



July 11, 2023

VIA E-FILE

Rosemary Chiavetta, Secretary
PA Public Utility Commission
P.O. Box 3265
Harrisburg, PA 17105

**Re: Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania, Inc. Universal Service and Energy Conservation
Plan for 2024-2028 Submitted in Compliance with 52 Pa. Code § 62.4
Docket No. M-2023-3039487**

Dear Secretary Chiavetta:

Attached for filing, please find the **Petition to Intervene of the Coalition for Affordable Utility Services and Energy Efficiency in Pennsylvania (CAUSE-PA)**.

Copies have been served as indicated on the enclosed Certificate of Service.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ria M. Pereira".

Ria M. Pereira, Esq.
Counsel for CAUSE-PA

CC: Certificate of Service
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BEFORE THE PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania, Inc. Universal :
Service and Energy Conservation Plan for 2024- : Docket No. M-2023-3039487
2028 Submitted in Compliance with 52 Pa. Code § :
62.4 :

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that I have, on this day, served copies of the **Petition to Intervene of the Coalition for Affordable Utility Services and Energy Efficiency in Pennsylvania** in the above captioned matter upon the following persons and in accordance with the requirements of 52 Pa. Code § 1.54.

SERVICE VIA EMAIL ONLY

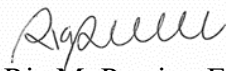
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Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania, Inc. Universal :
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**PETITION TO INTERVENE OF THE COALITION FOR AFFORDABLE
UTILITY SERVICES AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN PENNSYLVANIA**

PENNSYLVANIA UTILITY LAW PROJECT

Counsel for CAUSE-PA

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Pursuant to the provisions of the Rules of Practice and Procedure of the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC or Commission), 52 Pa. Code §§ 5.71-.76, the Coalition for Affordable Utility Services and Energy Efficiency in Pennsylvania (CAUSE-PA), through its counsel at the Pennsylvania Utility Law Project, hereby files this Petition to Intervene in the above captioned proceeding regarding the Universal Service and Energy Conservation Plan of Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania, Inc. (Columbia). In support thereof, CAUSE-PA states as follows:

1. On April 5, 2023, Columbia filed its proposed Universal Services and Energy Conservation Plan for 2024-2028 (Proposed USECP or Plan), including proposals to further adopt policy provisions set forth in the Commission’s CAP Policy Statement.¹
2. Columbia proposes to amend its USECP to accomplish, what includes but is not limited to, the following:
 - Adopt the energy burdens as set forth in the Commission’s CAP Policy Statement.
 - Remove “payment troubled” CAP qualification criteria to align with the Commission’s CAP Policy Statement.
 - Update recertification schedule as outlined in the Commission’s CAP Policy Statement.
 - Eliminate the CAP eligibility requirement for social security numbers, driver’s license numbers, or other state identification for adult household members who are not the rate payer responsible for the utility bill.
 - Move to a quarterly review of all CAP accounts with an automatic adjustment.
 - Eliminate CAP aggregation for supply of gas..
 - Eliminate Remedial Energy Efficiency Program (REEP).
 - Administer CAP customer survey to be completed by all CAP customers with \$1,500 annual shortfall to determine reason for high usage.
 - Increase Health and Safety spending on every home to \$1,200 from the current maximum of \$650.
 - End the Inoperable Heating System Pilot.
 - Allow CAP customers to receive a Hardship Fund grant beginning mid-May if funding is available.

(Proposed USECP at 10-11).

¹ 2019 Amendments to CAP Policy Statement, Final Policy Statement and Order, Docket No. M-2019-3012599 (Order entered Nov. 5, 2019).

3. Pursuant to the requirements contained in 52 Pa. Code § 5.61(e), CAUSE-PA asserts that it has standing to intervene in this proceeding.
4. Eligibility to intervene in Commission proceedings is governed by Section 5.72, which provides that “[a] petition to intervene may be filed by a person claiming a right to intervene or an interest of such nature that intervention is necessary or appropriate to the administration of the statute under which the proceeding is brought.”²
5. Section 5.72 further provides that the right or interest may be one “which may be directly affected and which is not adequately represented by existing participants, and as to which the petitioner may be bound by the action of the Commission in the proceeding.”³
6. While Section 5.72 speaks of the rights of a “person” to intervene, the Commonwealth Court has consistently stated that “an association may have standing as a representative of its members... as long as the organization has at least one member who has or will suffer a direct, immediate, and substantial injury to interest as a result of the challenged action, [the organization] has standing.”⁴
7. CAUSE-PA is an unincorporated association of low-income individuals that advocates on behalf of its members to enable consumers of limited economic means to connect to and maintain affordable water, electric, heating, and telecommunication services.

² 52 Pa. Code. § 5.72(a).

³ 52 Pa. Code § 5.72(a)(2).

⁴ Energy Cons. Council of Pa. v. Pa. PUC, 995 A.2d 465, 476 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2010) (alteration in original) (citing Tripps Park v. Pa. PUC, 415 A.2d 967 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 1980); Parents United for Better Schools v. School District of Phila., 646 A.2d 689 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 1994)).

8. CAUSE-PA membership is open to individuals residing in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania who are committed to the goal of helping low-income Pennsylvanians to connect and maintain affordable utility services.
9. CAUSE-PA is located, c/o Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network, 118 Locust Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101.
10. CAUSE-PA has a significant interest in the impact that Columbia's Proposed USECP will have on low income residential customers. These interests are not adequately represented by other participants.
11. As an association of low-income individuals, CAUSE-PA has a direct interest in the prompt and efficient implementation of the Commission's CAP Policy Statement reforms through updated Universal Service and Energy Conservation Plans both in Columbia's service territory and across the state. These reforms are designed to address deep and persistent levels of unaffordability within CAP. If allowed to persist without mitigation through the adoption of the Commission's CAP Policy Statement reforms, economically vulnerable households will continue to be at risk of harm to their health and financial stability.⁵
12. CAUSE-PA has standing to intervene because at least one member of CAUSE-PA will experience a direct, immediate, and substantial impact to their interests as a result of this proceeding.⁶

⁵ See Diana Hernandez, Understanding "Energy Insecurity" and Why It Matter to Health, J. Social Science & Medicine 167, at 1-10 (2016).

⁶ See Energy Cons. Council of Pa., 995 A.2d at 476.

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

Ria M. Pereira, Esq.
Elizabeth R. Marx, Esq.
John Sweet, Esq.
Lauren N. Berman, Esq.
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14. Counsel for CAUSE-PA consents to the service of documents by electronic mail to pulp@pautilitylawproject.org, as provided in 52 Pa. Code § 1.54(b)(3).

WHEREFORE, for the above noted reasons, CAUSE-PA respectfully requests that the Commission grant its request to formally intervene in this proceeding.

Respectfully submitted,
Counsel for CAUSE-PA



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Dated: July 11, 2023

Verification

I, **Elizabeth R. Marx**, legal counsel for *Coalition for Affordable Utility Services and Energy Efficiency in Pennsylvania (CAUSE-PA)*, on behalf of CAUSE-PA, hereby states that the facts contained in the foregoing pleadings are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief, that I am duly authorized to make this Verification, and that I expect to be able to prove the same at a hearing held in this matter. I understand that the statements herein are made subject to the penalties of 18 Pa. C.S. § 4904 (relating to unsworn falsification to authorities).



Elizabeth R. Marx, Esq.
*On behalf of the Coalition for Affordable Utility
Services and Energy Efficiency in Pennsylvania*

Dated: July 11, 2023