

APPEARANCES (CONTINUED):

STEPHEN KEENE, Esquire
CHRISTY M. APPLEBY, Esquire
Fifth Floor
555 Walnut Street
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17101
(For the Office of Consumer Advocate)

STEVEN GRAY, Esquire
1102 Commerce Building
300 North Second Street
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17101
(For the Office of Small Business Advocate)

EDWARD McCOOL, Esquire
Community Legal Services
Fourth Floor
1424 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102
(For CEPA, ACORN, TAG and Action Alliance)

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Commonwealth Reporting Company, Inc.

700 Lisburn Road
Camp Hill, Pennsylvania 17011

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P R O C E E D I N G S

1
2 ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE CYNTHIA FORDHAM: Good
3 evening.

4 I am Administrative Law Judge Cynthia Williams
5 Fordham and this is the time and place for the third
6 public input hearing in the matter of the PUC versus
7 Philadelphia Gas Works at Docket Number R-00006042.

8 The Public Utility Commission is holding these
9 public input hearings so we can hear what the customers
10 have to say about the rate increase.

11 At this time -- I have already introduced myself.
12 For those of you who did not here me before, I am
13 Administrative Law Judge Cynthia Williams Fordham. We do
14 have some of the parties here with us tonight. I will
15 introduce them after I give my brief remarks. They are
16 to my left.

17 We have a number of formal complaints that have
18 been filed in this matter. There are 166 so far.

19 Let me explain a little bit about the ratemaking
20 process. PGW is a municipally owned natural gas company
21 providing service within the City of Philadelphia.
22 Before the passage of the Natural Gas Choice and
23 Competition Act the Public Utility Commission did not
24 regulate PGW. However, on July 1st of 2000 we began to
25 regulate PGW.

1 There two types of rate proceedings. This is a
2 base rate proceeding. There is also a gas cost rate
3 proceeding. And I know you have received a number of
4 increases. Those were gas cost rate increases. So that
5 is different from what we are dealing with today.

6 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: We are still paying.

7 JUDGE FORDHAM: That is true. But I am trying to
8 distinguish between the two because it is complicated and
9 we want to be sure that you have information about what
10 is happening so you can understand. Even if you are
11 paying you want to know what you are paying for.

12 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: All the money that is missing
13 out of the gas company.

14 JUDGE FORDHAM: Okay. I will give you an
15 opportunity to talk. It is a smaller room than we
16 expected and it is kind of hot and I want everybody to be
17 comfortable and everybody to be able to say what they
18 need to say.

19 On August 8, 2000, PGW filed an interim base rate
20 case with the PUC and requested an expedited proceeding.
21 The PUC did grant that request for an expedited hearing.
22 After the hearings the Commission entered its opinion and
23 order on November 22, 2000, allowing PGW an \$11 million
24 rate increase with certain conditions. However, this was
25 not implemented because the gas works decided they were

1 going to appeal to Commonwealth Court.

2 However, on February 8 of 2001 PGW and the
3 Commission's Law Bureau filed a joint settlement petition
4 resolving the issues raised in the appeal. The
5 Commission approved this joint settlement petition by
6 order entered February 22, 2001.

7 Therefore, as of March 1st, 2001, the gas cost rate
8 will increase from .661985 to .66959. This is about \$8 a
9 year for the typical PGW residential customer.

10 Can everyone hear me?

11 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: Would you be kind enough to
12 repeat that last line about \$8 a year?

13 JUDGE FORDHAM: If I am going to get the same
14 response we will never get out of here tonight.

15 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: Ask them to please be quiet.

16 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: What were the conditions? You
17 said the city filed an appeal with the state. The PUC
18 approved the increase with conditions and the city filed
19 an appeal about the increase, about those conditions.

20 JUDGE FORDHAM: One of the conditions -- and I
21 don't have that in front of me -- one of the conditions
22 related to management and having a new management team in
23 place by a certain date. That is still a condition.

24 The others, like I said, I don't have that right in
25 front of me. So I can't speak to all of it. I can get

1 you that information.

2 However, there has been a settlement of that and
3 this is what the settlement is. We are trying to give
4 you information. Whether you agree with it or disagree
5 with it, I think you need the information.

6 What I did say is that the gas cost rate would
7 increase. Now, the gas cost rate is the changes based on
8 the amount that PGW has to pay to get the gas. Now, this
9 has been happening all across the nation. This is not
10 something that is specific to PGW. The cost of gas has
11 been raised even when you go to get oil or gasoline for
12 your car.

13 I don't want to keep answering questions right now.
14 I want to get through this so we can hear the people.
15 Because I think you came here to talk and not to hear me
16 talk a long time. I just wanted to give you a brief
17 synopsis of what was going on.

18 I did say that the gas cost rate would increase.
19 It is less than a penny. That is why I said it would be
20 about \$8 a year. That is based on what has been given to
21 me for a typical residential customer.

22 However, the customer charge for residential
23 customers increased. It is now \$8. It will be \$11.66
24 each month. And it also increased for commercial
25 customers to \$14.57 a month and for industrial customers

1 to \$29.14 a month.

2 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: I want to know what is going
3 up. Is it the commodity charge or the gas rate charge?

4 JUDGE FORDHAM: This particular proceeding is for
5 the commodity charge. The other increases that you have
6 received recently have been the gas rate cost.

7 Let me get through this first. That is the next
8 thing I was going to say, that this particular proceeding
9 is for the base rate. It is a base rate proceeding so it
10 is the commodity charge that we are talking about. It
11 was supposed to go into effect effective of March 6 of
12 2001. However, the Commission entered an order on
13 February 8, 2001, instituting an investigation into the
14 lawfulness, justness and reasonableness of the proposed
15 rate increase and also it suspended the operation until
16 October 6, 2001, unless otherwise directed by order of
17 the Commission. In addition to looking at the proposed
18 rates, the investigation will include the consideration
19 of the lawfulness, justness and reasonableness of PGW's
20 existing rates.

21 This matter was assigned to the Office of
22 Administrative Law Judge for resolution by hearings and
23 for the issuance of a recommended decision. So what will
24 happen after we have the public inputs, the company has
25 already filed their direct testimony. The other parties

1 will file their direct testimony. They have experts who
2 are looking at the numbers, the information that has been
3 filed with the Commission by the company and they will
4 file their direct testimony on April 10. We will have
5 rebuttal testimony and surrebuttal. This is all in
6 written form. Then May 22 through 25, May 30 and May 31
7 we will have public hearings to cross-examine those
8 experts.

9 After that briefs will be filed by the parties. I
10 will do a recommended decision which will be sent to the
11 Commission. We have five Commissioners in Pennsylvania
12 and those Commissioners will look at my decision. They
13 can agree with me and the parties can file exceptions to
14 my decisions. They will agree or modify it or reverse
15 me.

16 So what we are doing now is getting information
17 from consumers. It will be used by me and also sometimes
18 by some of the parties and we need everything so we can
19 make an informed decision.

20 Let me introduce the attorneys that are here today.

21 For Philadelphia Gas Works we have Wendell Holland.
22 He is the chief attorney for them today. And we also
23 have Les Fyock, who is the Vice-President for Regulatory
24 Affairs here.

25 For the Office of Small Business Advocate we have

1 Steven Gray here.

2 For the Office of Trial Staff we have Johnnie
3 Simms.

4 For the Office of Consumer Advocate we have Steve
5 Keene and Christy Appleby.

6 There is an attorney who is representing the
7 Consumer Education and Protective Association, the
8 Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now,
9 Action Alliance of Senior Citizens of Greater
10 Philadelphia and Tenants Action Group. That is Philip
11 Bertocci. I don't see him in the room at this time but
12 he has been at the other two public hearings that were
13 held yesterday.

14 The options at this particular hearing are, one, to
15 testify formally in the case and be subject to
16 cross-examination. That would mean you would swear or
17 affirm that the testimony is the truth, and the testimony
18 would be recorded by the court reporter who is seated to
19 my right and will be reviewed by me in making my
20 decision.

21 The second option is to make unsworn or unaffirmed
22 statements at the hearing. These statements or off the
23 record and will not be subject to cross-examination, will
24 not be transcribed by the court reporter and will not be
25 considered by the presiding officer in the recommended

1 decision.

2 The third option is to provide information to
3 attorneys from the Commission's Office of Trial Staff,
4 Mr. Simms, or to the attorneys from the Office of
5 Consumer Advocate, Mr. Keene or Ms. Appleby, for possible
6 use by them at hearings in their discretion.

7 At this time we will have brief statements from the
8 attorneys and then I will turn the microphone over to the
9 speakers that are here.

10 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: One question.

11 JUDGE FORDHAM: Yes?

12 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: The two attorneys for the gas
13 works, are they in-house attorneys or are they from the
14 outside?

15 JUDGE FORDHAM: One is not an attorney. Mr.
16 Holland is an attorney with a law firm.

17 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: What law firm? In other words
18 he is an outside attorney? He is not an in-house
19 attorney for the gas works?

20 JUDGE FORDHAM: Yes.

21 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: Fine. Is there a reason for
22 this? Does the gas works have one attorney that they
23 have to go out and hire an outside attorney?

24 JUDGE FORDHAM: Mr. Holland, do you want to answer
25 that.

1 MR. HOLLAND: My name is Wendell Holland.

2 MEMBERS OF AUDIENCE: We can't hear.

3 MR. HOLLAND: I represent Philadelphia Gas Works.
4 Philadelphia Gas Works has a number of --

5 MEMBERS OF AUDIENCE: We can't hear you.

6 MR. HOLLAND: Philadelphia Gas Works has a number
7 of lawyers inside. None of them are familiar with the
8 complex rate case process. It is not uncommon...

9 JUDGE FORDHAM: Wait. Let me say from general
10 experience all of the rate cases that I have handled and
11 the other judges have handled, the companies -- not just
12 PGW -- the companies have had outside Counsel to handle
13 it because it is much different than the regular run of
14 the mill cases.

15 Mr. Holland.

16 MR. HOLLAND: That is what I was going to say.

17 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: That is the reason, then, that
18 this lawyer is working for the gas works, because there
19 is nobody, no lawyer, in the gas works -- let me put it
20 this way. I don't want to say he is not intelligent
21 enough to be sitting here. He has more expertise than --
22 this man has more expertise than what they have? Is that
23 basically what it is?

24 JUDGE FORDHAM: I would say yes. This is the first
25 time that PGW is really going through a rate proceeding

1 under the Public Utility Commission's regulations. Prior
2 to this time the Gas Commission regulated them and they
3 just went through that proceeding. So they are new to
4 regulation under the Public Utility Code.

5 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: Let me say this. Would it be
6 cheaper for the gas company to hire this man in-house
7 than to have him representing the gas company with an
8 outside outfit? Or get somebody with the same expertise
9 as he has?

10 JUDGE FORDHAM: I can't answer that question.

11 Sir.

12 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: I have this question. Is the
13 rate increase, the \$65 million rate request, on hold
14 until you make your recommendation?

15 JUDGE FORDHAM: Yes. Well, until the Commission's
16 does. I mean, I will make a recommendation.

17 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: To the Commission and then the
18 Commission decides?

19 JUDGE FORDHAM: Yes.

20 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: How is the Commission
21 appointed?

22 JUDGE FORDHAM: By the Governor and confirmed by
23 the Senate.

24 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: They are not elected.

25 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: It's a city patronage job.

1 JUDGE FORDHAM: We work for the state.

2 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: Doesn't the Mayor and the City
3 Council run the gas works?

4 JUDGE FORDHAM: Yes.

5 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: Shouldn't the Mayor and the
6 Council be held liable for that?

7 JUDGE FORDHAM: I can't get into that. But if you
8 want to say that on the record you can express your
9 opinion.

10 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: Why does a man have to have a
11 credit card to go by all kinds of stuff --

12 JUDGE FORDHAM: Okay. We need to go through so we
13 can have the speakers.

14 Mr. Holland.

15 JUDGE FORDHAM: Go we have quiet?

16 MR. HOLLAND: Thank you, Your Honor.

17 I would encourage everyone who --

18 MEMBERS OF AUDIENCE: Can you use the microphone,
19 please?

20 MR. HOLLAND: Thank you, Your Honor.

21 I would just like to encourage -- because we have
22 so many people in here tonight I would just to encourage
23 everyone who wishes to make a sworn statement or everyone
24 who wishes to make a statement be sworn so that your
25 comments can be considered by the Judge and the full

1 Commission when they make their decision.

2 Thank you you all for coming tonight.

3 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: Why do you have to be sworn.

4 Is this a court of law?

5 JUDGE FORDHAM: Yes.

6 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: We are here because we are
7 displeased with what is going on.

8 JUDGE FORDHAM: Wait a minute. We are not going to
9 get through this.

10 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: You are in charge. Take
11 control of the meeting. Or throw them out.

12 JUDGE FORDHAM: Mr. Gray.

13 MR. GRAY: Thank you, Your Honor.

14 Good evening. My name is Steve Gray. I am an
15 attorney with the Office of Small Business Advocate. My
16 boss is Bernie Ryan, who is the Small Business Advocate.
17 We represent small businesses in Pennsylvania before the
18 Public Utility Commission and other courts as well.

19 If you are a small business owner my personal
20 interest tonight is hearing you testify in front of this
21 Judge and tell your tail of your treatment by PGW, any
22 service comments you have, any billing comments you have.

23 Thank you very much for coming and please do
24 testify on the record because when you testify under oath
25 on the record we can then use that in our cases opposing

1 PGW and the Judge can consider it. That is why sworn
2 testimony is important.

3 So if you are small business, please walk up to
4 that microphone and tell your story.

5 Thank you very much.

6 (Applause.)

7 JUDGE FORDHAM: Mr. Simms.

8 MR. SIMMS: Good evening.

9 My name is Johnnie Simms. I am a senior prosecutor
10 for the Commission's Office of Trial Staff. First of
11 all, I want to thank you for your attendance here
12 tonight.

13 My office is charged with representing the public
14 interest in rate proceedings before the Commission. We
15 have accountants and engineers who are presently
16 reviewing the company's filing. We have submitted a
17 number of interrogatories and we will be filing
18 adjustments to PGW's case on April 10.

19 Like Mr. Gray and the other Counsel and the Judge,
20 Judge Fordham, I would urge that you testify tonight and
21 that you testify under oath. The Commission is a
22 quasi-judicial administrative body and in order for them
23 to consider your statements it must be under oath.

24 Once again, I want to thank you you for your
25 attendance tonight and I look forward to your comments.

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1 (Applause.)

2 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

3 Mr. Keene. .

4 MR. KEENE: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen.

5 My name is Stephen Keene and I am from the
6 Pennsylvania Office of Consumer Advocate. Our office
7 represent the interests of utility consumers and in
8 particular residential consumers.

9 (Applause.)

10 MR. KEENE: We represent utility consumers in
11 matters before the Public Utility Commission.

12 When the legislation was passed which brought PGW
13 under the jurisdiction of the Public Utility Commission
14 our office was also assigned to represent the interests
15 of PGW consumers before the Commission.

16 We filed a formal complaint in this proceeding and
17 we have hired a team of utility experts to help us
18 examine the company's claim and identify any areas of the
19 company's claims that may be overstated.

20 I too want to encourage you to testify under oath
21 tonight. I have heard a lot of criticism and comments
22 already and we would like to get that on the record so
23 that we when we present our arguments to the Commission
24 on behalf of you we can refer to this testimony when we
25 present those arguments to the Public Utility Commission.

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1 When you came in there was a table at the back. I
2 left some brochures there which describe our office and
3 some of the services we provide and some cards with a
4 toll-free number you can call if you have any questions
5 about your utility service.

6 Also here with me tonight is Christy Appleby,
7 another attorney from the Office of Consumer Advocate.
8 Both of us will stay afterwards and we would be more than
9 happy to try to answer any questions that you may have.

10 I look forward to hearing from you.

11 (Applause.)

12 JUDGE FORDHAM: Mr. Edward McCool has arrived. I
13 mentioned Philip Bertocci as representing CEPA and ACORN.
14 He is also with Mr. Bertocci. He is representing CEPA at
15 this particular time.

16 MR. McCOOL: Thank you, Your Honor.

17 I am a lawyer with -- my name is Ed McCool and I am
18 a lawyer with Community Legal Services. We represent
19 CEPA, ACORN, Action Alliance and the Tenants Action Group
20 in this base rate case.

21 Just a couple of comments. One, it is important to
22 keep this increase in context. Just a few months ago in
23 November of 2000 the average bill for a household with
24 typical use, 100 mcf per year, was paying \$72 per month.
25 If this rate increase is granted the same customer will

1 be paying on average \$112 a month with bills about 200
2 per month in the heating season. This requires customers
3 to shoulder a huge new burden.

4 Two, PGW says it needs the rate increase because
5 its costs have increased since 1992, the time of the last
6 base rate increase. However, this increase asks for way
7 more than to cover increased operating costs. In the
8 last decade PGW has dug a hole of debt for itself through
9 inefficiency and mismanagement.

10 (Applause.)

11 MR. McCOOL: Now PGW and its owner, the City of
12 Philadelphia, is asking you to pay through this rate
13 increase for all that mismanagement. We do not think
14 that is fair or reasonable.

15 I want to thank you all for coming out tonight and
16 we want you to let the Commission know how you feel about
17 the proposed base rate increase.

18 (Applause.)

19 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

20 I would ask as I call your name for you come up.
21 If you want to be sworn I will swear you in and then
22 testify. Since we have a number of people here who want
23 to testify I would ask that you keep your comments to a
24 reasonable length. But we do want to hear everyone.

25 The first speaker is Rhonda S. Smith.

1 Whereupon,

2 RHONDA S. SMITH

3 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

4 DIRECT TESTIMONY

5 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and your
6 address for the record, please?

7 THE WITNESS: Rhonda Smith, 1918 Dallas Street.

8 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you You may proceed.

9 THE WITNESS: I am here today on behalf of more
10 than just myself. The gas company is a little outrageous
11 with their prices. We have been faced with getting these
12 increases in the last four months and it's not the
13 consumers' error. The consumers should not be faced with
14 this problem.

15 I have a master bill from January to now and it is
16 totaling \$1,000. This is outrageous.

17 My bills are usually \$75, 200 in heating time. I
18 can't pay a bill like this. I work. I work for the
19 department of public welfare. Even my clients will not
20 be able to handle this bill.

21 Nobody's wages goes up the type of rates they are
22 giving us. Our rates are not going up. We are not
23 getting raises at the rate that these bills are going up.
24 We can't choose not to have gas. We can choose not to
25 have a loaf of bread if it goes up. But we can't choose

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1 not to have gas.

2 I cut my gas down. I am still cold. I don't think
3 this is proper. There is something wrong with this whole
4 picture. The company's debt, we are like Jonah and they
5 are like the whale. We get swallowed up by this big
6 conglomerate because they have financial difficulty. Let
7 them file bankruptcy. I don't care what they do but they
8 need not put it on the the consumer.

9 (Applause.)

10 JUDGE FORDHAM: Any questions?

11 MR. HOLLAND: I don't have any questions for Ms.
12 Smith.

13 One of the things I forget to mention in my opening
14 comments, Your Honor, was that there might be some
15 customers here tonight that have questions about their
16 individual gas bills, about your individual gas bills.
17 It might be a miscalculation or something.

18 JUDGE FORDHAM: Let him talk, please.

19 What he is saying is if you have a problem that has
20 not been resolved. A lot of people are here because, as
21 Ms. Smith said, she can not pay the bill. Regardless of
22 whether it is right, if your bill is right according to
23 the calculations but it is too high, we want to hear that
24 too. But Mr. Holland is talking about something, if you
25 have a problem that you have not been able to resolve at

1 the gas company, they have someone here.

2 MR. HOLLAND: Yes. Across the hall we have about
3 four or five customer service representatives who we
4 brought yesterday at yesterday's public input hearings
5 and who were able to service a number of customers who
6 had individual problems with their complaints.
7 Throughout the night I will again remind that we have
8 that service available to the public, Your Honor, and
9 that those of you who have those kinds of complaints can
10 certainly avail yourself of our customer representatives.

11 Thank you, Your Honor.

12 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

13 The next speaker is Mary Cooper.

14 Whereupon,

15 MARY COOPER

16 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

17 DIRECT TESTIMONY

18 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and your
19 address for the record, please?

20 THE WITNESS: My name is Mary Cooper and my
21 residence is 175 West Albana Street.

22 JUDGE FORDHAM: You may proceed.

23 THE WITNESS: My concern is not only for myself but
24 others as a whole. And I can not afford to pay a gas
25 bill at this rate. I have always paid my bills and

1 managed to keep them up to date even though I am on a
2 fixed income. I have a health problem, I am under
3 doctors care and I must have heat.

4 What I do have I pay my bills. At a price like
5 this they might as well shut off everybody's gas or this
6 is going to be a ghost town or a burnt down city.

7 They say no increase for nine years when they did
8 add on \$4 or customer charge and \$8 and now it is 11.66.
9 People are going to try anything and everything to cook,
10 try to keep warm. So I speak not only for myself but for
11 the elderly, the children of families that are neglected.
12 Some kids that I have seen myself that have to fend for
13 themselves whose parents are addicted on drugs, alcohol.
14 I know because I have seen this. And children that get
15 climbing on top of counters trying to fix their food and
16 it is a danger, you know, with the gas or electric or
17 whatever to get or fix them their own food.

18 One man, for instance, had kerosene that was frozen
19 and he took it and put it on top of the stove to warm it
20 up in the heater and he blew the house up. People don't
21 think, you see.

22 So I say to you think of the innocent as well as
23 the inconvenience, safety and harm and the danger of the
24 city.

25 As a whole people that are stealing gas now -- just

1 think who is living next to you. Will you be able to
2 sleep knowing your neighbor is stealing gas? That is
3 like having a bomb to go off at any time that you don't
4 know anything about that live next door to you. And that
5 is like living in a field mine. You don't know when it
6 is going to go off. Because they are not going to tell
7 you what they are doing.

8 I say to you, if people knew or if people now are
9 stealing gas can you imagine what this is going to lead
10 to? This is supposed to be a country of liberty and
11 justice for all. I say to you where is the justice?

12 When I paid my bill I kept it up. I did without
13 things but my bills were paid. Now, I can't pay this
14 rate. I know I can't. Some people don't care about
15 their bills. I do.

16 There is going to be a crime rise. Just watch.
17 How can you pay \$12 when you only getting \$5? People
18 like material things. If they don't have the money they
19 are going to burglarize, rob, kill, steal and destroy. I
20 say to you, stop it before it starts.

21 Make people pay that owe. Distribute the funds
22 honestly. I know I need gas. I pay my bill. Where some
23 people don't care. I say to you where is the justice for
24 all or do that have any meaning?

25 I hope and pray and trust in God that you hear me.

1 Mary Cooper.

2 (Applause.)

3 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

4 (Witness excused.)

5 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is Catherine
6 Jackson.

7 Whereupon,

8 CATHERINE JACKSON

9 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

10 DIRECT TESTIMONY

11 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and
12 address for the record, please?

13 THE WITNESS: Catherine Jackson, 1219 Kereper
14 Street, Philadelphia.

15 JUDGE FORDHAM: Can you spell that street for us,
16 please?

17 THE WITNESS: K-E-R-E-P-E-R.

18 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you. You may proceed.

19 THE WITNESS: I didn't have anything prepared. I
20 didn't know I was going to do this. But I just feel that
21 the gas company is just gouging everyone. My gas bill,
22 one month, I used 52 cubic feet of gas. That gas cost me
23 \$87. The next month I used 57 cubic feet worth of gas,
24 only five more, and my rate was \$204. That is a big
25 jump.

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1 I think the gas company needs to get better
2 management and they also cannot charge the paying
3 customers for the people who do not pay their bills.

4 (Applause.)

5 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

6 JUDGE FORDHAM: Any questions?

7 (No audible response.)

8 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you, Ms. Jackson.

9 (Witness excused.)

10 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is Lea Ann Harris.

11 Whereupon,

12 LEE ANN HARRIS

13 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

14 DIRECT TESTIMONY

15 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and
16 address for the record and please spell your name.

17 THE WITNESS: Lea, L-E-A, Ann, A-N-N, Harris,
18 H-A-R-R-I-S.

19 JUDGE FORDHAM: And your address?

20 THE WITNESS: 7453 North 21st Street.

21 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you. You may proceed.

22 THE WITNESS: I have been a homeowner for 12 years.

23 I go to work every day and I pay my bills on time. On
24 November 21, 2000, I received a bill from PGW for \$916.

25 This bill does not represent unpaid charges that were

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1 carried from the previous month. I pay the gas bill each
2 and every month. The gas bills from January of '99 to
3 December of '99 range from \$144 to \$294, and from January
4 of 2000 to December of 2000 the range was \$11 to \$916.
5 Apparently the charges from the year 2000 were either
6 skewed or in error or both. But nevertheless, I made
7 \$300 payments in December and in January. Just when the
8 bill was paid down to \$310 I was slapped with a \$456 bill
9 for February. My total bill including late charges was
10 \$771.

11 I cannot afford to pay \$771 or, for that matter,
12 \$456. As a result I am always going to have a balance on
13 my account. I am always going to have late charges and I
14 will always be in arrears to PGW.

15 On February 2nd PGW sent me a letter threatening to
16 shut off my gas if my bill was not paid in full. Now I
17 have the bill from March, which is \$355, and my account
18 is \$1,138. I still cannot afford to pay the bill. A
19 \$456 gas bill is more than than my car note, it is more
20 than my mortgage and it is more than I can afford.

21 I have never been on a budget and I don't want to
22 be on a budget. And I should be able to pay just one
23 utility bill in full each month without having to get
24 another job.

25 I did go to PGW on February 23rd, Cheltenham

1 Avenue. I went there 11:15. There was no one there but
2 one customer. I sat there for 40 minutes before someone
3 talked to me. And he gave me the company spiel that the
4 rates are going up across the country, the foreign
5 government got a squeeze on us, there is gas up Alaska
6 but we can't use it, we use it we will be all out of gas
7 in 20 years.

8 I said, look, I can't afford this. How can you
9 afford it? He said I got a \$450 bill myself. He said I
10 am going to tell you, they have a squeeze on us. We are
11 not going to get out from under this. He said another
12 gas rate coming up in the summer when the electric
13 company go up they are going to raise the gas bill up
14 again. Because he said they need the electric to supply
15 the gas to us. So the electric rates go up, the gas
16 rates will go up.

17 So he said we will put you on a budget. I said
18 okay. What can I do. Put me on a budget. He said the
19 bill you got going now, \$90 a month for 12 months and he
20 estimate my bill is going to be about 200 a month. So
21 \$300 a month for 12 months.

22 Now I got a bill for April and it says 00. See, I
23 have no confidence in this billing. Something is wrong
24 with the billing and if the consumer is looking into this
25 they need to go back to when they started changing our

1 account numbers around last year. Something is not
2 right.

3 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: And the meters.

4 THE WITNESS: You know, like I said in this letter,
5 I said people don't mind paying a reasonable rate for gas
6 to go up. But come on, this is ridiculous. And I don't
7 think we should be charged late, we should be paying late
8 charges when they sock you with a \$1,000 bill. I don't
9 have \$1,000 just sitting in my wallet I can go out and
10 give to them. It is just totally unfair.

11 And that is all I have to say.

12 (Applause.)

13 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you, Ms. Harris.

14 MR. GRAY: Your Honor, can I ask one question?

15 JUDGE FORDHAM: Yes.

16 MR. GRAY: Can I ask you one quick question? I am
17 not from this area so pardon me if this is an ignorant
18 question.

19 You get your April bill and it says 00. Did you
20 pick up the phone and call PGW and say what is going on?

21 (Shouts from audience.)

22 JUDGE FORDHAM: Wait a minute. You don't have the
23 floor. Ms. Harris was asked the question.

24 MR. GRAY: So you still have a copy of your April
25 bill, correct?

1 THE WITNESS: I have a copy of the bill.

2 MR. GRAY: So you did not call PGW and say you made
3 a mistake before, all this interest that you claim that I
4 owe you. You didn't make any contact?

5 THE WITNESS: Well, I went there the other day but
6 they were crowded. That office was crowded. There is
7 someone out there now. It says 00, but it also says I
8 agree to give them \$43,200. So I don't know what is
9 going on.

10 MR. GRAY: Thank you, Your Honor.

11 JUDGE FORDHAM: Ms. Harris, I don't know whether
12 you have talked to anyone tonight about that bill or not.
13 The other thing is we talked about the people from PGW
14 here. The Commission also has a Bureau of Consumer
15 Services and the person who is at the sign-in table, Ms.
16 Graves, is from the Bureau of Consumer Services and you
17 can also talk to her.

18 (Witness excused.)

19 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is Donna Konrad.
20 Whereupon,

21 DONNA KONRAD
22 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

23 DIRECT TESTIMONY

24 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and
25 address for the record, and please spell your name?

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1 THE WITNESS: Donna Konrad, K-O-N-R-A-D. I live at
2 7817 Rockwell Avenue.

3 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you. You may proceed.

4 THE WITNESS: I brought some petitions tonight and
5 some people here also signed it. I would like to read
6 the petition to the board.

7 It says we, the undersigned, consider the continued
8 PGW rate hikes ludicrous. The citizens of Philadelphia
9 are paying the bill for PGW's gross mismanagement and
10 extravagant living by its management staff.

11 (Applause.)

12 THE WITNESS: The citizen of the City of
13 Philadelphia have seen no accountability for the increase
14 in the rate hikes received. We urge the Public Utility
15 Commission to prove to the citizens of the City of
16 Philadelphia what has happened to our money paid to PGW.

17 We request the PUC to hold public hearings -- amen
18 -- information gather hearings on the issue with Mayor
19 John Street present as well as PGW representatives.
20 Which I am glad PGW is here this evening. We do not feel
21 we should have to pay for the mismanagement of PGW.
22 Further, we do not feel we should pay for all the
23 deadbeats who do not pay their bills.

24 (Applause.)

25 THE WITNESS: The burden is placed on the citizen

1 of Philadelphia who pay their bills promptly. All the
2 citizens of Philadelphia are on fixed incomes, whether on
3 social security or even if they have a full-time job.
4 The citizens' amount of money does not fluctuate enough
5 to cover the cost of living or the increases from PGW.
6 Our bills that have doubled from December and January and
7 will probably continue on this track. Where will it end?
8 When the citizens of Philadelphia can no longer pay their
9 bills properly where will PGW be then? We agree an
10 increase is fair. But the amount of so many increases is
11 staggering.

12 (Applause.)

13 JUDGE FORDHAM: Are there any questions of
14 Ms. Konrad?

15 THE WITNESS: Myself personally I have been
16 unemployed three times in two years. My bill is paid up
17 to date. You don't have to worry about that because I
18 walk around with sweats on and jackets and shawls and
19 covers at night because I can't afford it.

20 I also cook for Aid for Friends. I don't know if
21 anybody knows about that. And I do a lot of cooking for
22 these people that can not cook for themselves. So I use
23 a lot of gas cooking for them. And I will continue to do
24 it even though it costs me money because I feel that is
25 important in my life.

1 I just don't understand why we have to have so many
2 increases at once. I realize we all have to pay extra,
3 that is obvious. But the amount of the increases is what
4 bothers, I think, everybody in this room. And we need to
5 know why.

6 We have seen no profit and loss statement from PGW.
7 We have seen nothing of what happened. All we hear on
8 the news is they went on business junkets and spent all
9 the money. Where is it? We want to see -- if you are a
10 public people, Your Honor, why can't we see their
11 accounting?

12 JUDGE FORDHAM: They have filed some documents with
13 the Commission and as the Office of Trial Staff and
14 Consumer Advocate indicated, they have experts that are
15 reviewing the documents, accountants and economists who
16 are reviewing all of those documents. They will be
17 presented at the public hearings.

18 THE WITNESS: Can we get a copy of it if we call
19 and ask PGW or maybe the Office of Consumer Advocate? I
20 mean, shouldn't we see what is going on in black and
21 white?

22 MR. FYOCK: It is available in our office at 800
23 West Montgomery for your review.

24 THE WITNESS: Do you have to make an appointment,
25 sir?

1 MR. FYOCK: No. It is right in the lobby.

2 THE WITNESS: Okay. I'll see you there in the
3 morning.

4 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: I guess we have to call the
5 Daily News up and they will get it for us.

6 JUDGE FORDHAM: If you would listen he did say it
7 is available at their office at 800 Montgomery.

8 MR. FYOCK: For review.

9 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: That isn't enough. It should
10 be published instead of being hidden.

11 THE WITNESS: Is it a certified copy by a reputable
12 CPA?

13 MR. FYOCK: It is filed under the requirements of
14 the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission?

15 THE WITNESS: You didn't answer my question. It's
16 not certified, is it.

17 MR. FYOCK: Your Honor, I defer to you.

18 JUDGE FORDHAM: I have not seen the document.

19 MR. FYOCK: Your Honor, it is a filing we made for
20 the rate case. It's not certified.

21 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: It's not by a CPA.

22 MR. FYOCK: It's not a financial accounting
23 document.

24 THE WITNESS: Well, I think that is what we should
25 have.

1 JUDGE FORDHAM: There are certain requirements for
2 the rate case and he said what he is providing is what is
3 required by the Public Utility Commission and the Public
4 Utility Code.

5 THE WITNESS: Okay. How many copies do you need of
6 these petitions?

7 MR. KEENE: I would request that Ms. Konrad's
8 petition be marked and identified and admitted into the
9 record as an exhibit.

10 JUDGE FORDHAM: Okay. I need a copy. The court
11 reporter needs two copies. And the parties need copies.

12 THE WITNESS: Okay.

13 (Applause.)

14 JUDGE FORDHAM: Do you have an original?

15 THE WITNESS: Yes, I have the original here.

16 JUDGE FORDHAM: Give me the original.

17 THE WITNESS: Let me have one of the copies.

18 JUDGE FORDHAM: Okay.

19 What would you like to mark that?

20 MR. KEENE: Whatever you prefer, Your Honor.

21 Konrad Public Input Statement 1?

22 JUDGE FORDHAM: This will be marked as Konrad
23 Public Input Exhibit 1.

24

25

1 (Whereupon, the document was marked as Konrad
2 Public Input Exhibit No. 1 for identification,
3 and was received in evidence.)

4 JUDGE FORDHAM: This is the petition that she read.
5 It is 17 pages.

6 Thank you, Ms. Konrad.

7 (Witness excused.)

8 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is Elsie Rizzo.
9 (No audible response.)

10 JUDGE FORDHAM: Is she here?

11 (No audible response.)

12 JUDGE FORDHAM: Is Elsie Rizzo, R-I-Z-Z-O, here?

13 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: We can't hear you.

14 JUDGE FORDHAM: Is there a Elsie Rizzo, R-I-Z-Z-O
15 or R-I-Z-Z-I, here?

16 (No audible response.)

17 JUDGE FORDHAM: Then the next one is Vincent -- I
18 can't read the last name -- O'Mara from Crafton Street.
19 Is that person here?

20 (No audible response.)

21 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next person is Maris Menin.

22 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: I am testifying on behalf of
23 my parents.

24 JUDGE FORDHAM: I still need to swear you in.
25 Whereupon,

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MARIS MENIN

having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

DIRECT TESTIMONY

JUDGE FORDHAM: Will you state your name and please spell your name and your address for the record.

THE WITNESS: Do you want my name or my parents?

JUDGE FORDHAM: I want your name and you can mention your parents' name. But I need to have your name for the record.

THE WITNESS: My name is Maris Menin, M-E-N-I-N. And my parents are Mr. and Mrs. Friedlinder, F-R-I-E-D-L-I-N-D-E-R. They live at 437 Regina Street.

My parents are over 80 years of age and for medical reasons cannot be here tonight. They requested that I testify on their behalf.

They are concerned about the continuing increases for natural gas service. Since November they have been paying an increase of 55 percent and now they are faced with yet another approximately six percent increase.

My parents have lived in Philadelphia all their lives. Now, living on a fixed income, not only are they concerned about the increases in the gas rate, they also have greater medical expenses and that includes the high price for prescription drugs. I can't tell you how many drug my mother has to take right now. It's a tremendous

1 amount.

2 My mother expressed concern for other senior
3 citizens who may be less fortunate than my parents.
4 Until now they have been able to meet their obligations
5 to PGW. If their gas bill goes any higher they may have
6 difficulty. And what happens to those people who will
7 never receive the senior citizen discount?

8 Working and living in Philadelphia, my parents want
9 to know why the city is not willing to share the burden
10 of PGW's deficits by releasing PGW from its \$18 million
11 obligation it requires every year. And she is right.
12 Mayor Street should be here. After all, the city had an
13 obligation to oversee PGW for all these years. The city
14 did not do its job and now they want PGW ratepayers to
15 pay for their inadequate supervision.

16 Thank you.

17 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

18 (Applause.)

19 (Witness excused.)

20 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is Merlyn Hoppel.

21 Whereupon,

22 MERLYN HOPPEL

23 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

24 DIRECT TESTIMONY

25 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and

1 address for the record and please spell your name?

2 THE WITNESS: My name is Merlyn Hoppel. The first
3 spelling is M-E-R-L-Y-N. The last name is H-O-P-P-E-L.
4 I reside at 12618 Chilton Road.

5 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you. You may proceed.

6 THE WITNESS: I can't elaborate much more than what
7 already has. Most of my statement or questions will be
8 in question form.

9 My first question is has the panel ever tried to
10 call the gas company?

11 (Laughter.)

12 THE WITNESS: Hold it. You are not the panel.
13 Let's see what they have to say.

14 People say call. They are put on hold. I myself
15 hang up after a half-hour, even though I am not paying
16 the bill. Where is the justice here?

17 So you say okay, we are going down to the office.
18 Down to the office? You can't see the office for the
19 line. How do you expect to contact the gas company and
20 say, hey, I got a problem. You sure have. You got the
21 problem right there in the gas company.

22 The next thing is why doesn't the gas company try
23 to collect these back fees that have never been paid?
24 Nothing against the Mayor. I don't know him. I didn't
25 vote for him. My likes and dislikes are not relevant

1 here. Did you ever collect his back money?

2 (Applause.)

3 THE WITNESS: No. It has been stated that if the
4 gas company collected all of the back monies they would
5 be ahead of the game and not in the hole.

6 The next thing I want to speak on is senior
7 citizens, which I am one of. I have a sister that is on
8 the bare social security, \$500. How can she or anyone
9 else pay these bills? My bill went up three-fold in the
10 last six months.

11 Come on, people. I can't buy this. My suggestion
12 is throw the gas company out.

13 (Applause.)

14 THE WITNESS: Let City Council --

15 (Shouts from audience.)

16 JUDGE FORDHAM: Please, he has the floor.

17 THE WITNESS: Or go to Harrisburg.

18 And let us put in propane. Propane, I use in my
19 second home. Last year for 30 pounds I paid \$15. I get
20 the same use, the same heat, and everything else that I
21 do this natural gas. To me, the gas company is riding on
22 inflation and we are, the consumers, are taking a
23 beating. They don't consider the consumer. They want to
24 rip us off, which they are doing.

25 Now, the next question, when this thing is all

1 over, are they going to turn around and reverse
2 everything and ask the PUC to permit them to lower the
3 price? Not as long as I am alive. I will never see it.

4 Consider the people you are supplying and doing
5 business for. They also charge enormous fees when they
6 come out to do repairs. It costs you an arm and half a
7 leg.

8 I can go on forever. I will quit right there, Your
9 Honor.

10 (Applause.)

11 (Witness excused.)

12 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is Solomon Haas.
13 Whereupon,

14 SOLOMON HAAS

15 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

16 DIRECT TESTIMONY

17 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and
18 address for the record, please. And please spell your
19 name.

20 THE WITNESS: Solomon Haas, 7832 Lister Street,
21 Philadelphia.

22 JUDGE FORDHAM: You may proceed.

23 THE WITNESS: My name is Solomon Haas, a senior
24 citizen. I have resided in the northeast for the past 47
25 years.

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1 Rates are out of order. Completely out of it. Now
2 the monthly rate equals all of the energy and water bills
3 of 45 years ago for one year. Today you pay it in one
4 month for gas. Why are they so high?

5 First, poor legislative oversight to control
6 profits. Because profits are the God in this society.
7 Profits for the gas pipelines cost plus profits for raw
8 gas costs and profits for excessive executive salaries
9 and benefits.

10 Several years ago it was in, I believe, the
11 Bulletin at the time, that the chief executive officer of
12 the gas company had a million dollars income -- I'm sorry
13 -- half a million, plus additional benefits. Is that
14 logical? That was much more than even the Mayor of the
15 city got.

16 The inadequate investigation of products for sale.
17 Several years ago we bought a Bryant air conditioner.
18 One month later it had to be replaced. After a new one
19 was put in, repeated service to cover one little O ring
20 in the pump. Now who paid for it? The gas company
21 covered it. But those expenses mount and then a couple
22 years later they discontinued servicing the Bryant air
23 conditioner.

24 Then you had the Caloric gas stove. Five pilots.
25 I remember years ago we had two pilots. It uses gas.

1 Why? Did the gas company consider the consumer? Oh, no.
2 They only considered the profit. The hell with the
3 consumer.

4 The previous speaker spoke of the cost for service.
5 Years ago we didn't pay any charge as long as we got the
6 gas. Today you pay excessive amounts for labor.

7 Then you had the inadequate overseer by city and
8 state.

9 I recommend the following: first, I don't know how
10 many of you here know that in the House of
11 Representatives -- that is the state house -- a bill was
12 put in, it is Resolution 100, and I oppose that bill,
13 which is to investigate the gas company rates and so
14 forth. And the reason I oppose the bill is that in the
15 bill they have a little bit of additional -- in Jewish we
16 say arice. What is it? The committee that is doing the
17 investigating largely of the Legislature, they get paid
18 extra. Now, why do they get paid extra? I don't know.
19 It is pork. Some more pork. Doubledipping.

20 Now, my recommendations are the following:
21 reorganize the PGW under city ownership.

22 (Shouts from audience.)

23 JUDGE FORDHAM: Let him speak. He has the floor.
24 He has the floor.

25 THE WITNESS: If you have the management which is

1 composed of one-half union workers, the other half can be
2 management. But you also have an ombudsman who is the
3 chairman and has a lot of control. Now, this procedure
4 takes place in countries in Europe. That is where I
5 learned it. And there is a great deal of satisfaction in
6 that type of management.

7 Suits -- I don't mean suits like this -- suits
8 against the perpetrators of this tremendous increase in
9 rates, against the pipelines, gas pipelines and oil
10 pipelines and so forth, the suppliers that gave us the
11 Bryant air conditioner, the suppliers that gave us the
12 various units that we have in our homes, they should be
13 prosecuted.

14 Now, finally, I recognize this requires city, state
15 and federal action to resolve the problems and to act on
16 behalf of the consumers, you and all of us. We are the
17 ones that should be considered, not the profit. And it
18 is up to the people to make sure that that happens.

19 (Applause.)

20 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you, Mr. has.

21 (Witness excused.)

22 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is Roy Berman.

23 Whereupon,

24 ROY BERMAN

25 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

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DIRECT TESTIMONY

1
2 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and
3 address for the record, please?

4 THE WITNESS: Roy Berman, 1813 Tolbut Street.

5 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you. You may proceed.

6 THE WITNESS: I have a prepared statement here.
7 Philadelphia Gas Works, suggestions for economizing and
8 saving at least \$1 million or more per year.

9 Number one, consolidation of facilities. The
10 location in the 9500 block of Bustleton Avenue has an
11 extremely large area, mostly unutilized space. Why not
12 combine it with the municipal services building nearby at
13 Roosevelt Boulevard and Welsh Road, which has very little
14 space and is heavily utilized. The gas works facility
15 can easily accommodate the needs of the municipal
16 services facility. Substantial savings on annual
17 rentals.

18 Secondly, credit cards. Why accept credit cards
19 for payment? No other utility or tax collecting agency
20 does this, except the IRS, for which there is a service
21 charge. Substantial annual savings on credit card fees.

22 Security. Why is there a security guard at branch
23 payment offices? There is relatively little cash handled
24 and why accept cash or credit cards at all? The
25 municipal services building only accepts checks, why not

1 PGW? They have no security guard nor do any of the banks
2 in the greater northeast and probably other parts of the
3 city. A substantial yearly savings in the cost of guards
4 at all PGW facilities.

5 Next, meter readings. Why not consolidate meter
6 readings with the water bureau, which is also a city
7 owned utility the same as PGW? And perhaps with PECO. A
8 substantial annual savings in the cost of personnel.

9 Next, billing. Again, why not consolidate bill
10 mailings with water bill mailings. Even though the
11 payment dates could be different from each other so as
12 not to create a hardship on some payees. Why not send a
13 postcard billing, not an estimate every, month and a
14 detailed one page billing every third month. A
15 combination of either of these billing suggestions would
16 offer a substantial annual savings in postage, paper and
17 handling.

18 Lastly, computerization. There are still snafus
19 this this area which are costly to both PGW and their
20 customers. Personally, I am on a budget billing and
21 always pay on time. Yet my latest bill indicated that no
22 payment was due even though I had a substantial account
23 balance and the current charges were \$158. Had I not
24 paid my regular budget bill in any case next month's bill
25 would be double plus penalty and PGW would have lost

1 also.

2 That is my comments.

3 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

4 (Applause.)

5 (Witness excused.)

6 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next name I am having
7 difficulty reading. It is 4517 Comb Street. Is that
8 someone's address?

9 (No audible response.)

10 JUDGE FORDHAM: Is it Marne, the last name? Does
11 that sound familiar?

12 (No audible response.)

13 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: Pardon me, Your Honor.

14 JUDGE FORDHAM: Yes, sir?

15 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: I have a question for you
16 before we go on. Who exactly organized this meeting?
17 Who is in charge of this meeting here tonight? Who made
18 the arrangements with the hotel and so on and so forth?

19 JUDGE FORDHAM: The Public Utility Commission.

20 THE WITNESS: Well, they are the only ones that can
21 get the heat turned down in here. So if you could have
22 one of them go up and tell them to turn the heat down a
23 little bit that would make everybody a little more
24 comfortable and that would help a lot.

25 JUDGE FORDHAM: Okay.

1 The next speaker is Janina Ankielewicz from the
2 Polish American Social Services.

3 Whereupon,

4 JANINA ANKIELEWICZ

5 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

6 DIRECT TESTIMONY

7 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name for the
8 record and identify your organization and please spell
9 your name.

10 THE WITNESS: Polish American Social Service.
11 J-A-N-I-N-A, A-N-K-I-E-L-E-W-I-C-Z.

12 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

13 THE WITNESS: I have written statement. I just
14 want to shorten. I am going to just mention the most
15 important points.

16 JUDGE FORDHAM: Okay.

17 THE WITNESS: I am here to speak today on behalf of
18 many people who could not be here to voice their opinion.
19 I know how these people feel and what they think and what
20 they would say today if they could be here.

21 The people I am speaking of are elderly Polish
22 speaking who are on a fixed income, \$600 a month or less.
23 And they are qualifying -- they are people who have been
24 qualified tax paying citizens of the city and this
25 country for many years.

1 I am speaking of people who have lost their jobs in
2 the prime of their lives and have bills daily falling
3 behind. I am also speaking of people who are disabled
4 and could not work if they want to and are on fixed
5 incomes.

6 I know these people because I get to talk to them
7 on the phone every day. They call me. They explain that
8 the gas bill is definitely too high. Their income is so
9 small that after they pay their gas bill they don't have
10 much left for food and they are, some of them are,
11 crying. I can hear the fear, desperation, fear,
12 helplessness in their voice. Many were just making it
13 with their meager incomes and some assistance from our
14 social programs.

15 They tell me stories with bitter tears of them,
16 making them stop several times. It is unbelievable.
17 They really cannot pay increase because the bill is not
18 just increased few percent but it is just double and it
19 is so hard for them that they told me they have, like --
20 they come down, have a cup of coffee with their coats on
21 or sweaters and then they go back under the covers. They
22 cannot have their gas set to their comfort. And some of
23 them have arthritis. It is really difficult for them to
24 live this way.

25 My final is that I would like to ask Philadelphia

1 Gas Works to really not to raise the gas bill because it
2 is really hurting the society and especially the elderly.

3 Thank you.

4 (Applause.)

5 JUDGE FORDHAM: Ms. Ankielewicz, what is your
6 position with Polish American Social Service?

7 THE WITNESS: I am a social service representative.

8 JUDGE FORDHAM: And is the address listed here for
9 your address or the organization?

10 THE WITNESS: Yes. 308 Walnut Street,
11 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106.

12 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

13 THE WITNESS: You're welcome. And I have written
14 statement. I know there is many people that want to
15 speak. So I shorten this and I have made copy.

16 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

17 (Witness excused.)

18 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is Sam Munafo.
19 Whereupon,

20 SAM MUNAFO

21 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

22 DIRECT TESTIMONY

23 JUDGE FORDHAM: Will you state your name and
24 address for the record and please spell your last name.

25 THE WITNESS: I name is Sam Munafo, M-U-N-A-F-O. I

1 live at 3345 Holme Avenue in Philadelphia.

2 First I want to thank that gentleman that gave some
3 constructive ideas on how to cut down the bills. That
4 was good. Instead of just complaints he had some
5 solutions.

6 Anyway, I have gone over my bills just for the last
7 three months. Comparing them with last years I was
8 surprised to find that percentage-wise my bills have gone
9 up 50 percent. I think that is a little excessive.

10 Anyway, I would have hoped that by this time in
11 this gathering we would have had some numbers, some
12 figures to refer to. I would like to know, first of all,
13 what the extent of PGW's debt is and what their
14 receivables are. Does anybody know? A percentage?
15 Something?

16 MR. HOLLAND: Mr. Munafo, we can provide that
17 information. It is in our filing. But if you care to, I
18 can certainly provide that.

19 THE WITNESS: I would have liked to have made a
20 comparison. This is what I want to refer to.
21 Philadelphia is known as a city of lawyers. A lot of
22 people don't know it is a city of damn tough collectors.
23 I am not saying we want to be like California. Our rates
24 are going to go up, deservedly so. Things go up. You
25 got to pay more. Look, I am 80 years old and I am

1 retired and I manage and I don't have a hell of a lot of
2 money. By the same token, we have to keep them in
3 perspective.

4 Now, I don't care. Have they made any effort to
5 collect any money? Have they been successful? If not,
6 why don't they sell their paper to a collection agency
7 and maybe the increase won't be as severe. Sell the
8 paper. There is no use keeping something -- it is a dead
9 horse. I don't care if it is a dime on a dollar. It
10 will reduce it some.

11 One thing I do want to say. The zip code
12 collections smacks of profiling. I don't think it is
13 fair. You go where the money is owed. The heck with the
14 zip codes. Go after the people who are not paying. And
15 if they are not paying give it to the cops.

16 Thank you.

17 (Applause.)

18 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

19 (Witness excused.)

20 JUDGE FORDHAM: There are a couple of seats in the
21 front for people who are standing in the back if you
22 would like to sit down.

23 The next speaker is Walt Mueller.

24

25

1 Whereupon,

2 WALT MUELLER

3 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

4 DIRECT TESTIMONY

5 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and
6 address for the record and spell your name.

7 THE WITNESS: Walt Mueller, M-U-E-L-L-E-R, 8928
8 Fairfield, here in northeast Philadelphia.

9 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you. You may proceed.

10 THE WITNESS: The one issue, I have spent my entire
11 life in data processing. I worked mainly in state and
12 municipal accounts over 46 years. Through a family
13 relationship and my own daughter, who at one time applied
14 for a position with PGW two years ago -- thank God she
15 didn't take the job -- she went over the system which
16 they were implementing. And the surface the system was
17 super sophisticated, very complex. And I think the
18 reason it failed was not from the management team which
19 they had, who were very astute, but the people working
20 under them.

21 I have always believed and I think a lot of people
22 here are going to applaud when I say it, I think PGW is
23 nothing but a nepotism organization. If you don't know
24 somebody at PGW you will never get a job there. It is a
25 city hack organization. And that is why they don't have

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1 the wherewithal to hire people who are petrified to work
2 in a politically organization. Because you lose your job
3 for no reason at all if someone doesn't like you. It is
4 never based on ability or performance. It is based on
5 who you know.

6 And so intelligent hard working people stay out of
7 it. And so you have people who are promoted into the
8 systems analysts job, programmers, who knew nothing about
9 these functions and we are forcing managers to try to
10 implement a system that took unbelievable intelligence
11 because, folks, let me use some forward statements, these
12 were complex integrated systems which would act today
13 very much like the internet and they were trying hard to
14 do this system but they didn't have the guns to do it.

15 And my complaint is what others are worried about.
16 All of us here in some way shape or form do have at times
17 money to pay our bill and most all of us, and I have been
18 in the city for 49 years -- in fact, my whole life but as
19 a bill payer over 49 years -- my concern is the accounts
20 receivable.

21 I would like to see published in the Inquirer --
22 and I saw an article about two months ago when they were
23 harassing the last management team that was put out for
24 the money they spent. Folks, the money they spent is
25 peanuts compared to the receivables. The receivables two

1 months ago was over \$300 million. And two years ago it
2 was \$390 million. Now, who the hell is collecting that
3 money. No company in America can stay alive with
4 receivables over six to eight percent. You are out of
5 business. The average receivables delinquent is about
6 three-and-a-half percent in America. Anybody over that
7 is bankrupt. And you know what? The city took over PGW
8 again after UGI ran it for 50 years without any problem.
9 UGI is still successful today. But the political hacks,
10 starting with Mayor Rizzo, took it and gave it away to
11 the political hacks who destroyed it and now you have
12 receivables that people who not can't pay but won't pay.
13 And you have a mayor who leaves the same type of
14 personality who is not upset over people who won't pay
15 because he never did pay.

16 (Applause.)

17 THE WITNESS: And to me they need \$65 million to
18 bring themselves out of the red with 300 million in
19 delinquent accounts. You've got to collect that money.
20 If they don't collect it, sell the company. Give it to a
21 commercial firm.

22 Look, the biggest problem is if you go down and
23 take a flight to any city you don't get on the plane
24 without a ticket. If you go to the supermarket and you
25 put five bags of food on the counter, you are going to

1 pay for it. I don't know of any business that functions
2 on selling their product and never getting paid for it.

3 And so the least they could do is shut off the gas
4 for those who are habitual delinquent accounts, and that
5 means you do not have to buy that gas. That is gas that
6 you don't have to sell. Why are you giving gas away?

7 I mean, folks, you know there was 176,000 accounts
8 -- this came out about a year -- 176,000 residential
9 accounts. 68,000 are delinquent. It is a joke.

10 I would like to see all those numbers put in the
11 papers so people in here who can read accounting numbers
12 can see how bad the delinquency rate is, how bad the
13 number of accounts -- 30 some percent of the people in
14 this city ain't paying nothing. And it is unbelievable.

15 And also the whole rate increase was a lie. There
16 was no such thing as a 45 percent increase in this last
17 gas rate. That gas rate went from 10795 to 61095. Six
18 hundred percent increase in the rate for gas. Folks, it
19 wasn't 74 percent, it was 600 percent. So, I mean, why
20 do the people continuously lie?

21 All the people in here, there are many people who
22 are educated enough to understand how to add things.
23 Everybody is made out to be a dupe and it just troubles
24 me. I have never been to a public meeting to complain
25 before but this is so outrageous.

1 Get rid of this company. Stop giving the city
2 employees the jobs that they can't function in any other
3 part of the city and putting them in PGW, or somebody's
4 brother-in-law who is a bum needs a job and they put them
5 in PGW. You meet these people. They come to your
6 houses. I mean, there is so much fraud in PGW --

7 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: I worked there for 22 years,
8 buddy, and I ain't no bum.

9 JUDGE FORDHAM: Wait a minute.

10 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: I worked there 22 years and
11 you're calling me a bum?

12 THE WITNESS: I'm not calling you a bum. I am
13 saying there are bums in that organization.

14 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: I ain't a political hack
15 either.

16 THE WITNESS: Then how did you get your job?

17 JUDGE FORDHAM: Sir, please make your remarks --

18 THE WITNESS: I am just saying my biggest concern
19 is collecting the money due. If we are paying money here
20 now and our money is being taken to operate the system
21 then why aren't all of the customers paying? If not, you
22 shut the the gas off.

23 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: Here is another thing. You
24 ask them people at the PUC to give you their regulations
25 for somebody that is going to call up and cry and they

1 are going to say you have to pay \$1 to 15 on a \$9,000 gas
2 bill. You ask them what their regulations are. And then
3 you call me a bum, buddy.

4 THE WITNESS: I did not call you a bum.

5 JUDGE FORDHAM: Sir, sit down, please. Don't
6 respond to him. We are not here to have an argument. We
7 are not here to have shouting matches with each other.
8 We are here for you to explain what you want to say about
9 it. Please refrain from calling the employees any names.

10 THE WITNESS: I'm sorry about that. This is a
11 heated situation.

12 JUDGE FORDHAM: Please refrain from calling the
13 PGW --

14 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: That is the top, the very top.

15 JUDGE FORDHAM: Sir, you are out of order.

16 Everybody wants to have time to talk. We do not
17 shout from the audience.

18 Are you finished?

19 THE WITNESS: Yes. I just want to say my main
20 concern is collecting the monies due.

21 (Applause.)

22 THE WITNESS: Collecting the monies due. There are
23 sick and there are old and there are invalid and those
24 cases can be reviewed in an intelligent way so they are
25 not slighted. But I still contend there are people who

1 can pay and they must pay. It is as simple as that, I
2 think. It's not simple but I think that is a solution.
3 There is money out there that is due to PGW. Go and
4 collect it.

5 Thank you.

6 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

7 (Applause.)

8 (Witness excused.)

9 JUDGE FORDHAM: I would ask that the audience
10 respect the speakers that are here and that the speakers
11 respect the audience and the PGW employees.

12 The next speaker is Nate Marcus.

13 Whereupon,

14 NATHANIEL MARCUS

15 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

16 DIRECT TESTIMONY

17 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and
18 address for the record, please?

19 THE WITNESS: Nathaniel Marcus, M-A-R-C-U-S, 205
20 Radburn Road, Philadelphia, 19115.

21 JUDGE FORDHAM: You may proceed.

22 THE WITNESS: I have a prepared statement but I
23 have heard so many of you express my feelings that I have
24 down here on the paper. I spoke to my wife, Joyce,
25 tonight and I said I got to go to the meeting. I got to

1 go to the meeting. And she turned around to me and she
2 said, you know something, you see the weather outside,
3 it's going to rain. Nobody is going to show up but you,
4 meaning me. I wish Joyce could be here tonight. You are
5 a blessing.

6 You know, folks, if you have a leak in your house
7 of water unless you go to stop it that leak is going to
8 grow. So the first thing you got to do when you have a
9 leak, if it is a hot water tank, is to know where the
10 valve is. And you turn that valve off and you stop the
11 water. What that does, it gives you time to think of how
12 to make the repairs. Gentlemen, I don't know who you
13 are. But I hope that you will help myself and all these
14 folks here because we have turned that valve and we are
15 saying no, enough is enough, we can't pay your bills.

16 Now, once that sort of slows down, the rate
17 increases, then the repairs have to be made. And those
18 repairs involve taking the course that we are forced to
19 pay now and turning it back, making it so that we can pay
20 your bills on time and perhaps others will do the same.
21 It is up to you people and whoever else in this room can
22 help to make that statement come true. All the screaming
23 and all the yelling don't do any good. But what you did
24 good coming here tonight is you presented your resistance
25 to the cost of when you get this blue and white bill.

1 You know, when I get this bill I got a new habit.
2 I sit down. Because if I don't when I open the envelope
3 and read the bottom line I will be sitting.

4 Many of you people have preceded me in your talk
5 said many of the things that I was going to say. So
6 excuse me. I won't take up too much further.

7 I wrote a letter to a gentleman that I was told at
8 this time is the president of the Philadelphia Gas Works.
9 The gentlemen's name is Kishand Chan. Am I saying that
10 right? Is he the president of the Philadelphia Gas
11 Works.

12 MR. FYOCK: He is the acting CEO.

13 JUDGE FORDHAM: Did you hear his response?

14 THE WITNESS: Yes. Not --

15 JUDGE FORDHAM: I mean did you hear Mr. Fyock's
16 response?

17 MR. FYOCK: I said, yes. He is the acting CEO.

18 THE WITNESS: Good. Addressing my letter to him,
19 and the letter was dated before this meeting, February
20 26.

21 "I am a senior citizen, retired on a fixed income,
22 and a consumer of your product, gas, for heating and meal
23 warmups. As you have been told from many sources, the
24 cost of your product has gone through the roof. I sit
25 down before I open up your billing in the mail. Your

1 company is killing us financially. We have many bills to
2 pay. The question is who do we pay and who do we not pay
3 or delay paying."

4 "It is a shame what we read in the papers about the
5 past directors of your Philadelphia Gas Works and at
6 present our problems of meeting the payments monthly for
7 your gas billings."

8 I would like to reiterate the first part of that
9 statement. If you people read the Philadelphia Inquirer
10 there was a gentleman that ran or had something to do
11 with running this organization, the Philadelphia Gas
12 Works, and he installed gas lights completely around his
13 house. And when this issue came into court they allowed
14 him to have it because the statement was made he is
15 advertising the gas company.

16 Even with the senior citizen discount the cost of
17 your product is becoming outrageous. God help us, those
18 of you in my category, senior citizens, they should take
19 away the 20 percent. Geez, if my bill becomes \$1,000 at
20 20 percent I would be paying roughly maybe about \$750,
21 which I still can't pay. So I hope to God this 20
22 percent discount never is taken away from us. I know, in
23 today's billing it doesn't do much. You still can't pay
24 the bill.

25 I am going to eliminate part of my letter because

1 other people have said this.

2 "I struggle to pay my bills on time. I struggle to
3 make ends meet. I do not have to be insulted or have my
4 financial ratings lowered. Have your employees think
5 twice before they mail insults."

6 What that is about, perhaps it is a little strange,
7 was the fact that I got a billing telling me pay your
8 bill or we are going to shut our gas off. The funny part
9 about it was the bill was not due yet. But they are
10 sending me the statement pay your bill or we will shut
11 your gas off. I didn't think it was funny.

12 They claim that retirement are the golden years.
13 Did you ever hear that, the golden years when you retire?
14 Sir, gentlemen, there are no golden years. Life is a
15 struggling to survive, to stay afloat, or you will drown.
16 Example, to pay the monthly gas bill. I trust you will
17 look into my personal problem and my personal problem is
18 yours also. With a past due billing and on behalf of all
19 consumers, find a way to bring your costs down that
20 people can pay the bills and still live to enjoy
21 retirement.

22 Thank you very much.

23 (Applause.)

24 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Marcus.

25 (Witness excused.)

1 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is Joe Kiniry.

2 THE WITNESS: Joe Kiniry, 12609 Medford Road, far
3 northeast.

4 JUDGE FORDHAM: Do you want to be sworn?

5 THE WITNESS: Yes, I do.

6 Whereupon,

7 JOE KINIRY

8 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

9 DIRECT TESTIMONY

10 JUDGE FORDHAM: Will you spell your last name for
11 the record?

12 THE WITNESS: K-I-N-I-R-Y.

13 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

14 You may proceed.

15 THE WITNESS: I am not going to spend a lot of time
16 up here. We have heard an awful lot of rhetoric. A lot
17 of it I would have aired out myself tonight.

18 But I had just one thing that I saw in my bill
19 initially and some people might have absorbed it and just
20 didn't think much of it, which was the service charge.
21 I had a couple of questions here regarding that.

22 Who gives you the authority to increase the service
23 charge? And by how much? Who makes that decision?

24 What was the reason for the monthly service charge
25 increase? To cover the debts that we all have heard

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1 through mismanagement and other things? And how did you
2 calculate this increase? All of a sudden I am paying \$8
3 a month. And now it goes to \$11.66. I mean, where does
4 this percentage, where does this come from? How is it
5 calculated? Based on what? I have never heard anything
6 and it is never explained.

7 I have my particular bill, it covers the two
8 months. It is the period for February 15 to March 15.
9 And they say in there that come March 1st we are going to
10 have this increase.

11 Now, to the best of my knowledge the \$8 covered to
12 some extent half of that for the 15 days in February.
13 And then we start from March 1st to the 15 days in March
14 and do it on a daily basis on how much it costs. We are
15 getting back to this accounting again. My bill should
16 not be 11.66. It started March 1st, only 15 days in.
17 And you are charging me the full month?

18 These are little things. Now, I am only hitting
19 the service charge. That is only another accounting
20 problem, I think, that some of the others have echoed.
21 On the bigger scale if they are fouling up on the
22 so-called smaller service charge that we get each month
23 in the way they did this billing then what is happening
24 with the bigger thing, the cost of the gas and the
25 commodities and this and that? So I am very suspicious

1 of the accounting that was done and how our bills arrive
2 the way they have.

3 That is all I have. Thank you.

4 (Applause.)

5 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

6 (Witness excused.)

7 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is Hanna Abrams.

8 Whereupon,

9 HANNA ABRAMS

10 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

11 DIRECT TESTIMONY

12 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and
13 address for the record, please?

14 THE WITNESS: Hanna Abrams, A-B-R-A-M-S, 9863 Hoff
15 Street.

16 I will not repeat a lot of things being said. But
17 I do want to point out the article in the newsletter said
18 the average bill for 100 mcf is \$105. That was true at
19 the end of November. At the end of March that same 100
20 cubic feet would cost 144.74.

21 And another thing. Most organizations when they
22 have financial difficulties cut out overhead. CEOs got a
23 35 percent increase.

24 And something about the small businesses, too.
25 They are getting an increase in rates. Besides a high

1 gas bill, whatever company is getting an increase in rate
2 is also going to pass it onto the consumers. So we will
3 pay everywhere for this high increase.

4 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

5 (Applause.)

6 (Witness excused.)

7 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is Danielle
8 Vetter.

9 Whereupon,

10 DANIELLE VETTER

11 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

12 DIRECT TESTIMONY

13 JUDGE FORDHAM: Will you state your name and
14 address efforts record?

15 THE WITNESS: My name is Danielle Vetter. I am at
16 3599-K Nottingham Lane, Philadelphia.

17 JUDGE FORDHAM: Please spell your name.

18 THE WITNESS: V-E-T-T-E-R.

19 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

20 THE WITNESS: I am going to keep this short and
21 sweat because I think everybody pretty much has said
22 everything that needs to be said. I don't understand why
23 we have to pay for mismanagement. The millions and
24 millions of dollars, like ten million was an estimated
25 cost for this wonderful computer system. It turned into

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1 a \$29 million cost.

2 The no layoff policy, not that I want to see
3 anybody lose their job, but there is an overabundance of
4 employees that they are paying an average of \$43,000 a
5 year. Not to mention all the funds that were dprny on
6 personnel items for all the management that was up top.

7 I think if you cut out a lot of unnecessary things
8 you probably would get a lot of costs taken care of and
9 maybe you would not have to worry about passing it on to
10 people like us.

11 I know in the company that I used to work for, when
12 their AR was in trouble because they couldn't collect a
13 lot of people lost their jobs because they couldn't
14 manage their ARs. Because they couldn't collect their
15 ARs there were a lot of people laid off and they had to
16 file bankruptcy.

17 If PGW wasn't able to extort consumers like us to
18 pay for their costs and their mismanagement, okay, they
19 would be bankrupt right now.

20 And that's all I have to say.

21 (Applause.)

22 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

23 (Witness excused.)

24 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is Dr. Leon
25 Johnston.

1 Whereupon,

2 LEON JOHNSTON

3 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

4 DIRECT TESTIMONY

5 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and
6 address for the record?

7 THE WITNESS: My address is 4717 Mulberry Street,
8 Philadelphia, 19124.

9 JUDGE FORDHAM: And we need your name and the
10 spelling.

11 THE WITNESS: My name is Dr. Leon Johnston, retired
12 principal of the Philadelphia School District.

13 I have prepared today a little paper to represent
14 the Citizens Utility Board of Pennsylvania of which I
15 have been a member I believe now since the early 1980's.
16 It goes something like this.

17 To the dear Commissioners. I would like to express
18 my group's concern about the latest and the recent flood
19 of seeking tremendous rate increases by the Philadelphia
20 Gas Works with your approval of the Commission, of
21 course. In the Philadelphia Inquirer on Monday, March
22 21, 2001, I read that the base rates are part of the
23 commodity charge and customer charge on the bill. PGW is
24 requesting your approval for an overall base rate
25 increase of about \$65 million more as of October, 2001.

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1 As a customer of the PGW for years I and others in my
2 organization greatly and seriously object to you granting
3 approval to their recent request.

4 Two days ago I personally received my March payment
5 bill and on page one of my bill I read this: effective
6 March 1st, 2001, PGW's monthly customer charge will
7 increase from \$8 to \$11.66 for the typical residential
8 heating customer.

9 Last year I told my niece when we went from \$4 up
10 to \$8 and there was not too much clamor about it. Nobody
11 raised to much about it. I said to her -- her name is
12 Juanita -- I said, Juanita, we have gone from \$4 to \$8.
13 Nobody is raising sand. I said but watch and see if they
14 don't raise it soon to \$16. I was wrong. Because we
15 didn't go to 16 yet. We stopped at \$11.66 that I just
16 read in my March bill.

17 We are on the way. I told her this afternoon we
18 didn't get to the 16. We stopped at 11.66. The next
19 time they will add probably \$3.45 more and make it 16.

20 Already was the mismanagement cost of bringing gas
21 into the city and using it. And perks for certain gas
22 company officials, et cetera, is overly burdensome for
23 our lower socio-economic citizens struggling to pay for
24 the gas that they already use, to say nothing about
25 having to pay an exorbitant price for gas that they don't

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1 use just to say you are a customer of the gas company.
2 Unbelievable.

3 As I stand here this evening I recall when I was a
4 little youngster in south Philadelphia over 80 some years
5 ago my mother would say, son, go down and put this
6 quarter in the meter. Put this quarter in the meter and
7 when that ran out that was it. You paid for what you
8 used. But now we want from \$4 to \$8 and now \$11.66 for
9 something that you don't use.

10 Within an average block in any city, in our city,
11 there are at least, I would say, 30 homes. The customer
12 charges for each such block amount to \$349.80 per block
13 per month without the occupants using any gas. Ladies
14 and gentlemen, sit there and think how many blocks there
15 are in the City of Philadelphia. And they are getting
16 \$348 and some cents for each and every block, every
17 person in those blocks who has a home, and that is before
18 they start paying for using gas. Just think about it.
19 Something is radically wrong somewhere when the gas
20 company says we can't make it.

21 There is one other thing that bothers me and this
22 is it: with all the wonderful universities and colleges
23 within our city why am I always reading that our
24 administrative leaders are always finding it imperative
25 to bring so-called experts here to work.

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1 (Applause.)

2 THE WITNESS: These important skillionaires come,
3 stay maybe four years with us at tremendous expense to us
4 and soon leave our area, never to be heard from again.
5 They come here and they have little or no concern about
6 how the decisions or actions will affect the ordinary
7 citizens of our city. They know that they will will not
8 be in Philadelphia much longer. The skillionaires know
9 they have been hired to do one particular thing, which is
10 to greatly increase the profit and income of their
11 particular employer, such as the gas company, and not
12 worry about how their profitmaking decisions and
13 enterprises hurt everybody else.

14 Right now I am reading an article about PGW written
15 in the Philadelphia Inquirer's edition on Friday, August
16 13, 1999. It quotes Mr. Ben Palia, PGW's acting
17 president, as stating that PGW is overstaffed,
18 particularly in the management ranks. Most of the 300
19 job cuts will be at the managerial level. Somehow I
20 don't recall ever reading where anything like that has
21 taken place. Have you?

22 (Applause.)

23 THE WITNESS: It doesn't seem fair to me that for a
24 continuance of such mismanagement policies that we, the
25 customers of PGW, should be asked to shell out millions

1 of dollars more.

2 Above all, I am greatly concerned about the overall
3 effect, ladies and gentlemen, of the granting of this
4 latest request for a huge gas increase. According to the
5 year 2000 census the population in our beloved city
6 decreased between 9,000 and 10,000 residents during the
7 last ten years. Everywhere I look I see blocks of empty
8 delapidated homes, buildings and former factories. Every
9 week on TV I see long lost towns due to such conditions.
10 Many of our distinguished leaders are trying to revive
11 Philadelphia and repopulate it. I am worried, ladies and
12 gentlemen, and Commissioners. I am worried about the
13 negative effect that will certainly be caused by another
14 huge gas rate increase.

15 Finally, I ask myself, because I heard many people
16 say this evening, where is all this money going and for
17 what? Ladies and gentlemen, basically about this
18 commodity charge and the cost of gas, has nature really
19 changed so greatly in the past three or four years that
20 the cost of getting gas here, transporting it into
21 Philadelphia, et cetera, is now three or four times
22 greater than it was just a few years ago? I can't
23 understand. If not, how can the Philadelphia Gas Works
24 justify charging ratepayers so much for it.

25 And to the Commissioners sitting, please do not

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1 approve this request. Yours respectfully, Dr. Leon
2 Johnston.

3 (Applause.)

4 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

5 (Witness excused.)

6 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is Carolyn Helm.

7 Whereupon,

8 CAROLYN HELM

9 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

10 DIRECT TESTIMONY

11 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and
12 address for the record?

13 THE WITNESS: Carolyn Helm, 3559 Church Hill Lane,
14 C-A-R-O-L-Y-N, H-E-L-M.

15 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you. You may proceed.

16 THE WITNESS: Hi to everyone. Short and sweat. I
17 know you've heard it all.

18 I am using half as much gas as I did last year,
19 paying twice as more. And I am not looking forward to
20 this winter. If I have these bills coming in I am going
21 to have to look elsewhere to live because I feel like I
22 am just throwing money out the window. Because I am not
23 getting what I should be getting. I put my thermostat to
24 65 and I go to turn it up and I have a horrible pain in
25 my stomach. I don't want to live my life like this. If

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1 I can't afford to keep my children warm I can't afford to
2 live here.

3 So I just ask you to be compassionate to the people
4 here. And think of us in our need in your decisions. We
5 are here but I don't know how much longer.

6 Thank you.

7 (Applause.)

8 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

9 (Witness excused.)

10 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is Kathy Lauletta.
11 Whereupon,

12 KATHY LAULETTA

13 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

14 DIRECT TESTIMONY

15 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and
16 address for the record and please spell your name.

17 THE WITNESS: Kathy Lauletta, L-A-U-L-E-T-T-A, 3545
18 Church Hill Lane, Philadelphia, 19114.

19 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you. You may proceed.

20 THE WITNESS: An awful lot of what I wanted to say
21 has already been said. So I want to let you know and
22 experience what it is like to call PGW. Because when I
23 am done the steam is coming off the top of my head.

24 You asked if anyone ever tried to call. When we
25 first got the customer rate increase I called to find out

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1 exactly what that was for. And they said it was for
2 customer service. Okay. So anyway I get my bill in
3 March and I notice that my bill has gone up at least 100
4 percent. I was told last November the gas increase would
5 be approximately 30 percent.

6 When I finally got through to the gas company --
7 now, you have to understand you call the gas company --
8 today I called just to get an idea. I called at 1:55. I
9 got someone on the phone at 2:55. To ask a simple
10 question what the gas rate is now. When I called prior
11 to that I wanted to know how they figured at the time it
12 was a 46 percent rate increase and according to my bill I
13 figured 100. I wanted to know how they arrived at this
14 46 percent. It was a simple question. You know,
15 according to my records, what I am seeing it is 100
16 percent, and you are telling me it is 46 percent. Can
17 you please explain this to me.

18 After the man I was talking to read my bill over
19 and over because I wasn't satisfied because he just
20 constantly read my bill, I said to him -- he said have I
21 answered your question? I said, no, you have not
22 explained to me my rate increase. He said I am going to
23 have to give you to a supervisor and placed me on hold
24 for 35 more minutes. When I got done the steam was
25 pouring out of my head. So the people don't have the

1 information because they cannot get the information
2 unless you read the fine print. Just like tonight.

3 There should be halls full of people here. But
4 because they didn't read that article in the Northeast
5 Times they don't know about it.

6 You just can't afford these increases. Thirty
7 percent was a lot but I think everybody kind of said
8 okay, we have not had an increase, nothing we can do
9 about it, we will accept it. But when I call and find
10 out it is 61 percent then there are a lot of questions
11 that need to be answered and somebody should be there to
12 pick up the phone within a reasonable amount of time and
13 be able to answer reasonably and not say I can't help
14 you, let me get you a supervisor and then you talk to no
15 one.

16 So that is my testimony.

17 MR. GRAY: Let me ask this question. Did you ever
18 have a chance to call PGW in years past?

19 THE WITNESS: I have probably called them. I have
20 always had to wait. But only recently I really had to
21 call them. I also worked at an apartment community and I
22 received a bill for one building with 11 apartments in it
23 for \$55,000. I called PGW and it was going to be
24 straightened out. Of course it was not. This was when
25 they changed over the meters. By the time I got the next

1 bill it was up to \$77,000. At this point I didn't know
2 what I was going to do so I visited PGW on Castor Avenue.

3 When I got there she couldn't explain to me how
4 they were going to charge me because they had no records
5 of the previous reading and the new reading. So how can
6 they bill me is my question. I never get an answer.

7 Maybe in the past years -- this isn't past years,
8 this is now. We are being told we are going to get a 30
9 percent increase and we are up to 61 but according to my
10 records it is 100 percent. I don't know about anybody
11 else but my bill has doubled at least.

12 At least come and give us the truth. At least let
13 us prepare for it. Now you are telling me that is the
14 gas cost rate, those last three raises. The next one is
15 the commodity rate. How many times is that going to be
16 raised? What is it going to be? What is the rate
17 increase? How many times are they going to increase it?

18 And the customer service charge, at least give me
19 customer service for what I am paying for. I am getting
20 nothing. I am not a public speaker and usually I don't
21 do this, but when I get off the phone you can probably
22 see the steam coming out of my ears.

23 I have a 173 unit apartment complex that we pay the
24 gas for. When I get the bills that is a lot of money.
25 When you see it go from 6,000 or 10,000 up to 65,000 for

1 one building, this is ridiculous. What is wrong?

2 And myself, personally, I don't have a new meter in
3 because of that reason. All my neighbors were getting
4 \$400, \$500 bills when they normally get \$80 bills. We
5 live in rowhouses where they are open on one or two
6 sides. We are getting phenomenal bills and people quite
7 honestly can't afford it.

8 I have a lot of senior citizen in my place. They
9 don't pay it. But there is no way they could pay this
10 price increase. These poor people with their medication,
11 it is just a totally unreasonable thing to do. And to
12 raise the commodity charge, you know. How many times is
13 that going to be raised? What is a commodity charge?

14 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: Can you explain it?

15 JUDGE FORDHAM: This came up last night and what we
16 did is the company brought in this glossary. So I will
17 read from the glossary certain things.

18 The commodities charge, that is the charges for the
19 basic gas supply service. The commodity is the natural
20 gas sold either by volume or heating value.

21 The customer charge the monthly charge to cover the
22 cost to maintain the gas lines and provide meter reading
23 and billing.

24 THE WITNESS: Then how come the employees aren't
25 told this so when I ask for an explanation of something

1 they don't just say it is for customer service. I wasn't
2 told what that was for. How many people have that book?
3 How many people are given this information?

4 Yeah, every month in your statement for your gas
5 and your electric and your water you get these little
6 pamphlets. I mean, you know, people have to work. How
7 long do you have to read every little pamphlet?

8 That is what I was told when I did call. Did you
9 read your pamphlet? I am like, well, no, I just pay my
10 bills every month the full amount. I pay them. And you
11 are right, we are the ones that get punished for it, not
12 the people that owe the money and they should be going
13 after. I understand some people can't. There are
14 special arrangements made, but there are so many people
15 that get away with it and can afford it. Well, one name
16 was mentioned earlier --

17 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: Street.

18 THE WITNESS: Right.

19 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: That is why he is not here.
20 He knew that questions would be asked.

21 THE WITNESS: The information needs to get out.

22 This is a very small room. It is a very small
23 group for all the people who are involved in this and who
24 have something to say. Personally I am here because of
25 the steam blowing out my ears when I try to get a

1 response from PGW.

2 MR. GRAY: The reason I was asking was because one
3 of the many issues raised in this case is the
4 responsiveness of the customer service. And the PGW has
5 indicated to us that they are working hard to make
6 improvements and customer time is decreasing.

7 THE WITNESS: No, it has increased actually.

8 MR GRAY: So my question to you would be if you
9 have been calling over a number of years and now you have
10 been calling recently have you noticed any kind of
11 significant decrease in response time?

12 THE WITNESS: Not at all. I called in February. I
13 waited 35 minutes. I called today, I waited one hour.
14 No, there is no decrease and there is no explanation on
15 the other end of the line.

16 MR. GRAY: Thank you, Your Honor.

17 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

18 (Applause.)

19 (Witness excused.)

20 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is Terry Giles pie.

21 (No audible response.)

22 JUDGE FORDHAM: Is Terry Giles pie here?

23 (No audible response.)

24 JUDGE FORDHAM: Angelo Rotchford.

25 Whereupon,

1 ANGELO ROTCHFORD

2 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

3 DIRECT TESTIMONY

4 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and
5 address for record?

6 THE WITNESS: Angelo Rotchford, 2624 East Sommerset
7 Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19134.

8 R-O-T-C-H-F-O-R-D.

9 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you. You may proceed.

10 THE WITNESS: There is only thing that is going to
11 solve this problem with the gas company and that is to
12 sell it to a private company who will manage it and make
13 it work the way it worked ten years ago.

14 Thank you.

15 (Applause.)

16 (Witness excused.)

17 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is Gerry
18 Lamparter.

19 Whereupon,

20 GERRY LAMPARTER

21 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

22 DIRECT TESTIMONY

23 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and
24 address for the record and please spell your name.

25 THE WITNESS: The name is Gerry Lamparter,

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1 G-E-R-R-Y, L-A-M-P-A-R-T-E-R. The address is 3217
2 Holyoke Road.

3 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you. You may proceed.

4 THE WITNESS: To follow up on what that gentleman
5 just said, there is one thing that politicians listen to,
6 the sound of money or the absence of it: I suggest
7 everybody open up an escrow account in their bank, send
8 your payment to that account instead of PGW. You get
9 enough people to do that, you are going to call attention
10 to your problem.

11 (Applause.)

12 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

13 (Witness excused.)

14 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is Joe Fedeli.

15 (No audible response.)

16 JUDGE FORDHAM: Is Joe Fedeli here?

17 Whereupon,

18 JOE FEDELI

19 having duly affirmed, testified as follows:

20 DIRECT TESTIMONY

21 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and
22 address for the record and please spell your name.

23 THE WITNESS: Joe Fedeli, F-E-D-E-L-I. The address
24 is 3116 Welsh Road.

25 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you. You may proceed.

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1 THE WITNESS: I thank everyone for coming out here
2 at least to hear our tales of woe. My question is
3 basically to the PUC members, which are who?

4 JUDGE FORDHAM: I am the Administrative Law Judge
5 from the PUC. And then we have the Office of Trial Staff
6 representing them. But the Commissioners are not here.

7 THE WITNESS: So no one from the PUC is represented
8 other than you?

9 JUDGE FORDHAM: Yes.

10 THE WITNESS: My question is where can we get a
11 copy and also have a copy provided to CEPA the management
12 agreement between the City of Philadelphia and the PFMC,
13 which is the Philadelphia Facilities Management
14 Corporation. Since I would assume that that management
15 agreement is a contract -- is that correct? Can you give
16 me an answer to that?

17 MR. KEENE: Counsel for CEPA, Mr. Bertocci, does
18 have a copy of the management agreement.

19 THE WITNESS: Okay. Is that agreement between the
20 city and PFMC, which is the group that manages the gas
21 company, is that a legal binding contract? That is my
22 question. I am just looking for that answer to that.

23 MR. HOLLAND: Yes, sir.

24 THE WITNESS: That is legal binding contract?

25 MR. HOLLAND: Yes, sir.

1 THE WITNESS: In that contract -- correct me if I'm
2 wrong -- it sites that the PFMC, all the operations of
3 PGW are the responsibility of the CEO, the chief
4 operating officer, and the chief financial officer. Now,
5 that means according to the PFMC and the city that there
6 is a 50/50 split. It would seem to me that the PUC
7 should just assure that that management agreement is
8 being acted upon and if it is not that is a violation of
9 a contract which should then come up in the evaluation of
10 the rate increase. Therefore no rate increase should
11 occur until that management agreement has been looked
12 into to assure that they are abiding by it.

13 (Applause.)

14 THE WITNESS: So is there going to be a PUC review
15 to assure that that management agreement is being acted
16 upon as to whatever those terms are, that both parties
17 are fulfilling them? And if they are not will they be
18 held, those people who are not abiding by those
19 requirements, whether it be the city portion or the PFMC
20 portion, that it be assured that they are accomplished?
21 Is that going to be done before a rate increase is
22 approved? I am just looking for a yes or a no here.

23 MR. KEENE: The answer to that is yes. Without
24 going into too much detail the terms and conditions of
25 the management agreement are in fact a contested issue in

1 this case. The parties have disagreements over exactly
2 what those terms and conditions mean.

3 THE WITNESS: Then I would recommend that that
4 issue be resolved first before any potential increase by
5 the PUC be granted. If that is an issue that is going to
6 come up, there is some argument over what the terms are
7 and whether they have been fulfilled by both parties that
8 that issue be totally satisfied first before any type of
9 approval for any rate increase be accomplished.

10 My other question is basically what has been talked
11 about many times here, that any type of back debts, I
12 would recommended that prior to any increase that any and
13 all back debts be attempted to be collected or be sold
14 off prior to any type of increase.

15 That is about it. Because probably this increase
16 is going to go through anyhow because I think everyone
17 knows that this is what usually occurs. I would
18 recommend that the PUC at least assure that there is some
19 type of responsibility for those parties that are
20 involved which I view, the two parties, are the city and
21 this group, this PFMC, and that they be held accountable
22 first prior to any attempt for any increase. And along
23 with that is the responsibility of assuring that all the
24 debts, you know, have been paid or if they are going to
25 be charged off they be sold off. And if that means that

1 the system or the gas works has to be sold, then so be
2 it. If it has to be sold, if it is through bankruptcy or
3 whatever, it would go to the highest bidder. And I can
4 guarantee you that if that would occur, if you would
5 allow that to occur by not approving a rate increase, I
6 guarantee you the politicians will get involved and they
7 will resolve the issue.

8 (Applause.)

9 THE WITNESS: I want to thank all the members and
10 Your Honor for listening to me, and hopefully you will do
11 the proper thing. I just believe that responsibility
12 needs to be demonstrated from also the PUC board which
13 has the oversight responsibility and the contractual
14 obligation. So that is what I am counting for.

15 Thank you for your time.

16 (Applause.)

17 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

18 (Witness excused.)

19 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is Joe -- and I am
20 having trouble with the last name, but it is 5931 Algar
21 Avenue.

22 (No audible response.)

23 JUDGE FORDHAM: Is there a person with that address
24 here?

25 (No audible response.)

1 JUDGE FORDHAM: David Burrs, 1616 -- I can't read
2 the writing.

3 (No audible response.)

4 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next one is Charles -- I am not
5 sure whether this is one word -- Fershonski, on Nester
6 Street.

7 (No audible response.)

8 JUDGE FORDHAM: Catherine Hefferson?

9 (No audible response.)

10 JUDGE FORDHAM: Ed Moran.

11 Whereupon,

12 EDWARD MORAN

13 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

14 DIRECT TESTIMONY

15 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and
16 address for the record please.

17 THE WITNESS: Edward Moran, 7256 Oakland Street,
18 Philadelphia.

19 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you. You may proceed.

20 THE WITNESS: Sir, to answer your question, I
21 worked in the public sector in communications on
22 telephone systems, many over which had real customer
23 service departments. In those areas there are software
24 registers which keep track of everything, the amount of
25 time before the call is answered and the amount of time

1 that people spend on hold. And they are measured in
2 seconds. So that might tell you. I am sure that PGW
3 could have a register in weeks.

4 I was surprised to hear someone else. I thought I
5 was the only one that had a complaint about customer
6 service. On January 8 I called Mrs. Davis at seven
7 o'clock at PGW after waiting on hold. I had a very
8 simple problem. My meter reading was several hundred
9 units below what they were billing me for. Since the
10 bill had gone up greatly I thought here is a way to save
11 money. Mrs. Davis after arguing with me that I couldn't
12 do this said I will take the meter reading, you will get
13 a new bill in a week and it will be corrected. Needless
14 to say I didn't get that bill. The next month I just got
15 a double bill that was up again.

16 So I called back again and I spoke to somebody,
17 Fernando. And I waited until 11 o'clock at night, 11:30,
18 because I knew I didn't want to spend a lot of time on
19 hold. But I still spent 20 minutes on hold at 11:30 at
20 night.

21 Fernando said there is no record of this lady
22 taking your reading. There is nothing in the system. So
23 I said here is the reading. Well, we can't do that. I
24 said, okay, let me talk to a supervisor. He said I can't
25 do that, I can't transfer you to a supervisor. There is

1 none here. I said wait a second. You have a staff there
2 of customer service people, right. Yes. Well, somebody
3 manages those customer service people. Yes. Well, that
4 is who I would like to speak to. You can't speak to him.

5 So we have a customer service department, can't
6 solve problems, you have to wait on hold for 30 minutes
7 to two hours and it doesn't do anything. They have no
8 power to do anything.

9 I finally spoke to someone who solved my problem.
10 He took care of me. Actually called me back. He was
11 from the PUC. February 2nd I referred the problem to the
12 PUC. He said they have a month to respond to this
13 problem, we faxed it over today to the gas company.

14 On the 24th somebody is banging on my door. I
15 don't answer the door if I don't know who it is. Then
16 the phone rang. He said I am from the gas company, we
17 have an appointment to change your meter. I said I
18 didn't make no appointment. Yes, on February 2nd you
19 made an appointment. Ah, okay. February 2nd was when I
20 called the PUC. The PUC faxed it to the gas company.
21 The gas company probably said let's get the meter out of
22 there, maybe we can fix the reading or something.

23 So I said you're not changing it. I wasn't
24 supposed to be home. I was supposed to be out. Just
25 happenstance that I was home. So I didn't allow him to

1 change the meter because it wasn't satisfied to what the
2 reading was to what the estimate was. It was a good deal
3 of money.

4 My bill finally when Derek Thomas got it
5 straightened out from the PUC went from about \$700 down
6 to \$200. So they were playing with \$500 of my money for
7 a number of years. The reason it went on that long was I
8 was working and not home during the day when they came to
9 read the meter, so you get estimates. So you just pay
10 them. When you finally decide let's get this
11 straightened out, you call and make an appointment for
12 them to come out to read the meter they don't show up.
13 After a couple times of that, you give up. After a
14 couple of times of listening to the deceit and
15 misstatements and lie from the customer excuse department
16 you give up. And the PUC thankfully helped me.

17 It is a toll-free number. They call you back.
18 They work with you. They give you a case number. I will
19 give you the case number. I know I am testifying under
20 oath but just to make sure, the case number is 0898251,
21 from February 2nd.

22 And the gas company didn't get it fixed in a month
23 like they are supposed to. I called Derek Thomas and he
24 said, guess what, we have not heard anything from the gas
25 company. So probably in six weeks.

1 They almost got it straightened out. The last bill
2 I got looked correct except there was a charge on there
3 from November. I looked back at my November bill. My
4 November bill says zero balance due. Maybe some day in
5 the near future the gas company will figure out how much
6 I owe them and maybe I can get my meter replaced. But
7 customer service is not customer service.

8 Thank you very much.

9 MR. HOLLAND: Mr. Moran, do I understand you to say
10 that you still have a problem with your bill?

11 THE WITNESS: I think I do, yes. I can show you
12 here where it says the balance from November is --
13 previous balance on November 28 is \$11.40. But if I go
14 back to January the previous balance on November 28 after
15 a credit is zero.

16 MR. HOLLAND: I was going to offer, sir, that if
17 you care to talk to one of our customer service
18 representatives --

19 THE WITNESS: It is the old saying, screw me once
20 shame on you, screw me twice shame on me. No thank you.
21 I will wait for the gentleman from the PUC, Mr. Derek
22 Thomas. If I could get anybody a raise it would be Derek
23 Thomas.

24 And when I first called in to Mrs. Sanchez on the
25 2nd she said you wouldn't believe the number of calls the

1 PUC is getting since we have taken over PGW. I said I
2 can understand it. So, no thanks. I will choose not to
3 use the service out there in the hallway.

4 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

5 (Applause.)

6 (Witness excused.)

7 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is Marge Benner.

8 Whereupon,

9 MARGE BENNER

10 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

11 DIRECT TESTIMONY

12 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and
13 address for the record, please.

14 THE WITNESS: Marge Benner, 9742 Evans.

15 JUDGE FORDHAM: Please spell your last name.

16 THE WITNESS: B-E-N-N-E-R.

17 JUDGE FORDHAM: Go ahead.

18 THE WITNESS: I don't have all the records like
19 this previous gentleman had but I also dealt with the
20 Commissioner's office. And to answer to your question, I
21 have been a gas customer over 32 years. I would say for
22 the last 15 years no matter what time of day when you
23 call there is no response. The phones ring or you are
24 put on hold for hours at a time.

25 And to give you an example of how long I waited,

1 last winter -- this had nothing to do with my calling
2 about a rate increase -- last winter I was without heat
3 for three days. I have a contract with the gas -- PGW.
4 I pay yearly for this contract. It involves my heater,
5 my hot water and my air conditioner. For three days I
6 could not get a response, they would not come out. And I
7 had to call the Gas Commission. Within two hours I had
8 the gas company at my house and the Commissioner's office
9 called me back with a response. That is how I dealt with
10 my heater problem with the gas company.

11 As far as the rate increase, last year I was paying
12 on average \$110 a month. Gas heat, dryer, cooking. I
13 thought that was not bad, pretty good. This year my
14 monthly bills are \$279 a month. I have no kids at home.
15 It is my husband and myself. We leave in the morning and
16 we put the thermostat down to 68 degrees. I come home at
17 night and put the thermostat at 70 degrees. You tell me
18 why I am paying \$279 a month.

19 That's all I got to say. Thank you.

20 (Applause.)

21 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

22 (Witness excused.)

23 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is Michael

24 Devinent.

25 Whereupon,

1 MICHAEL DEVINCENT

2 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

3 DIRECT TESTIMONY

4 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and
5 address for the record, please?

6 THE WITNESS: It is Michael Devinent,
7 D-E-V-I-N-C-E-N-T, 763 Bergen Street, 19111.

8 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you. You may proceed.

9 THE WITNESS: I am questioning like everybody else
10 the rate increase. And I got my January bill. I tried
11 for days to call customer service that we are paying that
12 charge for. I never got through. I got my following
13 bill. I couldn't get through. I went over to Bustleton
14 Avenue. The gentleman at the front desk there, like I
15 was troubling him, he said what do I want. And I said I
16 have calculated -- and I called the PUC up for
17 calculations if they were correct and they told me my
18 calculations were correct -- and I wanted to go over to
19 your office and get my paperwork and a check to pay what
20 I thought was fair. And all it was was \$120 less than my
21 actual bill of about 500 and some dollars with the
22 notation that I am willing to pay it as long as they can
23 answer my question.

24 The gentleman at the desk said get out of here.
25 And I said I am a customer, you don't talk to me like

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1 that because my bills pay for your job. And he said we
2 don't want to hear your problem. And I said here is my
3 paperwork, just tell me where to mail it. I can't get
4 through on the phones. He in turn said to me get out of
5 here.

6 I said the calculations may be wrong. He says we
7 are aware of a computer glitch and just wait until it is
8 resolved, the bills are wrong. And I said nobody can add
9 in this company? He said there is the door, sir, get out
10 or I will call the police.

11 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: Bustleton Avenue?

12 THE WITNESS: Bustleton Avenue.

13 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: Do you know his name?

14 THE WITNESS: I can get his name.

15 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: He should be fired.

16 THE WITNESS: So in turn I was leaving and the guy
17 says excuse me, sir, I want to tell you something. I
18 said what's that? He said don't pay your bill. I said I
19 have a check here and I want to fill it out. I just want
20 to give my papers to someone or be told where to send
21 them and here is a check for over \$400. He said don't
22 waste your money, just hold it.

23 So I went home and I called again and again and
24 again. So finally one day I waited over an
25 hour-and-a-half being told our lines are busy right now

1 but if you want to call back later -- well, I have been
2 calling over a month and that is what I am paying for, to
3 be put on hold like that.

4 I ate my lunch, read the newspaper and watched two
5 television shows with the phone dangling at my ear. When
6 I finally got somebody on the line, I am the type of
7 person I don't yell at the reps because I work for the
8 phone company. Let's face it, everybody has a problem
9 with bills. But the thing is I am just an employee like
10 they are. I don't own the company, neither do they. So
11 why should I be screaming or cursing at them? I am the
12 easiest person to get along with. I'm Italian. We are
13 all like that.

14 So I explained to the person my calculations. Now,
15 the gentleman took the information and I said I want to
16 put my bill on hold with the notation I am willing to pay
17 it if somebody would take this one check and I just want
18 to pay the balance after my problem is resolved.

19 He said to me don't pay right now. This will be
20 resolved with the Commission, with the PUC and our board.
21 They will call you back. It has been over a month.
22 Anybody home?

23 I even went next door and there is a notation on my
24 bill and there is nobody calling me. I know you guys
25 must be busy with all the complaints. I just got my new

1 bill and it is over \$700. Don't you want my money? What
2 are you going to do, come to my house and turn off the
3 gas? I just had back surgery. I have been out of work
4 for over a year. I just went back to work. Are you
5 going to turn off my gas and make be get ill and I got to
6 move to my mother up in Blue Bell? You don't want my
7 money. I don't know what's going on with you guys. I
8 mean, you got honest people that want to pay the bills
9 but you don't want to talk to us.

10 Now, my question is this. This is what it came out
11 to, and the PUC person that I called on the 800 number
12 even got his supervisor on the line and they said that
13 the calculations were correct. Now, you were granted a
14 24 percent increase. If you take the rate of .10982 and
15 times that by 24 percent it should come out to .136168.
16 But your calculation is you take the .10982 and times
17 that by 277 percent and you come out to .30445. And then
18 the following month the PUC says okay, guys, we will give
19 you another 21 percent increase in your rate. Well, if
20 you still take the first calculation of the .1361768 and
21 times that by 21 percent the new rate should be like
22 .16477 blah, blah, blah, whatever.

23 Now, your rate by what you calculated originally at
24 277 percent, now when you took that rate, 21 percent and
25 times that by 203 percent. Now, the PUC is giving you an

1 increase and you are taking it over the river. I mean,
2 where are you getting these rates? These are not
3 calculated right.

4 Then when I was talking to the PUC they said, Mr.
5 Devincent, what part of the bill are you talking about?
6 I said the charge for the ccf. They said is that
7 correct. There is a problem with this bill.

8 Now, my bill is calculated to be approximately \$120
9 more than what I should be paying if the calculations are
10 correct per two PUC people in Harrisburg. They said
11 please try to get this resolved; if not file charges.

12 Now, I just went next door and they cannot give me
13 an answer. They said, well, we were granted a 24 percent
14 increase and a 21 percent increase but because the city
15 didn't come through with their money we can charge you
16 and make up the difference right now. This is the high
17 point of usage. Why are we paying a big difference? I
18 don't understand it.

19 And you say a customer service charge, like the
20 people are complaining in here. Why are we paying a
21 customer service charge? I asked this years ago. Oh,
22 well, that is to type your bill. I said, okay. Then I
23 will come in and pay it in person and save the money.
24 Now we are told that you are paying a customer service
25 charge for a meter reader. Well, guess what, when I

1 asked how come I keep getting estimates, they did away
2 from the meter readers.

3 And the PUC says they are supposed to be coming out
4 to your house during the high peak time. I am getting
5 estimates. After getting through, I have been trying
6 since August, trying the new automated meter put in. I
7 finally got through and I said to the lady, now, don't
8 get off yet, I am not done. So she had the guy come out
9 and installed an automatic meter reader. But my house
10 has the glass block and you go right by the house, look
11 in and read the meter and keep going on. So what is so
12 hard about my area? You don't have to come in the
13 houses. So we don't have any meter readers because we
14 got the easier area to read? It makes no sense.

15 I just want to know why you are being granted one
16 percentage and charging us another percentage. What is
17 going to happen? We are going to get zero bills pretty
18 soon, we got all this credit, because the PUC is going to
19 say that was a bad boy? I mean, what is going to happen?

20 Again, like everybody says where in the world in
21 this country have you ever seen rates that go up because
22 we got to conserve but they never come down when we have
23 an abundance of something.

24 But I just want to know why I'm being charged all
25 this high percentage rate When I have been told by a

1 supervisor and a rep from the PUC that my calculations
2 are correct because their calculations match mine and
3 they said that's all you are allowed to charge.

4 Now, the only thing it is going to boil down to is
5 this: many years my father-in-law, he always was a penny
6 scrimper. What he did was he installed in his rowhouse
7 -- he had an end of rowhouse -- a potbelly stove. And
8 his gas bill for one entire winter was \$4. Now, PGW had
9 eight different people with them, they had inspectors and
10 lawyers and everything banging on his door saying people
11 like him is what is ruining PGW. Because they went in
12 his house and searched his entire house to find out why
13 his gas bill was so low.

14 I always thought my father-in-law was nuts because
15 my mother-in-law had to have a big potbelly thing
16 upstairs that heated her water up with a tub going
17 downstairs to fill the washer with hot water. And there
18 were vents all through the house for the heat to go
19 upstairs. I always thought he was nuts but now I think
20 he's got a good idea now. I mean, what are we all going
21 to do?

22 (Applause.)

23 THE WITNESS: I mean, I am not saying what you get
24 paid is astronomical, which is it. I mean, any executive
25 at any level gets paid too much. Do your paychecks get a

1 24 percent increase by 277 percent? That is what you are
2 charging us.

3 Now, as far as I know in two months your increase
4 went up to .50003 -- excuse me -- .51003 for two months.
5 So you went from like 11 cents per cubic whatever up to
6 51 cents. Where the PUC says in those two months
7 increases you should have gone from .10982, you should
8 only have had an increase in two months of only like
9 five-and-a-half cents. But you are really charging us 51
10 cents more.

11 So what am I supposed to do? Even if we want to
12 sell, I am still young. I'm only in my 40's. In ten
13 years I am going to be one of those statistics that are
14 going to say he got out of Philadelphia.

15 And everybody where I work in Jenkintown, they just
16 make so much fun because they keep saying we told you
17 never by a house in Philadelphia. And now they say I am
18 really going to pay for the price. And my house is not
19 going to keep going up in price anymore. It's going to
20 start going down. Why? Because who wants to pay for
21 utilities as outrageous as the gas? And that is what
22 runs my house.

23 That is it. Thank you.

24 (Applause.)

25 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

(Witness excused.)

1
2 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is Al McCoras from
3 Lister Street.

4 (No audible response.)

5 JUDGE FORDHAM: P. Clauner, Hartell Avenue.

6 (No audible response.)

7 JUDGE FORDHAM: S. Zorr, Tustin Avenue.

8 (No audible response.)

9 JUDGE FORDHAM: Reverend Arthur Johnson, Junior.

10 Whereupon,

11 ARTHUR JOHNSON, JR.

12 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

13 DIRECT TESTIMONY

14 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and
15 address for the record, please.

16 THE WITNESS: Arthur Johnson, Jr. And I am
17 currently pastor of the Tacony Baptist Church, which I
18 have been there for the last 21 years.

19 I am here to ask the question where is my gas
20 going? I received a bill as pastor of the church of
21 \$682.21 which was payable January 5, '01. I protested
22 that bill. The next bill they sent me was for \$2,104.19.
23 It was payable February 6, '01.

24 I went to see Joan Krajewski, my Councilperson, and
25 I talked to her about this.

COMMONWEALTH REPORTING COMPANY, INC.

1 (800) 334-1063

1 The next bill they sent me was \$2,012.12 payable
2 March 2nd, '01.

3 For the last ten years we have run a community food
4 cupboard at the Tacony Baptist Church. I have been the
5 one to pick up the food, to go and get the food with the
6 Greater Philadelphia Food Bank and with the state
7 emergency food programs. We had to close that food bank.
8 We closed it February 20 and we are not able to open it
9 again.

10 Channel 10 put me on television with this problem.
11 And some Christian people sent money to help us pay this
12 bill. Now, we are in the northeast. Our address is 4715
13 Disston Street 19135.

14 We paid March 2nd on the due date \$212.21. I
15 received another bill for \$911 and it is supposed to be
16 paid on April 5, '01.

17 Now, I have to explain this. We have two different
18 systems of heating the church. We have an oil system
19 downstairs in the basement of the church that heats the
20 complete downstairs. And that is where our pipes and
21 everything are. The gas heats only the sanctuary and the
22 classrooms upstairs. What I have been doing is watching
23 the weather and if it is 30 or above I shut the heater,
24 the gas heater, off -- not to a low degree but O-F-F --
25 by going in the heater room and clicking the switch. We

1 have placed a lock on the heater room and I have the key.
2 The sexton of the church has the key. Nobody is there to
3 turn it on, you see. But where is my bills coming from
4 from?

5 Now, the oil heater will heat the pipes and will
6 keep the pipes from bursting. It is cold in the church.
7 I get to the church on Sunday morning at seven o'clock in
8 the morning. I turn the heat on but one o'clock in the
9 afternoon after service I shut the heat off and it is no
10 no more on until next Sunday morning. Now, where am I
11 getting 900 and some dollars? Where am I getting \$2,200
12 from? This is what I'm protesting.

13 I called. I got in touch with the PGW. I asked
14 them to give us a new meter because evidently something
15 is wrong with the meter. It's got to be. And I am not
16 smelling gas around so something is wrong with the meter.
17 Don't get it. Ain't got it. Ain't not going to get it.
18 So something is wrong.

19 Now, we are not opening up the food cupboard
20 because my first priority as pastor or the church is to
21 keep the doors of church open, not feed the public, which
22 we have been doing for ten years. So this is our
23 problem.

24 They put me on Channel 10 because of that problem
25 and some people send us some money to help us pay that

1 \$2,212. I am looking at \$900 more.

2 Now, what is our congregation? Less than 100 and a
3 lot of them are senior citizens.

4 Now, the business association has their bi-monthly
5 meetings in the church that I'm pastoring. But it is
6 done in a room where we have a space heater in and we use
7 that space heater for that meeting. The town watch has
8 their bi-monthly meeting in the church that I'm
9 pastoring. But it is done in a room where I have a space
10 heater and I've used that space heater. I don't have to
11 put that big heater on. I am only putting it on once on
12 Sunday and shutting it off. The Sunday evening service
13 is in that same small prayer meeting room.

14 Where is the gas going? I don't mind paying for
15 it. The congregation don't mind paying if we knew where
16 it was going go. It's cold in the church now. It is
17 cold in the church now. They tell me that you are using
18 it. Something is way out of whack. And these bills are
19 way out of line. But who am I to see?

20 There are got my problem. Now, I am going back on
21 Channel 10 again because I am dealing --

22 (Applause.)

23 THE WITNESS: We are not here asking something for
24 something else. We don't ask no special credit. No.
25 But if the heater is off, O-F-F, you click the switch of

1 the heater off, then the gas meter should not be running.
2 That's it.

3 This past Sunday we had a bridal shower at the
4 church and it was in the afternoon from two o'clock until
5 six. Downstairs in the basement the heat for that bridal
6 shower was oil heat, okay. It didn't have nothing to do
7 with the sanctuary. It didn't have nothing to do with
8 that big gas heater.

9 Now, we put a new heater in 1992 or 1993. So it's
10 not an old delapidated heater that is way out of shape
11 and smoking and all that kind of stuff. But it is just
12 -- now, the one that runs the food cupboard, I have five
13 volunteers, they don't get paid. Nobody gets paid. I
14 don't get paid for running that food cupboard. Take our
15 church van, go down there, load it up, bring it back to
16 the church. What am I working for? No consideration.
17 So we shut it down. And it will stay shut down until
18 somebody gives me some kind of consideration and I can
19 talk to my workers and see if I can get them back to
20 work.

21 But according to this you got another rate hike
22 coming. We are going to have to sell the church. And
23 the church has been there for 118 years. I have been
24 there for 21. This is what I am up against. I am not
25 here to make somebody feel bad but we cannot keep this

1 up. And that is the name of the game.

2 That's all I got to say.

3 (Applause.)

4 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

5 (Witness excused.)

6 JUDGE FORDHAM: Reverend Johnson, before you leave
7 would you talk to Ms. Graves? I don't see her in the
8 room right now. But if you could talk to Ms. Graves
9 before you leave.

10 THE WITNESS: Thank you, very much. And God bless.

11 JUDGE FORDHAM: God bless.

12 The next speaker is Herb Sumsky.

13 Whereupon,

14 HERB SUMSKY

15 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

16 DIRECT TESTIMONY

17 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and your
18 address --

19 THE WITNESS: My name is Herb Sumsky, S-U-M-S-K-Y.
20 I live at 2326 Vista Street in the northeast. I am a
21 retired steamfitter.

22 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

23 THE WITNESS: I feel that the Mayor and the City
24 Council should be held liable for this fiasco because if
25 they would hire people who were qualified to run a

1 monopoly and proper, this situation would not happen.
2 And frankly, going down to PGW to straighten out bills,
3 you come in like a nice person and you walk out like a
4 fighting tiger. They should hire people that are
5 computer friendly. You go down there, they got the
6 dumbest people -- now, I am not calling names, but down
7 there I had a bill for two years. It took them two years
8 to take it off with canceled checks I had in my
9 possession to go down there. I lost three hours of
10 overtime to keep running down there. They got the
11 dumbest people to run the computer. They know how to
12 push buttons but they don't have computer friendly or
13 education to operate it.

14 If they would hire people that are computer
15 friendly and have education the public relations would be
16 cut down. It would be more friendly and they would solve
17 a lot of problems. The person who is behind the
18 information desk doesn't know anything more than the man
19 on the moon.

20 Last year I had a credit of \$429 in January. March
21 it is gone already. I got a semi-detached house. I got
22 thermopane windows and the house is tight. And yet the
23 gas is double what I had last year. It is supposed to be
24 -- it is just getting ridiculous what is happening.

25 But I do blame, if they would hire -- if the Mayor

1 and the council would look around and find professional
2 people that know how to operate a monopoly of that sort I
3 think the problem would be solved.

4 Thank you.

5 (Applause.)

6 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

7 (Witness excused.)

8 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is Clarence
9 Reilly.

10 Whereupon,

11 CLARENCE REILLY

12 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

13 DIRECT TESTIMONY

14 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and
15 address for the record and please spell your name.

16 THE WITNESS: Clarence Reilly, 7232 Algard Street.

17 JUDGE FORDHAM: And spell your last name.

18 THE WITNESS: R-E-I-L-L-Y.

19 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

20 THE WITNESS: I am a retiree from Philadelphia
21 Newspapers, the Daily News, Inquirer. My wife is sitting
22 here and she can tell you that we paid one gas bills that
23 was \$100. And lo and behold those pirates came right in
24 with looting in mind and with a \$200 gas bill the next
25 time around. I mean, where does all this stop at? The

1 water goes up. The gas goes up. The politician's
2 salaries go up. And that should be on a referendum.

3 What killed the gas company was over 10 or 15 years
4 of the people at the very top just looting it. Now they
5 are coming around and saying, well, somebody got to pay
6 the guy that robbed the stage coach. We are the ones
7 that are going to have to pay for it. But it will never
8 end. It doesn't come to an end. Enough is enough.

9 And you can't go around blaming and saying, well,
10 there is people that don't pay. Who are the people that
11 don't pay? They are the people that don't even have a
12 job. I get a good pension and social security but there
13 are people that are getting \$500 a month. How are they
14 supposed to pay this? This is extortion. I mean, this
15 is theft on a grand scale is what it is.

16 How come when somebody gets hired to run this
17 organization, whatever you want to call it, they bring
18 them in, they give them a \$250,000 salary, a brand new
19 Mercedes, he gets a house, an unlimited travel expense?
20 And what do you get? You get nothing. What are they
21 paying these grand salaries for? That is what I don't
22 understand.

23 Now, we just got stuck -- anything even like this
24 stadiums bit. That should be on a referendum. They are
25 shoving them down our throats is what they are doing. I

1 mean, at some point in time you got to get up to here
2 with everything else and say, well, let's go into the
3 street. That is the only way to do it. And then lo and
4 behold you are going to have a calamity because people
5 are going to go only so far.

6 The average American is not the brightest person in
7 the world. Let's face it. You take the sports page away
8 from them or TV or Treasure Island, whatever these things
9 are, and they just walk around. But at some point in
10 time they are going to come up and say it ain't him, it
11 ain't him, it ain't him, it is you and then that is when
12 it is going to hit the fan. So you better start taking
13 heed and taking notice somewhere.

14 I mean, all this money that is just blowing out the
15 window for trips and this and that and unlimited expense
16 accounts it's all got to come to this sometime. If you
17 recall, even this Kaaverner thing, that the shipyard
18 fiasco, did not Smiley Ridge and our rather obese Mayor
19 at the time, who had 14 deputy mayors -- why he need 14
20 deput mayors I'll never know -- but Charlie Chubbs and
21 that bedbug in Harrisburg, they flew to Germany and told
22 the people we need your jobs. Wasn't that the joke of
23 the century. And how did he go? They charged mileage.
24 Did they go in their pocket? If you make this kind of
25 money, like the people in charge of the gas company, you

1 don't need an expense account. If you are making
2 \$200,000 you can pay your own way. You don't want to get
3 me to pay for it. So how did they fly? They flew by the
4 Pennsylvania Air Force. The Air National Guard hauled
5 them over and back and they charged us mileage.

6 I mean, when you think of that, when you think
7 these scalliwags running around and getting perks and
8 everything else, I mean, watch when it is going to start
9 riding up. The people are leaving the city. But what
10 are they running to? To another problem. That ain't
11 going to solve it. So you better take notice and watch
12 what these people are doing here. It is in with this
13 hand and grab with that hand.

14 That is about all I got to say. Don't blame each
15 other. The problem lies at the top. That is where the
16 problem lies, not at the bottom. The people at the
17 bottom only do what they are told to do. If you tell
18 them to dance on the head of a pin they will put cleats
19 on their shoes and do it. So the idea is not the people
20 at the bottom. Remember, it is the ones at the top you
21 go after.

22 Thank you.

23 (Applause.)

24 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

25 (Witness excused.)

1 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is Ann Trier.

2 (No audible response.)

3 JUDGE FORDHAM: Is there a person with the last
4 name of Rayca?

5 THE WITNESS: My name is Chester Rayca. I live at
6 4000 Primrose Road.

7 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you spell your last name for
8 us?

9 THE WITNESS: Rayca.

10 JUDGE FORDHAM: Do you want to be sworn?

11 THE WITNESS: Yes.

12 Whereupon,

13 CHESTER RAYCA

14 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

15 DIRECT TESTIMONY

16 JUDGE FORDHAM: You may proceed.

17 THE WITNESS: First of all, there is a gentleman
18 back there that made some statements earlier and at the
19 conclusion he should we should give it to the politicians
20 to straighten out. Well, I think it is the politicians
21 that created the problem that you have.

22 (Applause.)

23 THE WITNESS: Please. I am in a hurry. I want to
24 get out. It is hot and I am tired.

25 We started out with the Honorable Frank Rizzo, your

1 champion, as you thought. He created himself a patronage
2 haven as soon as he lost his job as the Mayor and didn't
3 have a job. So he created a job for himself and the
4 patronage for all his cronies. He got a job for \$72,000,
5 a chauffeured limousine and it snowballed from there.

6 Now, one of the problems we have is the board of
7 directors of the Philadelphia Gas Company. I think they
8 are all politicians. You got to eliminate them. We
9 should have businessmen running the gas company.

10 When the UGI ran this gas company, they ran it for
11 over 100 years. I have been in this city for 79 years.
12 I never failed to pay my gas bills. You got people out
13 there today don't give a damn. They don't want to pay
14 them. And they get the cell phones, they got the cars,
15 all the toys. But they won't pay their bills.

16 But you got to two politicians in City Council now
17 backing them. They are not concerned about. One of them
18 -- he is senile now, I think, Cohen -- made a statement
19 in today's news that these people should not be punished.
20 We can't turn off their gas. Well, I say turn it off if
21 they don't pay. And that's the name of the game. If I
22 couldn't pay my bill I wouldn't buy gasoline. I would
23 cut down on my home expenses and I would pay my gas bill
24 to keep my family warm.

25 Now, my gas bills have been running over 50 percent

1 over what they were last winter. You got any other
2 corporation today, you got all these corporations,
3 Microsoft, Dell Computer, Verizon, you name them, they
4 are laying off people today? Do you know why they are
5 laying from off? Because they see a loss. And when you
6 see a loss in a company you thin it out. And that is
7 what they got to do. They got to get rid of all the
8 patronage. I'm sure every councilman on that board has
9 some patronage workers on there. They are the guys that
10 get out on and election day and see I want you to vote
11 for. That is one of the things.

12 I ain't got much more to say. I'll just get out of
13 here.

14 Now, we never had to pay a parts and labor plan.
15 You have to pay it today. When UGI ran it, incidently
16 with two-and-a-half million people in this city with only
17 two-thirds of the people that PGW has working and you
18 didn't have to pay for anything. If anything went wrong
19 with your stove or your house they were there immediately
20 and repair it for free.

21 I guess that is about all I got to say. A lot of
22 the other gentlemen said a lot of things that I wanted to
23 say, like Mr. Mueller over here and different ones, and
24 Mr. Johnson. So I can only say to you, Your Honor, if
25 you are the one that is going to decide whether this rate

1 should go through I would recommend that it doesn't go
2 through and tell this board on the Philadelphia Gas
3 Company to straighten up and get this place cleaned out.
4 Get rid of the dead wood. We don't need it. This is
5 what the people are paying for. That is the reason the
6 rates are going up, not to mention the fact that they are
7 raising the rates that they are really paying for the
8 import of the gas.

9 That is it about it.

10 (Applause.)

11 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

12 (Witness excused.)

13 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is A. Fusco.

14 (No audible response.)

15 JUDGE FORDHAM: Anne Rossi.

16 Whereupon,

17 ANNE ROSSI

18 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

19 DIRECT TESTIMONY

20 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and
21 address for the record, please?

22 THE WITNESS: Ann Rossi, A-N-N-E, R-O-S-S-I. My
23 address is 3543 Chalfont Drive.

24 JUDGE FORDHAM: You may proceed.

25 THE WITNESS: I kind of came unprepared this

1 evening. I didn't know I would be testifying. But I
2 would just like to reiterate a lot of what other people
3 in this room have said.

4 I think I am representative of the typical
5 residential customer. I too have my share of complaints
6 with the customer service. I have been living and paying
7 Philadelphia gas bills for over 30 years. I pay them
8 promptly. I'm probably one of the few people that do pay
9 them promptly. I am very organized that way.

10 Last year, the '99-2000 season, when the new
11 computer system was first incorporated I actually stood
12 in line behind a PGW worker while I was waiting to get a
13 deal on a computer and he informed me of the coming of
14 the new computer system and said it was total sham.
15 He himself said that. And I soon realized that
16 afterwards when I started seeing my bills coming in and
17 it had an estimated amount on there and where it said pay
18 by it had 0. Nothing.

19 I too went down to Bustleton Avenue to get the
20 bills straightened out and was yelled at by the person
21 behind the desk who said, Ma'am, what don't you
22 understand? We have a glitch in our computer system and
23 we can't fix it. So there is the door. That is your
24 customer service.

25 This year I have been on the budget plan for --

1 ever since I have owned my house since 1969. This year
2 they elected to take me off the budget plan. I called in
3 January. When I first picked up the phone it was around
4 seven o'clock in the evening because on the bill it
5 stated they had extended their hours to midnight from
6 7:30 in the morning. I work. I get home from work about
7 five o'clock. I called the gas company. I was told it
8 was approximately a 55 minute wait. I hung up. I called
9 back at a later time. I was then told it was
10 approximately a 45 minute wait. I waited about 25
11 minutes through all the announcements and then was
12 disconnected. Then when I tried to call back again much
13 later I was told that the office was closed on your
14 announcement and call another number. I tried to call
15 that number and I was disconnected again. So much for
16 your customer service.

17 I finally did get through the next day and reached
18 a woman that told me that she would put me back on the
19 budget. She didn't understand why I was taken off. I
20 never requested to be taken off. My bills are paid
21 properly. There were no arrearages. She said start
22 paying \$104 a month on the budget plan, which had gone up
23 from approximately \$80 the previous budget season.

24 I saw an increase in my bills also. There is a
25 little portion on the bill that reads what your daily

1 usage is comparing it to last year's daily usage. I
2 don't know where they get their figures from, but I saw
3 mine go from an average of \$6 a day to \$9 a day and my
4 usage is less than what I used last year.

5 I have been in accounting for over 12 years now and
6 working accounts receivable collections and I know the
7 math. There is no way that they come up with these
8 numbers, that the average user pays \$199 more a year. I
9 mean, that is physical proof that I am paying \$90 a month
10 more than I was last year.

11 I paid my bill before it was due, the \$104 that I
12 was instructed to pay. The next month I got a bill
13 stating thank you for your payment of \$104 which was paid
14 on February 2nd. They received my check February 2nd.
15 The bill was not due until February 6. Below that was a
16 past due amount of \$104.

17 Again I called. They said if you do not pay this
18 amount you will be taken off the budget. I called again.
19 I spent my 45, 50 minutes on the phone to get another
20 gentleman that assured me that the first woman should
21 have told me that I had to pay a double payment the first
22 month to be put back on the budget that I never asked to
23 be taken off of in the first place.

24 I asked to speak to a supervisor. He again stated
25 he could not put me in touch with a supervisor. He would

1 take my name and number and have someone call me. I
2 waited an hour. I called back again. It was probably 11
3 at night and I asked why this gentleman had not called me
4 back. I believe his name was Mr. Medley was the
5 supervisor that was acting that night. And the girl
6 said, well, I will go put the note in on his desk so he
7 will call you. To this day I have not received a phone
8 call.

9 I got my next bill -- that gentleman also told me,
10 he came back on the line and he said he made a mistake
11 and said I should only be paying \$104 a month.

12 The next month I get another bill. Again, it is
13 wrong. I called a third time and they have an
14 announcement on there that your call my be monitored.
15 And I requested that it be monitored. So I have tangible
16 evidence that my bill is incorrect a third time that I
17 called in a row. I wanted it recorded that I was having
18 this conversation with someone.

19 I don't know if it went anywhere, but she
20 instructed me to pay \$107 a month. So I am going to pay
21 my 107 and we will take it from there. So I have no idea
22 what is going to go on from here.

23 But you say have you tried to call customer
24 service. Well, that is the frustration you endure. And
25 we are all up against the wall here. There is nowhere

1 else we can go.

2 I was looking through this pamphlet here and this
3 page from the Pennsylvania Office of Consumer Advocate
4 about choosing another gas supplier. Well, whoever wrote
5 this is misinformed because they are the only game in
6 town. We have nowhere else we can go. If I could
7 convert my house completely over to electric now I would
8 do it in the blink of an eye because I am so dissatisfied
9 with Philadelphia Gas.

10 I think there is going to be a mass exodus if this
11 continues and these rates continue to rise. I myself
12 don't know how people that live on a fixed income can
13 afford to live in this city any longer. And I have no
14 intention when I retire of retiring in Philadelphia.

15 Thank you.

16 (Applause.)

17 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

18 (Witness excused.)

19 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is -- I think it
20 is either Al Grant or Av Grant.

21 (No audible response.)

22 JUDGE FORDHAM: From Heggeman Street.

23 (No audible response.)

24 JUDGE FORDHAM: Vince Mullins.

25 MR. GRAY: Your Honor, can I interrupt for one

1 second?

2 JUDGE FORDHAM: Yes.

3 MR. GRAY: She just said there is no one else to
4 turn to. Well, the PUC took over jurisdiction July 1st,
5 2000. And the Bureau of Consumer Services is now there.
6 So the customers of PGW should know that calling the
7 Bureau of Consumer Services is now an option. They don't
8 have zero options. They have a new option, frankly. I
9 just wanted to point that out.

10 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

11 MR. GRAY: The PUC has jurisdiction. It is taking
12 over jurisdiction of PGW.

13 JUDGE FORDHAM: He is not saying there is another
14 supplier. He is saying that if you don't get
15 satisfaction at customer service at PGW you can contact
16 the Bureau of Consumer Services of the Public Utility
17 Commission.

18 Whereupon,

19 VINCE MULLINS

20 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

21 DIRECT TESTIMONY

22 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and
23 address for the record?

24 THE WITNESS: Vince Mullins, 3522 Wellington Street
25 in Philadelphia, 19149.

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1 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you. You may proceed.

2 THE WITNESS: Like a few other people I really
3 didn't plan on speaking tonight. I just jotted a few
4 things down.

5 I notice a lot of people that came in tonight that
6 are still here and some that left were probably old
7 enough to be my grandparents. Not any disrespect. The
8 point is that along with a lot of the senior citizens
9 that are on fixed incomes, social security, things like
10 that, I am 25 years old. I have an one year old, a two
11 year old and a three year old. Obviously my wife can't
12 work. You want to talk about a fixed income. There is
13 only so much a person like myself can do.

14 I went to the city hearings in late February at
15 center city at 15th and JFK. And you will be happy to
16 know there was a different lawyer down there from PGW and
17 he said we are working day and night to answer
18 interrogatories and working this and working that.
19 Meanwhile everybody else and most everyone in the middle
20 class is working left and right just to pay a gas bill.

21 I use my car to go back and forth to work every day
22 to feed my family, so I can turn a light on, electricity,
23 phone, cable, whatever. My gas bill for the last four
24 months has been higher than my car payment.

25 Last year at this time from January through April

1 my gas bills totaled just under \$600. This year from
2 January through April usage only 60 percent of the total
3 that I used last year, just over \$1,200. That is
4 ridiculous.

5 I am sure there are plenty of other young families
6 out there like himself who have the option of doing
7 things like going on welfare, getting state assistance,
8 things like that. But we try to work through it.

9 Now, my concern is is the state even aware that
10 because of this outrageous 600 percent gas hike -- I
11 don't know where you people come up with 30 percent, it
12 is 600 percent. A freshman in high school can figure
13 that out. What you are paying your \$80,000 a year
14 accountants for, I have no clue.

15 (Applause.)

16 THE WITNESS: To me that is the difference. If the
17 state would realize, forget about it costing the city.
18 If the city can afford a \$300 billion stadium, I don't
19 even care about the city at this point. If the state,
20 would realize, the state, the community that puts out
21 money for welfare would realize how many young families
22 like myself will be forced to hit state assistance just
23 to pay a gas bill, that is ridiculous. And then I guess
24 about five years down the road the taxes go up because
25 the people are hitting welfare to pay for their gas bill.

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1 It is a ball that keeps rolling.

2 Your executives that live in the 100,000 dollars
3 houses on their private golf course and their own
4 Mercedes that is brand new every year, which is more than
5 likely a little exaggerated, you know, but the point is
6 is that they don't need it. They absolutely do not need
7 it.

8 The same thing as plenty of other people have said,
9 people that don't pay their bill, shut it off.

10 (Applause.)

11 THE WITNESS: If I don't pay my car payment --

12 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: You lose it.

13 THE WITNESS: Thank you. The bank doesn't say,
14 that's okay, other people are billing their bills, you
15 keep your car. No. They take the car.

16 I have a neighbor who has been on the budget plan
17 for I guess about seven years now. Now, I have nothing
18 against the budget plan. If you can't afford something
19 but you have to do it for your family, you got yourself
20 in a position of trying to do it, that's fine. They are
21 over \$3,000 behind over the last four years because they
22 are paying \$50 a month. Again, freshman high school
23 math. If for half the year your bills are \$100 and you
24 are only paying \$50 for 12 months out of the year, you
25 are going to fall a little behind after a little while.

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1 I mean, fine, if you want to give them a budget plan
2 that's great. Let's make it a little realistic.

3 I thought this was a kicker. I also found out that
4 the notification that people are supposed to get for rate
5 hikes is a distinguishable fluorescent I believe either
6 green or yellow piece of paper in their bill when a hike
7 is about to come up, a rate hike. How I heard about it
8 is after I got my bill from the news. That is how I
9 heard about it. Not a piece of paper in the mail. And I
10 know for a fact from going to the hearings in February
11 that that is illegal. Now, does that mean I am going to
12 get reimbursed for the last three months? I have a
13 better chance of sprouting another three feet and that's
14 a fact.

15 Since other people have touched on customer service
16 I got to tell you this. August of '99. I come home on a
17 Saturday evening after work to find a three foot hole in
18 my lawn with an orange cone sticking out of it that says
19 PGW on it like a big welcome card. I go in my house and
20 I find a we were here little door knob ticket on my
21 dining room table. Nobody else was home. I find out
22 from my neighbors that somebody reported a gas leak and
23 PGW had a locksmith come out to get in my home. With a
24 police officer there. Which I found out is legal and I
25 understand that as opposed to having my house blow up I

1 would rather have the gas turned off. I understand that
2 part.

3 But this is where my problem comes in. My problem
4 comes in in the fact that my sister is upstairs asleep in
5 the back room with the TV on and the air conditioner on.
6 And I go to use the bathroom and I don't mean to be
7 graphic but human feces in my toilet. Now, you have an
8 officer present, you have a PGW foreman present, you have
9 the department of streets present and you have the
10 regular PGW worker present that is physically turning the
11 gas off. And nobody could tell me who exactly used my
12 bathroom when no one was else was home. It was a PGW
13 employee.

14 It took me two-and-a-half hours to realize that
15 nobody was going to pick up the phone at PGW so I decided
16 to call the leak line, the emergency -- there is a leak
17 line. I call that. A girl picks up. I was surprised.
18 I said I smelled gas and my carbon monoxide detector was
19 going off, I have two young children in the house, I
20 would like someone to come out right away. The next two
21 words I hear, hold please, for five minutes. Thank God
22 there wasn't really a leak. But yet they are going to
23 shut my gas off and dig a hole in my lawn because they
24 got a false reading from three doors down.

25 And then I call and make an appointment to have my

1 hole refilled because there are young children on the
2 block and when they fall in that hole PGW isn't the one
3 that gets sued, I do. They say we will be able to come
4 out -- this was around the end of August. They wanted to
5 make a date for September 12. September 12.

6 I had to go so far as to call Joan Krajewski's
7 office to get the manager for the department of streets
8 to then get a hold of the general foreman of that
9 district for PGW, with which is probably another well
10 paying title, to come out and fill the hole in my lawn
11 and then to repatch the lawn because I just had the whole
12 thing sodded which cost me over \$300.

13 My point is -- and I am going to get out of here
14 because I know everyone else wants to get home too -- my
15 point is the fact that this is a bunch of crap. Bottom
16 line. The hike. The hike over the last three months is
17 ridiculous. I mean, just with whatever everyone else has
18 said, what everyone else is going to say, you guys here
19 that are representing PGW, I don't know how you sleep at
20 night.

21 (Applause.)

22 THE WITNESS: All these people out here and all the
23 people that have left so far either can't work because
24 they are retired or work their butts off day and night
25 and you sit there and want to do what you want to do and

1 what you have done. Just think about it.

2 (Applause.)

3 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

4 THE WITNESS: For whoever was asking the questions
5 during the course of the evening, I don't know what right
6 you guys have asking us questions and expecting answers
7 when you have no answers for us.

8 (Applause.)

9 JUDGE FORDHAM: With respect to what Mr. Mullins
10 just said, I at the beginning explained that the
11 procedure is to have people ask questions of the
12 participants so that they can use that if they would like
13 to use that during the course of the hearing. It's not
14 that they are just asking questions just to be mean to
15 you.

16 THE WITNESS: I understand that. It is just that
17 when we want to ask a simple question it would be nice if
18 there was somebody here representing PGW that worked for
19 PGW. That's all. That is the only point. I understand
20 they want to get information to further use it in the
21 upcoming months. But to not answer our questions or to
22 say we don't know or it is in our filing cabinet, I don't
23 care about your filing cabinet. Half the questions that
24 were asked of that panel were yes/no answers. You got a
25 50 percent percent change of getting it right. I mean,

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1 it's not that difficult.

2 JUDGE FORDHAM: The purpose of the public input is
3 of course to give you some information but it is to get
4 input from the public. It's not basically to ask
5 questions of the company on the panel.

6 (Witness excused.)

7 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is Marion Gabriel.

8 (No audible response.)

9 JUDGE FORDHAM: Talmadge Wallace.

10 Whereupon,

11 TALMADGE WALLACE

12 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

13 DIRECT TESTIMONY

14 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and
15 address for the record?

16 THE WITNESS: Talmadge Wallace, T-A-L-M-A-D-G-E,
17 W-A-L-L-A-C-E. I live at 8251 Thouron Avenue,
18 T-H-O-U-R-O-N, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19150.

19 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you. You may proceed.

20 THE WITNESS: To piggyback on what the gentleman
21 just said, which has nothing pretty much to do with what
22 I went to speak about is, the gas company did the same
23 thing to me. They actually went next door to my
24 neighbor, asked him for his ladder. Some supervisor from
25 the Philadelphia Gas Works climbed the ladder, broke my

1 window -- broke it -- and climbed in, went downstairs and
2 opened my door, front door, so these workers could come
3 in. The same thing. Three doors from me someone had
4 called in and said that they smelled gas. So they
5 panicked and went in everybody's house on the block.

6 The gas company reimbursed me for the window. But
7 that is neither here nor there. My neighbors actually
8 had to physically hold me because I would have really
9 hurt that gentleman. That is breaking and entering.
10 That is illegal.

11 Anyhow, I received a \$4,000 gas bill. \$4,000.
12 \$4,000. First of all, I live alone. I have no children.
13 I have no wife. I spend a great deal of time at my
14 girlfriend's house. I may go a month and I don't even go
15 to my own home. Like everyone else, I don't turn the gas
16 just down, I turn it almost off. I did turn it off once
17 but then the pipes broke and I said I can't do that
18 anymore. So now I turn it down very low just to keep
19 heat in the house to keep the pipes from bursting. At
20 one point I opened up a little bit every faucet in the
21 house to let the water drip so it would not freeze.

22 I have gone through the expense. I have replaced
23 every window in my house, every window in my house, with
24 the superduper triple insulation. I have replaced every
25 door in my house with these 19,000 R value doors and all

1 this stuff. Superduper insulated. I have had my house
2 pointed so I could keep the drafts out and everything. I
3 do everything in my power to lower my gas bill. And what
4 do I get? A \$4,000 gas bill. That is ridiculous,
5 gentlemen. Ridiculous.

6 I work every day. This is not for -- but I will
7 tell the city anyhow. I make \$1,100 a week. I can't
8 afford a \$4,000 gas bill. \$4,000. That is ridiculous.

9 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: Even if it is wrong.

10 THE WITNESS: It was wrong. I went to them. Like
11 everybody else, I stood in line. The gentleman tells me,
12 well, you didn't bring -- you should have written down
13 the numbers on -- like the other people were testifying,
14 there is a glass block. They can come and read my meter
15 any time they want to, any time of the day or night. It
16 is there. Anybody can. To make a long story short, he
17 tells me I didn't bring all of this stuff that they
18 needed. He is try to provoke me into some behavior or
19 action so he can call the police. You can just see how
20 he was seething in trying to get me to do something
21 crazy. I just kept smiling.

22 I went home, got the information that the gentleman
23 wanted, went back to the gas company. Now the line is
24 around the block so I left. I took a day off from work
25 the next day. I went there with my lunch, with a thermos

1 of drink because I was going to sit there until they
2 closed. I was in line at 6:30 a.m. before they opened.
3 And I waited. I waited. I waited. I was the first
4 person in line.

5 I got inside. The same gentleman that I was
6 talking to the day before, he waited on me again. I said
7 I have all of the information you need. He typed some
8 stuff into his computer. He says, Mr. Wallace, you only
9 owe \$132. I gave him the \$132.

10 And the reason why you get zeros on your bill
11 because if you are diligent and you pay them on time like
12 everybody else does, if it is an estimated bill the next
13 bill is zero. You don't owe them anything. So now I
14 might go depending on how much they estimated it at,
15 which last month was \$359. This morning -- I'm sorry --
16 yesterday I opened up my gas bill. Zero. So there is
17 something wrong with your accounting system. It needs to
18 be redone. Everybody is saying the same thing over and
19 over and over again.

20 You pay \$10 a month for 12 months, your bill is X.
21 The next year rolls around and they say you are going to
22 have a ten percent increase, you figure in the ten
23 percent. It should be ten percent higher. But now it
24 comes out to 300, 400. It is not even the same number.
25 Sometimes it is 300 percent. Sometimes it is 400

1 percent. How do you -- not you personally -- but how
2 does the gas company calculate its bills?

3 I have even taken the approach I will pay the gas
4 company to teach me how to read the meter. Teach me how
5 to read it so I can know from month to month. Why do you
6 have to estimate my bill when you can physically see the
7 meter? Why do you estimate a bill?

8 Why are you so tenacious in trying to put me on a
9 budget? I don't need to go on a budget. I can afford to
10 pay my gas bill.

11 I have replaced my heater with a high energy
12 efficient heater. I have replaced my gas stove with a
13 superduper gas stove. None of them have pilots anymore.
14 I have replaced every window in my house. It came out to
15 a total of almost \$8,000. I am not worried about it
16 because when I retire February 18 if the Lord hears my
17 prayer I will recoup that because I am selling my house
18 and I am leaving Philadelphia. No doubt about it.

19 (Applause.)

20 THE WITNESS: Because I am 59 years old then. Then
21 I will be on a fixed income. I will be a senior citizen.
22 And I cannot afford \$4,000, although that is not what it
23 was. But I cannot afford \$4,000 gas bills. This is
24 ridiculous. This needs to be rethought, rethought and
25 rethought. Somebody has to come to some sort of

1 conclusion about this. This is ridiculous. Ridiculous.

2 And I wish I had your names because I am sure --
3 but nobody here is on the gas company. Am I correct or
4 incorrect?

5 JUDGE FORDHAM: An employee, you are saying?

6 THE WITNESS: Yes.

7 JUDGE FORDHAM: Mr. Fyock is an employee.

8 THE WITNESS: Fryer? Fryer? I'm going to remember
9 that name. Because you are going to probably run for
10 some election pretty soon and I know who not to vote for.

11 That is all I have to say.

12 (Applause.)

13 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

14 (Witness excused.)

15 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is Rosemary
16 Macklin.

17 Whereupon,

18 ROSEMARY MACKLIN

19 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

20 DIRECT TESTIMONY

21 JUDGE FORDHAM: Will you state your name and
22 address for the record, please?

23 THE WITNESS: Rosemary Macklin, 3232 Morning Glory
24 Road.

25 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you. You may proceed.

1 THE WITNESS: Hi. I have been a life-long resident
2 of Philadelphia and it seems to me -- I am single, first
3 of all. I am 57 and I'm toward retirement age too and I
4 will have no qualms selling my house and moving out of
5 Philadelphia when the time comes if this continued.

6 It seems to me that abuse is always done in an
7 atmosphere of intimidation and fear and the deadbeats
8 don't care and the wealthy don't care. But the people
9 that you are hearing from are the people that have been
10 responsible people and it bothers us not to pay our bills
11 on time and it scares the heck out of me not to be able
12 to pay them at all. I have been spent a lifetime being
13 responsible and I don't like this payoff at the end.

14 I was on a budget of \$43 a month for the past
15 couple of years. No problem. I live alone. My roommate
16 wears a fur coat -- she's a cat. It is a small house.
17 It was \$43 a month in the winter. In the summer, usually
18 July and August, I would have no balance due because I
19 didn't use that much gas. When I leave in the morning I
20 turn it down to 60. It leave at ten after eight in the
21 morning. I come home at 5:30. I shut it off completely
22 at night because I like to open my window at night in the
23 bedroom. I'm one of these people that like a cold
24 bedroom. So I am out five days out of seven. I am
25 involved in a lot of activities. I'm out a lot in the

1 evening. I turn the gas off again. The first bill I got
2 this winter was \$118 on the budget from 43.

3 I called the gas company. I am one of the lucky
4 ones. I got through in a reasonable time. Of course it
5 was quarter to 12 at night. I am lucky I am a nightowl.
6 I decided I would be very cordial to the person because
7 my boss has a habit, if you scream and yell, the guy at
8 the other end has the power, he puts your name on the
9 bottom of the list. He could care less. So I try to be
10 nice because I know this is just another person like me
11 doing their job.

12 The person told me that they would put the budget
13 to \$86. I said that was still too much because I am
14 salaried. They said are you low income. No, I am not
15 low income. I am not high income. I am just a little
16 guy in the middle like everybody else. And I don't
17 qualify for much and I have always taken pride in being
18 able to pay my way.

19 I was never scared of bills. I was a single parent
20 for ten years years ago with four kids. I wasn't afraid
21 that I couldn't pay my bills. I'm one of these people
22 that pay bills before they eat. I am scared now.

23 This person on the phone said \$86 and I said, well,
24 I don't know. The next day I decided to climb up and
25 read my meter because I didn't have one of those

1 electronic ones.

2 I called back the next night. I got through. I
3 got the same representative which I thought was like a
4 minor miracle considering all the calls they take. I
5 gave him the reading. He said, oh, don't pay that bill.
6 We probably owe you a lot of money. So I didn't pay the
7 bill.

8 Last month I got a bill for \$474. When I got it
9 for the first time in my 30 years I sat down and I cried
10 because I was scared. It scares me. And I am angry
11 because I feel like the gas company and everybody else
12 has you by the short hairs. We can't trust anything
13 anymore, government, our city, nothing, and it is scary.
14 It is really scary.

15 So I called up when I got this bill and the girl
16 starts reading. I started out with like a 400 and some
17 balance, which I don't know how I did when I usually have
18 zero zero at the end of the year. And we threw out this
19 one and threw out this one. So she came up with I still
20 had a balance of \$336 for this year and it seemed like a
21 reasonable amount. So I said, you know, okay.

22 I sent them \$150 of that because that is all I had.
23 And that is out of the little bit of savings that I have
24 managed to do with taxes and everything the way they are.
25 And I called today and the guy said to me I think you

1 better go on \$100 a month because it just looks like you
2 are going to need that.

3 Now, I don't know if I can pay \$100 a month but I
4 said okay because, again, I am dominated by due dates,
5 dominated by big corporations. I'm sick of it. You feel
6 like you have no rights.

7 I heard two things tonight that made sense to me.
8 The guy that suggested that we put everything in an
9 escrow account. That was nice. I would like to hear
10 more about that.

11 And another thing is we need to organize more.
12 There should be absolutely more people in this room, so
13 crowded that we have to move to a bigger room. I suggest
14 that somehow we can organized for the next meeting and go
15 block by block in our neighborhoods and get people out
16 just like they do to vote when they need to vote.

17 And I just think that marching go has worked
18 before. I am ready to march. I am ready to go out
19 there. I mean, I have about five more years before I
20 retire and there goes my health insurance, things like
21 that. What do you do? I heard elderly people here
22 today. I am in great health right now. But is scary in
23 this country anymore. I'm not so sure we live in such a
24 free country anymore, if we ever did.

25 That is all I have to say. Thank you for your

1 time.

2 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

3 (Applause.)

4 (Witness excused.)

5 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is C. Thomas.

6 Whereupon,

7 CLARENCE THOMAS

8 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

9 DIRECT TESTIMONY

10 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and
11 address for the record?

12 THE WITNESS: Clarence Thomas, 8719 Hickory Drive,
13 Philadelphia 19136.

14 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you. You may proceed.

15 THE WITNESS: Good evening. I am rather fortunate.
16 I live in a association of 1,000 families. I was going
17 to talk to you about our problems but fortunately the
18 president of our association is here tonight and he will
19 address you at a later time about our problems.

20 But there is a few comments I would like to make.
21 Gentlemen, I admire you. Legends don't die and PGW is
22 seeing to it that legends do not die. About 70 years ago
23 there was the four horsemen of Notre Dame who made
24 history on the football field. We had four horsemen of
25 PGW for decades, and the four horsemen are stupidity,

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1 ignorance, incompetence and corruption. So I do admire
2 you for that. Legends do not die because you will not
3 permit them.

4 So we have a challenge here. The PUC is now taking
5 over. Possibly for the first time in decades we, the
6 people, will have an opportunity to get a fair and
7 equitable hearing. Will the rates go through? You bet
8 your bippy it is going through. There is no way or the
9 Commission will stop it. But hopefully this will be the
10 turning point when this intolerable situation at PGW gets
11 resolved. If you want to know the truth, it is a miracle
12 that somebody has not got in the PGW guns and start
13 shooting. You are close to it and you will have deserved
14 it.

15 Thank you.

16 (Applause.)

17 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

18 (Witness excused.)

19 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is Sondra Guido.

20 (No audible response.)

21 JUDGE FORDHAM: Michael Connell.

22 Whereupon,

23 MICHAEL CONNELL

24 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

25 DIRECT TESTIMONY

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1 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and
2 address for the record, please?

3 THE WITNESS: Michael Connell, C-O-N-N-E-L-L, 3736
4 Lylac Lane.

5 JUDGE FORDHAM: You may proceed.

6 THE WITNESS: I am not going to take a lot of your
7 time. A lot of this has been said. I would repeat a lot
8 of it. I think the one problem -- and it's not a
9 problem. I have an opposite problem.

10 I am the president of Pennypack Woods Homeowners
11 Association. We have a thousand families that live
12 there. We pay our bill as a common bill. Last year for
13 three months they didn't want to take our money. The
14 bookkeeper called every day for three months and could
15 not pay the bill. And finally they sent us a bill for
16 \$226,000 and gave us three extra days to pay it. The
17 bill was \$226,000.

18 This year, February, our monthly bill for gas was
19 \$141,000. Today I paid the bill over here on Bustleton
20 Avenue and it was \$131,000.

21 We have a lot of senior citizens in our association
22 who are on fixed incomes and cannot really afford this,
23 as most of these people are here. If you took notice,
24 most of the people are retired or on fixed income.

25 My statement really is that before this is

1 considered in my opinion -- and I know there is a budget
2 and I know there are people on the budget that can't
3 afford to pay it, but there is some mismanagement
4 somewhere that the bills should be collected that is
5 owed, whatever the number is, 100 million, 125 million,
6 whatever the number is. I don't know what the number is.
7 But the money that is owed the gas company, that should
8 be collected before we try to make -- we have a rate
9 increase for the people that are paying their bills.

10 Other than that, I mean, like I said, the burden on
11 the people that are retired, my mother is 80 years old
12 and on an fixed income. She just happens to have six
13 children that help her. A lot of people don't have
14 children that can help them. I think it is a shame and a
15 crime. As one woman said, most of these people that are
16 from the old school pay their bills on time, are
17 responsible, and there are a lot of people today that
18 don't do it and the people that are from the old school
19 are paying for it and we shouldn't be. Like I said the
20 payments should be -- they should collect the back money
21 that is owed them before we have a rate increase.

22 Thank you.

23 (Applause.)

24 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

25 (Witness excused.)

1 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is Alice
2 Wojciechowski.

3 Whereupon,

4 ALICE WOJCIECHOWSKI

5 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

6 DIRECT TESTIMONY

7 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and
8 address for the record and please spell your last name.

9 THE WITNESS: My last name is
10 W-O-J-C-I-E-C-H-O-W-S-K-I.

11 JUDGE FORDHAM: And your address?

12 THE WITNESS: 3401 Chippendale Avenue,
13 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19136. Telephone number, 215
14 624-7563

15 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you. You may proceed.

16 THE WITNESS: Do you want the petitions?

17 JUDGE FORDHAM: You have petitions?

18 THE WITNESS: I have 400. There is 400 there. I
19 would have had more but the wind was blowing them away.
20 I couldn't use the papers.

21 JUDGE FORDHAM: This is a 12 page exhibit. Do you
22 also have -- these are just the names. Do you have
23 something to go along with this?

24 THE WITNESS: No. What would I need?

25 JUDGE FORDHAM: Do you have something saying you

1 don't want the rate hike or something like? Or is that
2 going to be your testimony?

3 THE WITNESS: That will be my testimony.

4 JUDGE FORDHAM: Okay.

5 THE WITNESS: Before I start can I say something?
6 Back in 1945 we had gas lights on our street which were
7 beautiful. Guess what. They sold them. The gas company
8 sold our gas lights and they are in Cape May now. I
9 thought that was terrible. That was a very nice feature
10 of Mayfair.

11 Anyway, I will say something about Street here.
12 Street is too busy putting up signs welcome to Mayfair.
13 We know where Mayfair is. He is putting signs up.

14 I wanted to be here but my body said no. I
15 collected 400 signatures. If it was not for the wind I
16 would have had more. I did lose two pages to the wind.

17 If we all stick together we will sway the gas
18 company to help lower the bills. Get rid of corrupt
19 people and management. Things better than before. You
20 know what happens to our own homes if we don't take care
21 of it. Should be a better way to help all people that
22 make phone calls and never get through to solve little
23 problems that become big ones.

24 I had a bad problem as you all heard -- as you all
25 had the same one. It took two days hanging on the phone.

1 I carried the phone all over the house just so I would
2 not miss the gas employee to answer me. In the end they
3 told me weather was bad. It was not. We were told to
4 get a new thermostat or get a new furnace.

5 One gas person came in with a learner, a young
6 girl. He was not checking out the heaters. He almost
7 got on top of the young lady. He was showing her the two
8 meters in a tight closet. I felt sorry for her. He
9 intimidated her. She was almost crying. I got in
10 between the two of them.

11 The gas company was telling us what to do to
12 conserve gas. We all know that no one wastes heat, it is
13 so precious. For two weeks I called because I smelled
14 gas. Every time they said they did not smell. Guess
15 what. They had to dig up my lawn, part of the sidewalk.
16 There was a gas leak in the lawn. My lawn is still
17 lumpy. I can't fix it. I have arthritis in two-thirds
18 of my body. My bill for one month was \$450 had and I am
19 alone and I conserve. And I don't waste heat.

20 I went to the gas company at 4400 Frankford Avenue
21 to ask for help. The clerk said pay part of it but there
22 will be an one percent penalty. So now my bill is over
23 \$500. One on top of the other.

24 Right away I turned my thermostat down to zero, put
25 a lot of clothes on, sleep under a down cover and use two

1 small electric heaters. One I can't move but the other
2 is portable. I don't use them all the time. Now I heard
3 the electric is going up also. It is nothing but a
4 copycat situation. One jumps and everybody follows.
5 Where are we going to see the end?

6 I am 83 years old. I need heat. We all do. After
7 I cut my heat off my bill went down from 450 to 166 and
8 that was too much. I didn't use it. And that is without
9 using much gas. I hang my clothes outside. I don't use
10 the washer or dryer. You use my microwave. What else
11 can I do?

12 Thank you all for listening to me. You all have
13 the same problem, but like I said, stick together and
14 don't give up. Something has to give. God willing I am
15 going to try to make it tonight if I get a ride -- I did.
16 I don't drive. A little old lady they called me, four
17 foot 12 inches, will fight for any cause worthwhile. We
18 all can do it. Don't blame the employees. Not all are
19 bad.

20 I called the Inquirer to come see the people
21 complaining about their bills and were really crying. I
22 got the name of the reporter but I am not mentioning it.
23 He turned me down. Not gory enough for him. Had it been
24 a murder he would have been there promptly.

25 I think that is it. There is a lot more I can say

1 but I think this is enough.

2 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

3 (Applause.)

4 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

5 MR. KEENE: Your Honor, I just have a quick
6 question to clarify the record.

7 Is it your testimony that the signatures that you
8 collected were from people that were opposed to the rate
9 increase?

10 THE WITNESS: They were opposed to the rates being
11 high and they want them lowered. The minute I asked them
12 if they wanted the rates lowered they actually pulled the
13 pen out of my hands.

14 MR. KEENE: Thank you very much.

15 THE WITNESS: You're welcome.

16 MR. KEENE: Your Honor, we would request that the
17 signatures in the petition be marked as Wojciechowski
18 Public Input Exhibit No. 1 and admitted into the record.

19 JUDGE FORDHAM: I will note that there are no
20 addresses.

21 The petition will be marked as Wojciechowski Public
22 Input Exhibit 1.

23 (Whereupon, the document was marked as
24 Wojciechowski Public Input Exhibit No. 1 for
25 identification, and was received in evidence.)

1 (Witness excused.)

2 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is Margaret
3 Ketler.

4 Whereupon,

5 MARGARET KETLER
6 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

7 DIRECT TESTIMONY

8 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and
9 address for the record, please?

10 THE WITNESS: Margaret Ketler, 3307 South Keswick
11 Place, second floor, Philadelphia.

12 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you spell your last name and
13 the name of your street?

14 THE WITNESS: K-E-T-L-E-R, Ketler. Keswick,
15 K-E-S-W-I-C-K, Place.

16 I have a couple of comments. Number one is about
17 landlords and ownership of houses in the city or
18 apartments where the gas is paid by the tenant. I was a
19 landlord for a long time and my father was also a
20 landlord. We had one tenant move out several years ago.
21 My husband called the gas company to get the gas changed
22 to our name so we would not have pipes bursting, et
23 cetera. And the gas company proceeded to tell us it was
24 a vacant apartment. So for three years somebody read the
25 meter for the second floor and didn't look at the meter

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1 for the first floor and both meters were in the same
2 closet in the first floor apartment. And they acted like
3 the first floor was vacant with people living in it. And
4 there were cats in the window and everything. I was
5 amazed. My husband was amazed. But we had no control
6 over that.

7 That is one of the problems that I see as being a
8 landlord and the utilities are separate utilities. There
9 was no control in place for us to even know, or the gas
10 company to come back and say to us, is the apartment
11 still vacant as the owners or somebody. There was no
12 question. There was no investigation for over
13 two-and-a-half years.

14 Then my father had a tenant that moved out in 1998.
15 They called the gas company to get the gas changed to
16 their name so again there would be heat in the house for
17 the pipes and instead of putting it in their name they
18 put it in care of to my father and five hours from
19 Philadelphia, which is where he had moved to. So that
20 was 1998.

21 I got that straightened out today. Today. And for
22 all that time they never shut the gas off. They never
23 sent a shutoff notice to where the bill was going, which
24 was Wellsboro, Pennsylvania.

25 I had written a letter last year, because my one

1 brother was trying to handle it for my father. I never
2 heard on that letter. It went to the correspondence
3 department, which is where the person on the phone told
4 me that that issue was, was in the correspondence
5 department. When I called yesterday and I was on the
6 phone probably on hold about 20 minutes, which was
7 relatively short, I started before 8:30 and it was 9:14
8 when I was finished the call and the lady did call we
9 back a couple hours later and told me what to do. And
10 today my brother and I spent two hours on Bustleton
11 Avenue to get the gas changed into a new account. My
12 brother is actually taking it over but then we had to
13 write a check immediately for a good amount to cover a
14 large part of it.

15 The sad part was that all of this could have been
16 avoided. For all the money that my father was more than
17 willing to pay, he didn't have a bill in his name. That
18 to me is rather amazing. And I wrote a letter. They
19 told me yesterday on the phone that they had a copy of
20 that letter written May 8 of 2000. And I had two phone
21 numbers on that letter. Nobody ever called me. And I
22 assumed they had called my father's house and got it
23 straightened out. I never heard from there that was
24 still a problem until the house is being sold now and
25 settlement is the end of April. Now it is an issue.

1 When a tenant is your tenant they can do some
2 things, like the one tenant did, which was move out and
3 let her mother move in. She continued to write checks in
4 her name to the landlord but PGW got the bill for the new
5 tenant. So there was -- when you walk into PGW all you
6 have to show is an ID and give them \$150 and they will
7 give you gas. And they will never -- if they don't get
8 another penny, that's fine. So for three years they
9 never got another penny and they never investigated.
10 They never said we are going to shut it off. And
11 everybody else that pays the bills as I pay mine every
12 month and as my father attempted to do to get it changed
13 to the right name, you know, all that money will be
14 recovered because we are going to pay the portion from
15 April of '98 to now that is my father's, but the portion
16 that was the previous tenant's is still outstanding.
17 That to me is a big issue.

18 If they know it is a rental property -- you know,
19 they usually ask you, are you the owner of the house.
20 And if you say no, I am renting, I don't know that they
21 ask for a lease. They should. Because they would have
22 found out that that lady was not really the tenant. And
23 now I don't think they have a way of tracking her down
24 because she wasn't the actual tenant of the property.
25 And I just think that that is one of the ways that we

1 could improve what goes on at the gas company.

2 As a landlord you can't necessarily control what
3 the tenants do or don't do about their utility bills.
4 The water bill is the only one that the city will lien
5 you for if you don't pay it. And usually that was one
6 the bills that we always had come to our house and we
7 paid it. The gas and electric, it is usually in the
8 tenant's name and it is usually their responsibility.
9 But PGW doesn't seem to follow up or have any concern
10 that a house that has a car in the driveway, people
11 walking in and out and does not pay, they have it down as
12 vacant. It doesn't make sense to me. And to me that is
13 a loss that, you know, they should be able to do better
14 at for administering it.

15 As far as I agree with everybody else about the
16 increases. It is -- I don't understand why it has gone
17 from \$4 to \$8 and now to 12 and it probably will be 16 as
18 the gentleman mentioned earlier before long. And I don't
19 see that we are getting a lot for that money. I
20 understand the gas usage, the actual gas we are using.
21 But I don't understand.

22 And it sounds to me like a lot of people have the
23 old meters, never got the new meters, and they all seem
24 to have incorrect meter readings, including friends of
25 mine that did not come tonight. That was the one of last

1 complaints that I heard from somebody on the phone
2 yesterday, was that their gas bill for one person in the
3 house by themselves where they turn the gas down in the
4 morning and at night as the other lady mentioned has a
5 bill for \$318 for one month. And the gas company told
6 her to validate the meter reading and she does have the
7 old meter. But she also has the glass block in front of
8 it. I don't know whether they are reading them so wrong
9 that you get the gentleman with the \$4,000 bill. To me
10 you need some remedial training on meter reading, I
11 think.

12 Thank you..

13 (Applause.)

14 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

15 (Witness excused.)

16 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is Teodozia Pepe.

17 Whereupon,

18 TEODOZIA PEPE

19 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

20 DIRECT TESTIMONY

21 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and
22 address for the record and please spell your name?

23 THE WITNESS: Teodozia Pepe, T-E-O-D-O-Z-I-A,
24 P-E-P-E. And my address is 4021 Fitler Street,
25 Philadelphia 19114.

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1 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you. You may proceed.

2 THE WITNESS: I am here like everyone else and I
3 thank Mrs. Wojciechowski because I read the article in
4 the Northeast Times and that is the only reason I am here
5 because I didn't know anything about the hearing.
6 However, I was the last similar I was at a forum similar
7 to this was when City Council was passing what they
8 called the transfer tax. We were there en masse, all the
9 realtors, until two o'clock. They went to their rooms,
10 ordered pizza and the next day we heard they passed the
11 transfer tax. So unfortunately I think all these people
12 are wasting their time. It is really a crime having them
13 pour out their hearts and have you men just ignore us.

14 And this is not the first time that I have heard
15 that there were hearings and rates were raised. So I
16 think Mrs. Helm is the one who had prompted me to speak.
17 Mrs. Helm had said that people will be moving out and who
18 are you going to charge? Does Bucks County get any of
19 this gas that they have to pay higher rates for? No?
20 Just Philadelphia?

21 I will have you know, sir, I have worked for a
22 company 13 years, for a real estate company, and I have
23 worked in Yardley, Pennsylvania. I travel to Yardley
24 every day to make my money. I move Philadelphians that
25 you are charging out of the city. I just moved someone

1 from Mayfair, 3329 Ryan Avenue, I moved them into
2 Trevose.

3 And the offices within the small area that I served
4 -- there are 12 real estate companies, all of whom are
5 different companies, they get tons of Philadelphians.
6 Now I don't know who else you are going to charge because
7 all the people that are making money are moving.

8 Now, you are going to listen when you don't have
9 anybody else but, like, center city is improving but the
10 northeast is dying. And you very well know that because
11 of the census that you have taken. The people who can
12 afford money are not paying for the wage tax, for the
13 transfer tax and now for gas. Let alone the terrible
14 schools that they are running away from.

15 Now, about PGW. I have had several experiences
16 with PGW myself, all of which were with my own property.
17 The line, the gas line where I live, is right under my
18 concrete path. I have a walkway in front of my home.
19 They have had to rip up my path. I have 100 feet in
20 front of my house. They ripped it up four different
21 times and when somebody says that you get these
22 subcontractors who just pour as much concrete as possible
23 and you are walking on a mountain when you do their
24 concrete work. I have had them come back twice because
25 what I did was break up what they did and I would not

1 accept it. It looks absolutely atrocious. And these
2 people are rude, don't use forms.

3 So there. That's all I have to say. I thank you
4 for listening.

5 (Applause.)

6 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

7 (Witness excused.)

8 JUDGE FORDHAM: The next speaker is Mark Morrison.
9 Whereupon,

10 MARK MORRISON

11 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

12 DIRECT TESTMIONY

13 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you state your name and
14 address for the record, please?

15 THE WITNESS: Mark Morrison, M-O-R-R-I-S-O-N. The
16 address is 5010 Grant Avenue, Philadelphia.

17 JUDGE FORDHAM: You may proceed.

18 THE WITNESS: I know one of you gentlemen is on the
19 Philadelphia Gas Works board. Goes PGW work on a budget?
20 Do they?

21 MR. HOLLAND: None of us or on the board, sir. And
22 we have a budget, yes.

23 THE WITNESS: Have they ever stayed within their
24 budget?

25 MR. HOLLAND: Yes, sir.

1 THE WITNESS: On a consistent basis?

2 MR. HOLLAND: A reasonably consistent basis.

3 MR. HOLLAND: A lot of the people here tonight are
4 also on a budget. I have heard two increases of 24 and
5 21 percent in the past last year alone. That is a 45
6 percent increase. There is not anybody I know, not
7 social security or anybody else, that grants a 45 percent
8 increase in the amount of money people make. And to come
9 up here and to ask these people to make this kind of
10 payment, I think is wrong. It is absolutely wrong.

11 I think that you need to get your house in order.
12 You need to get rid of your liability, which is money
13 that has not been paid to the gas company. It must be
14 returned back to the gas company. I think you need to
15 get this done before you come back to the public and you
16 ask them for more money.

17 That is all I have to say.

18 (Applause.)

19 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

20 (Witness excused.)

21 JUDGE FORDHAM: We have two speakers who spoke at
22 yesterday's hearing -- do we have another? Marita
23 Trimmer.

24 Whereupon,

25 MARITA TRIMMER

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1 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

2 DIRECT TESTIMONY

3 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would would you state your name and
4 address for the record?

5 THE WITNESS: My Marita Trimmer, M-A-R-I-T-A,
6 T-R-I-M-M-E-R. I live at 8211 Albion Street. And that
7 is 19136.

8 JUDGE FORDHAM: You may proceed.

9 THE WITNESS: I would like understand or know what
10 when the relationship is between the gas company and the
11 city. I know that if you were to try to sue the gas
12 company -- my husband was blown up by a gas employee --
13 they have sovereign immunity. It was taken all the way
14 to the federal Supreme Court. There is a cap of \$500,000
15 on any accident.

16 There was a whole block down in Wyssoming that was
17 blown up. A woman lost her husband. She had to share
18 that with the reft of the block.

19 My husband was a police officer. These people were
20 talking about the gas company just entering the house.
21 My husband was a police officer and there was a man that
22 tried to commit suicide. He pulled the whole meter off
23 of the wall. And he had all his windows and doors
24 closed. The people down the block were calling the gas
25 company, we smell gas.

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1 When the gas company came they hit that block in
2 neighborhood and their meters were going crazy. So the
3 guy would not let them in the house and they called the
4 police to gain access into the house. They needed a
5 warrant.

6 When they went in there the gas man connected the
7 main and then lit a match to light the pilot without
8 airing the house out.

9 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: I remember that.

10 THE WITNESS: Yes. My husband is on disability.
11 He was in the burn unit for three months, third degree
12 burns. My husband even said to this gentleman, he was
13 standing on the steps of the basement and he said, hey,
14 buddy, don't go lighting any matches while I'm in the
15 room. And the gas man turned around and said it's not
16 going to blow. If it was that volatile when we turned
17 the lights on the electric arc would have set it off.
18 Well, the lights were on before the man even pulled the
19 main off the wall. There was no arc. This gas man lit
20 the match.

21 I later found out that this gas man had flunked an
22 open book test but was hired anyway. What happened to
23 him as a result of this? My husband is out on
24 disability. He was given plasma in St. Agnes in the burn
25 unit and he now has hepatitis C. The gas man was given a

1 promotion to get him off the streets.

2 I would like to know what the relationship is
3 between the city and the gas company. The city owns the
4 gas company as an investment? I mean, these rate
5 increases, is that a way of not increasing our taxes? Is
6 it a way of paying for the stadium?

7 And also I believe that the city, as an investment,
8 like, if you have investments you collect money from
9 them, sometimes you get a check or sometimes it just
10 rolls over just like the interest in your bank account.
11 The city was taking off of the top. I don't know what
12 the number was. Probably --

13 MR. McCOOL: Eighteen million a year.

14 THE WITNESS: Whether the gas company made money or
15 not I would like to do it with some of the things I have
16 investments in. Just take 18 million or \$18 right off
17 the top whether they made money or didn't make money.

18 I don't understand the thinking behind that
19 investment. I mean, as a taxpayer in the city, this is a
20 bad investment. But it seems like a conflict of interest
21 because they own the company. The gas company can claim
22 sovereign immunity. You said take it to the PUC. Okay,
23 if you don't get satisfied in 30 days with the PUC what
24 recourse is there? Can you go down and blow the gas
25 company up? I mean, what recourse is there? You need to

1 have gas so they have you by the...

2 I would like to understand the relationship between
3 there. Do we own the gas company? Is it part of the
4 city?

5 MR. HOLLAND: Yes.

6 THE WITNESS: So when you are raising the rates for
7 the gas company, you are raising our taxes?

8 MR. HOLLAND: I certainly would not say that,
9 Ma'am, but when we are raising rates we are --

10 THE WITNESS: Incorrectly.

11 MR. HOLLAND: I certainly wouldn't agree with that
12 statement.

13 THE WITNESS: So you would disagree with it?

14 MR. HOLLAND: I disagree with that statement, yes.

15 THE WITNESS: Can I explain what the relationship
16 is to the gas company? I mean, I was to understand that
17 the gas company was either an investment that was going
18 to make money for the city or -- in this lawsuit somebody
19 told me it is a non-profit organization. Which I
20 understand is bankrupt, so it is non-profit. But why is
21 the city hanging onto this investment?

22 These are just some of the questions I had. My
23 husband is out on disability. Now we are struggling to
24 try to pay this. I know the turnout tonight was good but
25 it should have been a lot better. A lot of people are

1 really irate, but they are so busy working and trying to
2 keep up with things.

3 Life in the city, I work for a state rep. And I
4 know that Philadelphia is the hemorrhoid of the state.
5 And I know the Mayor will threaten with all sorts of we
6 won't do this or we won't do that. I think that the
7 state should just say to the city, go ahead and become
8 your own state. I mean, I am paying \$500 a month in
9 tuition to educate my kids and I am paying the taxes for
10 the public schools.

11 I mean, the City of Philadelphia is so mismanaged.
12 The only thing that is managed is the police department
13 and the fire department. And they are the only ones that
14 are non-union. They can't go on strike and they have to
15 deliver their services. But then all the other, the
16 trash and the streets and the gas company, which I don't
17 understand whether that is city -- do you work for the
18 city if you work for the gas company?

19 MR. FYOCK: I do.

20 THE WITNESS: You don't know.

21 Was it Rizzo that was on the city pension and then
22 went to the gas company? These are like tricky questions
23 that the bureaucracy and the red tape and the tricks and
24 the legalese have managed and the people just don't know
25 what is going on. And the worst part is that they don't

1 know that they don't know what is going on.

2 I am a committeeperson and I put a note in every
3 door in my division for this meeting tonight. And then I
4 had a hard time making it. I had to call my husband and
5 he had to come home. He had payroll tonight. But it
6 was, like, I had to go to that meeting because I put
7 notes in everybody's door. But my daughter had track and
8 she had to be there. I have a hard time telling my kid
9 that I can't take you to track because of my volunteer
10 work. Their stuff comes first.

11 It is just ridiculous trying to make ends meet.
12 Between my mortgage and the tuition, living in the city,
13 the education -- I know you are not the education
14 committee or anything. But we are going under.

15 I think it was Mark Twain that said if you want to
16 know where your nation is headed look to your inner
17 cities. And since I heard that statement about 10 or 12
18 years ago I have watched and I have watched and it is
19 just inner cities spreading and that is where the nation
20 is headed unless something can be done where the people
21 have a say, you know, with the old Boston tea party. No
22 taxation without representation.

23 And in response to calling about service with the
24 gas company, I have a legislative liaison that I can't
25 get responses from.

1 Thank you.

2 (Applause.)

3 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

4 (Witness excused.)

5 JUDGE FORDHAM: We have two people who testified
6 yesterday, Janet Mills and Mr. Cohen. Do you have any
7 additional testimony? Because the hour is really late.
8 We have been here since six o'clock.

9 MS. MILLS: Yes. I have testimony from two other
10 individuals that I would like read. Not on my own. They
11 were unable to be here today and I was able to get their
12 testimony.

13 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: I also have one. But I would
14 like it submitted for the record.

15 JUDGE FORDHAM: Okay.

16 MS. MILLS: I can submit this as well.

17 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

18 MR. KEENE: Your Honor, I have one as well that we
19 would like to place into the record.

20 JUDGE FORDHAM: Would you tell me who it is and
21 tell me the names. State your name for the record and
22 then tell me the names of the people.

23 MS. NELSON: My name is Tina Nelson. I am with the
24 Consumer Education and Protective Association.

25 This lady's name is Mamie Young. She resides at

1 4324 Pine Street, Philadelphia, 19104.

2 I would just like to submit her handwritten
3 testimony because she could not be here tonight.

4 JUDGE FORDHAM: Okay. .

5 MS. NELSON: To shorten things.

6 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

7 Ms. Mills.

8 MS. MILLS: My name is Janet Mills. I reside at
9 309 East Vernon Road, Philadelphia, 19119.

10 I gave my testimony about my personal experience
11 with PGW yesterday in the hearings yesterday at 2:00 a.m.
12 as well as 6:00 p.m. I am here today to submit written
13 statements from two other people. They are very
14 passionate about PGW.

15 One is the testimony from Mr. Jeff Kogan,
16 K-O-G-A-N. He is the owner of Lester's Shoes, 934 South
17 Street, Philadelphia. I am submitting his testimony.

18 Also I am submitting testimony by a party by the
19 name of Phyllis Saunders, P-H-Y-L-L-I-S, S-A-U-N-D-E-R-S.
20 She is a resident of Philly for 66 years and she has a
21 very compassionate testimony.

22 JUDGE FORDHAM: Do you have her address?

23 MS. MILLS: No, I do not.

24 JUDGE FORDHAM: Okay.

25 MS. MILLS: I can forward it to you if you would

1 like.

2 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

3 MS. MILLS: I will do so. Thank you.

4 JUDGE FORDHAM: Mr. Keene.

5 MR. KEENE: Your Honor, we received by E-mail some
6 comments from a consumer who was at last night's public
7 input hearing but fell ill before her name was called.
8 She asked that her statement be submitted tonight.

9 The consumer's is Jacqueline Harris, address 41 St.
10 James Court, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106.

11 I have distributed copies to Counsel and Your Honor
12 and two copies to the court reporter.

13 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

14 I also received a fax from a Rebeccas Rose of 4413
15 Ernie Davis Circle and she indicated that she would be
16 unable to attend the public input hearings because she
17 would be out of town. This will also be submitted. And
18 I do have copies for Counsel.

19 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: Your Honor, how did everyone
20 find out about this hearing? Where was it publicized?

21 MR. HOLLAND: It was published in five newspapers
22 of general circulation here in Philadelphia I believe on
23 Friday, the 23rd, and Monday, the 26th.

24 JUDGE FORDHAM: There are people who have filed
25 formal complaints in this matter also. And if you filed

1 a formal complaint you got a notice of today's and
2 yesterday's public input hearings. We also tried to give
3 it to some of the politicians. Representative Perzel did
4 testify last night at the seven o'clock hearing and he
5 indicated that he also let his constituents know.

6 There are representatives from CEPA, ACORN and some
7 other organizations. They put out the word. And I know
8 I did see it in the Inquirer on page A-9 on Monday, and
9 that was a fairly big article.

10 MR. FYOCK: The PUC also published it on their web
11 site two weeks ago.

12 JUDGE FORDHAM: Mr. Cohen.

13 MR. COHEN: I have a statement here from Julia
14 Wellons. She asked me to read this for her.

15 JUDGE FORDHAM: Will you come forward and we will
16 just submit it into the record. Would you state your
17 name again for the record and then state her name and
18 address?

19 MR. COHEN: My name is Alphonso J. Cohen from
20 Philadelphia, 1240 South 16th Street.

21 JUDGE FORDHAM: And what is the name of the woman
22 who gave you the document?

23 MR. COHEN: Julia Wellons, 1817 Carpenter Street,
24 south Philadelphia.

25 "I am a senior citizen" --

1 JUDGE FORDHAM: Mr. Cohen, will would you spell her
2 last name and just give me the document?

3 MR. COHEN: The last name is W-E-L-L-O-N-S.

4 JUDGE FORDHAM: Instead of you reading it because
5 of the late hour just give me the document and I will
6 submit it into the record.

7 MR. COHEN: Okay.

8 MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: It is very short.

9 JUDGE FORDHAM: It is very short? Okay. Go ahead.

10 MR. COHEN: "My name is July Wellons. I live at
11 1817 Carpenter Street in south Philadelphia. I am a
12 senior citizen and I am a lifelong resident of the city.

13 I very much wanted to be here tonight to speak in
14 person but I am too ill to come. I am on social security
15 and that is my full income.

16 My gas bill was \$200 last month. I only paid \$100
17 on that bill. That was all I could afford. Now I owe
18 PGW over \$400. I don't have the money to make the
19 payment, to pay that bill off.

20 I am not alone with this problem. A friend of mine
21 just moved out of her house because she could not afford
22 to pay her gas bill and electric bill. Now she is living
23 with her children. So many people are sick and have no
24 hope, have to move in with there families. They are
25 losing their homes because they cannot afford to pay. I

1 demand that you cut the gas rates to a level working
2 people can afford on a fixed income.

3 I have much more to say but I am too ill to do it.
4 We cannot afford to pay the bills even as they are. Cut
5 the rates.

6 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

7 (Applause.)

8 JUDGE FORDHAM: I would like to thank --

9 MS. MILLS: I have the address for the lady.

10 JUDGE FORDHAM: Yes?

11 MS. MILLS: For the record, that was Phyllis
12 Saunders. Her address is 2220 Pierce Street,
13 P-I-E-R-C-E, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19145.

14 JUDGE FORDHAM: Thank you.

15 I would like to thank everyone for your
16 participation. This is the third of the public hearings
17 and the last one. We had two at the Double Tree in
18 center city yesterday, one at two o'clock and one at
19 seven o'clock, and then the one here today. We didn't
20 know how many would turn out but we did have over 100
21 people here tonight. We thank you for your
22 participation.

23 After today's hearing, as I indicated before, the
24 parties are still submitting testimony. The other
25 parties will submit testimony. There will be rebuttal

1 testimony and then we will have the public hearings at
2 the end of May. The briefs will be filed after that and
3 I will render a decision which will be submitted to the
4 Commission and the full Commission will make the decision
5 in this case by October 6th.

6 Thank you very much.

7 (Whereupon, at 10:35 p.m., the public input hearing
8 was concluded.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I hereby certify, as the stenographic reporter,
that the foregoing proceedings were taken
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