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BEFORE THE
ILLINOIS COMMERCE COMMISSION
REGULAR OPEN MEETING
PUBLIC UTILITY
NOVEMBER 5, 2020
Springfield, Illinois

- CARRIE ZALEWSKI, Chairwoman, remote
- MICHAEL T. CARRIGAN, Commissioner
- D. ETHAN KIMBREL, Commissioner
- MARIE S. BOCANEGRA, Commissioner, remote
- SADZI OLIVA, Commissioner, remote

- DeAnne M. Renken, IL CSR
- Alaris Litigation Services

1 CHAIRMAN ZALEWSKI: Under the Open
2 Meetings Act and in accordance with the Governor's
3 executive orders, I call the November 5, 2020,
4 regular opening meeting to order.

5 Before we proceed and for clarity of
6 the record, I would ask everyone to state their name
7 before speaking and to speak slowly and clearly so
8 that the court reporter can capture everything that
9 is said.

10 The court reporter is in Springfield
11 with commissioner Kimbrel and Carrigan. So if the
12 court reporter is unable to hear us, just wave, and
13 then perhaps Mr. Kimbrel or Carrigan can speak up
14 and let us know.

15 So we have all five commissioners, and
16 we have a quorum. We have six requests to speak,
17 and we are going to go in the order of receive, and
18 so first we will have Allan Max Axelrod, second Adam
19 Broad, third Danielle Chynoweth, fourth Renee
20 Patten, fifth Nicholas Dodson, and sixth Brandon
21 Adams.

22 Under 2 Illinois Administrative Code,
23 Section 1700.10, any person desiring to address the
24 commission shall be allowed up to three minutes.

1 Only one person may speak on behalf of any
2 organization. Please note that the commission will
3 not respond directly to any comments.

4 First we have Mr. Allan Axelrod.
5 Mr. Axelrod, we will just make sure we can hear you.

6 MR. AXELROD: Can you hear me?

7 CHAIRMAN ZALEWSKI: We can hear you.
8 You have three minutes. I'm going to quickly -- I'm
9 going to set my timer, and if you could state and
10 spell your name for the court reporter, and then you
11 can go ahead and begin.

12 MR. AXELROD: All right. My name is
13 Allan Max Axelrod. That is A-l-l-a-n M-a-x
14 A-x-e-l-r-o-d.

15 (Court reporter clarification.)

16 COMMISSIONER CARRIGAN: Chairman.
17 Chairman. Hold on. It's Commissioner Carrigan. The
18 reporter is having trouble.

19 (Wherein, an off-the-record
20 discussion was held.)

21 CHAIRMAN ZALEWSKI: Let's try again.
22 And -- I mean, I will mute and hopefully that helps
23 a little bit, and if you could -- I think if you're
24 stationary, it will be helpful as well. Let's start

1 over though.

2 MR. AXELROD: Thank you. Can you hear
3 me better now? Okay. Sorry about that.

4 So my name is Allan Max Axelrod. That
5 is A-l-l-a-n M-a-x A-x-e-l-r-o-d.

6 I'm the campaign lead of No Ameren Shut
7 Off. That is a zero dollar all volunteer grassroots
8 campaign spanning from Waukegan all the way down to
9 Carbondale. We have a 46 member organization
10 spanning the ideological spectrum well into the non
11 -profit industry, including food and water watch.
12 The last time that I spoke to you, we had 30 --

13 (Court reporter clarification.)

14 COMMISSIONER CARRIGAN: She is having
15 trouble again.

16 (Wherein, an off-the-record
17 discussion was held.)

18 CHAIRMAN ZALEWSKI: Okay. Great. All
19 right. Mr. Axelrod, you may proceed.

20 MR. AXELROD: So my name is Allan Max
21 Axelrod. That is A-l-l-a-n M-a-x A-x-e-l-r-o-d.

22 I'm the campaign lead of No Ameren Shut
23 Off. That is a zero dollar all volunteer grassroots
24 campaign spanning from Waukegan all the way down to

1 Carbondale. We have now a 46 member organization
2 spanning the ideological spectrum including a lot of
3 non-for-profit organizations, including food and
4 water watch.

5 The last time I spoke to you, we had 30
6 counties of warning stated for coronavirus. Our
7 average for the seven-day running average new
8 coronavirus cases was just below 3,000 cases; and
9 after utility shut-offs were allowed to resume
10 through the means testing, not automatic voluntary
11 moratorium that was enacted, coronavirus cases have
12 exploded.

13 We went from down to 17 counties that
14 are warning status for coronavirus at the end of
15 September to 49 last reported.

16 Our -- we haven't had a day below 2,000
17 new coronavirus cases since October 6. We haven't
18 had a day below 3,000 new coronavirus cases since
19 October -- what was it? -- 14th.

20 We haven't had a day below 4,000 new
21 coronavirus cases since October 23, and we haven't
22 had a day below 6,000 coronavirus cases since
23 October 27. The last two days our coronavirus cases
24 have been above 7,000. Today it was over 9,000 yet

1 again, breaking a record for the new daily
2 coronavirus cases that our state has had in a day.

3 A lot of media has been reporting about
4 how we have gone all the way back to spring in terms
5 of the protections that we have in order to stymie
6 the coronavirus and spread. That is not true.

7 In spring, there were no utility
8 shut-offs. And so I want to reemphasize that the
9 Bush era 2007 congressional research service report
10 entailed pandemic influenza and announces a state
11 preparation and response plan, specifically
12 enumerated public utilities as one of the things
13 essential to continue during a pandemic.

14 The state of Wisconsin has a mandatory
15 utility shut-off moratorium for just their public
16 utility, but because they had so many municipal and
17 cooperative-owned utilities, they had to, on
18 October 24, extend those protections to be mandatory
19 for all kinds of utility.

20 This has been a severe health issue
21 that is undeniable. In June, when West Virginia
22 allowed their utility shut-off moratorium to lapse,
23 their rate of new daily coronavirus cases tripled
24 within a week.

1 In Kentucky, they allowed their
2 moratorium on utility shut-off to expire in
3 October 20, and they have seen increase of cases as
4 well.

5 CHAIRMAN ZALEWSKI: That's your three
6 minutes.

7 MR. AXELROD: Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN ZALEWSKI: Thank you so much.
9 Okay. Next, Mr. Broad. You are next.

10 If you could state and spell your name. I will
11 start the timer as well. Go ahead and proceed.

12 MR. BROAD: My name is Adam Broad,
13 A-d-a-m B-r-o-a-d. I am a volunteer co-organizer of
14 Our Revolution Lake County. We stand in solidarity
15 with the Stop Ameren Shut-Off organization. I am
16 also a Vernon township trustee up in Cook County,
17 Illinois.

18 Basically, I'm here asking the ICC to
19 make public all emergency powers that exist. So we
20 can prevent utility -- all utility shut-offs in
21 Illinois during this pandemic. Utility shut-offs
22 effectively make people homeless and put their lives
23 at risk.

24 We are indirectly killing people if

1 we're shutting off their utilities and making them
2 homeless during a pandemic and forcing them into a
3 shelter.

4 Right now it's warm. It's going to get
5 cold. It's not the time to be homeless or without
6 utilities. I would like to see my state step up and
7 promote the general welfare, which includes people
8 suffering during economic hardship, which should not
9 be a death sentence for poverty in the United States
10 or the state of Illinois. Thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN ZALEWSKI: Thank you. Third
12 is Danielle Chynoweth. Ms. Chynoweth, spell and
13 state your name, and you may go ahead and proceed.
14 I will start the timer.

15 MS. CHYNOWETH: Thank you. Good
16 afternoon, commissioners. This is Danielle
17 Chynoweth. D-a-n-i-e-l-l-e C-h-y-n-o-w-e-t-h. I am
18 the board chair of the Champaign-Urbana Public
19 Health District, and I am also the Cunningham
20 Township Supervisor running a public aid office in
21 Urbana which is home to the University of Illinois.

22 I want to show you a photo if I could.
23 Is that possible? I will do a quick share and see
24 if it is. So -- okay.

1 This is Cedric Robinson. I want you to
2 see his face. He lives in Urbana. He was in the
3 shower getting ready to work when his bathroom
4 lights suddenly went dark yesterday.

5 He has been out of work due to COVID-19
6 and recently got new employment at Best Buy. He was
7 \$280 behind on his power bill when Ameren called him
8 last Friday.

9 He set up a payment plan. He told them
10 he would get paid Wednesday and would pay the \$33 on
11 that day, and they said that would be fine.
12 Yesterday morning, his lights went off.

13 Thanks to the Public Utilities Act,
14 Ameren is required to notify local public health
15 departments about any customers with non-pay
16 disconnections November through March.

17 We have not received notes of September
18 through October. So we're unaware of the hundreds
19 who have already received disconnection.

20 CU Public Health Board spoke at our
21 study session last Friday about the utility
22 shut-offs and what we could do to intervene and
23 support. The board asked our administrator, Julie
24 Pryde, to write a letter to --

1 (Court reporter clarification.)

2 COMMISSIONER KIMBREL: Miss. Miss,
3 you're speaking too fast.

4 MS. CHYNOWETH: I am sorry. I have
5 three minutes. I'm trying to be judicious. If I
6 could have a little more time put on the clock.

7 This is Cedric Robinson. His power was
8 turned off when he was in the shower. He was behind
9 because of COVID-19. He just got new employment at
10 Best Buy. He was behind \$280. He set up a payment
11 plan on Friday. He said he would be paid Wednesday
12 and would pay \$33, and they said that would be fine,
13 and his power was shut off yesterday morning.

14 Because of the Public Utilities Act
15 Ameren is required to notify public health
16 departments about non-paid disconnections November
17 through March, and our board spoke at our study
18 session about how we could intervene and support,
19 and you will be receiving a letter from us, along
20 with Pritzker and Ameren. We're calling for a
21 statewide moratorium on shut-offs.

22 I have a list. My list has 223
23 residents facing shut-offs this week due to
24 nonpayment. Many of these are walking distance from

1 my home. So I canvassed, personally, over a dozen
2 people on Tuesday, election day.

3 I spoke with an elderly woman in her
4 early 80s. She had a hard time understanding me. I
5 spoke with a man with a neurological disability who
6 had a hard time walking. I spoke with a woman
7 dealing with domestic violence.

8 These are all people on the list who
9 were receiving a shut-off the next day, and I tried
10 to help them access LIHEAP and speak to Ameren to
11 prevent the shut-off.

12 Mr. Robinson, I visited him, but he was
13 not home. He called me because of the note that I
14 left; and because of our Angel Donor Fund, I paid
15 his now connect fee over \$300 to reconnect his
16 utility.

17 I am practically standing with a hat
18 out on the street privately fundraising to pay for
19 people's utilities, when Ameren, according to their
20 quarter two earnings call, their profit increased
21 36 percent for the last year to this year. People
22 already --

23 CHAIRMAN ZALEWSKI: That's the timer.

24 MS. CHYNOWETH: I will just end with

1 this sentence. The voluntary moratorium is not
2 working. We need a mandatory moratorium on
3 shut-offs now. The governor's office constituent
4 services line did not connect, and the voice mailbox
5 was full this morning.

6 Thank you for your time.

7 CHAIRMAN ZALEWSKI: Thank you.

8 (Court reporter clarification.)

9 COMMISSIONER CARRIGAN: The court
10 reporter is requesting written comments from
11 Ms. Chynoweth if they are available.

12 (Wherein, an off-the-record
13 discussion was held.)

14 CHAIRMAN ZALEWSKI: Ms. Renee Patten,
15 same thing. You have three minutes, and please
16 state and spell your name, and I will start the
17 timer.

18 MS. PATTEN: Hi. I'm Renee Patten,
19 spelling R-e-n-e-e, Patten P-a-t-t-e-n. I'm with
20 Democratize ComEd. My heart is racing from
21 Danielle's comments. That just absolutely breaks my
22 heart. Just taking a moment to soak that in for all
23 the people that are -- people that are struggling.
24 That's real hard to hear. So I'm -- I want to speak

1 to that -- we have heard north (unintelligible) --

2 THE REPORTER: I don't know what she --

3 MS. ROLANDO: She is very mumbled.

4 MS. PATTEN: And that -- to that --

5 over 9,000 people in the second half of September

6 alone have had their household be disconnected.

7 This (unintelligible) --

8 (Court reporter clarification.)

9 MS. PATTEN: I don't know if I can say
10 it better than Danielle just said it --

11 COMMISSIONER CARRIGAN: I'm going to
12 interrupt. This is Commissioner Carrigan again.
13 Chairman and Ms. Patten, the court reporter is
14 having some problems. Where do we need to back up
15 to?

16 COMMISSIONER KIMBREL: Your connection
17 is a little...

18 MS. PATTEN: I will drop the video.

19 COMMISSIONER CARRIGAN: Just back up
20 two, three, four sentences and try again.

21 MS. PATTEN: Okay. My comment is about
22 that over 9,000 households have been disconnected in
23 the end of September alone, despite the voluntary no
24 disconnect that is happening, and this is

1 unacceptable with Democratize ComEd, we support
2 expanded low income assistance, especially relevant
3 in a pandemic, and I ask the commission to do what's
4 in your power and hopefully what your hearts are
5 telling you as well in helping these people ensure
6 they have the basic right to electricity that they
7 need to function in life. That's the end of my
8 comment. Thank you.

9 (Court reporter clarification.)

10 (Wherein, an off-the-record
11 discussion was held.)

12 CHAIRMAN ZALEWSKI: Mr. Nicholas
13 Dodson. Mr. Dodson, are you on? Please state and
14 spell your name, and then I will mute myself because
15 there is a little background noise on my end, and I
16 will start the timer.

17 MR. DODSON: My name is Nick Dodson.
18 That's N-i-c-k D-o-d-s-o-n. I live in Springfield,
19 Illinois, and I'm with the Sangamon County
20 Democratic Socialists of America. I'm here to bring
21 light that it was reported that 375 homes in
22 Springfield, Illinois, have had their power shut off
23 in only the second half of the month of September
24 during the pandemic and during record unemployment.

1 We contacted your office by phone and
2 were informed that under point 12 of the governor's
3 emergency powers, JB Pritzker has the executive
4 order by power of his office, with 20 ILCS 3305-7.
5 The governor can control, restrict, and regulate
6 materials, goods, or services, which is exactly what
7 has been done in several other states with mandatory
8 moratoriums.

9 The governor was fact-checked by a
10 journalist in Champaign and was caught lying on film
11 about just this executive power last week. Lawyers
12 for the utility corporation have been messaging
13 public officials insisting that the ICC has unique
14 jurisdiction over public utilities.

15 While true in nominal times, that is
16 not the case with regard to the governor's emergency
17 powers, which brings me to corona and COVID.

18 According to the Illinois Department of
19 Public Health data, local COVID rates are soaring
20 exponentially in Sangamon County where I live. The
21 case rate per 100,000 has increased 450 percent
22 since September 20. When our (unintelligible) 61,
23 it was now 28 per 100,000.

24 COVID-19 positivity rates are sitting

1 at 8.2 percent with no signs of letting up in
2 Sangamon County. Let me remind you that the target
3 is 5 percent.

4 My question is this: Are you going to
5 sit by and let public utilities spread half-truths
6 which cause other public officials to balk instead
7 of acting to protect their residents?

8 You spoke up once before, and you are
9 needed to be boldly on that record again. We are
10 calling on the ICC to release a press statement
11 stating that in no uncertain terms that, yes, the
12 governor can use 20 ILCS 3305-7.12 to enact a
13 mandatory and non-means-tested utility shut off
14 moratorium. The data shows undeniably that we have
15 to act. Thank you.

16 (Court reporter clarification.)

17 (Wherein, an off-the-record
18 discussion was held.)

19 CHAIRMAN ZALEWSKI: Thank you,
20 commissioner. Finally we have Mr. Brandon Adams.

21 Mr. Adams, you have three minutes. I'm
22 going to set my timer. You may begin.

23 MR. ADAMS: Thank you, Illinois
24 Commerce Commissioners. I was going to introduce

1 myself and turn off the video to conserve data. My
2 name is Brandon Adams, B-r-a-n-d-o-n A-d-a-m-s. I
3 would like to thank the commissioners for letting me
4 speak.

5 I'm a Jacksonville city counselor.
6 I've been living in public housing and receive
7 Social Security Disability since a two-month coma
8 from West Nile virus in 2013.

9 Part of living off Social Security
10 Disability is the assistance programs. I receive
11 LIHEAP and public housing. Our rent is \$13,
12 included with the water. So at that discounted rate
13 to the low income people, that's provided to the
14 less fortunate regardless of their situation.

15 Ending water shut-off is currently in
16 the committee that I requested from the utility
17 committee to consider. 70 residents in Jacksonville
18 have had their power shut off in September alone,
19 and 8 to 12 percent of Morgan County is COVID
20 positive.

21 Right now the numbers in Illinois are
22 between 7 and 9,000 new cases a day, which put
23 Illinois in the top state in the nation for new
24 COVID cases, and the United States is the number one

1 country in the world for new COVID cases. So that
2 puts Illinois at the very front of this pandemic.

3 I asked my mayor to use his emergency
4 authority to end the power shut-offs during the
5 pandemic, and I'm also asking the ICC to send a
6 communication to Illinois mayors showing Champaign's
7 municipal code 12-39 (26), the moratorium on utility
8 shut-offs is completely within the authority of a
9 home rule community and also suggested to do so
10 until the pandemic is determined over.

11 Thank you very much, Commissioners.

12 (Court reporter clarification.)

13 (Wherein, an off-the-record
14 discussion was held.)

15 CHAIRMAN ZALEWSKI: Item 0-3 on our
16 public utility agenda concerns a report by the
17 president and chief executive officer of Peoples Gas
18 and North Shore on the status of compliance with the
19 order in Docket Number 14-0496. Docket 14-0496
20 concerns Peoples Gas and North Shore's corporate
21 reorganization into WEC Energy Group.

22 If there are no objections for
23 logistical reasons, we will hear this item now.

24 Hearing none, Mr. Matthews, you may

1 proceed.

2 MR. MATTHEWS: Very good. Thank you,
3 Chairman. Thank you, commissioners. Can you hear
4 me, reporter? I will move forward.

5 Let me just say upfront as usual, you
6 will have access to all of my comments in writing.
7 Let me just say that, obviously, I would rather be
8 there in person. I only get a chance to come over
9 and appear before the commission and get a chance to
10 enter directly with the commissioners a couple of
11 times a year, one of which was a couple of months
12 ago and now this one is virtual.

13 I just want you to know I really miss
14 coming over there and making this appearance, and I
15 thought nobody would miss it more than me, but after
16 hearing the first 20 minutes, obviously the court
17 reporter would rather have these in person as well.
18 I certainly know we all want to get back to normal.

19 This is the sixth annual update since
20 WEC Energy Group acquired Peoples Gas and North
21 Shore Gas in 2015. Let me say up front that I'm
22 pleased to say we remain in compliance with all of
23 the conditions in the commission's order authorizing
24 the merger.

1 2020 has been a year of unanticipated
2 challenges for us with a global pandemic and
3 unprecedented civil and social issues to contend
4 with. Despite all that, our employees remain more
5 focused than ever on providing our customers with
6 safe, reliable natural gas service.

7 I'm going to focus much of my update
8 today on our response to the challenges presented by
9 COVID-19. I will also be sharing some key
10 highlights from the year, and of course I will be
11 happy to respond to any questions you have after my
12 remarks.

13 As you can imagine, running a natural
14 gas utility in a major city like Chicago poses
15 unique challenges, even under normal circumstances.

16 We are responsible for providing an
17 essential resource our customers can depend on 24
18 hours a day, 7 days a week, but that resource must
19 be managed expertly and carefully to keep our
20 customers and communicates safe.

21 We take those dual responsibilities
22 very seriously, and both were on display like never
23 before when Governor Pritzker issued his
24 stay-at-home order in March.

1 The central question we faced was how
2 to best serve our customers while keeping them and
3 our employees safe.

4 While our office staff made the
5 transition to working from home immediately, we were
6 especially focused on the safety of our field crews.
7 We immediately implemented a number of new
8 procedures, including issuing PPE, daily deep
9 cleanings, and weekly disinfectant fogging
10 treatments at all of our facilities.

11 We suspended nonemergency appointments
12 with customers. We also created employee guidelines
13 for reporting COVID-19 exposures and test results.
14 And we established a contact tracing team to follow
15 up on positive cases to determine the need for
16 quarantines and additional preventative measures.

17 Today we continue to focus on the
18 health and safety of our workforce. We have asked
19 each of our employees to take a safety pledge
20 affirming their commitment to remaining vigilant
21 against COVID-19.

22 Let me turn our response to customers
23 in the community. As you know, we worked closely
24 with commission staff and other stakeholders early

1 on to support customers suffering from the economic
2 effects of COVID-19.

3 Thanks to your leadership, the
4 resulting plan included: Halting service
5 disconnections for nonpayment; reconnecting service
6 to customers who were previously disconnected;
7 making an additional \$13 million in financial
8 assistance available; extending long-term payment
9 plans; and waiving all deposit requirements.

10 These additional measures supplemented
11 existing financial assistance provided through
12 LIHEAP and our own Share the Warmth program.

13 Last winter more than 54,000 of our low
14 income customers received a total of \$29 million in
15 assistance from LIHEAP grants, and more than 4,700
16 customers received Share the Warmth grants of up to
17 \$200 per household.

18 As we did last year, we are making
19 \$3 million in Share the Warmth grants available this
20 winter. We also will suspend the matching payment
21 requirement for Share the Warmth for the fourth year
22 in a row.

23 Early on in the pandemic we responded
24 to the needs of the community with more than

1 \$1 million in funding for area non-profits.

2 That included \$400,000 in emergency
3 support for organizations providing food and shelter
4 to those directly affected by COVID-19, groups like
5 the United Way, American Red Cross, and Greater
6 Chicago Food Depository.

7 It also included \$630,000 for our
8 long-term community partners in the areas of human
9 services, education, and the arts to help them keep
10 their doors open.

11 Additionally, we donated more than
12 10,000 masks and 10,000 pairs of surgical gloves for
13 the Chicago Department of Public Health when PPE was
14 in short supply.

15 And as I speak to you this morning, we
16 are in the final days of our annual United Way
17 campaign. Last year, our employees donated more
18 than \$174,000 to United Way, and we're hoping to
19 increase our contributions this year.

20 Turning to our work in the field.
21 We've continued to make good progress on our system
22 modernization program this year, despite the
23 pandemic.

24 The lack of traffic during the

1 stay-at-home order made it possible to accelerate
2 several downtown construction projects, one on
3 Michigan Avenue, another along Dearborn Street and a
4 large one in River North.

5 The stay-at-home order did set us back
6 in other ways, most notably in the retirement of old
7 gas mains. Those retirements were delayed due to
8 the suspension of nonemergency customer appointments
9 to move meters. We are working to catch up on those
10 meter moves and retirements as much as possible by
11 the end of the year.

12 As you know, the engineer study by
13 Kiefner & Associates found that 80 percent of the
14 iron pipe and our delivery system have an average
15 remaining life of less than 15 years.

16 With that in mind, we continue to
17 prioritize the highest-risk sections of our system
18 for upgrades.

19 This year those high-risk areas
20 included projects and Gladstone Park on the
21 northwest side and Fernwood on the south side.

22 We also completed construction on our
23 high-pressure line on the northwest side, which will
24 allow upgrades to proceed in several high-risk

1 neighborhoods.

2 By the end of 2020, about 30 percent of
3 the total work planned for SMP will be complete.
4 SMP already has made a significant impact in terms
5 of safety.

6 Since 2010, SMP improvements have
7 contributed to a 73 percent decrease in the number
8 of leaks in our delivery system. Those leak
9 reductions will have significant safety and
10 environmental benefits.

11 As you may recall, in 2019 WEC Energy
12 Group pledged to reduce methane emissions by
13 30 percent by 2030 from a 2011 baseline. Much of
14 that progress will come from the SMP. We're proud
15 of this commitment to sustainability and look
16 forward to the positive changes that will result.

17 Now let me touch on a few customer
18 service milestones of 2020. Earlier this year,
19 Peoples Gas opened new shop facilities for our north
20 and central districts that will help us better serve
21 our customers.

22 The new shops replaced outdated
23 buildings constructed a century ago. They allow us
24 to operate more efficiently, offer customers more

1 choices for appointments and respond even faster to
2 emergencies.

3 They're also safer, healthier
4 workplaces for our employees and a vast improvement
5 in appearance for our neighbors. Upgrade for our
6 south district and at North Shore Gas are in the
7 works as well.

8 Over the past year, we've made
9 significant improvements in our online presence.
10 Last month we launched redesigned websites for
11 Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas.

12 The new websites make it easier for
13 customers to find information and manage their
14 accounts; and our mobile app, which we launched a
15 year ago, has had more than 100,000 downloads,
16 helping customers monitor their usage, and manage
17 their accounts from anywhere.

18 As I've mentioned in the past, we
19 continue to make follow-up calls to customers after
20 service appointments. So far this year, we've
21 contacted more than 80,000 customers. Of those with
22 whom we spoke, 99 percent reported being satisfied
23 with the service they received.

24 That trend is reflected in our formal

1 customer satisfaction surveys, which recorded a
2 record high level of customer satisfaction this
3 year. Additionally, Peoples Gas showed the highest
4 improvement in customer satisfaction scores and J.D.
5 Power 2020 survey of business customers.

6 In the J.D. Power survey of residential
7 customers, Peoples Gas recorded the highest
8 improvement among large gas utilities.

9 And for the second year in a row,
10 Peoples Gas was named a most trusted brand in a
11 national survey of more than 70,000 utility
12 customers by Escalent, a leading behavior and
13 analytic firm.

14 Before I wrap up, let me say a few
15 words about workplace and supplier diversity.
16 Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas have continued to be
17 a source of employment and economic opportunity in
18 the Chicago area.

19 We continue to have a steady stream of
20 baby boomers retiring, which means continued
21 opportunities for the next generation. Many of our
22 new employees are graduates of your Utility Workers
23 Military Assistance Program.

24 The program trains veterans for utility

1 careers and was created through a close partnership
2 with Gas Workers Local 18007. Since 2012, we've
3 hired 460 vets who graduated from the program. Many
4 of those hires have been diverse employees.

5 In fact, 75 percent of our hires over
6 the past two years have been diverse employees. And
7 our Illinois workforce as a whole is currently
8 60 percent diverse.

9 We continue with that record. This
10 year's movement for racial and social justice has
11 brought a new focus on diversity and inclusion, and
12 we're working with our employee business resource
13 groups to develop a plan to expand our commitment in
14 that area.

15 Additionally, we partnered with YWCA of
16 metropolitan Chicago on a new initiative called the
17 Racial Justice League. The program includes support
18 for corporate partners to engage their employees on
19 issues of systemic racism, diversity, and inclusion.

20 These are long-term efforts to be sure,
21 but I -- but a new dialogue has been established,
22 and there's an energy regarding diversity and
23 inclusion that's very encouraging.

24 I recently briefed you on our supplier

1 diversity initiative, as I mentioned earlier. Last
2 year we spent more than \$142 million on diverse
3 suppliers.

4 Overall spending with diverse suppliers
5 represented nearly 24 percent of total procurement
6 in 2019, a record high percentage. We continue to
7 work to expand that piece of the pie each year.

8 Our system modernization program
9 remains the bedrock of our supplier diversity
10 initiative and represents more than a third of our
11 diverse spending.

12 SMP has kept our supplier diversity
13 program on track to reach its goals in 2020, even in
14 the midst of the pandemic. That helped support
15 hundreds of good-paying jobs during a very difficult
16 time for many families.

17 Thank you for the opportunity to
18 provide this update today. I think we can all agree
19 it's been a year we won't soon forget; but despite
20 the challenges, we're proud of our accomplishments
21 and excited about the future.

22 We look forward to continuing to work
23 with you and all of our stakeholders, and I sure
24 hope I will see you guys in person in 2021. That

1 concludes my comments.

2 CHAIRMAN ZALEWSKI: With that, I'm
3 going to continue on with our public utility agenda.
4 There are edits to October 8, 2020, regular open
5 meeting minutes, and there are no edits to the
6 October 14, 2020, regular open meeting minutes.

7 Are there any objections to approving
8 the minutes as edited?

9 Hearing none, the minutes are approved.

10 Under our electric items, item E-1
11 concerns MidAmerican's filing to revise its Rider
12 PZE or rider purchased power zero emission resource
13 recovery adjustment. The revisions remove the
14 requirement for MidAmerican to provide an
15 information sheet during the annual reconciliation
16 process for rider PZE unless the annual
17 reconciliation results in a revised rate.
18 Commission staff has reviewed the filing and
19 recommends not suspending it.

20 Are there any objections to not
21 suspending the filing?

22 Hearing none, the filing is not
23 suspended.

24 Item E-2 through E-26 concern orders

1 initiating citation proceedings against retail
2 electricity supply brokers, agents, or consultants
3 to determine whether to suspend licenses for
4 violation of commission rules.

5 The orders initiate the citation
6 proceeding due to failure to file compliance
7 reports, to maintain a license bond, or to maintain
8 authority to transact business in Illinois. The
9 orders direct licensees to appear before the
10 administrative law judge to show cause why the
11 commission should not suspend the license.

12 Are there any objections to considering
13 these items together and approving the orders?

14 Hearing none, the orders are approved.

15 Moving on to item E-27, which concerns
16 ComEd's request to reconcile revenues under its coal
17 tar riders for the 2019 calendar year. The order
18 approves the reconciliation as set in the appendix
19 to the order, finding that the costs during the
20 reconciliation period were prudently incurred.

21 Are there any objections to approving
22 the order?

23 Hearing none, the order is approved.

24 Item E-28 concerns MidAmerican's

1 request to reconcile revenues under its electric
2 rider TERM, or Test Expense Revision Mechanism
3 rider, for the twelve months of April 1, 2019,
4 through March 31, 2020.

5 The order approves the reconciliation
6 as set in the appendix to the order, finding that
7 the costs during the reconciliation period were
8 prudently incurred.

9 Are there any objections to approving
10 the order?

11 Hearing none, the order is approved.

12 Item E-29 concerns Docket 20-0310,
13 which is the moratorium on in-person marketing of
14 services by alternative retail electric suppliers.
15 The commission staff motioned to conditionally
16 dissolve the moratorium based on consultation with
17 employees of the Illinois Department of Commerce and
18 Economic Opportunity, or DCEO, when commission staff
19 became aware that DCEO did not consider in-person
20 solicitation inconsistent with the governor's
21 Phase 4 reopening plan.

22 The Attorney General, Citizens Utility
23 Board, and the Community Organizing and Family
24 Issues, or COFI, oppose lifting any restrictions

1 that would allow for in-person solicitations to
2 resume, stating that in-person retail energy sales
3 would present an unnecessary and potentially
4 dangerous risk of COVID-19 transmission.

5 The interim order grants staff's motion
6 to conditionally dissolve the March 18, 2020,
7 emergency order.

8 Do any commissioners want to make any
9 comments before we vote?

10 Seeing none.

11 So I am going to call a vote on the
12 staff's motion to conditionally dissolve the
13 moratorium. If you are in favor of granting the
14 motion, please say "aye," and if you are opposed and
15 want to deny it, please say "Nay."

16 Commissioner Bocanegra?

17 COMMISSIONER BOCENAGRA: Aye.

18 CHAIRMAN ZALEWSKI: Commissioner
19 Carrigan?

20 COMMISSIONER CARRIGAN: Nay.

21 CHAIRMAN ZALEWSKI: Commissioner
22 Kimbrel?

23 COMMISSIONER KIMBREL: Nay.

24 CHAIRMAN ZALEWSKI: Commissioner Oliva.

1 COMMISSIONER OLIVA: Aye.

2 CHAIRMAN ZALEWSKI: I vote nay. So the
3 three "nays" have it, and the staff motion to
4 conditionally dissolve is denied.

5 Because the commission denied the
6 motion, we will thus not be voting on the interim
7 order.

8 Item E-30 concerns the Illinois
9 Department of Transportation for IDOT petition for
10 approval to acquire property owned by ComEd by means
11 of eminent domain.

12 IDOT seeks a fee simple absolute on
13 ComEd's property for a highway safety project.
14 Although ComEd agrees that IDOT can acquire the
15 subject property, the parties have been unable to
16 resolve a disagreement relating to the content of
17 all the documents needed to conclude a voluntary
18 transfer of title.

19 The commission's approval of this order
20 will allow IDOT to acquire property by filing an
21 eminent domain case against ComEd in the Circuit
22 Court of Cook County.

23 The parties, however, advised the
24 administrative law judge that there are no contested

1 issues and that an order by the commission approving
2 the taking of ComEd's property may be entered by
3 agreement.

4 Are there any objections to approving
5 the order?

6 Hearing none, the order is approved.

7 Item E-31 and E-32 concern applications
8 for certifications to install distributed generation
9 facilities in Illinois. The orders grant the
10 certificates, finding that the applicants meet the
11 requirements.

12 Are there any objections to considering
13 these items together and approving the orders?

14 Hearing none, the orders are approved.

15 Item E-33 concerns Docket 20-0686 which
16 is ComEd's Petition For Declaratory Ruling. ComEd
17 requests that the commission declare that ComEd has
18 met the advanced metering infrastructure, or AMI,
19 implementation requirements of Section 16-108.6 of
20 the Public Utility Act.

21 The attached order grants the petition
22 finding that with respect to plan implementation,
23 Section 16-108.6 does not require achieving perfect
24 100 percent deployment of all metered locations.

1 The order concludes that reading the
2 statutory language to require literal 100 percent
3 deployment would not be consistent with the act
4 language regarding material deficiencies in
5 implementation nor with the applicable goals of the
6 act.

7 ComEd has deployed AMI meters at 99.9%
8 of metered customer locations, or over 4.2 million
9 AMI meters. There remain fewer than 6,000 metered
10 locations, including AMI meter-refusing customers.

11 Requiring ComEd to engage in expanded
12 or additional efforts to achieve AMI meter
13 deployments at all the remaining locations by
14 July 2022 would not be reasonable or beneficial for
15 customers or the utility.

16 Are there any objections to approving
17 the order?

18 Hearing none, the order is approved.

19 Item E-34 concerns Docket 20-0717,
20 which is the Illinois Power Agency, or IPA's,
21 petition for approval of the 2021 Electricity
22 Procurement Plan. The order notes that no
23 objections were filed to the plan.

24 In addition, the order approves the

1 base load forecasts and finds that the 2021 plan
2 will ensure adequate, reliable, affordable,
3 efficient, and environmentally sustainable electric
4 service at the lowest total cost over time.

5 Are there any objections to approving
6 the order?

7 Hearing none, the order is approved.

8 Item E-35 concerns Docket 20-0737,
9 which is Ameren's application for authority to incur
10 debt pursuant to Section 6-102 of the Public
11 Utilities Act.

12 The order grants the authority and
13 directs Ameren to pay a fee pursuant to Section
14 6-108 of the act.

15 Are there any objections to approving
16 the order?

17 Hearing none, the order is approved.

18 Item E-36 through E-38 concern
19 applications for authority to install energy
20 efficiency measures. The orders grant the
21 certificates, finding that the applicants meet the
22 requirements.

23 Are there any objections to considering
24 these items together and approving the orders?

1 Hearing none, the orders are approved.

2 Under our gas items. Item G-1 concerns
3 North Shore Gas Company's filing to increase rates
4 for gas distribution service. The commission staff
5 recommended that the commission suspend the filing
6 to determine the propriety of the rate increase.
7 The order suspends the filing.

8 Are there any objections to approving
9 the order?

10 Hearing none, the order is approved.

11 Item G-2 concerns the matter of a
12 moratorium on in-person marketing of services by
13 alternative gas suppliers. Like in Docket 20-0310,
14 the commission staff filed a motion to dissolve the
15 moratorium, which was opposed by the Attorney
16 General, the Citizens Utility Board, and COFI.

17 The interim order grants staff's motion
18 to conditionally dissolve the commission's March 18,
19 2020, emergency order.

20 Do any commissioners have any comments
21 before we vote?

22 Seeing none, I will now call a vote on
23 staff motion to conditionally dissolve the
24 moratorium.

1 If you are in favor of granting the
2 motion, please say "Aye," and if you are opposed,
3 and want to deny it, please say "Nay."

4 Commissioner Bocanegra?

5 COMMISSIONER BOCENAGRA: Aye.

6 CHAIRMAN ZALEWSKI: Commissioner
7 Carrigan?

8 COMMISSIONER CARRIGAN: Nay.

9 CHAIRMAN ZALEWSKI: Commissioner
10 Kimbrel?

11 COMMISSIONER KIMBREL: Nay.

12 CHAIRMAN ZALEWSKI: Commissioner Oliva?

13 COMMISSIONER OLIVA: Aye.

14 CHAIRMAN ZALEWSKI: The three nays have
15 it, and the staff's motion to conditionally dissolve
16 is denied.

17 Because the commission denied the
18 motion, we will, thus, not be voting on the interim
19 order.

20 Item G-3 concerns consolidated Docket
21 20-0324 and 20-0325 which is North Shore's and
22 Peoples Gas's requests to reconcile revenues under
23 Rider VITA or Rider Variable Income Tax Adjustment,
24 during calendar year 2018.

1 The order approves the reconciliation
2 as set in the appendices to the order, finding that
3 the costs during the reconciliation period were
4 prudently incurred.

5 Are there any objections to approving
6 the order?

7 Hearing none, the order is approved.

8 Item G-4 concerns MidAmerican's request
9 to reconcile revenues under its Electric Rider TERM,
10 or Tax Expense Provision Mechanism, for the period
11 of April 1, 2019, through March 31 of 2020.

12 The order approves the reconciliation
13 as set in the appendix to the order, finding that
14 the costs during the reconciliation period were
15 prudently incurred.

16 Are there any objections to approving
17 the order?

18 Hearing none, the order is approved.

19 Under our telecommunications items.
20 Item T-1 concerns Red Pocket Inc.'s application for
21 a certificate of wireless authority to operate as a
22 reseller of telecommunications services. The order
23 grants a certificate, finding that the applicant
24 meets the requirements.

1 Are there any objections to approving
2 the order?

3 Hearing none, the order is approved.

4 There are no water and sewer items.

5 There are no miscellaneous items.

6 Under our petitions for rehearing.

7 Item PR-1 concerns Docket 18-1624, which is the City
8 of Mascoutah's petition for authority to exercise
9 the right of eminent domain to acquire easements
10 across two parcels of land for the construction of a
11 transmission line.

12 The City of Mascoutah has filed a
13 request for rehearing, arguing that the commission
14 order erroneously and unlawfully interprets Section
15 11-117(2) of the municipal code and conflicts with
16 the Eminent Domain Act and the Administrative
17 Procedure Act.

18 In addition, the City of Mascoutah
19 argues that the order exceeds the commission's
20 jurisdiction, is an abuse of discretion, and is
21 unlawful and inconsistent with commission rules.

22 The Administrative Law Judge in this
23 matter recommends that the commission deny the
24 petition for rehearing because Mascoutah presents no

1 additional arguments or evidence that warrant a
2 rehearing. The commission agrees with the ALJ's
3 recommendation.

4 Are there any objections to denying the
5 petition for rehearing?

6 Hearing none, the petition is denied.

7 Under our other business items.

8 Item 0-1 concerns approval of batches,
9 contracts, and confirmations under the Illinois
10 Solar for all Program.

11 Are there any objections to approving
12 the program administrator's submissions?

13 Hearing none, the submissions are
14 approved.

15 Item 0-2 concerns approval of batches,
16 contracts, and confirmations under the Illinois
17 Solar For All Program.

18 Are there any objections to approving
19 the program administrator's submissions?

20 Hearing none, the submissions are
21 approved.

22 Item 0-3, we already heard the report
23 at the beginning of this agenda.

24 So this concludes our public utilities

1 agenda.

2 Judge Teague Kingsley, do we have any
3 other matters to come before the commission today?

4 JUDGE TEAGUE KINGSLEY: No, madame
5 chairman.

6 CHAIRMAN ZALEWSKI: Do any of the
7 commissioners have any other business to discuss?

8 COMMISSIONER KIMBREL: Madame Chair,
9 this is Commissioner Kimbrel. Sorry to interrupt,
10 but a couple weeks ago I became aware that Jane
11 Fields is no longer with the commission.

12 So I want to apologize to her on the
13 record, because I really like Jane, and I didn't get
14 a chance to say goodbye. So that's my comment.
15 Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN ZALEWSKI: Thank you. She
17 will be missed.

18 Any other comments?

19 Hearing nothing and without objection,
20 the meeting is adjourned. Thank you everyone. Stay
21 safe and healthy.

22 (Hearing ended at 2:02 p.m.)

23

24

25