



February 14, 2020

Via Electronic Filing

Secretary Rosemary Chiavetta
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor
400 North Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Re: Pa. PUC v. UGI Gas of Pennsylvania Inc., Docket No. R-2019-3015162

Dear Secretary Chiavetta,

Enclosed for electronic filing, please find a *Petition to Intervene on behalf of the Coalition for Affordable Utility Service and Energy Efficiency in Pennsylvania (CAUSE-PA)* in the above referenced matter.

Copies of this petition will be circulated in accordance with the attached Certificate of Service.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John W. Sweet". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line above the name.

John W. Sweet, Esq.
Counsel for CAUSE-PA

CC: *Certificate of Service*

Encl.

BEFORE THE PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, et al. :
 :
 v. : Docket No. R-2019-3015162
 :
 UGI Gas of Pennsylvania, Inc. :

**PETITION TO INTERVENE AND ANSWER
OF THE COALITION FOR AFFORDABLE UTILITY SERVICES
AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN PENNSYLVANIA**

PENNSYLVANIA UTILITY LAW PROJECT
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February 14, 2020

Pursuant to the provisions of the Rules of Practice and Procedure of the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (“PUC” or “Commission”), 52 Pa. Code §§ 5.61-5.76, the Coalition for Affordable Utility Services and Energy Efficiency in Pennsylvania (“CAUSE-PA”), through its counsel at the Pennsylvania Utility Law Project, hereby petitions the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (“Commission”) to intervene and files its Answer in the above-captioned proceeding. In support thereof, CAUSE-PA states as follows:

1. January 28, 2020, UGI Gas of Pennsylvania (“UGI”) submitted a rate filing, Supplement No. 6 to its Tariff Gas PA PUC No. 7 and 7S, which proposes to increase rates by approximately \$74.6 million per year, or 8.5%. (UGI St. 1 at 6). A residential customer with an average usage of 73.5 Ccf of gas per month would increase from \$81.54 to \$90.22 per month, or 10.6 percent. (UGI St. 1 at 7).

2. UGI seeks to increase its fixed monthly residential customer charge by from \$14.60 to \$19.95, an increase of \$5.35 or 36.6 percent. (UGI St. 1 at 44).

Petition to Intervene

3. Eligibility to intervene in Commission proceedings is governed by 52 Pa. Code § 5.72, which provides in relevant part that “[a] petition to intervene may be filed by a person claiming a right to intervene or an interest of such nature that intervention is necessary or appropriate to the administration of the statute under which the proceeding is brought.” 52 Pa. Code § 5.72(a).

4. Section 5.72 further provides that the right or interest may be one “which may be directly affected and which is not adequately represented by existing participants, and as to

which the petitioner may be bound by the action of the Commission in the proceeding.” 52 Pa. Code. § 5.72(a)(2).

5. Even though Section 5.72 speaks of the rights of a “person” to intervene, the Commonwealth Court has consistently stated that “an association may have standing as a representative of its members ... as long as an organization has at least one member who has or will suffer a direct, immediate, and substantial injury to an interest as a result of the challenged action, [i.e., is aggrieved, the organization] has standing.” Energy Cons. Council of Pa. v. Pa. PUC, 995 A.2d 465, 476 (Pa. Commw. 2010) (alteration in original) (*citing* Tripps Park v. Pa. PUC, 415 A.2d 967 (Pa. Commw. 1980); Parents United for Better Schools v. School District of Philadelphia, 646 A.2d 689 (Pa. Commw. 1994)).

6. CAUSE-PA is an unincorporated association of low-income individuals that advocates on behalf of its members to enable consumers of limited economic means to connect to and maintain affordable water, electric, heating and telecommunication services.

7. CAUSE-PA membership is open to moderate and low- income individuals residing in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania who are committed to the goal of helping low-income families maintain affordable access to utility services and achieve economic independence.

8. CAUSE-PA is located, c/o the Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network, at 118 Locust Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101.

9. CAUSE-PA has a significant interest in the impact that UGI’s proposed rate increase will have on moderate and low income residential customers. These interests are not adequately represented by other participants.

10. Members of CAUSE-PA are located within UGI’s service territory and will be directly affected by the outcome of this proceeding. Particularly, this proceeding will affect the

price that CAUSE-PA members pay for natural gas service as well as the reliability and quality of that service.

11. CAUSE-PA has standing to intervene because its members have or will suffer a direct, immediate, and substantial injury to an interest as a result of this proceeding. See Energy Cons. Council of Pa., 995 A.2d at 476.

12. CAUSE-PA is represented in this proceeding by:

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13. Counsel for CAUSE-PA consents to the service of documents by electronic mail to pulp@palegalaid.net, as provided in 52 Pa. Code § 1.54(b)(3).

Answer

14. CAUSE-PA has preliminarily reviewed UGI's rate filing, and objects to UGI's request on the grounds that the proposed rate increase could result in unjust and unreasonable rates that would impose severe hardship on low and moderate income residential customers.

15. Continued delivery of safe, affordable natural gas service is of critical importance to the safety, welfare, and economic stability of all Pennsylvanians – particularly those with limited financial means. In recognition of this fact, the law requires that utility services – here natural gas service - be universally available at an affordable rate, and that all universal service programs be developed, maintained, and appropriately funded to ensure such affordability. See 66 Pa. C.S. §

2203(3), (8). UGI's general rate increase, specifically its proposal to significantly increase its fixed residential customer charge, could have a disparate impact on smaller households, with limited economic means, and will undermine bill savings achieved through adoption of energy efficiency and conservation measures.

16. CAUSE-PA asserts that these matters, and any future modifications presented by intervening parties, must be thoroughly reviewed and investigated to ensure that all customers are able to access safe, affordable natural gas service within the UGI service territory.

WHEREFORE, CAUSE-PA respectfully requests that the Commission enter an order granting CAUSE-PA full status as an intervener in this proceeding with active party status.

Respectfully submitted,

PENNSYLVANIA UTILITY LAW PROJECT
Counsel for CAUSE-PA



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Date: February 14, 2020

Verification

I, Marsha White Mathis, a member of the Executive Committee of the Coalition for Affordable Utility Services and Energy Efficiency (“CAUSE-PA”), on behalf of CAUSE-PA, hereby state that the facts contained in the foregoing pleading are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief, that I am duly authorized to make this Verification, and that I expect to be able to prove the same at a hearing held in this matter. I understand that the statements herein are made subject to the penalties of 18 Pa. C.S. § 4904 (relating to unsworn falsification to authorities).



On behalf of the Executive Committee of the Coalition for
Affordable Utility Services and Energy Efficiency in
Pennsylvania (CAUSE-PA)

Date: February 14, 2020

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Chief Administrative Law Judge
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VIA Regular Mail Only

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Respectfully Submitted,
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