Second.

7 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Is there any discussion?

8 (No response.)

9 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: All those in favor say
10 aye.

11 (Chorus of ayes.)

12 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Opposed say no.

13 (No response.)

14 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Motion carries.

15 Thank you, Commissioner Maye.

16 COMMISSIONER MAYE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

17 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: The next item we have is
18 approval of the Standard Product Benchmark Report
19 from the IPA's procurement administrator for its
20 March 2015 procurement for Ameren and ComEd.

21 Is there a motion to approve the report?

22 COMMISSIONER McCABE: So moved.

23 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Is there a second?

24 COMMISSIONER MAYE: Second.

1 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Any discussion?

2 (No response.)

3 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: All those in favor say
4 aye.

5 (Chorus of ayes.)

6 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Opposed say no.

7 (No response.)

8 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Motion carries 4 to 0.

9 Commissioner del Valle has asked for leave
10 of the Commission to make a statement concerning
11 LIHEAP, and that request is granted.

12 Commissioner del Valle.

13 COMMISSIONER DEL VALLE: Thank you,
14 Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the courtesy and the
15 opportunity to make a brief statement about something
16 I feel strongly about.

17 On April 2, 2014, this Commission voted
18 unanimously to adopt a Resolution urging our
19 President to remove from his federal budget proposal
20 an 18 percent cut to the Energy Assistance Program
21 for low-income households.

22 As a Commissioner, I wanted to place on our
23 agenda a timely Resolution similarly urging both the
24 General Assembly and the Governor to protect our

1 Supplemental Low-Income Energy Assistance Funds.

2 However, my request was denied.

3 This year, in Illinois, we have a budget
4 proposal that calls for cuts of \$165 million, or
5 33 percent, of ratepayer contributions to this fund.
6 Contributions collected in the public trust for the
7 exclusive purpose of aiding those in need. The press
8 is reporting that the Governor will be asking for a
9 legislative fix to permanently divert these dollars
10 to the General Revenue Fund. In addition, just last
11 week, the Senate proposed a bill that would sweep a
12 total of \$15 million from the Supplemental Low-Income
13 Assistance Fund. This program should not be subject
14 to cuts, in my opinion.

15 Even without these cuts, DCEO estimates that
16 in 2015, the assistance programs would only help
17 35 percent of eligible families in Illinois.
18 Following a recession, the slow recovery, and two
19 brutal winters, any cuts to this program further
20 reducing our state's ability to help our residents in
21 dire need is an unconscionable proposal by the State
22 Senate and Administration, and a devastating blow to
23 these households.

24 The Low-Income Energy Assistance Program is

1 the main federal program that helps low-income
2 households, people with special needs, and seniors
3 with their energy bills. It provides vital
4 assistance during the cold winters and hot summer
5 months. And the Commission was enthusiastic in
6 adopting a Resolution opposing a further 18 percent
7 cut after the federal program had already had its
8 appropriations go from \$5.1 billion in 2010 to
9 \$3.5 billion in 2014.

10 In Illinois, the Supplemental Low-Income
11 Energy Assistance Fund directs gas and utilities to
12 assess a monthly surcharge from ratepayers for the
13 sole purpose of supplementing the LIHEAP fund,
14 increasing the available LIHEAP by a total of
15 50 percent, to provide vital assistance to a greater
16 number of Illinois households in need.

17 And these people are in need. 1.8 million
18 of our residents live in poverty and 20.7 percent of
19 our children live at or below the poverty level.
20 DCEO estimated that 926,000 Illinois households will
21 be eligible for LIHEAP assistance in 2015. And the
22 agency projects that even without these cuts, only
23 35 percent of them will receive assistance.

24 Here at the Commission, we hear from

1 individuals who are facing these cuts. After
2 April 1st of every year, our Consumer Services
3 Division sees dramatic increases in consumer
4 complaints resulting from termination of service for
5 nonpayment after the annual lifting of the limitation
6 placed on terminations in the winter months.

7 I am deeply disappointed that my Resolution
8 will not be placed on the agenda. This past Monday,
9 however, I sent a letter on my own behalf to members
10 of the General Assembly and to the Governor urging
11 them to protect the ratepayer contributions collected
12 for the purpose of aiding those residents in need.
13 Given the two consecutive harsh winters our residents
14 have had to endure, these funds are needed now more
15 than ever.

16 Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the courtesy.

17 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Thank you, Commissioner,
18 for those remarks on an important issue.

19 Commissioners, do we have any other
20 business?

21 (No response.)

22 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Judge Wallace, do we have
23 any other matters?

24 JUDGE WALLACE: No. That's all,

1 Mr. Chairman.

2 CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Then we're adjourned.

3 Thank you very much.

4 BENCH SESSION CONCLUDED.

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I, Angela C. Turner, a Certified Shorthand Reporter within and for the State of Illinois, do hereby certify that the meeting aforementioned was held on the time and in the place previously described.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal.

Angela C. Turner
IL CSR #084-004122