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STATE OF MICHIGAN

BEFORE THE MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the matter of the application of DTE Electric Company to increase its rates, amend its rate schedules and rules governing the distribution and supply of electric energy, and for miscellaneous accounting authority. Case No. U-21534
Volume No. 1

PREHEARING

Proceedings held via Microsoft Teams in the above-entitled matter before Sally L. Wallace, J.D., Administrative Law Judge with MOAHR, for the Michigan Public Service Commission, Lansing, Michigan, on Friday, April 26, 2024, at 10:06 a.m.

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On behalf of Michigan Public Service
Commission Staff

- - -

23 REPORTED BY: Lori Anne Penn, CSR-1315

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1 Friday, April 26, 2024

2 At 10:06 a.m.

3 - - -

4 (Hearing commenced pursuant to due notice.)

5 JUDGE WALLACE: We are opening a record
6 in Case No. U-21534, In the matter of the application of
7 DTE Electric Company for authority to increase its rates,
8 amend its rate schedules and rules governing the
9 distribution and supply of electric energy, and for
10 miscellaneous accounting authority. I am Sally Wallace
11 and I am the ALJ who's been assigned to hear this matter.

12 Although we would normally move into
13 appearances, we've got some folks here who have completed
14 their applications and motions for admission pro hac
15 vice. So we have one for Mr. Boehm, Mr. Vijaykar,
16 Ms. Cohn, and Mr. Abrams, all of those motions and
17 applications are complete. Is there any objection to
18 admitting Mr. Boehm, Mr. Vijaykar, Ms. Cohn, or
19 Mr. Abrams to practice pro hac vice? (No response.)

20 O.K. Hearing none, those motions are
21 granted.

22 All right. Moving on to appearances.
23 Mr. Christinidis.

24 MR. CHRISTINIDIS: Thank you, your Honor.
25 Jon Christinidis on behalf of DTE Electric Company.

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1 JUDGE WALLACE: Good morning,
2 Mr. Christinidis. Ms. Durian.

3 MS. DURIAN: Good morning, your Honor.
4 Heather Durian on behalf of the Michigan Public Service
5 Commission Staff.

6 JUDGE WALLACE: Good morning, Ms. Durian.
7 Mr. King, Joel King.

8 MR. JOEL KING: Good morning, your Honor.
9 Joel King appearing this morning on behalf of Attorney
10 General Dana Nessel.

11 JUDGE WALLACE: Good morning, Mr. King.
12 Ms. Andrews.

13 MS. ANDREWS: Good morning, your Honor.
14 Tracy Jane Andrews and Christopher Bzdok on behalf of the
15 Michigan Environmental Council, the Natural Resources
16 Defense Council, the Sierra Club, and the Citizens
17 Utility Board of Michigan, collectively MNSC.

18 JUDGE WALLACE: Good morning,
19 Ms. Andrews. Mr. Abrams.

20 MR. ABRAMS: Good morning, your Honor.
21 Daniel Abrams appearing on behalf of the Ecology Center,
22 the Environmental Law & Policy Center, the Union of
23 Concerned Scientists, and Vote Solar, collectively the
24 Clean Energy Organizations, or CEO.

25 JUDGE WALLACE: Good morning, Mr. Abrams.
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1 Mr. Ooms.

2 MR. OOMS: Good morning, your Honor.
3 Justin Ooms, Laura Chappelle, and Timothy Lundgren on
4 behalf of Energy Michigan and the Foundry Association of
5 Michigan, and then also on behalf of the Michigan Energy
6 Innovation Business Council, the Institute for Energy
7 Innovation, and Advanced Energy United, the latter three
8 of those referred to collectively as MEIU.

9 JUDGE WALLACE: O.K. Good morning.

10 Mr. Boehm.

11 MR. BOEHM: Good morning, your Honor.
12 Kurt Boehm, Jody Kyler Cohn, and Michael Kurtz appearing
13 on behalf of The Kroger Company.

14 JUDGE WALLACE: Good morning, Mr. Boehm.
15 Mr. Benjamin King.

16 MR. BENJAMIN KING: Good morning, Judge.
17 Ben King on behalf of the Utility Workers Union of
18 America, Local 223.

19 JUDGE WALLACE: Good morning, Mr. King.
20 Ms. Brader.

21 MS. BRADER: This is Valerie Brader, I'm
22 appearing on behalf of the City of Ann Arbor, which is
23 also represented by Valerie Jackson, as well as the
24 Michigan Municipal Association for Utility Issues,
25 MI-MAUI.

1 JUDGE WALLACE: Good morning, Ms. Brader.
2 Ms. Urban.

3 MS. URBAN: Good morning, Judge Wallace.
4 I'm appearing on behalf of Soulardarity and We Want
5 Green, Too, which collectively are referred to as the
6 Detroit Area Advocacy Organizations, or DAAO, D-A-A-O.

7 JUDGE WALLACE: Mr. Coyer.

8 MR. COYER: Yes. Good morning, your
9 Honor. Brian W. Coyer with Don L. Keskey of the Public
10 Law Resource Center on behalf of the Great Lakes
11 Renewable Energy Association, GLREA.

12 JUDGE WALLACE: Good morning, Mr. Coyer.
13 Ms. Horne.

14 MS. HORNE: Good morning, your Honor,
15 Melissa Horne on behalf of Walmart, Inc.

16 JUDGE WALLACE: Good morning, Ms. Horne.
17 Mr. Campbell.

18 MR. CAMPBELL: Good morning, your Honor.
19 Steve Campbell on behalf of the Association of Businesses
20 Advocating Tariff Equity.

21 JUDGE WALLACE: Good morning.
22 Mr. Vijaykar.

23 MR. VIJAYKAR: Good morning, your Honor.
24 Nikhil Vijaykar of the firm Keyes & Fox, LLP, on behalf
25 of EVgo Services, LLC.

1 JUDGE WALLACE: Good morning.

2 Ms. Flowers.

3 MS. FLOWER: Good morning, your Honor.
4 Olivia Flower on behalf of International Transmission
5 Company. We'll go by the acronym ITC. Richard Aaron,
6 Courtney Kissel, and Hannah Buzolits will also be here,
7 appear on behalf of ITC throughout these proceedings.

8 JUDGE WALLACE: Thank you, Ms. Flower.
9 Sorry about botching your name there. Mr. Gallagher.

10 MR. GALLAGHER: Good morning, Judge
11 Wallace. Sean Gallagher of the firm of Fraser,
12 Trebilcock, Davis, Dunlap & Cavanaugh, P.C., appearing on
13 behalf of the Michigan Cable Telecommunications
14 Association.

15 JUDGE WALLACE: O.K. Has MCTA put in,
16 filed a petition to intervene?

17 MR. GALLAGHER: Yes, Judge. Yeah, I
18 filed it on Friday afternoon, and I failed to affix my
19 electronic signature appropriately, so it was rejected.
20 I therefore filed it immediately first thing Monday
21 morning correcting that oversight, and so it appears in
22 the docket as being filed just this past Monday.

23 JUDGE WALLACE: O.K. Anybody have any
24 objections to that sort of technical glitch? Having
25 spent the last three days dealing with SIGMA, you have
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1 all my sympathy.

2 All right. Did I miss anyone?

3 MR. WATZA: Mike Watza, your Honor.

4 JUDGE WALLACE: Oh, O.K. Mr. Watza, you
5 want to place an appearance, O.K.

6 MR. WATZA: Yes. Mike Watza from the
7 Kitch firm on behalf of PROTEC, The Michigan Coalition to
8 Protect the Public Right of Way, and I see my appearance
9 did make it to the docket.

10 JUDGE WALLACE: O.K., great. But your
11 board has not decided whether or not they would like to
12 intervene, correct?

13 MR. WATZA: That's correct, your Honor.

14 JUDGE WALLACE: O.K. Well, again, you
15 know, petition to intervene, a late petition to intervene
16 could be challenged, and of course whatever has been
17 decided, you know, in terms of the schedule and
18 everything else, you're going to have to abide by.

19 MR. WATZA: I'm familiar with that, those
20 rules, your Honor, yes.

21 JUDGE WALLACE: O.K. Moving on to
22 notice. Mr. Christinidis, can you please describe the
23 Company's compliance with the notice requirements set
24 forth in the executive secretary's notice of hearing.

25 MR. CHRISTINIDIS: Certainly, your Honor.

1 Thank you. Service appears to have been accomplished
2 consistent with the executive secretary's direction. The
3 Company on, before April 12, 2024, mailed a copy of the
4 notice of hearing to all cities, incorporated villages,
5 townships, and counties in DTE Electric's electric
6 service territory, and also served intervenors in Case
7 No. U-21297. Publication was also accomplished before
8 April 12, 2024, of the notice of hearing in newspapers of
9 general circulation in DTE Electric's electric service
10 area. And yesterday, April 25, in advance of the
11 April 26, 2024, date required by the executive
12 secretary's directive, each intervenor that filed a, and
13 served a petition to intervene in this case was served
14 with a copy of the Company's written direct testimony of
15 its proposed witnesses along with their proposed exhibits
16 as we filed them with the Commission. And those proofs
17 and affidavits are, have been filed in the docket and are
18 available for review.

19 JUDGE WALLACE: Thank you,
20 Mr. Christinidis. Does Staff have any issues or concerns
21 with the Company's compliance with the notice
22 requirement?

23 MS. DURIAN: Staff has no concerns, your
24 Honor.

25 JUDGE WALLACE: Thank you. All right.

1 Moving on to intervention. We have a notice of
2 intervention from the Attorney General, and then, let's
3 see, petitions to intervene by City of Ann Arbor,
4 Michigan Environmental Council, Citizens Utility Board,
5 Natural Resources Defense Council, Sierra Club,
6 Environmental Law & Policy Center, Ecology Center, Union
7 of Concerned Scientists, Vote Solar, MEIBC, IEI. What
8 was the third one, the U one?

9 MR. OOMS: Yes. Advanced Energy United.

10 JUDGE WALLACE: Advanced Energy United,
11 Foundry Association, Energy Michigan, Kroger Company,
12 Utility Workers, Local 223, Michigan Association for
13 Utility Issues, Michigan something for Utility Issues,
14 MI-MAUI.

15 MS. BRADER: Yes. Again, Municipal
16 Association for Utility Issues.

17 JUDGE WALLACE: Thank you. I only know
18 you by your acronyms. Thank you.

19 MS. BRADER: It's a good acronym.

20 JUDGE WALLACE: It is, yeah.
21 Soulardarity, We Want Green, Too, Great Lakes Renewable
22 Energy Association, Walmart, the Association of
23 Businesses Advocating Tariff Equity, EVgo, ITC, and
24 Michigan Cable Telecommunications Association. Did I
25 catch all of them? Is there any objection to any of

1 these petitions to intervene?

2 MR. CHRISTINIDIS: Your Honor, no
3 objections from the Company to those petitions. We
4 would, however, note for the record that we reserve our
5 right to object to PROTEC's, you know, any petition to
6 intervene PROTEC may submit subsequently here.

7 JUDGE WALLACE: O.K. All right. Noted.
8 Thank you very much.

9 O.K. All right. The parties have
10 discussed a schedule, it's been sent to me -- I don't
11 have it because right before the hearing my computer
12 decided it was time to update, so it closed everything
13 out, I had it open -- and the parties have come to an
14 agreement on the schedule is my understanding. O.K.
15 Ms. Durian, could you please read the schedule into the
16 record, if you have it. Somebody has it.

17 MS. DURIAN: Yes, your Honor.

18 JUDGE WALLACE: Thank you.

19 MS. DURIAN: Today was the day set for
20 the prehearing. Staff and intervenor filing will be
21 Friday, July 26, 2024; rebuttal filing, Friday,
22 August 16, 2024; any motions to strike, August 23, 2024;
23 responses to motions to strike, Friday, August 30, 2024;
24 cross-examination commencing Wednesday, September 4,
25 2024, through Tuesday, September 10, 2024; initial briefs

1 due Thursday, October 3, 2024; reply briefs, Wednesday
2 October 23, 2024; with a target for the PFD of Tuesday,
3 November 26. We propose exceptions to the PFD to be
4 filed by Friday, December 13; and replies to exceptions
5 by Monday, December 23. And also, discovery would be
6 eight business days until Staff and intervenor filing,
7 with five business days thereafter, best efforts.

8 JUDGE WALLACE: O.K. Does everyone agree
9 to that schedule?

10 MR. CHRISTINIDIS: Yes.

11 JUDGE WALLACE: Does anybody object?
12 That would be easier. (No response.)

13 All right. Hearing no objections, I will
14 get a scheduling memo out today. There will be an
15 attachment that has, you know, all that stuff, directions
16 and instructions and so forth. I do want to remind
17 everybody that I think the last case I had, it wasn't a
18 DTE case, but Microsoft was in the process of getting rid
19 of the two-factor identification where you could get a,
20 you know, a phone call or a text message and log into the
21 Sharepoint; you are now required, if you're not on the
22 State system, to have access to the Microsoft
23 Authenticator app, and you can't use another
24 authenticator, it's got to be, you know, the genuine
25 Microsoft one. Anyway, that transition is over as I

1 understand it, so if you don't have that Microsoft
2 Authenticator, get it, work with your IT people. Now, I
3 won't be sending out invitations to the SharePoint until,
4 you know, a couple weeks before the hearing, and that's
5 all in the instructions. But that, like I said, that has
6 been completed, and so having the Microsoft Authenticator
7 either on your phone or tablet or whatever it is, you're
8 going to have to do that in order to access the
9 SharePoint.

10 O.K. The protective order, how are we
11 doing on that?

12 MR. CHRISTINIDIS: Your Honor, I saw that
13 Mr. Bzdok sent around a version yesterday afternoon that
14 had some markups in it. The Company can indicate that
15 it's, it doesn't object to that protective order as
16 marked up.

17 JUDGE WALLACE: O.K.

18 MS. ANDREWS: Would you like more
19 explanation, or are you good with that?

20 JUDGE WALLACE: I'm good with that.

21 MS. ANDREWS: O.K.

22 JUDGE WALLACE: Once you guys have sorted
23 it out, send me a clean copy, and I'll serve it and get
24 it in the docket ASAP.

25 MS. BRADER: Your Honor, could I put a
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1 statement on the record regarding the protective order on
2 behalf of my clients?

3 JUDGE WALLACE: Please do.

4 MS. BRADER: Thank you. Ann Arbor and
5 MI-MAUI do not object to the protective order, but that
6 is based on our understanding that although Paragraph F
7 of Section II uses the term "public record", that
8 paragraph is not intended to and will not be interpreted
9 to apply in the event a receiving party or a limited
10 receiving party who is subject to FOIA receives a FOIA
11 request that may reach protected material; instead, only
12 those provisions of the protective order that
13 specifically reference FOIA define the procedures to be
14 used in that situation. It is our understanding that
15 both the Attorney General's office and the Company agree
16 with this interpretation. Thank you.

17 JUDGE WALLACE: All right. Thank you,
18 Ms. Brader.

19 MS. ANDREWS: Your Honor, may I request
20 that since I believe none of the parties have raised
21 objections, if there are objections, give us a timeline
22 so that we can wrap this up and send a clean copy to you,
23 or, you know, is it close of business today or Monday?

24 JUDGE WALLACE: Can we try to do it by
25 today?

1 MS. ANDREWS: Yes.

2 JUDGE WALLACE: I mean I may not be able
3 to get it, because I've got a bunch of stuff to send over
4 and we have a substitute administrative assistant for the
5 next few months. Meaghan is having a baby today, yay,
6 Meaghan. That will be three boys that she now has. So
7 yeah, poor Meaghan. Anyway, I got a whole pile of stuff
8 to send over, so if you can get it to me today --

9 MS. ANDREWS: Yep.

10 JUDGE WALLACE: -- then, you know, you
11 can --

12 (Multiple speakers.)

13 COURT REPORTER: Excuse me. One at a
14 time. Wait until the Judge is done talking, please. If
15 you can get it to me today... Continue, Judge, please.

16 JUDGE WALLACE: Oh, yeah, if you can get
17 it to me today, that would be great, Monday's fine.
18 Either way, it will be up in the docket as quickly as
19 possible.

20 MS. ANDREWS: So if I haven't seen any
21 objections by 3:00, we'll get it to you this afternoon.

22 JUDGE WALLACE: Perfect.

23 MR. CHRISTINIDIS: Your Honor, just to
24 respond to Ms. Brader, the Company agrees that Section II
25 Paragraph F was intended to address the public record in
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1 this proceeding.

2 JUDGE WALLACE: O.K.

3 MR. JOEL KING: And your Honor, since the
4 AG was also mentioned by Ms. Brader, we concur with the
5 interpretation that DTE and Ms. Brader and her clients
6 have.

7 JUDGE WALLACE: All right. Thank you,
8 Mr. King. Is there anything more on the protective
9 order? (No response.)

10 All right, I'll look forward to that
11 today. We've already addressed the pro hac vice motions.
12 Is there any other business that we need to take up
13 before we conclude this part? As I said, we may have
14 some Rule 413 statements to take up afterward. But any
15 other housekeeping business with respect to the rate
16 case?

17 MS. ANDREWS: Just one issue, your Honor.

18 JUDGE WALLACE: Yes.

19 MS. ANDREWS: It is our understanding
20 that the discovery turnabout in this case will be the
21 same as 21297?

22 JUDGE WALLACE: I don't know. It's eight
23 days before Staff and intervenor filing, eight business
24 days before Staff and intervenor filing, and then five
25 business days thereafter, so if that's the same, then

1 yes.

2 MS. ANDREWS: That's great. Thank you,
3 your Honor.

4 JUDGE WALLACE: O.K. Anyone else have
5 anything that we need to take up? (No response.)

6 All right. Thank you, all.

7 So let me go off the record here for a
8 couple of minutes just to get a head count. Off the
9 record now.

10 (At 10:26 a.m., off-record discussion.)

11 JUDGE WALLACE: Back on the record. We
12 are going to be taking statements pursuant to Rule 413,
13 and we'll begin with Ms. Locke.

14 MORGAN LOCKE: Hello. Good morning. Can
15 you all hear me O.K.?

16 JUDGE WALLACE: Yes.

17 MORGAN LOCKE: O.K., great. My name is
18 Mo, Morgan Locke, I'm a resident of Detroit, Michigan. I
19 really value the City and my community, but I do have
20 concerns about proposing another rate hike for
21 electricity bills because so many of my neighbors,
22 including myself, have been struggling to pay these
23 increasing bills. I know far too many people who are
24 already in debt with DTE, and I think that proposing
25 another rate hike would just put a larger burden on those

1 who are already struggling financially to survive.

2 I also have not seen much improvement in
3 DTE's reliability in terms of providing safe, clean, and
4 accessible energy, and I highly doubt that increasing the
5 rate hike, or increasing DTE Energy bills is going to
6 help with that considering how much DTE has paid its
7 shareholders in the past few years.

8 I would also like to ask that any future
9 hearings in person be held in an accessible location so
10 that residents from City, from the City of Detroit are
11 able to make an appearance. And I'll just keep it short
12 and sweet and end with that. Thank you.

13 JUDGE WALLACE: Thank you, Ms. Locke.

14 All right. Ms. Alcazar.

15 GABRIELA ALCAZAR: Hi, good morning. My
16 name is Gabriela Alcazar, I am also a resident of
17 Detroit, and I have been helping with some (inaudible) --

18 COURT REPORTER: Excuse me. Helping with
19 some?

20 GABRIELA ALCAZAR: I've been helping my
21 neighbors to understand their rights when it comes to the
22 abuses of DTE, when it comes to their inability to afford
23 their energy bills, and I just want to say that there's
24 already so much concern, there's already so many people
25 who can not afford to pay their bills already, another

1 rate hike feels pretty ridiculous, and so I want to
2 encourage this Commission to reject any further increases
3 for people because I know that my neighbors can not
4 afford it.

5 But also, I want to echo the demand to
6 have in-person hearings. You were just explaining, your
7 Honor, all the difficulties with Microsoft Teams. I am,
8 find myself to -- I see myself as a pretty tech savvy
9 person and even I was having a hard time getting on here,
10 I can't imagine people who would want to engage in this
11 process also having similar -- I can imagine them also
12 having issues, and I think that affording people an
13 in-person hearing would be a way to actually allow people
14 who want to have their voices heard to be heard, and so I
15 really encourage the Commission to have in-person
16 hearings. Ideally they would be in multiple parts of the
17 State, but for sure I would like some in my hometown in
18 Detroit. Thank you.

19 JUDGE WALLACE: Thank you, Ms. Alcazar.
20 Ms. Jacobs.

21 LIZ JACOB: Good morning, your Honor.
22 Can you hear me?

23 JUDGE WALLACE: Yes, I can.

24 LIZ JACOB: Wonderful.

25 JUDGE WALLACE: But nobody cares if I can

1 hear you, Lori's got to hear you.

2 LIZ JACOB: Lori, I hope you can hear me
3 as well.

4 COURT REPORTER: Yes. I'm not afraid to
5 speak up when I can't.

6 LIZ JACOB: Thank you. So my name is Liz
7 Jacob, I teach she/her pronouns, I'm a Detroit resident
8 and I'm an attorney with the Sugar Law Center for Social
9 and Economic Justice in the Metro Detroit community. I
10 provide free legal services to residents who are
11 struggling to afford their energy bills, who are
12 navigating shutoffs and outages, and who are having any
13 violations of their consumer rights by DTE and other
14 utilities, and I work with dozens of clients throughout
15 the community. I'm hearing from my clients over and over
16 again that they can not afford their bills, that they are
17 struggling to stay up to date with their DTE bills, and
18 I'm hearing stories from clients that frankly are
19 astounding; folks paying over 40 percent of their monthly
20 incomes on their DTE bills, folks choosing whether or not
21 to put food on the table or pay their DTE bills, folks
22 falling behind on rent because they are paying their DTE
23 bills. Folks are living in so much fear, they are
24 struggling to be able to afford their gas and their
25 electric service. We are just getting out of the winter

1 heating season and I'm working with dozens of clients who
2 are scared of how they're going to keep their power on
3 for the next few months, how they're going to stay up to
4 date with the bills that they are already facing.

5 We cannot have another rate hike. My
6 clients and so many community members that I work with
7 are struggling, and we need more safe, more consistent,
8 more affordable energy from renewable sources, we don't
9 need greater increases in our bills. DTE has already
10 gotten several increases in the last few years, yet we
11 are still seeing abysmal grid reliability, abysmal
12 service, and just abysmal responses from DTE to meet the
13 needs of the community and to actually provide affordable
14 service.

15 As we just heard from Gabriela, so many
16 folks in Metro Detroit are struggling across the digital
17 divide. Many of my clients would have loved to be in
18 this prehearing, they would love to learn about how these
19 rate increase processes work, but they don't have access
20 to the internet, they don't have access to computers,
21 they don't have access to consistent cell service. We
22 need to have in-person hearings in Metro Detroit so that
23 people are able to participate in this process so that
24 the Commission can hear from the most burdened customers
25 that DTE is continuing to impact. It is so important

1 that we have in-person opportunities to engage, that we
2 make this process accessible, and that we listen to those
3 folks, those folks who are disproportionate, folks of
4 color, low-income folks, and folks in Metro Detroit who
5 are disproportionately bearing the burdens of DTE's
6 bills. Thank so much for your time.

7 MR. TIDWELL: Sally, you're muted.

8 JUDGE WALLACE: Thank you. Sorry about
9 that. Thank you, Ms. Jacob. Next, Ebony Elmore.

10 EBONY ELMORE: Good morning, your Honor.
11 This is Ebony Elmore, lifelong resident of Detroit, and
12 a, also a parent, and I am here to make a statement in
13 regards to the public hearing about the DTE rate hike.
14 As a parent, I've been a DTE customer for over 17 years,
15 and I have also experienced the loss of my, the loss of
16 my power and energy because of the DTE rate hikes on
17 several occasions, and I'm just asking that you take into
18 consideration not having another rate hike because people
19 are burdened by this and it's causing a strain on making
20 a decision to keep a roof over our head or food in our
21 children's mouths or do we keep our lights and gas on and
22 pay our DTE bills. A lot of the -- I know DTE likes to
23 share that they have a lot of affordability practices for
24 us to maintain that, but it's, it doesn't meet our
25 requirements for the cost of living that we now have.

1 So I'm asking and urging that we do not
2 have another rate hike, and we also take into
3 consideration that the hybrid option of having these
4 public hearings be moved to a more in-person option so
5 that people and residents have the access to entertain
6 and speak, as well as considering an education option to
7 make sure that people are aware of the proper ways that
8 they can support and stand up for themselves and advocate
9 for a rate hike decrease. Thank you.

10 JUDGE WALLACE: Thank you, Ms. Elmore.
11 Then the last name I have here for people who are present
12 on the Teams, Roshaun Harris.

13 ROSHAUN HARRIS: Yes. Good morning. My
14 name is Roshaun Harris, I live on east side of Detroit, I
15 also work on the east side of Detroit at a community
16 center called Eastside Community Network at Stoudamire
17 Center where we act as a resilience hub. Any time that
18 there is a weather emergency, a large power outage, we're
19 there to service the community and our community members
20 and whatever their needs are, and we work very closely
21 with others on this call to advocate for folks in terms
22 of, you know, rate increases and the lack of
23 infrastructure.

24 I mean that's what I really want to talk
25 about today is the burden on the citizens of the City of
 Penn Reporting, LLC - lori.penn@yahoo.com

1 Detroit where we're paying exorbitant amounts in rates
2 and fees for a power grid that is not truly servicing us.
3 We have many outages, and those outages have a huge
4 economic impact, not just on families, but also on small
5 businesses, so the entire community is impacted in a very
6 negative way. And so not only do we not see these rate
7 hikes as being not justified, we would also like to see
8 future infrastructure investment.

9 We know that you guys are paying off
10 shareholders, but our principle is always people over
11 profit, and we want to ensure the safety and the
12 resilience of our community members in making sure that
13 they have what they need to take care of their children,
14 feed their children, heat their homes, you know, whatever
15 is needed to function as a human being in our society, in
16 a modern 21st century society. And so I think it's
17 unfair that the citizens of Detroit have to be burdened
18 with another rate increase, it is really out of synch
19 with the level of service that's being delivered here,
20 and it's completely unjustified.

21 So I'm here to say that there should not
22 be a rate increase, and there should be an investment in
23 infrastructure here in the City and throughout southeast
24 Michigan, and throughout the State abroad. The green
25 energy infrastructure, energy that's safe and clean, and

1 energy that can be delivered reliably, especially as we
2 know that the weather is getting more temperamental, and
3 we know that weather crises are increasing, especially
4 where we're located because we're very close to the
5 Detroit River, so we have a lot of things that we're
6 dealing with, and so a grid that is based on old
7 infrastructure that hasn't been refurbished and haven't
8 been made to be up to date and invested in clean energy,
9 it provides a huge burden on the citizens of Detroit and
10 I'm sure others in other communities in southeast
11 Michigan and across the State are experiencing, you know,
12 similar turmoil. So I'm just here to advocate for all of
13 our community members who have been experiencing the
14 strife, and would just simply like to say that there
15 should be no rate increase. And thank you for allowing
16 me to speak today, and everyone have a blessed and
17 wonderful day.

18 JUDGE WALLACE: All right. Thank you,
19 Mr. Harris. Is there anyone else on the Teams meeting,
20 video, whatever, video, telecom, who would like to make a
21 statement pursuant to Rule 413?

22 MR. TIDWELL: We have another person with
23 their hand raised, they're a dial-in number with area
24 code 586. You can press *6 to unmute.

25 JUDGE WALLACE: Are you there?

1 MR. TIDWELL: 586-524, and the rest is
2 cut off for me.

3 JUDGE WALLACE: Oh, O.K.

4 ERIN LIBERTY: I'm sorry, I have my phone
5 muted as well. Can you hear me now?

6 JUDGE WALLACE: Please make sure to state
7 your name and your interest in the proceeding when you,
8 you know, get started. Please go ahead.

9 ERIN LIBERTY: O.K. Thank you. My name
10 is Erin Liberty. I'm a resident of Macomb County, and I
11 also am against these rate increases. Personally, I
12 would have liked to see these rate hike notice not only
13 in the newspapers, but also in the bills that we receive,
14 and like the other callers, to have that notice with a
15 public appearance for the residents.

16 I'm against these rate increases because,
17 well, first of all, I was appalled by the stealth rate
18 hike that was recently put in place with the
19 off-peak/peak, this was -- I can't think of the word
20 right now -- it just was stealthy and uncalled for. But
21 right now, I mean me personally, I had an 81-percent
22 increase in my auto insurance, a 45-percent increase in
23 my home insurance, an increase in the water, gas,
24 electric, phone, food, gasoline, my car, everything. I
25 mean I'm like every other residents in Michigan, we're

1 just struggling, and right now with the public utility,
2 there are no business forces to keep your costs low, you
3 just pass it on. With the water increases that we're
4 going to be seeing soon here in Macomb County, there's
5 just needless building with, again, no business forces to
6 keep the costs low and it's just going to be passed
7 through our water bills. Same thing with DTE. So again,
8 I'm against these tax increase, or these price hikes.

9 And finally, I am a solar customer, I
10 have solar panels, and DTE has treated me and the other
11 solar customers as enemies instead of as a partner to
12 help with lowering the costs, you know, like how Germany
13 does it. So that's all I have to say. Thank you so
14 much.

15 JUDGE WALLACE: Thank you very much.
16 O.K. Do we have any other people either in the Teams
17 meeting or on the phone? I can't quite see this. Is it
18 Shaw?

19 MR. TIDWELL: Above Shaw, there's Nancy
20 Morales.

21 JUDGE WALLACE: O.K. I'm sorry, say that
22 again, Charlie.

23 MR. TIDWELL: Sorry. Above Shaw, there
24 is Nancy Morales.

25 JUDGE WALLACE: O.K. Let's start with
Penn Reporting, LLC - lori.penn@yahoo.com

1 Ms. Morales. Please go ahead.

2 NANCY MORALE: Good morning, your Honor.
3 My name is Nancy Morales, I am actually a resident in
4 Wyoming, Michigan, on the west side. I am here because I
5 also am against the rate increases.

6 Something that I've been hearing a lot
7 from my neighbors, especially those on fixed incomes,
8 such as seniors and, you know, full-time disability, is
9 that they are quickly finding it really, really hard to
10 keep up with not just the general cost of living, but
11 also with, you know, just like the rising expenses of
12 maintaining even the power on in their homes. Like the,
13 I forgot her name, but the person who went just before me
14 mentioned, like there's a cumulative impact that's
15 happening to the rate, and it's not just that our rates
16 are going up, but it's that everything is going up and
17 things are quickly becoming more and more unaffordable.
18 And I have several jobs -- sorry, that was my dog. I
19 have a couple different jobs that I juggle just to make
20 ends meet as it is, and I just can't imagine having to
21 take on like a third or -- I mean I already have a
22 third -- like a fourth or even a fifth job just to keep
23 up with rising rates of, you know, keeping the power on
24 in my home, keeping a roof over my head, and all of these
25 things, and that's even though I'm a young, able-bodied

1 person, so I just hate to think of what my older senior
2 neighbors are going through since, you know, they don't
3 have the ability to even work more to keep up with those
4 things.

5 I'd also like, like was mentioned before,
6 too, like there's no, you know, there's no like free
7 market for these costs to be driven down, like it's
8 really just one single monopoly raising the costs again
9 and again and again and again, and I think it would be --
10 just think about Michigan residents struggling
11 everywhere, you know. And please block this next rate
12 increase, or put in some kind of system that would
13 control how often these happen and how much these prices
14 go up. Thank you so much for your time.

15 JUDGE WALLACE: I keep forgetting, I'm
16 muted. Thank you, Ms. Morales. And then we have Shaw.

17 ROSS SHAW: Can you hear me?

18 JUDGE WALLACE: Yes.

19 ROSS SHAW: O.K., thank you. Hi, my name
20 is Ross Shaw, I am a resident of Detroit, Michigan, and I
21 just want to voice my opinion and say that I'm strongly
22 against the proposed rate increases for DTE. As I think
23 the person two comments before me mentioned, the rising
24 costs of living across the board are making the ability
25 of people to pay their, to live their day-to-day lives,

1 pay their bills, live their life increasingly difficult,
2 and having DTE do another seemingly unprecedented rate
3 increase for really no reason seems ridiculous to me.
4 There has been no increase in reliability, simply only an
5 increase in payments to shareholders.

6 I would just like to again voice that I'm
7 in strong opposition to the proposed increase, and I urge
8 the Michigan Public Service Commission to in the future
9 hold in-person meetings as other commenters have
10 mentioned. I am relatively tech savvy and still had some
11 difficulties getting on here, and so I think we are
12 limiting the voices of a large portion of the public that
13 are able to work with Microsoft Teams and have reliable
14 internet access, so having in-person meetings around the
15 State I think would really go towards making sure that
16 we, you hear the voices of all the people. Thank you for
17 your time.

18 JUDGE WALLACE: Thank you, Mr. Shaw. Do
19 we have anybody else in the queue who would like to make
20 a statement under Rule 413?

21 MR. TIDWELL: There is another. Monica
22 with no last name given in the chat.

23 JUDGE WALLACE: O.K. Please proceed,
24 Monica.

25 MONICA BOOKER: Yes. Hi. My name is
Penn Reporting, LLC - lori.penn@yahoo.com

1 Monica Booker and I'm a lifelong Michigan resident, I
2 grew up in Detroit, Michigan, and I'm also a community
3 organizer, and I'm strongly against DTE's rate hike.
4 This hike will only burden those who are already
5 experiencing energy burden, specifically low-income black
6 and brown folks. I personally grew up in poverty, and my
7 parents struggled to keep the lights on. There were days
8 when I would come home from school and there would be no
9 electricity at home because my parents, despite working
10 long hours, couldn't afford the electricity bill, and
11 things have only gotten worse. Now, as an adult, I'm
12 constantly in fear of not being able to afford my bills,
13 including my electric bills, to the point that I've
14 considered getting a second job just to afford it all,
15 and I truly cannot fathom another rate hike.

16 And additionally, as other folks have
17 stated, it's very important to be able to have these
18 meetings at a reasonable hour in-person so other
19 residents can be able to freely and easily share their
20 thoughts. As you've seen in this meeting, folks have had
21 different technological struggles with being able to
22 unmute being on the phone, being able to just access
23 entering the meeting, or being able to raise their hand
24 so they can speak, so please consider having these
25 in-person so folks can be able to easily and accessibly

1 share their thoughts. Thank you.

2 JUDGE WALLACE: Thank you, Ms. Booker.

3 O.K. Do we have anyone else, Charlie?

4 MR. TIDWELL: Not at this time.

5 JUDGE WALLACE: All right. Last call for
6 Rule 413 statements. (No response.)

7 All right, seeing none, then I'm going to
8 go ahead and adjourn this prehearing conference. And I
9 will see parties back at a later date, and I will get the
10 schedule, instructions, pro hac vice rulings, and
11 hopefully the protective order out by the end of the day
12 today. Does anyone have anything else? (No response.)

13 All right. Well, thank you, all, very
14 much, including those of you who attended to make public
15 statements. And I'll see you again closer to September.
16 Thank you.

17 MR. CHRISTINIDIS: Thank you, your Honor.

18 (Collective "Thank you, your Honor.")

19 (At 10:57 a.m., the hearing was adjourned to
20 September 4, 2024, through September 10, 2024, for
21 cross-examination.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Lori Anne Penn (CSR-1315), do hereby certify that I reported in stenotype via Microsoft Teams the proceedings had in the above-entitled matter, that being Case No. U-2`534, before Sally L. Wallace, J.D., Administrative Law Judge with Michigan Office of Administrative Hearings and Rules, for the Michigan Public Service Commission, Lansing, Michigan, on Friday, April 26, 2024; and do further certify that the foregoing transcript, consisting of Volume 1, pages 1-36, constitutes a true and correct transcript of my stenotype notes.

Lori Anne Penn

Lori Anne Penn, CSR-1315
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Dated: May 2, 2024