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Alexis Bechtel

VIA FEDERAL EXPRESS

December 8, 2016

Ms. Alexis Bechtel, Director
Bureau of Consumer Services
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission
Commonwealth Keystone Building
400 North Street
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120

DEC 08 2016

PA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
SECRETARY'S BUREAU

DEC - 9 2016

Director
Bureau of Consumer Services

**Re: Petition of PPL Electric Utilities Corporation
for Waiver of 52 Pa. Code § 56.97(a) to Allow
Customers to Establish Payment Agreements
Online or Through an Automated Interactive
Voice Response System
Docket No. P-2012-2327036**

Dear Ms. Bechtel:

Enclosed for filing on behalf of PPL Electric Utilities Corporation ("PPL Electric") is a Comprehensive Report evaluating the overall effectiveness of PPL Electric's IVR System to establish self-serve payment agreements. This report is being filed pursuant to the Commission's Order entered on January 24, 2013 at the above referenced docket.

Pursuant to 52 Pa. Code § 1.11, the enclosed document is to be deemed filed on December 8, 2016, which is the date it was deposited with an overnight express delivery service as shown on the delivery receipt attached to the mailing envelope.

In addition, please date and time-stamp the enclosed extra copy of this letter and return it to me in the envelope provided.

If you have any questions regarding this document, please contact me or Melinda Stumpf, PPL Electric's Manager-Regulatory Programs & Business Services at (484) 634-3297.

Very truly yours,

Handwritten signature of Kimberly A. Klock in black ink.
Kimberly A. Klock

Enclosure

cc: Tanya J. McCloskey, Esquire
Louise Fink Smith

PPL Electric Utilities Corporation
2016 Comprehensive Report
Website and Interactive Voice Response Payment Agreements

I. Introduction and Background

In an Order entered September 24, 2010 at Docket No. P-2010-2168786, the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (“PUC” or “Commission”) granted PPL Electric Utilities Corporation (“PPL Electric” or “Company”) a two-year waiver and authority to expand its Website and Interactive Voice Response (“IVR”) systems to offer customers the option, in defined circumstances, to submit payments and establish payment agreements either online or through an automated system to avoid termination of service. Given the success of the Website and IVR systems, the Public Utility Commission entered an Order on September 28, 2012 at Docket No. P-2012-2327036, granting an additional four-year waiver for PPL Electric’s Website and IVR systems.

In the September 28, 2012 Order, the Commission directed PPL Electric to, among other things, submit a comprehensive report on its Website and IVR systems prior to the expiration of the four-year waiver. Specifically, the comprehensive report should evaluate the overall effectiveness of the program and include information such as any problems encountered with the original implementation and program availability, the frequency of and percentage of customer usage, the number of complaints stemming from use of the program, and the number of service terminations prevented from use of the program.

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The four-year waiver for PPL Electric's Website and IVR systems is set to expire on December 31, 2016.¹ In compliance with the Commission's September 28, 2012 Order, PPL Electric herein submits this comprehensive report on the Website and IVR systems.

II. Evaluation of Overall Effectiveness of the Program

PPL Electric has offered self-serve payment agreement capabilities to residential customers since November 2010. The key objectives of the Website and IVR systems during the waiver periods were to: (a) determine if customers with overdue balances would use the self-serve payment options; (b) identify system or process issues impeding customer participation with regards to submitting payments and establishing payment arrangements via self-service applications; (c) offer customers more payment options and control; (d) provide customers with the flexibility to communicate with PPL Electric beyond normal business hours; and (e) reduce service terminations for payment-troubled customers. PPL Electric has met each of these objectives during the past six years. In addition, since the inception of the program in November 2010, PPL Electric did not encounter any problems with implementation and program availability, and saw very few complaints associated with the program.

Allowing residential customers to establish, within limits, payments/agreements via its Website or IVR systems provides substantial benefits to its customers. Important benefits for customers include, but are not limited to, the following: (a) providing two additional means by

¹ Given the success of the Website and IVR systems, PPL Electric filed a petition on August 5, 2016 at Docket No. P-2016-2560140, requesting an additional waiver of 52 Pa. Code § 56.97(a) to continue to allow customers the option, in defined circumstances, to establish payment agreements through either the Website or IVR systems to avoid termination of service. As of the date of this comprehensive report, PPL Electric's petition remains pending before the Commission.

which customers may establish payments/agreements to avoid service termination; (b) providing a means by which customers can, within limits, respond to termination notices outside normal business hours; (c) responding to the growing use of online and automated resources to manage billing and payment matters; (d) avoiding further collection action, such as termination of service; (e) offering options to customers, such as making an immediate payment or establishing a payment agreement, that meets their needs; and (f) providing automatic referrals to assistance programs, such as LIHEAP and CAP, for eligible customers.

Similarly, allowing residential customers to establish payments/agreements via its Website or IVR systems provides substantial benefits to PPL Electric. Key benefits for PPL Electric include, but are not limited to, the following: (a) improving customer satisfaction; (b) providing more flexibility to customers in addressing their overdue bills; (c) reducing Commission complaints, including Payment Assistance Requests and termination of service; and (d) helping PPL Electric to better manage its call volume.

III. Implementation and Administration

The Website and IVR systems were initially implemented on November 16, 2010. Since the initial implementation of the Website and IVR systems, PPL Electric has not encountered any problems or issues with the administration and availability of the program. PPL Electric's Website and IVR systems provide customers with additional channels to make payments and payment arrangements at no cost to the customer.

IV. Customer Usage

PPL Electric has identified customers who had used the Website and IVR systems to make payments and establish payment agreements. As shown below, from January 1, 2013 through October 31, 2016, there were a total of 1,916,017 payments and payment agreement transactions made using the Website and IVR systems. Of this total, 487,145 transactions (25%) were payment agreements set up through the Website or IVR systems. The number of transactions made using the Website and IVR systems to establish payment agreements were 99,717 (20.5%) and 387,428 (79.5%), respectively.

Transaction	Website	IVR	Total
Payments	929,851	499,021	1,428,872
Payment Agreements	99,717	387,428	487,145
Total	1,029,568	886,449	1,916,017

Year over year, PPL Electric has seen continued growth in the use of the Website and IVR systems. Based on survey responses and in customer feedback, customers have stated that the self-service payment agreement options were easy and convenient and customers who preferred this channel did so because it was faster and provided more anonymity. PPL Electric anticipates customers will continue to use the Website and IVR systems for online and automated payments/agreements if available in the future.

V. Number of Complaints

During the period from January 1, 2013 through October 31, 2016, PPL Electric received a total of 71 informal complaints regarding the use of the website or IVR to establish a payment agreement. These complaints largely related generally to the payment terms of the payment agreement rather than the Website or IVR systems themselves. Only six of these informal complaints are pending before the Commission.

VI. Number of Service Terminations Prevented

From January 1, 2013 through October 31, 2016, there were 86,831 service terminations prevented because residential customers used the self-serve systems (Website or IVR) to establish payment agreements; thus eliminating the grounds for termination.

VII. Conclusion

Based on the foregoing, providing customers with the option for online and automated payments/agreements through the Website and IVR systems has been highly successful. Use of the Website and IVR systems to make payments or establish payment agreements to avoid termination, together with the continued ability to directly contact a customer service representative at any time during the Call Center hours of operation, provides important benefits to both PPL Electric and its customers. Further, given the number of customers using the Website and IVR systems to establish payments/agreements, it is clear that customers routinely rely upon and expect the convenience offered by the Website and IVR systems to avoid termination.

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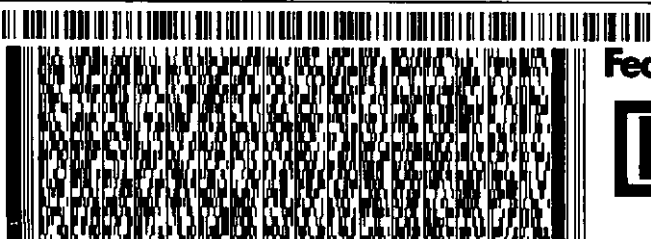
TO ALEXIS BECHTEL, DIRECTOR
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