



March 28, 2024

***Via Electronic Filing***

Secretary Rosemary Chiavetta  
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission  
Commonwealth Keystone Building  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Re: **Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission v. Duquesne Light Company**  
**Docket No. R-2024-3046523**

*Petition to Intervene and Answer of CAUSE-PA*

Dear Secretary Chiavetta:

Please find the attached **Petition to Intervene and Answer of the Coalition for Affordable Utility Services and Energy Efficiency in Pennsylvania (CAUSE-PA)** in the above-referenced proceeding.

As indicated on the attached Certificate of Service, service on the parties was accomplished by email only.

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  
Office of Administrative Law Judge (via email only: [crainey@pa.gov](mailto:crainey@pa.gov))  
Paul Diskin, TUS (via email only: [pdiskin@pa.gov](mailto:pdiskin@pa.gov))  
Office of Special Assistants (via email only: [ra-OSA@pa.gov](mailto:ra-OSA@pa.gov))

**BEFORE THE PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION**

Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission :  
 :  
 v. : Docket No. R-2024-3046523  
 :  
 Duquesne Light Company :

---

**PETITION TO INTERVENE AND ANSWER  
OF THE COALITION FOR AFFORDABLE UTILITY SERVICES  
AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN PENNSYLVANIA**

---

**PENNSYLVANIA UTILITY LAW PROJECT**

*Counsel for CAUSE-PA*

Ria M. Pereira, Esq., PA ID: 316771

John Sweet, Esq. PA ID: 320182

Lauren N. Berman, Esq. PA ID: 310116

118 Locust Street

Harrisburg, PA 17101

Tel.: 717-236-9486

Fax: 717-233-4088

[PULP@pautilitylawproject.org](mailto:PULP@pautilitylawproject.org)

**March 28, 2024**

Pursuant to the provisions of the Rules of Practice and Procedure of the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC or Commission), 52 Pa. Code §§ 5.61-5.76, the Coalition for Affordable Utility Services and Energy Efficiency in Pennsylvania (CAUSE-PA), through its counsel at the Pennsylvania Utility Law Project, hereby petitions the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission to intervene and files its Answer in the above-captioned proceeding. In support thereof, CAUSE-PA states as follows:

1. On March 20, 2024, Duquesne Light Company (Duquesne Light or the Company) submitted a rate filing, Supplement No. 71 to the Company's Tariff Electric - Pa. P.U.C. No. 25. In Supplement No. 71, the Company proposes a general increase in electric distribution rates of approximately \$133 million. Because the proposed base rate increase includes \$32 million of revenues currently recovered under surcharges, the increase to customers over current charges is \$101 million. If the Company's request is approved in its entirety, the total bill for an average residential customer using 600 kilowatt-hours would increase from \$130.67 to \$139.19 per month, or 6.52%. (Filing Letter, p. 1).

### **Petition to Intervene**

2. Eligibility to intervene in Commission proceedings is governed by 52 Pa. Code § 5.72, which provides in relevant part 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.” 52 Pa. Code § 5.72(a).

3. 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.” 52 Pa. Code. § 5.72(a)(2).

4. Even though 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 an organization has at least one member who has or will suffer a direct, immediate, and substantial injury to an interest as a result of the challenged action, [i.e., is aggrieved, the organization] has standing.” Energy Cons. Council of Pa. v. Pa. PUC, 995 A.2d 465, 476 (Pa. Commw. 2010) (alteration in original) (citing Tripps Park v. Pa. PUC, 415 A.2d 967 (Pa. Commw. 1980); Parents United for Better Schools v. School District of Philadelphia, 646 A.2d 689 (Pa. Commw. 1994)).

5. CAUSE-PA is an unincorporated association of low and moderate 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.

6. CAUSE-PA membership is open to moderate and low income individuals residing in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania who are committed to the goal of helping low income families maintain affordable access to utility services and achieve economic independence.

7. CAUSE-PA is located, c/o the Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network, at 118 Locust Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101.

8. CAUSE-PA has a significant interest in the impact that Duquesne Light’s proposed rate increase will have on moderate and low income residential customers. These interests are not adequately represented by other participants.

9. Members of CAUSE-PA are located within Duquesne Light’s service territory and will be directly affected by the outcome of this proceeding. Particularly, this proceeding will

affect the price that CAUSE-PA members pay for electric service, as well as the reliability and quality of that service.

10. CAUSE-PA has standing to intervene because its members have or will suffer a direct, immediate, and substantial injury to an interest as a result of this proceeding. See Energy Cons. Council of Pa., 995 A.2d at 476.

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

Ria M. Pereira, Esquire  
John W. Sweet, Esquire  
Lauren N. Berman, Esquire  
**Pennsylvania Utility Law Project**  
118 Locust Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17101  
Telephone: 717-236-9486  
Facsimile: 717-233-4088  
E-mail: [PULP@pautilitylawproject.org](mailto:PULP@pautilitylawproject.org)

12. Counsel for CAUSE-PA consents to the service of documents by electronic mail to [PULP@pautilitylawproject.org](mailto:PULP@pautilitylawproject.org), as provided in 52 Pa. Code § 1.54(b)(3).

**Answer**

13. CAUSE-PA has preliminarily reviewed Duquesne Light's rate filing and objects to the Company's request on the grounds that the proposed rate increase could result in unjust and unreasonable rates that would impose economic hardship on low and moderate income residential customers.

14. Terms, conditions, and rates for electric service are not just and reasonable if they are not appropriately designed and implemented to ensure that all consumers are able to access safe and affordable electric services, consistent with the laws and policies of the Commonwealth. A preliminary review of Duquesne Lights's filings suggests that the Company's proposed rate increases may be unjust, unreasonable, and inconsistent with the laws and policies of this

Commonwealth.

15. Continued delivery of safe, affordable electric service is of critical importance to the safety, welfare, and economic stability of all Pennsylvanians – particularly those with limited financial means. In recognition of this fact, the law requires that utility services be universally affordable, and that universal service programs be developed, maintained, and appropriately funded to ensure such affordability. See 66 Pa. C.S. § 2804. Duquesne Light’s general rate increase, which would pose a significant increase in the costs of basic electric service for its customers, could have a disparate impact on households with limited economic means, and will undermine bill savings achieved through adoption of energy efficiency and conservation measures. The Company has not proposed any remediation measures related to its universal service programs to reduce the stark impact of its rate proposal on its lowest income customers. (DLC St. 1 at 10: 10-13).

16. CAUSE-PA asserts that these matters, and any future modifications presented by intervening parties, must be thoroughly reviewed and investigated to ensure that all customers are able to access safe, affordable utility services within the Duquesne Light’s service territory.

WHEREFORE, CAUSE-PA respectfully requests that the Commission enter an Order granting CAUSE-PA full status as an intervener in this proceeding with active party status.

Respectfully submitted,

**PENNSYLVANIA UTILITY LAW PROJECT**  
*Counsel for CAUSE-PA*



---

Ria M. Pereira, Esq., PA ID: 316771

John Sweet, Esq. PA ID: 320182  
Lauren N. Berman, Esq. PA ID: 310116  
118 Locust Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17101  
Tel.: 717-236-9486  
Fax: 717-233-4088  
[PULP@pautilitylawproject.org](mailto:PULP@pautilitylawproject.org)

Date: March 28, 2024

**Verification**

I, **John Sweet**, legal counsel for the Coalition for Affordable Utility Services and Energy Efficiency (“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).



John Sweet, Esq.  
*On behalf of the Coalition for Affordable Utility  
Services and Energy Efficiency (“CAUSE-PA”)*

Date: March 28, 2024



<a href="mailto:mgang@postschell.com">mgang@postschell.com</a> <a href="mailto:akanagy@postschell.com">akanagy@postschell.com</a> <a href="mailto:mrulli@postschell.com">mrulli@postschell.com</a>	
--	--

Respectfully Submitted,  
**PENNSYLVANIA UTILITY LAW PROJECT**  
*Counsel for CAUSE-PA*



Ria M. Pereira, Esq., PA ID: 316771  
118 Locust Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17101  
(717) 236-9486  
[PULP@pautilitylawproject.org](mailto:PULP@pautilitylawproject.org)

March 28, 2024