



PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

STEPHEN M. DeFRANK
CHAIRMAN

July 17, 2025

Via Hand Delivery

Matthew L. Homsher, Secretary
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission
Commonwealth Keystone Building
400 North Street, 2nd Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Re: Pa. Public Utility Commission, et al. v. Wellsboro Electric Company, Valley Energy, Inc., and Citizens' Electric Company of Lewisburg
Docket Nos. R-2025-3054392, R-2025-3054393, R-2025-3054394

Dear Secretary Homsher:

A review of the procedural history at the above-referenced consolidated dockets shows the issuance of a prehearing order dated June 5, 2025, where it was determined not to schedule any public input hearings. The transcript of the prehearing conference reflects the Office of Consumer Advocate's (OCA) request for three in-person public input hearings, due to the large geographic area of the customer base in each service territory, and two telephonic public input hearings. The Office of Small Business Advocate (OSBA) requested that telephonic public input hearings be held at a minimum.

Despite these requests, the presiding officer reasoned that there was a lack of substantial public interest in the rate proceeding, pursuant to the Commission's Policy Statement at 52 Pa. Code § 69.321. Specifically, it was noted that only one formal complaint was filed by a customer in this matter and that in the 2022 base rate cases for Valley Energy, Inc. and Citizens' Electric Company of Lewisburg, only two people testified.

Pursuant to 66 Pa.C.S. § 331(b), the Commission has authorized me to, among other things, designate the time and place for the conducting of hearings and assign cases to special agents or administrative law judges for the taking and receiving of evidence. Therefore, I direct OALJ to schedule one in-person public input hearing to be held in Wellsboro, PA and two telephonic public input hearings, with one being held during the afternoon hours and the other being held in the evening hours. The public input hearings shall be promptly scheduled and conducted between August 11 and 22, 2025.

Adequate forums must be provided to the public to be heard when public utilities request rate increases. I understand that there was a concern about the cost of holding an in-person public input hearing if it is not well attended. However, the Commission does not gauge success by counting how many people attend a public input hearing. Rather, the Commission measures success by making ourselves available to the public, especially as affordability concerns persist for many Pennsylvanians. Therefore, the possibility for low attendance at a public input hearing does not negate the necessity of

providing a forum for the public to be heard. Customer testimony from public input hearings, whether they are well attended or not, has been instrumental in shaping the final outcome of rate proceedings during my time as a Commissioner.

Finally, I respectfully request that Secretary Homsher serve this letter on the parties of record in this proceeding.

Sincerely,



Stephen M. DeFrank
Chairman
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission

cc: Kimberly Barrow, Vice Chair
Kathryn L. Zerfuss, Commissioner
John F. Coleman, Jr., Commissioner
Ralph V. Yanora, Commissioner
Jennifer L. Berrier, Executive Director
Kelly A. Monaghan, Deputy Executive Director
Charles E. Rainey, Jr., Chief Administrative Law Judge
Mary D. Long, Administrative Law Judge