

**PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION  
HARRISBURG, PA 17120**

**Daniel Vermeychuk**  
vs  
**PECO Energy Company**

**Public Meeting – November 5, 2015**  
**2388323-OSA**  
**Docket No. C-2013-2388323**

**STATEMENT OF**  
**COMMISSIONER PAMELA A. WITMER**

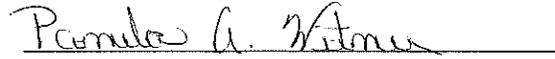
Before the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (Commission) today is the Petition for Rescission or Amendment (Petition) by the Complainant in the above-referenced proceeding. In 2013, the Complainant filed a formal complaint requesting a payment arrangement and stating that there were incorrect charges on his bill. The Complainant's case focused on his allegation that PECO was charging him for service on accounts that he had closed or had not opened. PECO denied these allegations, and stated that the Complainant is responsible for an unpaid balance of \$96,208. PECO explained that it had transferred final balances from the Complainant's prior residential accounts to his open accounts using the Company's "Internal Matching" process. The Complainant has one currently active account with the company, on which the entire balance of his account is owed.

As PECO stated, this astronomical balance accrued through a series of balance transfers between the Complainant's residential accounts. These transfers, of which there were six, occurred between 2008 and 2011 and ranged from approximately \$800 to more than \$40,000 in two instances. In this case, the Complainant was not only ignoring his obligation to pay his bills, but was actively employing various strategies to avoid paying in a timely manner, resulting in a past due balance of almost \$100,000. I want to be clear that I am in complete agreement with the recommendation to deny the Complainant's Petition, however, the Complainant's obligation to pay is matched by the Company's responsibility to timely attempt to collect payment. I am troubled that PECO allowed not only the accumulation of such a high balance, but also permitted the transfer of balances of tens of thousands of dollars on numerous occasions.

This case is one example that highlights the importance of the changes the Pennsylvania Legislature made in Act 155 of 2014. The Act provides, among other things, that public utilities must report annually to the Commission residential consumer accounts that have accumulated more than \$10,000 in arrearages and enumerate efforts undertaken to collect the past due amounts. Act 155 also tightened the process for customers to acquire a medical certificate, which the Complainant in this case used on four occasions to prevent termination. While the events in this case occurred before the implementation of these changes, they highlight the significance of the changes made in the Act.

I recognize that it is not possible to completely prevent bad actors from attempting to take advantage of the system. However, it is critically important to the customers, who are ultimately left footing the bills for such abuses, that our utilities act vigilantly to prevent them, continue to take steps to identify them, and mitigate their effects as quickly as possible. I remind PECO and all of our regulated utilities of this responsibility.

**DATE: November 5, 2015**

  
**PAMELA A. WITMER**  
**COMMISSIONER**