

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA



DARRYL A. LAWRENCE  
Consumer Advocate

OFFICE OF CONSUMER ADVOCATE  
555 Walnut Street, 5th Floor, Forum Place  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17101-1923  
(717) 783-5048  
(800) 684-6560

 @pa\_oca  
 /pennoca  
FAX (717) 783-7152  
consumer@paoca.org  
www.oca.pa.gov

March 16, 2026

**Via Electronic Filing**

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

Re: Letter of Notification of PPL Electric Utilities Corporation filed pursuant to 52 PA. Code Chapter 57 with respect to the approval to build approximately 1.1 miles of new parallel double circuit 230 kV transmission taps that are needed to connect the existing Susquehanna-Harwood #1 & #2 transmission lines on the New Tomhicken 230 kV switchyard that are respectively located in Luzerne County, Pennsylvania; Docket No. A-2025-3059443

Dear Secretary Homsher:

Attached for electronic filing, please find the Office of Consumer Advocate's Prehearing Memorandum in this proceeding.

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

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Josiah B. Harmar

Josiah B. Harmar, Esq.  
Assistant Consumer Advocate  
PA Attorney I.D. # 338426  
Email: JHarmar@paoca.org

Enclosures

cc: Administrative Law Judge Erin L. Gannon (Via Email Only: egannon@pa.gov)  
Administrative Law Judge John M. Coogan (Via Email Only: jcoogan@pa.gov)  
Certificate of Service

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

Letter of Notification of PPL Electric :  
Utilities Corporation filed pursuant to 52 PA. :  
Code Chapter 57 with respect to the approval :  
to build approximately 1.1 miles of new :  
parallel double circuit 230 kV transmission : Docket No. A-2025-3059443  
taps that are needed to connect the existing :  
Susquehanna-Harwood #1 & #2 :  
transmission lines on the New Tomhicken :  
230 kV switchyard that are respectively :  
located in Luzerne County, Pennsylvania. :

I hereby certify that I have this day filed electronically on the Commission’s electronic filing system and served a true copy of the following document, the Office of Consumer Advocate’s Prehearing Memorandum, upon parties of record in this proceeding in accordance with the requirements of 52 Pa. Code § 1.54 (relating to service by a participant), in the manner and upon the persons listed below.

Dated this 16th day of March 2026.

SERVICE BY E-MAIL ONLY

Alison Kaster, Director  
Bureau of Investigation & Enforcement  
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission  
Commonwealth Keystone Building  
400 North Street, 2nd Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17120  
akaster@pa.gov  
*Counsel for I&E*

NazAarah Sabree, Small Business Advocate  
Office of Small Business Advocate  
555 Walnut Street  
1st Floor, Forum Place  
Harrisburg, PA 17101  
ra-sba@pa.gov  
*OSBA*

David B. MacGregor, Esq.  
Garrett P. Lent, Esq.  
Hayley E. Wilburn, Esq.  
Post & Schell, P.C.  
17 North Second Street  
12th Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17101  
dmacgregor@postschell.com  
glent@postschell.com  
hwilburn@postschell.com  
*Counsel for PPL*

Michael J. Shafer, Esq.  
PPL Services Corporation  
645 Hamilton Street, Suite 700  
Allentown, PA 18101  
mjshafer@pplweb.com  
*Counsel for PPL*

/s/ Josiah B. Harmar

Josiah B. Harmar

Assistant Consumer Advocate

PA Attorney I.D. # 338426

Email: JHarmar@paoca.org

Office of Consumer Advocate

555 Walnut Street

5th Floor, Forum Place

Harrisburg, PA 17101-1923

Phone: 717-783-5048

Fax: 717-783-7152

Dated: March 16, 2026

Jacob Guthrie

Assistant Consumer Advocate

PA Attorney I.D. # 334367

Email: JGuthrie@paoca.org

Counsel for:

Darryl A. Lawrence

Consumer Advocate

**BEFORE THE  
PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION**

Letter of Notification of PPL Electric                   :  
Utilities Corporation Filed Pursuant to 52           :  
PA. Code Chapter 57, Subchapter G, for           :  
Approval to Build Approximately 1.1               :  
Miles of New Parallel Double Circuit 230       :  
Kv Transmission Taps that PPL Claims           :  
are Needed To Connect the Existing               :  
Susquehanna-Harwood #1 & #2                   :  
Transmission Lines to the New                   :  
Tomhicken 230 Kv Switchyard that are           :  
Respectively Located In Luzerne County,       :  
Pennsylvania   :

A-2025-3059443

---

**PREHEARING MEMORANDUM  
OF THE  
OFFICE OF CONSUMER ADVOCATE**

---

Pursuant to the Prehearing Conference Order issued on January 14, 2026 in the above-captioned proceeding by Administrative Law Judges (ALJs) Erin L. Gannon and John M. Coogan, of the Office of Administrative Law Judge (OALJ) of the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (Commission), Section 333 of the Public Utility Code,<sup>1</sup> and the Commission’s regulations,<sup>2</sup> the Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA) submits the following Prehearing Conference Memorandum:

**I. BACKGROUND**

On December 19, 2025, PPL Electric Utilities Corporation (PPL or Company) filed a Letter of Notification (LON) with the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (Commission), pursuant

---

<sup>1</sup> 66 Pa.C.S. § 333.

<sup>2</sup> 52 Pa. Code §§ 5.221–5.224.

to 52 Pa. Code Section 57.72(d)(1)(iii) and (vi), to build approximately 1.1 miles of new parallel double-circuit 230 kilovolt (kV) transmission taps (Tap Lines) that PPL claims are needed to connect the existing Susquehanna-Harwood #1 & #2 230 kV Transmission Lines to the new Tomhicken 230 kV Switchyard (Project). The Project also includes the construction of two new 0.1-mile-long 230 kV transmission lines (Connecting Lines) from the Tomhicken 230 kV Switchyard to a new customer-owned 230-34 kV substation. The new 230 kV Connecting Lines, Tap Lines and Tomhicken 230 kV Switchyard are located in Hazle Township, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania.

On December 30, 2025, the OCA filed a Notice of Intervention and Public Statement. Also on December 30, 2025, the Commission's Bureau of Technical Utility Services (TUS) propounded a set of data requests which requested additional information from PPL regarding the LON.

On January 7, 2026, the OCA filed a Protest. On January 9, 2026, PPL submitted its response to the data requests propounded by TUS.

On January 12, 2026, ALJ Gannon requested via email that PPL have notice published weekly, for two consecutive weeks, in a newspaper of general circulation in the location of the Project. On February 19, 2026, PPL filed Affidavits and Proofs of Publication evidencing that notice had been published in the Wilkes Barre Citizens' Voice and Wilkes Barre Times Leader consistent with the email request of ALJ Gannon.

On January 14, 2026, ALJs Gannon and Coogan issued a Prehearing Order establishing a Prehearing Conference on Wednesday, March 18, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. ALJs Gannon and Coogan set a deadline for the prehearing memoranda on or before Monday, March 16, 2026.

## **II. SERVICE ON THE OCA**

Assistant Consumer Advocates Jacob Guthrie and Josiah B. Harmar represent the OCA in this proceeding. Parties should serve a total of two copies of all documents on the OCA as follows:

Jacob Guthrie  
Josiah B. Harmar  
Assistant Consumer Advocates  
555 Walnut Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Forum Place  
Harrisburg, PA 17101-1923  
Telephone: (717) 783-5048  
Emails: [JGuthrie@paoca.org](mailto:JGuthrie@paoca.org)  
[JHarmar@paoca.org](mailto:JHarmar@paoca.org)

For the purposes of the Prehearing Conference, Jacob Guthrie will be the primary attorney speaking on behalf of the OCA.

## **III. DISCOVERY**

In conjunction with its proposed schedule, the OCA proposes the following modifications to the Commission's procedural rules regarding discovery. The OCA requests that the Presiding Officers direct that the modifications will take effect after the parties serve rebuttal testimony.

- A. Answers to written interrogatories and requests for document production, entry for inspection, or other purposes shall be served in-hand within ten (10) calendar days of service.
- B. Objections to interrogatories and/or requests for production shall be communicated orally to the propounding party within three (3) calendar days of service of the interrogatories; unresolved objections shall be served in writing to the propounding party within five (5) calendar days of service of the interrogatories and/or requests for production.
- C. Motions to dismiss objections and/or direct the answering of interrogatories and/or requests for production shall be filed within five (5) business days of service of written objections.
- D. Answers to motions to dismiss objections and/or answering of interrogatories and/or requests for production shall be filed within three (3) business days of service of such motions.

- E. Requests for admissions will be deemed admitted unless answered within ten (10) calendar days or objected to within five (5) calendar days of service.
- F. Answers to on-the-record data requests shall be served in-hand within five (5) calendar days of the requests.
- G. Any discovery or discovery-related pleadings (such as objections, motions, and answers to same) served after served after 4:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday or after 1:30 p.m. on a Friday or the day before a holiday will be deemed to have been served on the next business day for purposes of calculating the due date for any responsive filing.

**IV. PROPOSED SCHEDULE**

The OCA has reached out to and is working with PPL to negotiate a schedule for this case. The OCA, subject to further negotiations with PPL, proposes the following schedule:

Event	OCA Proposed Date
Prehearing Conference	Wednesday, March 18, 2026
PPL Direct	Monday, May 18, 2026
Other Parties Direct	Friday, July 17, 2026
Rebuttal	Monday, August 31, 2026
Surrebuttal	Wednesday, September 30, 2026
Written Rejoinder	Wednesday, October 14, 2026
Hearings	Wednesday, October 21, 2026
	Thursday, October 22, 2026
Main Brief	Friday, November 13, 2026
Reply Brief	Tuesday, December 1, 2026

**V. WITNESSES**

The OCA intends to present direct, rebuttal, and surrebuttal testimony of expert witnesses, as may be necessary. The OCA’s witnesses will present testimony in written form and will also attach various exhibits, documents, and explanatory information which will bolster the OCA’s case. To expedite this proceeding’s resolution, the OCA requests that copies of all interrogatories, testimony, and answers to interrogatories be mailed directly to its expert witnesses in this case, as well as to counsel for the OCA. The OCA’s expert witnesses in this proceeding include:

Energy policy, large loads,  
and resource adequacy

Dr. Frank Felder  
Independent Electricity Consultants, LLC  
1855 Saint Francis Street, Apt. 1612  
Reston, VA 20190  
[frankafelder@independentelectricityconsultants.com](mailto:frankafelder@independentelectricityconsultants.com)  
(781) 504-8424

Transmission line planning  
and design

Mr. Rao Konidena  
CEO, Rakon Energy LLC  
Roseville, MN 55113  
[rkonidena76@gmail.com](mailto:rkonidena76@gmail.com)  
(612) 594-9257

The OCA specifically reserves the right to call additional witnesses, as necessary. As soon as the OCA has determined whether an additional witness or witnesses will be necessary for any portion of its case, all parties of record will be notified.

## **VI. ISSUES AND EVIDENCE**

The OCA identified that PPL requests to build the \$59.9 million project primarily to serve a single, unidentified, large customer with an uncertain load and ramping schedule, while socializing 64% of the project's costs to PPL's existing transmission network customers.<sup>3</sup>

Based upon a preliminary analysis of the LON, the OCA has compiled a list of issues and sub-issues which it anticipates will be included in its investigation. The OCA anticipates that other issues may arise and may be pursued once the answers to all the OCA's interrogatories have been received and analyzed.

The OCA will analyze and present issues and sub-issues set forth below, and others that may develop during discovery, as appropriate with the assistance of its expert witnesses. The OCA intends to investigate:

1. Need for the Project
  - a. PPL's current load in the Hazle Township, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania area.

---

<sup>3</sup> OCA Protest at ¶¶ 8-13.

- b. The difference between what PPL would build in terms of transmission investment to serve existing load versus new load in the area.
  - c. The increase in transmission line capacity and what portion of the additional capacity will be occupied by the new large load customer's anticipated demand.
  - d. The engineering characteristics of the Project, such as voltage, power flows, grid-protective equipment, meters, sensors, integration with remote systems, mechanisms to prevent or inhibit the load from tripping offline, adequate cybersecurity protections.
  - e. The engineering and economic effects of PPL's proposed re-routing of the existing transmission line to interconnect to the proposed switchyard.
  - f. The sizing and design of the proposed switchyard.
  - g. The effects of the proposed project on upstream and downstream customer reliability.
  - h. Any other system harms or benefits which might result from PPL's proposed Project described in the LON.
2. Costs
- a. The rate impacts upon PPL transmission ratepayers.
  - b. The effects of the load that PPL proposes to interconnect on the PJM energy and capacity markets.
  - c. The extent to which the Project is the most cost-effective solution to the alleged need.
3. Alternatives
- a. Whether reasonable alternative project designs and configurations exist and the comparative costs and benefits of those designs and configurations.
4. Environmental and Land Use Impacts
- a. Whether the environmental and land use impacts of the project are consistent with the requirements of Art. I, Section 27 of the Pennsylvania Constitution.

5. Which elements of the Project fall within federal jurisdiction, state jurisdiction, or overlapping federal and state jurisdiction.

6. What PPL's definitions of "transmission" and "distribution" are for purposes of this Project, and how those map onto state and federal law, including the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's seven-factor test for federal-jurisdictional transmission facilities serving retail loads.<sup>4</sup>

7. By what legal mechanisms PPL proposes to allocate the state-jurisdictional distribution costs and federal-jurisdictional transmission costs.

8. Whether PPL's proposed method of cost allocation, as PPL claimed to justify the need for this project, "will ultimately reduce the transmission rates charged by PPL Electric to its other transmission level customers."<sup>5</sup>

9. Whether PPL's justification for need, that the project "will ultimately reduce the transmission rates charged by PPL Electric to its other transmission level customers," includes Phase I, Phase II, and any other planned phases of the Project.

10. How the Project's Phases impact need, service quality, cost allocation, load and ramping schedules, and other variables essential to the Commission's evaluation.

11. The interrelation between Phases I and II of the Project, to what extent Phase I of the project can be assessed and approved in isolation from Phase II, and whether Phase I of the project will be sufficient from a service quality perspective to address the identified need without consideration of Phase II.

12. According to which information, assumptions, and methods PPL calculates PPL's asserted public transmission rate reduction.

13. At what point in the development of the Project the public will realize PPL's asserted public transmission rate reduction.

---

<sup>4</sup> See *Cal. Pac. Elec. Co.*, 133 FERC ¶ 61,018, at PP 46-48 (2010). In the context of Order No. 888, FERC adopted a "7-factor" test:

- (1) local distribution facilities are normally close in proximity to retail customers
- (2) local distribution facilities are primarily radial in character
- (3) power flows into local distribution systems; it rarely, if ever, flows out
- (4) when power enters a local distribution system, it is not re-consigned or transported on to some other market
- (5) power entering a local distribution system is consumed in a comparatively restricted geographic area
- (6) meters are based at the transmission/local distribution interface to measure flows into the local distribution system
- (7) local distribution systems will be of reduced voltage.

<sup>5</sup> OCA Protest at ¶ 13 (quoting PPL LON at ¶ 11).

14. What is the actual load and ramping schedule for the new large load that PPL proposes to serve via this Project, because PPL presented that information inconsistently in the LON.<sup>6</sup>

15. Whether the new large load that PPL proposes to serve via this Project plans to bring its own new generation or capacity; rely on the backstop auction that PJM Interconnection, L.L.C. is currently formulating; or receive transmission through a connect-and-manage framework.<sup>7</sup>

16. Whether the new large load's agreements with PPL will need to be updated pursuant to any Commission-approved tariff schedules that results from a final Commission determination in PPL's currently pending rate case at R-2025-3057164.

17. Whether the entity responsible for the new large load that PPL proposes to serve via this Project has signed the White House's Ratepayer Protection Pledge (Pledge).

18. Whether the entity's agreements with PPL related to this Project effectuate that Pledge, including (1) "Building, Bringing, or Buying New Power Supply," (2) "Paying for New Power Delivery Infrastructure Upgrades," (3) "Paying Whether They Use the Power or Not," (4) "Investing in Local Job Creation and Workforce Development," and (5) "Contributing to Electric and Community Resilience."<sup>8</sup>

## VII. PUBLIC INPUT HEARINGS

The OCA will be prepared to discuss public input hearings at the prehearing conference. Given the magnitude of public engagement in Hazle Township regarding new large customer growth, including regarding this specific proceeding, the OCA requests that the Commission

---

<sup>6</sup> OCA Protest at ¶ 11 (first citing PPL LON at ¶ 10; and then citing PPL LON, Attach. 1 at 6).

<sup>7</sup> See *Statement of Principles Regarding PJM*, THE WHITE HOUSE (Jan. 16, 2026), <https://www.energy.gov/documents/statement-principles-regarding-pjm>; *Board Decisional Letter on Critical Issue Fast Path – Large Load Additions*, PJM (Jan. 16, 2026), <https://www.pjm.com/-/media/DotCom/about-pjm/who-we-are/public-disclosures/2026/20260116-pjm-board-letter-re-results-of-the-cifp-process-large-load-additions.pdf>.

<sup>8</sup> *Ratepayer Protection Pledge*, THE WHITE HOUSE (Mar. 4, 2026), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/articles/2026/03/ratepayer-protection-pledge/>; see also See Tom Dotan, *The AI Data Center Boom Is a Job-Creation Bust*, WALL ST. J. (Feb. 25, 2025 at 21:00 ET), <https://www.wsj.com/tech/ai-data-center-job-creation-48038b67> (reporting on and correcting vastly overstated AI data center job creation claims).

convene two public input hearings in Hazle Township, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, regarding the LON.<sup>9</sup>

### VIII. SETTLEMENT

The OCA is willing to engage in settlement discussions with PPL and any other future Parties to this matter at the appropriate time.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Josiah B. Harmar  
Josiah B. Harmar  
Assistant Consumer Advocate  
PA Attorney ID #338426  
E-Mail: [JHarmar@paoca.org](mailto:JHarmar@paoca.org)

Office of Consumer Advocate  
555 Walnut Street  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Forum Place  
Harrisburg, PA 17101-1923  
(717) 783-5048

Jacob Guthrie  
Assistant Consumer Advocate  
PA Attorney ID # 334367  
E-Mail: [JGuthrie@paoca.org](mailto:JGuthrie@paoca.org)

DATED: March 16, 2026

Counsel for:  
Darryl A. Lawrence  
Consumer Advocate

---

<sup>9</sup> Kent Jackson, *Preliminary Hearing Set About PPL's Request for 1.1-mile Transmission Lines*, STANDARD SPEAKER (Jan. 25, 2026), <https://www.standardspeaker.com/2026/01/28/preliminary-hearing-set-about-ppls-request-for-1-1-mile-transmission-lines/>.