

PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
Harrisburg, PA 17105-3265

Michael McLean
v.
Philadelphia Gas Works

Public Meeting held December 21, 2017
2497655-ALJ
Docket No. C-2015-2497655

STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN GLADYS M. BROWN

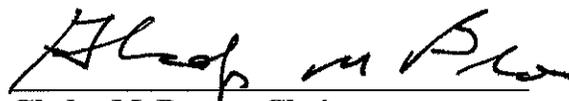
Before the Commission today is the Complaint of Michael McLean requesting a payment arrangement. The ALJ denied a payment request for \$1216.82 of the \$1389.64 arrears that was not part of the Complainant's Customer Responsibility Program (CRP) arrears. A CRP arrears cannot be the subject of a Commission payment arrangement under Chapter 14.

Chapter 14 gives this Commission the discretion to grant a customer, in most cases, only one payment arrangement. I do not agree that a poor payment history automatically should bar the Commission's exercise of that discretion because, every payment troubled customer's circumstance is unique.

Here, however, the ALJ correctly denied the one payment arrangement that we should normally grant even when there is a poor payment history. The record shows that this Complainant paid nothing for 3 of the 5 years from 2011 through 2015 that the Respondent provided service. Absent extenuating circumstances or some reasonable explanation for why the Complainant paid nothing, as opposed to any portion of a \$20.28 monthly average that was accruing over 5 years, no payment arrangement is appropriate.

By the same token, the Complainant's limited income of \$733 in Social Security disability benefits, coupled with an average monthly accrual of an arrears at \$20.28 per month, demonstrates the importance of addressing what this Commission determines to be affordable utility service for Pennsylvania's lower-income utility consumers.

December 21, 2017
Date


Gladys M. Brown, Chairman