

TRANSCRIPT OF THE LOUISIANA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION BUSINESS AND EXECUTIVE OPEN SESSION HELD ON FEBRUARY 19, 2025 IN BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA. PRESENT WERE: CHAIRMAN MIKE FRANCIS, VICE CHAIRMAN DAVANTE LEWIS, COMMISSIONER ERIC SKRMETTA, COMMISSIONER JEAN-PAUL COUSSAN, AND COMMISSIONER FOSTER CAMPBELL.

Exhibit	Docket	Description	Page
1		Announcements	1-8
2	T-37412	LPSC vs. B-T Towing, LLC.	30-32
3	T-37439	LPSC vs. CJ's Towing 2, LLC.	32-33
4	R-31106	Louisiana Public Service Commission, ex parte.	Deferred
5	R-37369	Louisiana Public Service Commission, ex parte.	33-36
6	S-37321	1803 Electric Cooperative, Inc. and Pointe Coupee Electric Membership Corporation.	37-38
7	U-37184	Golden Beams Power LLC, ex parte.	39-50
8	U-37423	South Coast Gas Company, Inc., ex parte.	50-51
9	U-37424	Pierre Part Natural Gas Company, Inc., ex parte.	51-52

10	U-37468	Entergy Louisiana, LLC, ex parte.	52-70
11	R-36131	Louisiana Public Service Commission, ex parte.	70-72
12		1) Reports 2) Resolutions 3) Discussions 4) ERSC/OMS business 5) Directives	72-105
13	U-37371	Entergy Louisiana, LLC, ex parte.	105-106
14	U-37502	Southwestern Electric Power Company, ex parte.	Deferred
15	Undocketed	Election of 2025 Vice Chairman.	7-29

1 **TRANSCRIPT OF THE LOUISIANA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**
2 **BUSINESS AND EXECUTIVE OPEN SESSION HELD ON FEBRUARY 19,**
3 **2025 IN BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA. PRESENT WERE: CHAIRMAN**
4 **MIKE FRANCIS, VICE CHAIRMAN DAVANTE LEWIS,**
5 **COMMISSIONER ERIC SKRMETTA, COMMISSIONER JEAN-PAUL**
6 **COUSSAN, AND COMMISSIONER FOSTER CAMPBELL.**

7 **CHAIRMAN MIKE FRANCIS:** Good morning, everyone. Welcome to the
8 February business meeting of the Louisiana Public Service Commission.
9 Downtown Baton Rouge, Louisiana, our state capital. I know we got a lot of good
10 guests here and I want to welcome all of you folks. We always stand up and do our
11 pledge and our prayer, and if y'all don't mind. You know, one thing I'll have y'all
12 notice, a lot of the meetings I go to that open like this, some people do the pledge
13 ahead of the prayer, you know. My question is which one of those things started
14 first for the Creator? Was it creation or was it America, you know? I think America
15 was in the Creator's thoughts, but America wasn't even existing during creation
16 except a spot on the map it became. So, let's open with a word of prayer and
17 remember the Creator first. I think we need to honor him.

18 **[CHAIRMAN MIKE FRANCIS LEADS IN PRAYER]**

19 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Let's do the pledge.

20 **[CHAIRMAN MIKE FRANCIS LEADS IN THE PLEDGE]**

21 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** All right. Y'all can be seated. We'll start out with some
22 -- any kind of information from the Staff over there?

1 **MS. KATHRYN BOWMAN:** Yes, sir. I know Secretary Frey had something
2 he'd like to read, but also on -- related to the agenda, so we do have 15 items today.
3 Taking Exhibit 15 out of order, that will be first. And then we have Exhibit 4 and
4 Exhibit 14 that are being deferred. Four and 14 are deferred.

5 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Okay. I know we're looking for Commissioner
6 Campbell. Anybody got a word on him, where he's at?

7 **SECRETARY BRANDON FREY:** I haven't heard. In fact, I had an
8 announcement I wanted to read, but I was kind of waiting on him to be here for that
9 one. So, we might defer that announcement until he gets here.

10 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Any other announcements here?

11 **SECRETARY FREY:** One other announcement, too, though, and I know we're
12 making the arrangements, but just a reminder to everyone, the April B&E will be
13 at Cypress Bend on the regularly scheduled date. We're not changing that date.
14 And I believe we are working with Commissioner Coussan for the May B&E to be
15 in Lafayette. We don't have it completely finalized, but we're close.

16 **COMMISSIONER ERIC SKRMETTA:** I have one announcement, Mr.
17 Chairman.

18 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Okay. Let me -- hold on just a second. Let me -- since
19 we got to talking about April and the beautiful Toledo Bend area, and -- my pleasure
20 to host that again in my area. Of course, that's over into Campbell's area also, but
21 we usually start these meetings at 9:00, and I want to try to be on time. And I
22 appreciate y'all's assistance in there, but Toledo Bend will be 10:00. We're going
23 to back it off a -- back it off an hour for some of you early morning golfers and

1 fisherman, all that kind of thing. But it's going to be casual. I don't want anybody
2 showing up with a suit and tie on up there. It's going to be flip-flops and shorts.
3 We're going to have a good time. For y'all's information, for some of you, there's
4 still some people that haven't been to Toledo Bend. That lake runs from Shreveport
5 down to Leesville. At the bottom of that lake there's a 60-megawatt generator
6 generating electricity, green, clean electricity, and it's a wonderful place. It's a
7 really good economic impact to that area. That's mostly SWEPCO and a little
8 Cleco. So, check your [INAUDIBLE], we're going to have a good time. So, I hope
9 everyone here will come. So, Commissioner Skrmetta, you have something?

10 **COMMISSIONER SKRMETTA:** Yes, sir. On March 11, and I think, Brandon,
11 you'll have to get the details on this, the Atlantic Counsel, which is a think tank, is
12 going to be hosting the Frontiers Initiative, which we're members of, as a
13 Commission. We're going to do this in Baton Rouge and I believe it's going to be
14 at LSU. It's going to be panels about advanced nuclear technology. Then this is
15 going to be -- the last one was held in Utah. This one's going to be held in
16 Louisiana, and it'll be something for folks that are interested in this can get in
17 contact with you, Brandon, and make a list and we'll try to get them involved to
18 where they can attend.

19 **SECRETARY FREY:** We'll push that information out [INAUDIBLE] get it. On
20 that topic, too, for those who know -- are aware, Commissioner Skrmetta presented
21 -- I believe that was last week. The days are blurring together.

22 **COMMISSIONER SKRMETTA:** Yeah. I know, I can't remember.

1 **SECRETARY FREY:** Last Tuesday. To a joint natural resources committee
2 about the Commission's efforts in nuclear, kind of an overview over the LANCE
3 report. Lauren and myself were there as well. It was a lot of interesting discussion
4 on what we need to do to go forward.

5 **COMMISSIONER SKRMETTA:** We're going to be setting a date for the next
6 technical conference for the LANCE team that's going to be about reregulation of
7 nuclear. More about bureaucratic issues and also about finance issues. And so as
8 soon as we get some dates on that, we'll have you publish that and get that out.

9 **SECRETARY FREY:** And I did get a text while we're talking from Joe that they
10 were about a minute out.

11 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Great. Commissioner Coussan, do you have anything
12 for us today?

13 **COMMISSIONER JEAN-PAUL COUSSAN:** No, sir.

14 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Everything's good in Lafayette? Okay.

15 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** Looking forward to our May meeting.

16 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Amen. Okay. Commissioner Lewis, you got
17 something for us?

18 **VICE CHAIRMAN DAVANTE LEWIS:** Yes, Mr. Chairman. Thank you. I
19 want to welcome two new members of my Staff. They are not present, but I know
20 they are watching online. Rula and Matt. As you know, I embarked on a
21 partnership with New York University of Law and Impact Environmental Center
22 to bring on fellows to learn about the regulatory process. Rula and Matt both bring
23 a significant amount of experience. One graduating from New York University of

1 Law School and the other graduating from the University of Loyola at Chicago.
2 They started in our office last week and so we wanted to officially welcome them
3 to the Commission and part of the District III Staff. Secondly, I would like to talk
4 about what we have seen federally around some of the programs that are important
5 to Louisiana. As we know, there have been some recent federal funding freezes at
6 the EPA and the DOE that affect many programs that benefit Louisianans,
7 especially when we talk about LIHEAP. LIHEAP is the program that provides
8 heating and cooling assistance for Americans who are struggling to pay their bills.
9 Roughly 60,000 Louisianans receive these benefits even though 600,000
10 Louisianans qualify for these benefits. It's important that our congressional
11 delegation recognize the importance of protecting these programs to ensure that
12 Louisianans can stay in their homes and afford their utility bills. Also, that we
13 continue to have the investments of the \$156 million that was granted to the state
14 for the Solar for Y'all program that would bring solar energy of community base
15 and residential base to Louisianans who are disaffected. This would affect all of
16 our districts and our entire state. And so while we navigate this, I would encourage
17 everyone to ask our congressional delegation to protect these two programs from
18 any federal cuts. And lastly, while we're here, I would like -- I could not be remiss
19 to celebrate Black History Month. February -- Hello, mister. Thank you,
20 Commissioner.

21 **COMMISSIONER FOSTER CAMPBELL:** Twelve minutes late.

22 **COMMISSIONER LEWIS:** I would like to commemorate Black History Month.
23 As we celebrate the achievements of many African Americans who have made their

1 way in the energy market, I specifically wanted to give a shout out to former FERC
2 Chairman Willie Phillips, former FERC Commissioner Collette Honorable, and
3 many others who paved the way to ensure someone like me could be in regulatory
4 affairs. I think it's important at these times that we do not negate from our history
5 and reflect on the multiple achievements that Black Americans have made, not only
6 here in the state of Louisiana, but in this nation. It is not remised on me that in our
7 state's history, I am only the third Black person to ever serve on this Commission.
8 I was born -- I was born seven months before the first Black person every served
9 on the Commission, Ms. Irma Muse Dixon, was appointed. And so as we talk about
10 our history, we have to also talk about our legacy. And so that is why I honor those
11 who come before me and will continue to celebrate Black History Month from now
12 and forevermore. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

13 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Thank you. Secretary Frey, you had something to say?

14 **SECRETARY FREY:** Yes. We do have a sad announcement and I wanted to
15 make sure Joe was here for this, but I want to read something that Commissioner
16 Campbell had sent out to announce the passing of Joe's father, former Shreveport
17 City Councilman Joe Shyne. A dedicated public servant, mentor to many,
18 champion for the people of Council District F, and father to LPSC District 5
19 Executive Assistant Joe Shyne II. Joe was a retired educator, skilled public official,
20 and tireless advocate for his district and beyond. His heart for the community left
21 a mark in Shreveport. Joe served in the Shreveport City Council for a total of 23
22 years, beginning in November of 1982 and continued with brief interruptions until
23 December '24. He pushed improvements in infrastructure, public safety, and

1 recreational opportunities for children and seniors. His passion for education and
2 community development was evident in initiatives he championed. Joe believed
3 that when a community is uplifted, its people thrive. Before entering politics, Joe
4 was a longtime coach and educator in Caddo Parish schools. He held an
5 undergraduate degree from Grambling State University and was the first African
6 American to earn a master's degree from Louisiana Tech. His religious faith,
7 leadership skills, and compassion were shaped by his upbringing in Grambling as
8 the son of educators and a Methodist minister. His voice was one of strength,
9 reason, and love for his family and his city. Joe is survived by his wife, Vertis, and
10 his two twin sons, Joe Jr., and Jokobe. To the family, loved ones of Joe Shyne, we
11 extend our condolences. His life was filled with purpose and service to community,
12 and his influence will live on in the lives he touched. So, condolences to Joe and
13 Joe's family.

14 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Let's have a moment of silence for this great young
15 man that passed away. Thank you, Joe, for being a part of our family here and
16 thank you, Secretary Frey, for reading that. And I'd also call on Commissioner
17 Campbell.

18 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** Thank you. Joe Shyne was a -- Joe Shyne Sr.
19 Joe Shyne Jr., is right there. Joe Shyne Sr., was a pioneer up in our area. He was
20 on the -- I mean, he was on the school board and he was also on city council, police
21 jury. He was a coach. He was a nice fellow, good mentor for a lot of people, good
22 coach. Had a lot of great athletes played for him. So, I went to his funeral, I went
23 to Grambling. It was very nicely done. Lot of nice people there. So, I know we're

1 all sharing that when you lose your dad, that's a big deal, or your mother. It's a big
2 deal, but he was a fine guy, people liked him, and he was a man's man. He stood
3 up and when he spoke, people listen. So, thank you.

4 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** All right. Any other -- okay.

5 **SECRETARY FREY:** That's all the announcements Staff have.

6 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Okay. Ms. Bowman?

7 **MS. BOWMAN:** So, we're taking Exhibit Item 15 up first, which is undocketed.
8 It is the election of the 2025 Vice Chairman at the request of Chairman Francis, and
9 just to let the Commissioners know, we do have some public comment.

10 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Okay. Well, we'll all address them. I'd like to move
11 that we replace Commissioner Lewis as Vice Chairman with Commissioner Eric
12 Skrmetta. And is there a second?

13 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** I'll second.

14 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** A second by Commissioner Coussan.

15 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** I object.

16 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Okay. And there's an objection.

17 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** I want to say something.

18 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** And we'll have a discussion.

19 **SECRETARY FREY:** Yes.

20 **MS. BOWMAN:** Yes, sir. We need to have the discussion before we do a roll call
21 vote.

22 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Yeah. Let me, before we -- let me address Mr. Colby
23 Cook to give us a little assistance here. We'd like to ask that people keep their

1 comments down to one to two minutes and -- if that's possible, and not to duplicate,
2 you know, their particular, you know -- whatever they have to say. So, after that,
3 I'd like to open up with Commissioner Campbell.

4 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** Right now?

5 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Yes, sir.

6 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** Okay. Good. Is Brad Mittendorf around? I
7 need to borrow somebodies' glasses. I didn't bring mine.

8 **SECRETARY FREY:** Just don't make me read anything until then.

9 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** Oh, I'm fine. Thank you. I won't bother Brad
10 anymore, I'll just look to you.

11 **SECRETARY FREY:** Wait now, I'm going to need those back, Foster, when I
12 got to read.

13 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for recognizing
14 me. It's a funny situation we find our self in today, and I believe in being fair. And
15 our good man here, I don't think you mean what you said. And I believe in
16 forgiveness, but I think you have to want it, too. And, Mr. Lewis, I don't think
17 anybody needs to be preaching today because, Mr. Francis, I was making a speech
18 one time and I know what you did behind my back. You had a big, big poster.
19 Bigger than this. This big, and you went all around the room just like this, bullshit,
20 right behind my back. You remember that?

21 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** No, sir, I don't.

22 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** Well, everybody else does. Shake your head
23 if you remember that. You can shake it in here. It's all right. You're not going to

1 get kicked out. You absolutely did that. I was making a point and you went behind
2 my back. Bullshit, bullshit, bullshit. And I thought that was very, very
3 inappropriate. Is it inappropriate as what he did? Mr. Lewis was inappropriate. I
4 was trying to make a speech and I meant what I was trying to -- I was very
5 passionate of what I was trying to do. And when the TV camera was there, you
6 went parading this around the room. So, anyway, nobody's a preacher in the room,
7 I hope. If you are, you need to pray for us. But anyway, I can't convict Mr. Lewis
8 when we've had action from other people and the other people are causing -- want
9 to convict you. And I felt like the devil that day because I was really for what I was
10 for and I thought it was foolish, but it happened. So, I can't vote to kick you out of
11 the chairmanship because I've seen other things happen here just as bad and just as
12 foolish. So, I'm going to try to be consistent and I can't vote to kick you out of your
13 chairmanship.

14 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Okay. We have some others. If we have some others
15 who would like to speak to this issue, if you do, I would just like to ask you to just
16 line up here and we'll hear from you.

17 **MS. BOWMAN:** We do have one, Commissioner, that I'd like to read into the
18 record, we received via email due to ADA policies. Her name is Ms. Michele. You
19 guys can come up. Her name is Ms. Michele Johnson, and her comments are: I'm
20 a resident of PSC District III. I'm sure most of you already have your mind made
21 up. However, I would be remiss to inform you of how wrong and short-sighted it
22 would be to remove Davante Lewis from his position as Vice Chairman. Governor
23 Landry is eroding public faith in our institutions via his violations of ethics laws,

1 parading a not-Mike tiger at football games, targeting academic professors, and
2 eliminating summer food programs for hungry children. If you concede to
3 removing Davante Lewis as Vice Chair, you are bowing down to Governor
4 Landry's whims and taking away your own power as an autonomous elected body
5 in this state. Moreover, National Rifle Association's Supreme Court case
6 determined that the First Amendment prohibits government officials from wielding
7 their power selectively to punish or suppress speech, including -- sorry, including
8 through private intermediaries. The effort to remove Davante Lewis from his
9 position of Vice Chair fits neatly within this opinion as a violation of his First
10 Amendment protections. If you vote to remove Davante, you will become
11 Governor Landry's puppet and receive nothing in exchange. I'm encouraging you
12 to instead flex your power, and focus on issues of ensuring utility companies
13 maintain their infrastructure. And for you to encourage the governor to focus on
14 giving the federal aid money for Louisiana that is currently being withheld by the
15 Trump Administration, and not meddle in the business of the Louisiana Public
16 Service Commission or punish those who disagree with him on Twitter. Thank
17 you.

18 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Okay. Well, I'd like to answer to that. Mr. Colby, you
19 have a timer, time machine over there?

20 **MR. COLBY COOK:** Yes, sir. Mr. Chairman, historically, when we give time
21 restrictions, it's usually about three minutes, so I'll --

22 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Two to three minutes?

1 **MR. COOK:** About three minutes is usually our historical limitation whenever
2 we implement a limited public speaking, so.

3 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** I want to make a brief statement in regards to that last
4 statement you just read. I haven't spoken to Governor Landry since the election
5 and this is the decision that I felt like I had to make as Chairman of the Public
6 Service Commission. This is solely my decision and suggestion that we elect
7 Commissioner Eric Skrmetta to this position. So, I just hope y'all understand that.
8 Okay. Okay. Ladies, we -- one of you can start. Push down to get the green light
9 and then just tell us your name, where you're from.

10 **MS. MELISSA FLOURNOY:** Okay. Great. Thank you, Commissioner Francis,
11 and welcome, Senator now Commissioner Coussan. I'm Melissa Flournoy. I'm a
12 former state legislator from Shreveport. I'm the board chair of a advocacy group
13 called 10,000 Women, and I want to say thank you for the opportunity to speak
14 today. I have known Davante Lewis since he has moved to Baton Rouge. I have
15 worked with him as an advocate, as an ally. I consider myself one of his mentors,
16 but I am not his mama, and, Mr. Chairman, you are not his daddy. If you have an
17 issue, you need to address it on a professional manner with Mr. Lewis. It is not
18 appropriate to ask to remove Commissioner Lewis. If we believe in free speech, if
19 we believe in democracy, if we believe in the private speech of individuals on social
20 media. This is not a cause to remove the Vice Chair. Frankly, I've known Foster
21 Campbell for 40 years, and he's said a lot worse about a lot of different governors.
22 And you're not going to deny it; are you, Foster?

23 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** No. No.

1 **MS. FLOURNOY:** Okay. And so, we don't need to sanction the Commissioner,
2 we need to believe in free speech. And frankly, Chairman Francis, there are a lot
3 of people that think Governor Landry is an asshole. And he did not say that in this
4 meeting or as a public official in a public meeting. And it is completely
5 inappropriate for you to sanction an elected member of the Public Service
6 Commission. It sets a dangerous precedent in the state of Louisiana. It reflects
7 poorly on you as a leader, and it reflects poorly on the Public Service Commission.
8 And I hope you will understand what is at stake at this moment in time where we
9 can have a difference of opinion in political discourse, and yet we can perform our
10 professional duties appropriately and effectively. So, I ask the other members of
11 this Commission to vote no on this motion. Thank you.

12 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Thank you, ma'am. Thank you.

13 **MS. BOWMAN:** Can whoever's phone is going off, please turn it on silent or step
14 outside?

15 **MS. ALFREDA TILLMAN BESTER:** Good morning. I am Alfreda Tillman
16 Bester. I am an attorney here in Baton Rouge. I am vice chair of 10,000 Women
17 Louisiana as well as a board member for Louisiana Progress and former general
18 counsel of the Louisiana State Conference of the NAACP. We are here today
19 because Chairman Mike Francis alleges that he was embarrassed that Davante
20 Lewis, an elected member of this Public Service Commission, exercised his First
21 Amendment right, a constitutional right to free speech, to criticize Louisiana
22 Governor Jeff Landry. Embarrassed? I'm embarrassed. I'm embarrassed that Jeff
23 Landry, governor of the state of Louisiana, posted a picture on social media of

1 former Health and Human Services director -- Secretary, rather, Rachel Levine, a
2 physician, a four-star officer in the nation's uniformed services, beside a picture of
3 fake vaccine denier, Robert F. Kennedy Jr., in an apparent juvenile insult -- an
4 apparent juvenile insult to criticize the physical appearance of this transgender
5 woman. I am embarrassed that the Landry Administration ordered its staff to no
6 longer promote or participate in events that promote life-saving vaccines, despite a
7 surge in measles in our neighboring state of Texas and a surge in influenza in
8 Louisiana itself. And if irony wasn't already on its last leg in Louisiana, I am
9 embarrassed that the Landry Administration had the unmitigated gall to say that in
10 forbidding its staff to do their job and saying that it was shifting away from one size
11 fits all paternalistic guidance to a more informative approach aimed at enabling
12 individuals in consultation with their physicians to make their own healthcare
13 decisions. This is the same Jeff Landry, who just last week sought to extradite a
14 New York physician to Louisiana to face criminal charges alongside the mother of
15 a teenage girl who was seeking healthcare related to her pregnancy. And here we
16 are today, because the Chairman of the Public Service Commission is embarrassed
17 because another elected member of this Commission exercised his First
18 Amendment right to free speech. Give us a break. The people of Louisiana need a
19 Public Service Commission that is focused on lowering utility costs and regulating
20 the utility industry. Not on violating the constitutional rights of Louisianans and
21 especially violating the constitutional rights of a duly elected public official who
22 dared to say something critical -- that you perceived as critical of another elected
23 official.

1 **MR. COOK:** Ma'am, begin to wrap it up.

2 **MS. BESTER:** I urge each of you -- I urge each of you to vote no --

3 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Time's up?

4 **MS. BESTER:** -- on this obvious attempt to silence dissent in this great state, and

5 to this motion, I dissent. Thank you.

6 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Thank you, ma'am.

7 **MS. JACQUELYN GERMANY:** Good morning to the board and members of

8 the audience. My name is Jacquelyn Germany and I am a community activist. I

9 work with several organizations to ensure that we the people have our rights and

10 our responsibilities acknowledged by the people who we elect to serve us. I echo

11 all the comments that were made by my previous speakers, but today I'm here to

12 ask you don't set a precedence, don't start changing things that should not be

13 changed. We live in a free speech democracy world. I grew up in the '60s. I'm 75

14 years old. I marched in the '60s for my rights and I'm not going back and we should

15 not move back. We should continue to progress and move forward. We live in a

16 changing world. It's changing every day and doing things that are unspeakable,

17 things that I never thought that I would get a chance to see, but we all have a right

18 to free speech. And when we start squashing that and censoring that to not allow

19 an individual to say something and not be challenged, then something's wrong with

20 that. We the people of Louisiana and of this nation deserve fair representation. I

21 am very proud of Davante Lewis.

22 **MS. BESTER:** Yes.

1 **MS. GERMANY:** I'm very proud to have him to serve me and we the people of
2 Louisiana. He's outspoken. He's unchallenged. He says what he mean, and he
3 means what he says and that's me. I say what I mean and I mean what I say because
4 I speak from the heart. I speak the spoken words that God placed in my heart to
5 say. I'm a stutterer. I've stuttered all my life, but I've learned to speak it in my head
6 before I speak it out my mouth. We all are challenged. We all make statements,
7 and we all say things sometimes that, yes, meant it, but sometimes it comes out
8 before you mean to say it. I'm not saying that's what Davante Lewis did. I'm
9 speaking for myself, but what I'm saying to you is that as board members that
10 represent we the people of Louisiana and of this parish to think about what you're
11 doing, think about what you're saying, and think about the precedents that you're
12 setting because going back is challenging, and we are not going back. Thank you
13 very much for allowing me to speak and you all have a great day.

14 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Thank you, Ms. Jacquelyn. Thank you [INAUDIBLE].

15 **MS. BOWMAN:** We have one more that would like to speak and one more that's
16 a potential. Oh, okay. Mr. Edgar Cage and then, Mr. Carlos Pollard, you may or
17 may not have wanted to speak. Are you in the audience? Yeah. Would you like
18 to speak? Okay.

19 **MS. MARIA HARMON:** Thank you.

20 **MR. EDGAR CAGE:** Ladies first.

21 **MS. SHERRY WHITE:** Good morning. My name is Sherry White. I'm from the
22 parish of Ascension. I am a retired employee, 43 years with the state of Louisiana,
23 and I'm just in disbelief at this point that you're willing to remove an individual

1 because of their freedom of speech. It's okay to disagree. You know, I don't agree
2 with everything that our president is doing, but do I have a right to remove him?
3 No. So, I'm saying is that we need to find opportunities to work with individuals
4 even if we don't agree with some things that they may say, but to remove him from
5 his position because of a statement he made, I think even as a human being, it
6 would've been more appropriate to maybe have a conversation with him if you
7 disagree with something that he said. But to remove him from his position, I just
8 can't believe that. I can't believe that this is -- in this day and time, that this is the
9 way we're operating. And to me, to be honest with you, this is straight up racism,
10 you know, and so we need to just deal with the monkey that's in the room. Doing
11 something like this is unbelievable. I'm almost embarrassed to say I'm a citizen of
12 the state of Louisiana for doing something like this. So, I think that whoever made
13 that decision to remove him, I think you need to rethink that because we're all
14 human being, and we all have a right to make a statement even if we disagree with
15 it. But I'm looking at this young man today and to see even his speech early on,
16 what he said, he's a very intelligent individual. So, why would we want -- and I
17 think it's also important to have somebody in the room that looks like me to be a
18 part of the board. So, I'm praying because one of the statement you made earlier
19 and the prayer is: Let us do the right thing. So, I'm praying that you do the right
20 thing and you rescind that idea about removing him from his position.

21 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Thank you, Ms. White.

22 **MS. HARMON:** Good morning. My name is Maria Harmon. I'm a resident here
23 in Baton Rouge and I'm proud to say I'm from Lake Charles. And that same pride,

1 I hope, my hometown, I know Davante Lewis does and you have been serving in
2 this role amicably, like, just to the fullest extent of excellence that I believe. You're
3 making the people in our hometown very proud and you're making the people of
4 this district that you represent very proud. You have executed beyond the
5 expectations of any Commissioner that we've seen in a very long time serving on
6 this dais. You have upheld with decorum your behavior, your speech, and
7 everything on this dais to the fullest extent of fidelity and integrity. There's no
8 reason, with that being said, looking at his record, and how he has executed his role
9 on this Commission, leaves no excuse for him to be sanctioned whatsoever. This
10 is a personal attack. What he used was his own personal platform to express his
11 own personal opinions. He didn't express that opinion through a Public Service
12 Commission outlet on social media, that would be a different situation. Nor did he
13 show up on this dais giving his own personal disdain towards anyone on this dais,
14 but apparently that behavior has happened with other members and nobody was
15 sanctioned there. So, what I want to say is if you're going to take an action like
16 this, let it be for something that is official within that person's role, but this has
17 nothing to do with that. All he did was exercise his First Amendment rights, his
18 constitutional First Amendment right. And all he has done was serve his role with
19 full -- the extent of excellence and integrity. He has made the people of his
20 hometown proud and he has made the people of District III very proud to continue
21 to support him. And I ask that you recall and rescind this effort because it makes
22 absolutely no sense. I feel like this is a waste of taxpayers' time because there are
23 14 other matters that needs to be attended to and you can't tell me that Mr. Lewis'

1 role, as a leader on this Commission, hasn't helped to propel his efforts because it
2 has and we cannot sanction him for that. He has made too much impact on this
3 state to eliminate his role as Vice Chair, and quite frankly, it is just insulting in a
4 sense to want to take personal embarrassment to a professional space. We don't
5 carry our personal matters in when we go to work. We show up to work and we do
6 the job. So, whatever personal matters you may have, handle it outside, have a man
7 to man conversation, but this is not the place to do it. No, it's not. So, we stand in
8 support of Mr. Davante Lewis and we are very proud of how he has executed his
9 role. We are going to continue to support him as he continues his role as Vice Chair
10 on this Commission as long as he's remaining elected on this dais. Thank you.

11 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Thank you, Ms. Maria.

12 **MR. CAGE:** Good morning. My name is Edgar Cage. I'm with Together
13 Louisiana and, you know, when I saw this item on the agenda, I had to check my
14 calendar. I thought it was 2025. It seem like we went back to, like, 1825. We're
15 going backwards and not forward. For the progress -- the little progress that we
16 have made in this state, seems to be people want to chip away at it to deny a certain
17 segment of the population a voice and representation. That's not going to happen.
18 I know you guys open up with prayer and I want to ask you about your faith. Is
19 this fair? Is this right? Is this what your God is instructing and telling you to do or
20 is somebody else -- somebody else influencing you? And let's serve the highest
21 power, not just a higher power, but the highest power. And it just doesn't seem fair
22 or right and I think this is a David and Goliath moment. And we have justice and
23 fairness in our rock, what we want to use to fight Goliath, who want to turn things

1 back the way they were. We're not going there. We're not going there, and I hope
2 you guys follow your faith, follow your highest power, and follow your conscience,
3 and do the right thing. But if you don't, you're going to go down in history on the
4 wrong side of history. I know if this -- to you, it may not mean anything, but to the
5 people of this state, it does. And you wonder why so many of our brightest and
6 best are leaving the state. This is why, it's no secret. If you guys want to help turn
7 the tide, help make things better, have Davante remain in his position. And I just
8 want to let you know, too, he represents everyone in Louisiana, and there are more
9 poor and working poor White people than Black people. So, they gain, too, from
10 his efforts, and what he bring to this Commission, and what he bring to the table.
11 So, let's make it good for all people in Louisiana, not just those who have the means
12 and those who have the quote/unquote power. You know, because in the end, we're
13 going to be judged by a higher power. Just want you guys to understand that and
14 to be ready for that. And hope you vote your conscience and vote the right way to
15 return Davante his Vice Chair. Thank you.

16 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Thank you, [INAUDIBLE].

17 **MR. CARLOS POLLARD:** Good morning. I'm Carlos Pollard Jr., a resident of
18 District III, and I'm here to express that I strongly disagree with the decision to hold
19 a vote to remove Vice Chairman Lewis from his current position. So, I came to
20 join you all on a school morning, I'm a law student, to support Commissioner Lewis
21 and several others are here, as well, in solidarity. So, I would like to ask you all
22 who are here to support Commissioner Lewis to just stand to show your support
23 and to make the record. These are your constituents, so we are tasked to represent

1 the people who elected you. So, please listen to your constituents and vote against
2 this motion. I urge you all to -- I urge you all to not violate Commissioner Lewis'
3 First Amendment right and to vote no.

4 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Okay. Thank you.

5 **MS. ELIZABETH SOYCHAK:** Hi. My name is Elizabeth Soychak and I live
6 on Ponce de Leon Street in New Orleans. I am a member of 10,000 Women and
7 also the co-chair of Climate Reality Project, Greater New Orleans chapter. And I
8 am -- just wanted to say today that Commissioner Lewis represents hundreds of
9 thousands of ratepayers and from our perspective, we voted him into office, and we
10 want him in a strong position to represent us. And I do agree with what's been said
11 in terms of the free speech issue and, you know, it's really -- it's really, really
12 important from a perspective of what's going on with the climate right now in
13 Louisiana. We just had a huge snowstorm and part of the reason we had a huge
14 snowstorm is because the weather at the arctic circle is so unstable that it sends
15 polar vortexes down as far south as Louisiana. And it met with hot air off the Gulf,
16 which is only getting hotter, and it created this crazy snowstorm that people say is
17 only going to happen once every hundred years. But I'm going to bet you \$5, it's
18 going to happen again within the next 10 years because that's what's going on with
19 our climate right now. We voted for Commissioner Lewis because he believes that
20 what is going on can be affected by what we're doing in Louisiana and what he's
21 doing on the Public Service Commission. And we really need his strong voice to
22 be the co-Chair. You know, we did not elect in New Orleans, we did not elect
23 Commissioner Skrmetta. And Commissioner Skrmetta has not supported the

1 MISO transmission -- the strengthening of MISO transmission, so that Louisiana
2 could get renewable energy from other states, wind energy and solar energy. And
3 I really strongly feel that that's not the right direction to go in in terms of -- in terms
4 of these crazy weather events. We need more, you know -- we need more solar and
5 wind and we need to be more connected to MISO. And I just urge you all to please
6 vote against replacing Commissioner Lewis because it's not going to be good for
7 our situation in terms of climate change here in Louisiana and not good for
8 ratepayers either. Thank you very much.

9 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Thank you, Liz.

10 **MS. BARBARA SHEPPARD:** Good morning. Good morning. My name is
11 Barbara Sheppard. I'm a member of Step Up Louisiana. We're a grassroots
12 organization that assists people around Louisiana with jobs, school, and we're
13 working on air. But I had to speak up because it seems like we're going backwards.
14 I'm much older than Commissioner Lewis, but I went through the same thing. I
15 was the first Black female to do this, the first Black female to do that. They killed
16 two birds with one stone to hire me in state government. And I had a Ku Klux Klan
17 application put on my desk. I had a picture of a tree with monkeys in it put on my
18 desk, and I was discriminated tremendously because even though I had a degree,
19 they told me I couldn't work in the position of a person with a degree. I had to
20 come in as a journeyman, which was a much lower position. But I fought so that I
21 could get up and I eventually became an engineer. So, my say is don't hold this
22 man accountable for speaking his mind on his own Twitter account. The governor
23 has thoughts of his own. First of all, he took -- well, he helped take prayer out of

1 school, but then he wanted the Ten Commandments put in school. And I'm like
2 okay, why the Ten Commandments? But still, we need to look into our hearts, like
3 everyone has said. We had prayer this morning, so that means everyone here serves
4 some higher power. Look into your hearts and think about what you're doing. Do
5 you want to stand behind someone who appears to maybe be -- I'm not going to call
6 him a racist, but a little bit slow on some of his thinking or backwards on his
7 thinking? Or are we going to be men and women of grace and do what God says,
8 and that's do the right thing? And that's all I have to say this morning.

9 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Okay. Ms. Sheppard, thank you. Okay.

10 **MR. COOK:** If you have a card, please bring it up because we don't have any
11 more cards. And if you want to speak, please bring a card up now because we don't
12 have any cards. I think two more, Mr. Chairman, that's it.

13 **MS. M. E. CORMIER:** Good morning. I will say, it feels really weird to say
14 these words in their entirety because I've never said a curse word in a public meeting
15 before, but since you guys have set the precedent this morning, I'll continue.

16 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** What's your name, ma'am?

17 **MS. CORMIER:** My name is M. E. Cormier. I'm a life-long Baton Rougean. I'm
18 a strong community advocate with no particular affiliation and I do find myself
19 getting into good trouble pretty often. The optics of removing a Black man from
20 his position because you didn't like the name he called someone else on Twitter
21 during Black History Month, violating his First Amendment right to free speech,
22 while you yourself, Mr. Chairman, are guilty of what I would argue worse actions
23 by taunting your colleague with a sign and a stunt with a sign just -- a giant sign

1 that said bullshit. It's, to use your word, embarrassing. That's embarrassing. This,
2 today, is an embarrassing waste of taxpayer money. It's an embarrassing waste of
3 my energy, of everybody else's energy. It's silly. It's silly. You should be brushing
4 it off like Governor Landry did when he said through a spokesperson I guess he
5 doesn't like me, and move on. Mr. Lewis quite rightly and rather succinctly
6 represented my views as my representative. Jeff Landry is an asshole, a big one.
7 So, thank you, Mr. Lewis, for letting the world know that. He is also embarrassing,
8 Jeff Landry is, to me, and so is this stunt of yours. Remove this item entirely, don't
9 dignify it with a vote. It's a waste of time. Don't further embarrass yourself by
10 actually dignifying this stunt with a vote, any of you. Schoolyard bullies abusing
11 their positions of power to pursue personal petty vendettas is embarrassing. It is
12 wrong, it is a giant waste of time, and it catapults us to a national stage because we
13 are so embarrassing. Read the room, read the news articles. This is embarrassing.
14 So, you have a job to do, you all do. A very serious job that directly impacts my
15 life, your life, and everybody else's in this room. So, can we get back to work?
16 Thank you.

17 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Sir.

18 **MR. KENNTONIO ROSETTE:** Good morning, everyone. How y'all doing
19 today?

20 **MS. BOWMAN:** Just use the mic.

21 **SECRETARY FREY:** Yeah. Use a mic, it won't pick you up.

22 **MS. BOWMAN:** Thank you.

23 **MR. ROSETTE:** Good morning, everyone. How we doing today?

1 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** What's your name?

2 **MR. ROSETTE:** My name is KennTonio Rosette. I'm a Louisiana State
3 University graduate, and I'm currently earning my master's degree at Southern
4 University as we speak, and I'm also a airman first class United States Air Force
5 Reserve. And I just came to speak on behalf of Davante Lewis. When I met him
6 personally, I looked at him as a guide. I looked at him as somebody I could look
7 up to because I've never seen someone with my color in that type of position and
8 holding that type of power and to say that he is a LGBTQ member also. I find it
9 utterly disgusting, during Black History Month, that y'all bring him up to vote for
10 using his First Amendment right. It makes no sense. Like, I thought the United
11 States was the land of the free and home of the brave; am I correct? So, are we
12 running this state like an autocracy, or we going to run it as a democracy? Just
13 because he said something about the governor, I don't think it puts him on grounds
14 to be put up for removal of his office of his Chair. So many Black people look up
15 to him. As a young man like myself, I intend to follow in his footsteps and become
16 a politician in this great state of Louisiana, but right now, we are not showing our
17 self to be a great state. And that's all I really have to say about this.

18 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** You a pilot? Are you a pilot?

19 **MR. ROSETTE:** No, sir.

20 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Thank you.

21 **MR. ROSETTE:** Thank you.

22 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** Whose district do you live in; do you know? As
23 a state rep. They need to watch out, you coming.

1 **MR. ROSETTE:** Thank you, everyone.

2 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** The seats are open.

3 **MS. BOWMAN:** I think we're good. So, if there's no more public comment, and

4 I'm making sure of that, all right, we do have a motion on the floor from Chairman

5 Francis, seconded by Commissioner Coussan, with Commissioner Campbell

6 objecting. So, we do need a roll call vote. Commissioner, I didn't know if you

7 were about to speak. [INAUDIBLE] --

8 **VICE CHAIRMAN LEWIS:** Oh, no. I was waiting for you to finish.

9 **MS. BOWMAN:** Okay.

10 **VICE CHAIRMAN LEWIS:** Mr. Chairman?

11 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Okay. You ready for a roll call?

12 **VICE CHAIRMAN LEWIS:** Mr. Chairman, may I speak before the vote?

13 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** What's that?

14 **VICE CHAIRMAN LEWIS:** May I speak before the vote?

15 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Yes. Okay. Go ahead.

16 **VICE CHAIRMAN LEWIS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's really unfortunate

17 that we are here. And I have sat here thinking about what I wanted to say, if I

18 should say anything, how should I say anything. But I am thinking of the one

19 person who always told me to say what comes to my heart, and that's my great-

20 grandmother, Viola Roberson, who I had for 22 years of my life. And I am here, I

21 ran for this job to do the work of the people. I show up here every day, I'm ready

22 to talk about the exhibits that me and my Staff have worked on for countless amount

23 of times, but it seems this political game became the most importance for us. I've

1 sat up here for over two years now treating each and every one of my colleagues
2 with the utmost respect that I can, but that respect hasn't always been given to me.
3 When I was speaking just a few months ago, rudely interrupted. And when I asked
4 to be respected, I was told not a chance. Mr. Chairman, you sat right there and
5 didn't gavel him down, you didn't tell him to stop, and now you nominated him to
6 be the Vice Chair of this Commission. So, if you're going to talk about behavior,
7 we're going to be fair in here today because I'm not going to sit here and hold myself
8 to a standard that you won't hold anybody else to, you won't hold yourself to, you
9 won't hold the president to, you won't hold the governor to. Now, you had the
10 chance to talk to me. We had a scheduled meeting on Friday. You cancelled it.
11 You came to the Galvez building to meet with the Staff. I was in the building, I
12 was right around the conference room. You didn't bother to call me. You didn't
13 bother to text me. You didn't walk across the hall and say come in here and talk to
14 me. You walked to Staff and said put this on the agenda and never said another
15 word to me. So, I'm not going to apologize for my behavior when others can't do
16 that. I'm not going to hold myself to a different standard. It seems that if you're
17 young, if you're Black, if you're outspoken, you got to do whatever the White man
18 tells you to do. And I didn't come here to not use my voice, so whatever actions
19 are taken today, I'm okay with, I'm good because I know I stand on a solid rock.
20 All of this is sinking sand to me. So, I say that to say, I don't apologize for what I
21 said. I stand two feet tall in what I said because I believed it and I'm going to always
22 say what I believe. If you attack somebody that I love, I'mma call you out. If you
23 don't defend the poor, I'mma call you out. If you don't stand up for everybody's

1 rights, I'mma call you out. And if calling you out means you got to shut me up,
2 well then shut me up, but you will never stop the work or the progress that I'm here
3 to do. And so when this is all done, I'mma put my glasses back on like y'all know
4 I like to do, and I'mma talk about the exhibits because I came here to do work. I
5 came here to talk about how we build a strong electric grid that defends everyone.
6 That you can have a warm house in the winter, a cool house in the summer, and the
7 utility bills that do not push them further into poverty. That's what I'm here for,
8 and that's what I'm going to do after this vote. So, this political game that we want
9 to take today, that's y'all's prerogative. I'm ready to get back to do the people's
10 work.

11 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Okay. Is there any other discussion on this matter?
12 [NONE HEARD] We'll call the vote. Yes, means that you'll accept the new Vice
13 Chairman of Eric Skrmetta. So, Commissioner Campbell, how do you vote?

14 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** Wait a minute. This is a vote to expel him,
15 right?

16 **MS. BOWMAN:** It's a vote to replace Chairman -- Commissioner Lewis with
17 Commissioner Skrmetta as Vice Chairman. It is not expelling Commissioner Lewis
18 from the Commission.

19 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** Well, of course it is. That's exactly what
20 you're doing and there's no sense of tap dancing around this. That's exactly what
21 you're doing. We're not in position to elect new officers. You did that the first of
22 the year. So, basically, what you're doing to him, and you're taking him out and
23 putting Mr. Skrmetta in. That's exactly what you're doing.

1 **MS. BOWMAN:** That is what is on the motion. Yes, sir.

2 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** Yeah. Well, I'm not for that.

3 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Commissioner Campbell would vote no.

4 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** Right.

5 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Commissioner Coussan, how do you vote?

6 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** Yes.

7 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Commissioner Lewis, how do you vote?

8 Commissioner Lewis?

9 **VICE CHAIRMAN LEWIS:** Abstain.

10 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Commissioner Skrmetta, how do you vote?

11 **COMMISSIONER SKRMETTA:** Yes.

12 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Chairman votes yes.

13 **VICE CHAIRMAN LEWIS:** Ms. Bowman, I'd like to change my vote to no.

14 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** So, it's a three-to-two vote in support of Commissioner

15 Skrmetta. Congratulations, Commissioner Skrmetta, you're Vice Chairman. Okay.

16 Let's move on to next item on the agenda.

17 **MS. BOWMAN:** Commissioner, did you want to take a quick break?

18 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Yes. I'd tell you, let's take a five-minute break. People

19 need to go to restroom [INAUDIBLE]. Thank you for that advice. Okay.

20 **[OFF THE RECORD]**

21 **[BACK ON THE RECORD]**

1 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** All right. Round up. Let's go back to work. If
2 someone sees Commissioner Campbell or Commissioner Lewis, I ask them to step
3 back in.

4 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** And we've got a quorum, so we can start.

5 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Yeah. We have a quorum, so we can get started. I see
6 the other two right there.

7 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** There they are.

8 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** And there they go.

9 **SECRETARY FREY:** I don't see Kathryn, but I can read even though I can't see
10 because Foster stole my glasses.

11 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** I think he's --

12 **SECRETARY FREY:** And I can see okay.

13 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** Well, you got Colby. You got your seeing-
14 eye assistant.

15 **SECRETARY FREY:** All right. I'll start. Exhibit 3 is Docket T -- I'm sorry.

16 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** Actually 2.

17 **SECRETARY FREY:** See, I can't even see what item I'm on.

18 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** It's T-37412.

19 **SECRETARY FREY:** Thank you. This is LPSC versus B-T Towing, LLC. In
20 re: Alleged violation of Revised Statutes Title 45:1177, 1179 and the General
21 Order dated November 22, 2011, for the failure to submit gross receipts and/or pay
22 to the state proper fees for the years 2021, 2022, and 2023 for the inspection,
23 control, and supervision of its business service and rates authorized in Common

1 Carrier Certificate Number 6836-B. Discussion and possible vote pursuant to Rule
2 57 on the affidavit, stipulation executed by the carrier, so we will need two votes.
3 And I'm turning it over to Kathryn now since she can see better than me.

4 **MS. BOWMAN:** As a result of a complaint submitted to the Transportation Staff,
5 a citation was issued to B-T Towing on November 1, 2024, based upon the
6 aforementioned allegations and violations. In response to the citation, the owner of
7 the company executed an affidavit and stipulation admitting to all the violations.
8 In that affidavit and stipulation, the carrier agreed to the imposition of a \$500 fine
9 and \$25 citation fee, with 250 of that being suspended contingent on the following
10 conditions: That the company not violate the Louisiana revised statutes for three
11 years from the date of the affidavit and stipulation; that the company pay all
12 outstanding inspection and supervision fees returns for the years 2021, 2022, 2023
13 to the Department of Revenue and provide copies to the Transportation Staff; that
14 the company pay all outstanding inspection/supervision fees for the years '21, '22,
15 and '23 to the Department of Revenue with copies showing proof of said payments
16 to the Commission Staff; and that they execute the affidavit and stipulation along
17 with the fines and fees totaling \$275. Staff recommends that the Commission: 1)
18 Exercise its original and primary jurisdiction under Rule 57 to consider the affidavit
19 and stipulation; and 2) Accept that affidavit and stipulation executed on January 14,
20 2025 for fines and fees totaling \$525.

21 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** Move to bring the matter up under Rule 57.
22 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Move under Rule 57 by Skrmetta.
23 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** Second.

1 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Seconded by Coussan. So, let's make a motion -- make
2 a motion we accept it under Rule 57.

3 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** Second.

4 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Seconded by Commissioner Coussan. Any discussion
5 or objection? [NONE HEARD] Hearing none, it's in the book.

6 **MS. BOWMAN:** Exhibit Number 3 is Docket Number T-37439. This is the
7 Commission versus CJ's Towing for an alleged violation of the Revised Statutes
8 45:161 through 180.1 by operating intrastate without Commission authority,
9 allegedly occurring on or about October 11, 2024. It's a discussion and possible
10 vote pursuant to Rule 57 on the affidavit and stipulation executed by the carrier.
11 So, again, this will need two votes. As a result of the complaint submitted to
12 Transportation Staff, a citation was issued to the company on November 18, 2024,
13 based upon the allegations just mentioned. And in response to that citation, the
14 owner of the company executed an affidavit and stipulation admitting to violations
15 alleged. In the affidavit and stipulation, the carrier agreed to the imposition of a
16 \$500 fine and \$25 citation fee, with 250 being suspended contingent on the
17 following conditions: That the company cease operating and offering services as
18 CJ 2 Towing until such time as a Common Carrier Certificate is issued to the
19 company, and execute the affidavit and stipulation and return that to Transportation
20 Staff. Staff recommends that the Commission: 1) Exercise its original and primary
21 jurisdiction under Rule 57 to consider the affidavit and stipulation; and 2) Accept
22 that affidavit and stipulation executed on January 7, 2025, for fines and fees totaling
23 \$525.

1 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** Move to bring the matter up under Rule 57.

2 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Rule 57 suggested by Commissioner Skrmetta.

3 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** I'll second.

4 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Seconded by Commissioner Coussan.

5 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** Move to accept Staff recommendation.

6 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Skrmetta moves to recommend Staff recommendation
7 on Commissioner 3 -- on Exhibit 3 after the 57. And I'll second that. Any objection
8 or discussion? [NONE HEARD] Hearing none, Number 3 is in the books.

9 **MS. BOWMAN:** Okay. So, Exhibit Number 4 is deferred. Exhibit Number 5 is
10 Docket Number R-37369. This is the Commission's possible amendments to
11 General Order dated April 30, 1998 regarding electrical reliability standards
12 including the Commission's current penalty levels and enforcement mechanisms.
13 It's a discussion and possible vote to retain United Professionals Company.
14 Pursuant to the Commission directive at the August B&E, Staff opened this
15 rulemaking docket. The directive also authorized Staff to seek outside assistance
16 if determined necessary. And based upon that directive, Staff solicited UPC to
17 assist with the technical components of the rulemaking as UPC has knowledge and
18 experience with not only the Commission's General Order, but has directly assisted
19 with reviewing the three IOUs' SAIDI and SAIFI metrics in various capacities.
20 Based on Staff solicitation, UPC provided a proposal of 95,000 in fees and 2,500
21 in expenses for a total budget not to exceed of 97,500. Staff recommends that the
22 Commission retain UPC for 95 in fees and 2,500 in expenses for a total budget not
23 to exceed of 97,500.

1 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** Move to accept Staff recommendation.

2 **COMMISSIONER LEWIS:** I'll Second.

3 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Move by Commissioner Skrmetta, seconded by
4 Commissioner Lewis. Any discussion, or? [NONE HEARD] Hearing none,
5 Number 5 passed.

6 **MS. BOWMAN:** We are on Exhibit Number 6.

7 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** Hold up.

8 **MS. BOWMAN:** Yes, sir?

9 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Okay. Commissioner Campbell?

10 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** I wasn't here because I was late, and I
11 apologize, because I was 10 minutes late and I apologize. At the first of all these
12 meetings we sort of go over about the price of what we're doing. Can you sort of
13 tell me who's high and who's low this time?

14 **SECRETARY FREY:** Sure, Foster. And I've got -- I'm doing a report under
15 Exhibit 12, that's going to kind of go into [INAUDIBLE] --

16 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** With Commissioner Campbell's permission, I'd like to
17 ask that we hold that off 'til you give the whole report and that way I think people
18 will get a better view of it.

19 **SECRETARY FREY:** Yeah. And I've got -- so I'm doing a report on Exhibit 12.
20 There was a legislative audit report that talks about rates and where we fit in the
21 country and I can go into the individual utility rates.

22 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** That's not what I'm talking about.

23 **SECRETARY FREY:** You talking about the individual utility's rates?

1 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** I'm talking about the individual rates.

2 **SECRETARY FREY:** I'm going to need your -- my glasses back then.

3 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** Okay. I don't know where Brad is, but he

4 owes me some glasses.

5 **SECRETARY FREY:** So, this was for February of --

6 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** Mr. Chairman, Mr. Chairman.

7 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Yes.

8 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** Point of order, please. What exhibit are we on

9 and what are we moving to? I'm trying to follow along in my binder.

10 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Okay.

11 **SECRETARY FREY:** So, this is undocketed. This is the residential bill

12 comparisons thing that we have in your binder.

13 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** I understand that, but what exhibit were we on

14 and that we're moving off of?

15 **MS. BOWMAN:** Six.

16 **SECRETARY FREY:** We're moving to six.

17 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** So, we are on six, but we're not on six?

18 **SECRETARY FREY:** Correct.

19 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** Okay. And, Mr. Chairman, is that something

20 that we're going to do right now or would it be more appropriate to put this out of

21 line -- more in line with an exhibit that is kind of on the same subject matter?

22 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Well, recognizing Commissioner Campbell's request,

23 I would just ask that he hold off 'til we get to the exhibit where we'll discuss that.

1 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** Just for the record, I got him to do this. I got
2 him to do this, for your information and for everybody to figure out how high the
3 price of natural gas was and the various companies. So, if that bothers you, I'll take
4 it off.

5 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** No. Commissioner. No, Commissioner --

6 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** We do it -- usually, we do it at the first of this
7 meeting. I wasn't here. I was late 5 minutes.

8 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** I see what you're saying.

9 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** So, I just wanted talk about these rates
10 because when I first came here they were 6 and 7 cents, now we got some
11 approaching 17 cents. And it's a big deal and I just sort of try to keep in mind
12 where everybody is.

13 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Well we're going to take that up in the order that it's
14 on the schedule and it will be covered if you don't mind just waiting until we get to
15 it.

16 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** I don't mind. I'm sorry I caused a confusion.

17 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** No, you'll have the floor [INAUDIBLE] the first one.

18 **SECRETARY FREY:** Yeah, because I've got -- I can answer a lot of those
19 questions. We'll go through these and there's some interesting data out there that
20 kind of shows how we've changed compared to others.

21 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** No problem.

22 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Let's get back on track with Exhibit 6.

1 **MS. BOWMAN:** Yes sir. Exhibit 6 is Docket Number S-37321. This is 1803
2 Electric Cooperative and Pointe Coupee Electric Membership Corporation's joint
3 petition for approval of transfer of transmission facility assets by Pointe Coupee
4 Electric to 1803 including operation thereof. It's a discussion and possible vote on
5 a Staff report and recommendation. On July 1, 2024, 1803 and Pointe Coupee filed
6 the joint request for approval of transfer of the transmission facility assets of Pointe
7 Coupee to 1803 including the operation thereof. Notice of the request was
8 published in the Commission's Official Bulletin with MISO filing a notice to
9 participate as an interested party. After extensive discovery, Staff filed its report
10 on January 24, 2025, indicating that, subject to the affirmative obligation of prudent
11 management by 1803, the transfer of the Pointe Coupee transmission assets is in
12 the best interest of ratepayers and members. Accordingly, Staff recommended that
13 the Commission issue a letter of non-opposition subject to standard filing
14 conditions and that 1803 shall confirm that it has already provided the most up-to-
15 date accounting on the costs that it will incur to acquire all assets including those
16 from LaGen and from PC Electric, and 1803 shall confirm that the assets to be
17 acquired from either LaGen or PC Electric will be priced at either a cost of zero or
18 netbook value. On February 4, 2025, the joint applicants filed correspondence
19 indicating that they agreed with the -- and consent to the findings made and
20 conditions proposed in Staff's report. And as there are no unresolved issues, Staff
21 recommends that the Commission accept the Staff report and recommendation filed
22 into the record on January 24, 2025, and that the order be effective immediately.

1 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** Move to accept Staff report and
2 recommendation

3 **COMMISSIONER LEWIS:** Second.

4 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** And that it also be issued in the proceeding
5 effective immediately.

6 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Okay. We've got a motion by Commissioner Skrmetta,
7 seconded by Commissioner Lewis; is that right? Okay. Is there any discussion?

8 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** Point of order, Mr. Chairman. I'd also like
9 to congratulate Myron Lambert, if you'd like to stand up. Myron, goodbye. Myron
10 has got a new job moving over to Ascension Parish. Myron, would you like to
11 come up and say goodbye? Because you know, we'll miss you most of all,
12 scarecrow. But come on up and say goodbye for a minute.

13 **SECRETARY FREY:** And in his words to me, I'm moving, but I'm not -- but
14 you've still got me.

15 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** Well, they finally figured out how to double
16 your pay, Myron, so congratulations.

17 **MR. MYRON LAMBERT:** I hope so, Commissioner. Thank you for this
18 opportunity. Y'all not getting rid of me so fast. We are a regulated utility that I'll
19 be going to.

20 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** I know.

21 **MR. LAMBERT:** And I appreciate all of your support. It's been a great
22 experience the last nine years, and I'd like to thank the board of Pointe Coupee for
23 giving me that opportunity. I'd like to recognize Mr. Craig Magruder, my

1 replacement, who is a longtime employee and a great guy and I wish him all the
2 best. And most of all, I'd like to thank the employees of Pointe Coupee Electric,
3 because nobody's successful without them. So, thank you for your
4 acknowledgement and I look forward to continuing to work with all of you. Thank
5 you.

6 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Thank you, Myron.

7 **MS. BOWMAN:** So, moving on to Exhibit Number 7. It is Docket Number U-
8 37184. This is Golden Beams Power's petition for jurisdictional determination.
9 It's a discussion and possible vote on a Staff recommendation and this was Exhibit
10 11 last month. On April 23, 2024, Golden Beams filed its petition requesting the
11 Commission determine that a proposed solar energy project is not a public utility
12 or an electric public utility as those terms are defined in the Louisiana Constitution
13 or the revised statutes. The proposed project is a solar energy plant that is expected
14 to generate up to three megawatts and is to be constructed on property located
15 adjacent to an anticipated data facility in Bastrop, Louisiana. Notice of the petition
16 was published in the Commission's Official Bulletin and intervention was timely
17 received by Entergy Louisiana. While the project itself is simple, the transactions
18 are not. The transactions involve multiple parties, most unknown at this time, with
19 various agreements being executed for the various components of the project.
20 Based on information provided by Golden Beams, the project participants will enter
21 into a prime lease with the land owner for access to the property. Golden Beams
22 will then develop, and if necessary, be the investor to any project participant, and
23 upon completion of the project, the project participant/owners of the solar facilities

1 will sublease the land and the facilities to the data facility, who will be the operator,
2 generator, and consumer of all electricity generated. Staff reviewed the filing,
3 conducted discovery, and had conversations with both Golden Beams as well as
4 Entergy, and based thereon, Staff filed a position statement and recommendation
5 on September 27, 2024. Therein, Staff found and recommended that the
6 Commission find that the project as described in the petition does not render Golden
7 Beams, any project participant, or Green Tech, the data facility, a public utility or
8 an electric public utility subject to conditions outlined in Staff’s recommendation.
9 A majority of those Staff’s conditions address the unknowns in Golden Beam’s
10 petition, some of them which are Golden Beam shall include a provision in the lease
11 agreements that all parties thereto agree to be bound by any Commission order
12 issued in this docket. Upon final execution of the various agreements, Golden
13 Beams shall submit copies to Commission Staff for review and confirmation that
14 the facts stated in the petition have not changed. And no material changes shall be
15 made to the structure of the project including the sale of any electricity generated
16 to Entergy, or into the wholesale market, or any changes to the leasehold interest in
17 the project, or in the identity of the project participants. After Staff filed its
18 recommendation, Entergy filed correspondence into the record indicating no
19 objection to Staff’s recommendation and Staff’s condition number eight required
20 Golden Beams to file final executed copies of each agreement with Staff, subject
21 to review. Golden Beams requested to send a list of those parties who executed the
22 final agreement along with a copy of the final agreement and Staff agreed to that,
23 subject to Golden Beams’ counsel submitting an affidavit authenticating the list is

1 accurate. On December 30, 2024, Golden Beams filed correspondence indicating
2 it did not object to Staff's recommendation memorializing the conversation
3 between Golden Beams and Staff regarding the revision to condition number eight.
4 Staff recommends that the Commission accept the Staff recommendation filed
5 September 27, 2024, with a slight modification to condition number eight regarding
6 copies to be submitted to the Commission as outlined in Golden Beams acceptance.

7 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** Who's representing Golden Beams?

8 **MS. BOWMAN:** J.P. Hebert, and he's here.

9 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Come on up, Mr. Hebert.

10 **MS. BOWMAN:** And J.P., you just have to sign the clipboard. You don't have to
11 fill out a yellow card.

12 **SECRETARY FREY:** You can do that after you finish, too.

13 **MS. BOWMAN:** Yeah.

14 **SECRETARY FREY:** Just sign the clipboard after you finish.

15 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Kathryn, this is kind of a -- this is not the normal that
16 we do every day. And explain real simple, what part does the Commission play in
17 this predicament here? Okay.

18 **MS. BOWMAN:** The Commission looks at the facts presented by the applicant
19 and determines whether we have jurisdiction or not --

20 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Oh.

21 **MS. BOWMAN:** And my recommendation based on the facts presented in their
22 application is that we do not have jurisdiction over this.

1 **SECRETARY FREY:** And this is -- you know, we have done these in the past. I
2 mean, when I was in Kathryn's role, I probably did a half dozen or so. They're
3 typically located in connection with a petrochemical facility or a LNG facility
4 where they're going to self-generate power. And it's just to check off the boxes
5 and make sure everyone's in line with our regulations and they're not getting
6 sideways with it. So, this is a little bit different than the solar, but it's the same.

7 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** So, he doesn't even really have to -- need to be here,
8 you know. Okay.

9 **SECRETARY FREY:** Well, I think it's he wants to be here to make sure we're
10 not regulating; isn't that right, J.P.?

11 **MR. JOSEPH P. HEBERT:** That is correct.

12 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Okay. Well --

13 **SECRETARY FREY:** And J.P. used to practice a lot in front of the Commission,
14 so.

15 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** I got one question.

16 **MR. HEBERT:** Sure

17 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Commissioner Skrmetta first, and then Commissioner
18 Campbell.

19 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** So, the company, Golden Beams, so who is
20 that? Who makes up the company?

21 **MR. HEBERT:** It's a company out of Texas. I think they're located in McKinney,
22 Texas, and they develop data centers. I don't know how many states they have, I
23 mean, I think they have a few in Texas. And in conjunction with that, they attempt

1 to power those facilities in part by renewable energy and in large part by purchasing
2 power from the local utilities.

3 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** So, what's the source of their capital?

4 **MR. HEBERT:** I'm not sure that I know that, Commissioner.

5 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** Well, I mean, that's a problem. Not knowing
6 the source of capital. And the Commission's going to be looking at some rules up
7 in the next month about making sure we identify this because I've had meetings in
8 Washington with the Pentagon and identifying that nearly half of the Bitcoin
9 operators in the United States are fronts for the Chinese army. So, you know, I
10 don't really believe that we should be authorizing operators of data centers and
11 Bitcoin operators unless we can identify sources of capitals and not leading -- allow
12 them to be integrated into the system.

13 **MR. HEBERT:** Yes, you're -- Commissioner, I fully appreciate that. And I'll say
14 this by saying, and it may not change the view, but these -- the principals of this
15 company are persons of Indian descent and they're American citizens, but they're
16 of Indian descent. I don't know of any Chinese connection. They may -- I don't
17 know.

18 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** It's about capital sources, it's not about --

19 **MR. HEBERT:** I understand that. I understand that.

20 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** -- you know, racial background or anything
21 like that.

22 **MR. HEBERT:** And the second issue, and frankly, I didn't know it until the
23 question was poised to me by Ms. Bowman. In terms of Bitcoin operations, they

1 reported back to me that they're going to have some, but they're less than 5%. Most
2 of what they're into is artificial intelligence, and what that is, I'm not intelligent
3 enough to tell you. And data research.

4 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** Where's the physical location of this facility
5 going to be?

6 **MR. HEBERT:** It's going to be in Bastrop.

7 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** And how far is that from, say, Barksdale Air
8 Force Base?

9 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** How far is it from where?

10 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** By the crow flies?

11 **MR. HEBERT:** I would --

12 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** Bastrop from where?

13 **MR. HEBERT:** I would guess 70 or 80 miles.

14 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** From where? Barksdale?

15 **MR. HEBERT:** It's --

16 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** About 90 miles.

17 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** Ninety miles? That's another problem
18 because we would not allow these type of facilities to be within 100 miles of a
19 power plant. We shouldn't be allowing them to be within 100 miles of a military
20 installation because of the other reasons associated with Bitcoin operators are
21 essentially decrypting organizations and they decrypt signals. And that's one of the
22 problems we're facing with Bitcoin operators that are essentially fronts that they
23 are decrypting signals. So, we're going to have to have some reviews from agencies

1 outside of the Commission and I think one of the rules we're going to try to bring
2 up in the future is having the utilities require federal background checks on sources
3 of capital and also limitations of location before they'll be able to be allowed to
4 integrate into the grid system for seeking power resources before we'll even allow
5 it.

6 **MR. HEBERT:** Yes, I appreciate your concerns, Commissioner. I follow the
7 national news and I'm fully aware of that. As to this project, it's three megawatts
8 and it's a behind the meter project, so it's not even going to connect to the grid.

9 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** Well, this is just a kickoff, so there's going
10 to be more coming on this.

11 **MR. HEBERT:** Sure.

12 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** And it's a serious matter. You know, I have
13 to tell you I was gobsmacked with finding out the magnitude of the problem. And
14 so I'm going to be meeting with folks in Washington about this next week and
15 we're going to continue this pathway to try and, you know, continue the protection
16 for our system and for our citizens on this issue. So, we're going to figure it out.
17 But at the same time, gave me a whole new appreciation of what these systems do
18 and how they function. But for those folks out there who are bad actors that -- we
19 just don't really want them or need them. So, thank you very much.

20 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** I think Commissioner Campbell had something to ask
21 you about that. This is in Campbell's district by the way.

22 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** Let me ask you a question. Have you -- you
23 haven't -- when you visited with me, you were very nice. You came to my office,

1 I appreciate it. And I asked you have you visited with the mayor and the city
2 council. Have you been able to do that?

3 **MR. HEBERT:** Commissioner, I have not been retained by the client to visit with
4 local -- any local political representatives, so no, I haven't. I do -- I was told that
5 my client did have, I guess, a governmental affairs person, not me, that is, you
6 know, working with the local officials and that the mayor has been notified of the
7 project. And in fact, I found out yesterday that they got -- and I realized there's a
8 number of permits they need to get, but they did get an occupational permit from
9 the Bastrop Fire Department for the solar panel part of the project.

10 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** It's a little troubling to me that I represent
11 Morehouse Parish and I represent Bossier Parish where Barksdale is, so. But I
12 hadn't been contacted by any of those people, and I really just hate to vote for
13 something before they contact me saying we're fully aware, we're all about it, and
14 we're for it. But it's not -- nothing personal, I just -- I feel a little bit left out.

15 **MR. HEBERT:** That who hasn't -- that the government officials haven't contacted
16 you? I'm sorry.

17 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** Anybody. You're the only person who's
18 contacted me. I hadn't heard anything from Morehouse Parish Police Jury,
19 anybody.

20 **MR. HEBERT:** Right. Yeah. And one of the issues, Commissioner, is that the
21 legal issues just with the jurisdictional determination, you know, I worked with Ms.
22 Bowman for several months just to get that straight. Because if we weren't going
23 to clear the legal issues, then really there was no point in moving anything else

1 forward. And so that was the delay, but that's why, you know, I sought the meeting
2 with you once that I realized that the Staff was, you know, going to make a
3 recommendation that the project be approved, but with the conditions that Ms.
4 Bowman produced. So, I understand that it seems like it was delayed, and yes, I
5 have to say it was delayed, but that was the reason. And frankly, I've worked on
6 probably 15 of these petitions for jurisdictional determination in the past 20 years
7 or so, and they've always involved, at least at the beginning, a lot of discussion
8 with the Staff just to make sure that the basic jurisdictional legal issues can be
9 overcome. And some of them frankly can, not on this project, but on others. And
10 you know, we never got to the point that we even approached the Commissioners
11 or anybody else because the project was not going forward in the face of Staff
12 opposition.

13 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** I have a question for Kathryn. Commissioner,
14 would you mind? Yes. He's good. There's a recommendation that Golden Beams
15 shall include a provision in the lease agreements that all parties thereto agree to be
16 bound by any Commission order issued in this docket. Would that include any
17 future Commission orders relative to Chairman -- Commissioner Skrmetta's issues
18 with the foreign adversary issues and development in the state?

19 **MS. BOWMAN:** So, if what Commissioner Skrmetta was discussing does become
20 a Commission rule, then we can amend this rule to adopt that, yes.

21 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** Okay.

1 **MR. HEBERT:** And, Commissioner, certainly, you know, I -- on behalf of my
2 client, if something comes up that creates an issue, obviously my client's going to
3 have to address it, and I fully understand that and I'll make that clear to my client.

4 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** Well, we may need to kind of read the room a
5 little bit before we take a vote on this issue. There may be a couple meetings in
6 advance of a vote that might be beneficial to all the parties involved. So, from one
7 J.P. to another, we may look at deferring this, Mr. Chairman, if that's something
8 that --

9 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** All right.

10 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** I'd like to defer to the Commissioner whose
11 district this project is in, and kind of give him that option.

12 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Commissioner Campbell, the question would be would
13 you like to defer this so we study it a little further because it's in your district?

14 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** If it's okay, I would like to put it off 'til next
15 week -- next month.

16 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** And would that cause any big problem for your clients?

17 **MR. HEBERT:** I don't -- I don't believe so, Chairman. And if, you know,
18 obviously you're free to feed me any other, you know, request for information that
19 you line up for us.

20 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Well, I think that's proper, we could do that, and I got
21 a couple of questions, Kathryn, too.

22 **MS. BOWMAN:** Yes, sir.

1 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** In regards to the issues Commissioner Skrmetta was
2 talking about, 100 miles from a air base and that sort of thing, is that -- do we have
3 outside counsel that helps us? Would that be considered part of cybersecurity or is
4 there another area?

5 **MS. BOWMAN:** We are still figuring out exactly where that would fit, but that is
6 our initial thought is, yes, it would make sense to put it within our cybersecurity.
7 Commissioner Skrmetta and I just talked about it last week. And so Brandon and
8 Ms. Evans and I have started those conversations, but that's what we're thinking is
9 it makes sense to put it into cybersecurity. Yes, sir.

10 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Ms. Evans going to be in charge of that? Huh?

11 **SECRETARY FREY:** Sounds like she is.

12 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** You've got the job.

13 **MS. LAUREN EVANS:** If my boss says so.

14 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Well, you're -- you've always been a great help to me
15 and this sound like a real complicated issue. So, let's put it off 'til next month and
16 with the help and -- you want to come down the Crowley? We got good gumbo
17 down there.

18 **MR. HEBERT:** I understand that, and I apologize because I -- for various reasons,
19 I didn't get to visit with the other four Commissioner. I was able to visit with
20 Commissioner Campbell, so I apologize for that. But I think everybody has my
21 information and the basic documentation. And again, please feed me questions and
22 I'll ask my client about the issue that you addressed.

1 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** No problem. And just get with me and
2 Kathryn later and we'll dive deeper into it.

3 **MR. HEBERT:** Okay. Great.

4 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Thank you, sir.

5 **MR. HEBERT:** Thank you.

6 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Okay. Exhibit Number 8.

7 **MS. BOWMAN:** Yes, sir. So, Exhibit Number 8 is Docket Number U-37423.
8 It's South Coast Gas Company's rate stabilization plan filing for the year ending
9 June 30, 2024. It's a discussion and possible vote on a joint report and draft order.
10 Yes. Thank you. On November 1, 2024, South Coast filed its rate stabilization
11 plan filing which was published in the Commission's Official Bulletin and no
12 interventions were received. Pursuant to Commission Order Number U-36276,
13 South Coast rate stabilization plan allows the company to earn a midpoint return on
14 equity of 10% and requires a resetting of rates in the event that the test period
15 earnings fall outside the prescribed 50-point deadband. In South Coast 2024 filing,
16 the company reported an ROE of negative 13.441%, which would have required a
17 rate increase of approximately \$1.5 million. As South Coast's earned ROE fell
18 below the established bandwidth, Staff found that South Coast was authorized in
19 accordance with the provisions of its RSP to adjust its rates to generate the increase
20 in revenue. Staff filed its report and recommendation into the record on January 6
21 -- no. Can you go in the other door, please? Staff filed its report and
22 recommendation into the record on January 6, 2025. On review -- upon review,
23 South Coast indicated that the company accepted Staff's report and

1 recommendation and filed notice to the effect into the record on January 17.
2 Thereafter, the parties follow a joint report and draft order into the record. As there
3 are no unresolved issues, Staff recommends that the Commission accept the joint
4 report filed into the record on February 5, 2024.

5 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** Move to accept the joint report and draft
6 order as attached

7 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Seconded by Chairman. Motion by Commissioner
8 Skrmetta, of course. Is there any other opposition to this or discussion? [NONE
9 HEARD] Hearing no objection, Number 8 is passed.

10 **MS. BOWMAN:** Exhibit Number 9 is Docket Number U-37424. This is Pierre
11 Part Natural Gas Company's rate stabilization plan filing for the year ending June
12 30, 2024. It's a discussion and possible vote on a joint report and draft order. On
13 November 1, 2024, Pierre Part filed its rate stabilization plan filing, which was
14 published in the Commission's Official Bulletin with no interventions received.
15 Pursuant to Commission Order Number U-36612, Pierre Part's rate stabilization
16 plan allows the company to earn a midpoint return on equity of 10% and requires a
17 resetting of rates in the event that the test period earnings fall outside of the
18 prescribed 50 basis points deadband. In Pierre Part's filing, the company reported
19 an ROE of negative 12.677%, which would have required a rate increase of
20 approximately \$168,000. Staff conducted a review of Pierre Part's filing and
21 determined that the company's earned ROE for the test year did was 13 --
22 negative 13.17, which was still below the established bandwidth and allowed a rate
23 adjustment of approximately -- still approximately \$168,000. Staff filed its report

1 and recommendation into the record on January 6, 2025. Upon review, Pierre Part
2 indicated that it did not object to Staff's recommendation and the parties filed a
3 joint report and draft order into the record on February 5, 2025. As there are no
4 unresolved issues, Staff recommends that the Commission accept the joint report
5 filed into the record on February 5, 2025.

6 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** Move to accept joint report and draft order
7 as attached.

8 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Move by Commissioner Skrmetta, seconded by the
9 Chair. Is there any objection, any discussion? [NONE HEARD] Hearing none, it
10 passed.

11 **MS. BOWMAN:** Exhibit Number 10 is Docket Number U-37468. This is Entergy
12 Louisiana's application for recovery and rates of costs related to Hurricane Francine
13 and for other related relief. It's a discussion and possible vote on an interim rate
14 increase pursuant to Rule 57. So, this will require two votes, and it's at the request
15 of the Chair. On September 11, 2024, Hurricane Francine made landfall as a
16 Category 2 hurricane, causing damage to Entergy's infrastructure throughout
17 southeast Louisiana. On December 30, 2024, Entergy filed the instant application
18 seeking recovery of approximately \$182 million in costs related to Hurricane
19 Francine. Of those costs, approximately 152 million are identified as distribution
20 related costs and approximately 29 million are identified as O&M expenses. In its
21 application, Entergy further requested that the Commission authorize interim
22 recovery, subject to true-up and refund, of the approximate \$152 million in
23 distribution capital cost through its rider FRP, which would be outside the cap, with

1 the first adjustment beginning in March of 2025. Staff recommends that the
2 Commission exercise its original and primary jurisdiction under Rule 57 to consider
3 the Entergy's request. Staff makes no formal recommendation regarding the actual
4 request itself, but does note that pursuant to applicable law, any interim increase
5 should be subject to refund and the applicable bonding requirements. Should
6 Entergy's request be approved, Staff would recommend that Entergy be required
7 to: File proof of the applicable bonding requirements with the Commission; be
8 required to file an updated tariff indicating that interim rate rider and its terms with
9 the Utilities Division within 30 days of the order approving the interim; Entergy
10 cannot begin charging the interim until proof of the applicable bond and updated
11 tariff have been provided to and approved by Staff; and Commission approval of
12 Entergy's request for interim rate relief shall not be considered final Commission
13 approval related to the recovery mechanism of the Francine distribution capital cost
14 as detailed in the application and shall not prohibit any party in this proceeding
15 from recommending an alternative recovery for the Francine distribution capital
16 cost.

17 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Move to --

18 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** Bring the matter up under Rule 57.

19 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** 57 under --

20 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** Second.

21 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** -- Commissioner Skrmetta and seconded by the Chair.

22 And I'll make the motion that we accept Staff recommendation.

23 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** Second.

1 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** And seconded by Commissioner Skrmetta.

2 **COMMISSIONER LEWIS:** Object.

3 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** And also, remind everyone this is not actually a rate
4 increase as such. This is storm damage recovery. Okay. So, let's be clear on that.
5 Commissioner Lewis?

6 **COMMISSIONER LEWIS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can I have a
7 representative from Entergy, please, at the table?

8 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Larry Hand with Entergy.

9 **MR. LARRY HAND:** Good morning.

10 **COMMISSIONER LEWIS:** Good morning, Mr. Hand. Good to see you. Just a
11 few questions that I have for you on this proposal. As you know, you're asking for
12 an interim recovery of storm damages and we haven't really done that for you since
13 Hurricane Katrina and Rita. So can you explain why you see justification to
14 supersede a prudence review and enter -- and put in these rates -- or, excuse me,
15 put in this recovery at an intermediate basis?

16 **MR. HAND:** Yes. And for the record, Larry Hand on behalf of Entergy Louisiana.
17 And I want to be -- open up with saying we are not trying to supersede the prudence
18 review. The conditions that Ms. Bowman read, we fully agree with. The interim
19 relief we are seeking would be subject to the prudence review, so any amounts
20 eventually disallowed by the Commission would be refunded to customers, and it's
21 also without prejudice, as she said to the allocation of the cost and the mechanism
22 for recovery, so. But to your question of why interim relief here, in this particular
23 case because of the mechanism we are proposing recovery, as we explained in the

1 application, securitization didn't make sense here. Thankfully, Francine was not as
2 catastrophic of a storm as we saw in 2020 and 2021, which made securitization
3 essential to reduce cost. Applying securitization here would carry very significant
4 fixed cost on the bond insurance, roughly \$8 million, and that would eat up the
5 savings on the utility cost of capital versus a bond rate. And what that means here
6 is, if we obtain the interim relief we sought in this docket, it will effectively help
7 customers avoid approximately \$13 million a year of carrying cost. If we do
8 nothing and we wait until after the prudence review, the carrying costs would
9 accrue and ultimately increase the amount we would seek to recover from
10 customers. So, I think this is avoiding carrying cost for customers to the tune of
11 about 13 million a year depending on how long the prudence review takes. The
12 sooner we start paying for it, the quicker it can get worked off. And again, because
13 of that unique situation, this doesn't apply for all storm cases, but because of the
14 manner in which we are proposing recovery, it does save customers or avoid the
15 carrying cost. And I view it as a no regret strategy because it also comes with the
16 customer safeguards of it's subject to the full prudence review, which hasn't been
17 done yet, and subject to the other conditions that Ms. Bowman read.

18 **COMMISSIONER LEWIS:** Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Hand. Can you update
19 on what the residential bill impact would be? I know we've talked about 80 cents
20 per -- for a 1,000 kWh, but can you go down a -- just a few ranges? I mean, I know
21 most -- looking around, we're probably somewhere around 1,250 is the average.
22 Do you happen to have that number of what like 1,250 would be?

23 **MR. HAND:** I can tell you that I had it at one point.

1 **COMMISSIONER LEWIS:** No worries. Well, look, I'll ask another question
2 while you look at it. I mean, I'm very interested in this proposal and I'm not going
3 to get too much into the application since we are still in the process of collecting
4 data. But I'm curious about, if we're going to do this through the DRM, how that
5 plays with the industrial customers in paying some of their share of the cost?
6 Because I mean, I think that's a question that some of my constituents have asked
7 me about. And so under this proposal, since you're putting some of that \$150
8 million in the DRM, what does that do to the cost share for the industrial users?

9 **MR. HAND:** Yeah. And I guess going back to the bill impact, I did want to
10 reiterate, I think Ms. Bowman may have read it, but the initial bill impact per month
11 would be about 80 cents. That would begin in March, if it's approved. I want to
12 also point out that due to a prior settlement that this Commission approved, there is
13 a rate refund or a credit that would also start in March, and that's associated with
14 the Grand Gulf divestiture that would roughly reduce customer bills, a residential
15 1,000 kWh customer, by 47 cents a month. So, when you net the two, if this is
16 approved, the bill change in March would be 33 cents, roughly. Your question
17 about allocation, the distribution recovery mechanism is primarily allocated on a
18 functional basis to those customers, whether it's commercial, residential, and some
19 industrials that take service at the distribution level. So, this would not carry the
20 same allocation the Commission has traditionally used, or most recently has used,
21 dealing with securitized storm cost. The DRM does -- I want to be clear, the DRM
22 does have several industrial rate schedules that are allocated some of the cost, it's

1 just not the same level of allocation that we've seen with the prior securitizations.
2 Does that answer your question?

3 **COMMISSIONER LEWIS:** No, that -- thank you. That does answer my
4 question. And as I kind of evaluated this, and you know we have had -- we've spent
5 countless time, so I actually want to thank you and Entergy for all the time you've
6 given me in answering me and my Staff's questions. I know we specifically have
7 talked about the risk, right? I know you mentioned the -- roughly some, depending
8 on how we do it, the 13 million carrying cost, but I would like to toy with that a
9 little bit more with you. What are the reasons? Because I mean, I think a lot of
10 constituents are saying, wait a minute, if you have to review this, why are you going
11 ahead and giving them the recovery before you actually check prudence? Maybe
12 you see any disallowances. So, can you speak to what are the actual risks or why
13 you believe there are risks if we do not improve -- approve an interim recovery,
14 rather than the 7 to 12 months after the prudence review is completed?

15 **MR. HAND:** I mean, I think the clearest risk is that for customers, and that is the
16 additional \$13 million if it takes 12 months, so that's -- that is the most direct risk
17 for customers. You know, I think that's what we should probably focus on today.
18 I will say, as the Commission in its order -- I think it's U-29203, following Katrina,
19 Rita, the Commission outlined a number of factors in that case why it did grant
20 interim relief. And really, it was trying to send a signal to credit analysts and other
21 folks to let them know that we -- the world, recognizes we're being exposed to more
22 and more storms, more significant storms. And just providing confidence to the
23 folks that we go to to borrow money, whether it's on the debt side or the people

1 we seek equity from to run the business, that when we take their money that they've
2 given us and we use it on storms, this provides -- this interim relief is a small way,
3 I think, to provide confidence to those folks that this Commission will continue to
4 recognize its responsibilities regarding reimbursement of storm cost. We wish we
5 never had them, but when they come, we know how important it is to get the lights
6 back on for our customers. You know, in theory, we could just restore power with
7 the crews we have on hand, and it could take three to four weeks. We know that's
8 not acceptable. So, when we bring in all these other crews on from off system,
9 around the country sometimes, it does add up the cost. So, that's why we're
10 proposing recovery here, but also provide confidence in a future storm event that
11 this Commission, you know, will support storm cost recovery.

12 **COMMISSIONER LEWIS:** No, thank you, Mr. Hand. I've looked through some
13 of the other applications especially on that credit risk and there were -- have there
14 been any significant or notices of potential risk of downgrades? I mean, I didn't
15 see any of that listed in the application, as we've done other applications where
16 credit agencies have listed a warning or listed other items. And so I'm trying to toy
17 with, while I do appreciate that risk, is that risk substantial enough right now?
18 Because I didn't see any of the supporting documents in the application to say that
19 we have gotten any kind of real indication from credit ratings of a potential
20 downgrade or even of some of that evidence that was submitted in the Hurricane
21 Ida recovery, for example. So, I'm just kind of curious is this more prospective, or
22 are there absolutely some hardcore evidence that's been submitted that you could
23 point to that says the credit agencies are looking at, especially at Hurricane Francine

1 -- or I shouldn't say Hurricane Francine, but at this moment in time of potential
2 downgrades?

3 **MR. HAND:** Yeah. And to be clear, I'm not aware of any reports or anything
4 from the rating agencies that expressed a specific risk of credit downgrades relating
5 to the Francine cost recovery, so I hope I didn't confuse any -- that is not the case.
6 As you pointed out, we did have very significant risk of downgrade following the
7 2020 and 2021 storms, where collectively, we sustained, you know, nearly I think
8 \$4.7 billion of damage. And that's where we saw the signal from the agencies that
9 there are historic patience for the securitization process, which can take from a
10 storm until we actually get the bonds issued, it can take 20, 24 months. And that's
11 where we saw them express we're not going to continue to be as patient, y'all need
12 to continue to look at ways to address this faster. I think this is just a way to do it
13 for a different storm, to show them we can figure things out. I think for future
14 catastrophic storms, we'll probably need to think differently, and we'll be coming
15 to the Commission, probably end of the first quarter, with a framework to look at,
16 not for this storm, but for the future, how can we work better together to reduce
17 cost for customers while still maintaining our ability to be resilient, following
18 storms.

19 **COMMISSIONER LEWIS:** No. No, thank you, Mr. Hand, for that question. I
20 think the last question I'll have is in this application, as you know, you currently are
21 collecting a storm escrow account -- a storm recovery escrow account. And I
22 believe in this application you're pulling only 30 million of the 186 million from
23 the storm escrow. So, can you explain what's the company's rationale of not pulling

1 more or the entirety of this 186 million out of the storm escrow, since the storm
2 escrow is sitting around -- correct me if I'm wrong, I want to say around \$255
3 million? That's just a question that I'm getting is why won't we pull it all out of the
4 storm escrow since that's what we collected it for?

5 **MR. HAND:** Yeah. And it is roughly about 255 million in the current storm
6 escrow account. That was funded following a securitization of Laura, Delta, Zeta
7 we replenished. So, we drew down the storm reserve for that one. The target storm
8 reserve when these start is about 290 million. We had exhausted that following
9 Laura, Delta, Zeta. When we securitized, we recovered the remaining cost but also
10 replenished that escrow back to \$290 million. We've had a few small storms that
11 have paid for it, but the balance currently is 255 million. When this storm
12 happened, we looked at total storm cost, capital, and the O&M would be about 180
13 million. We certainly have the ability, following the process in the order, we have
14 to get concurrence from the Executive Secretary. We have the ability to draw it all
15 from there, but then that would leave us going into the 2025 storm season with
16 about 70 million in that escrow. And our fear is that that will create a future crisis
17 and emergency if we have a catastrophic storm to run back to this Commission for
18 more significant interim or emergency rate relief, so we can fund -- and it's not just
19 fund the storm operations, right? Because we also have other programs that this
20 Commission has approved to benefit our customers. We don't want to be put in a
21 position after a future storm: Do I get the lights back on and do I stop working on
22 all the things this Commission wants us to do for customers? So, we thought it'd
23 be prudent to pull down about 30 million from the escrow. That would leave a

1 balance of about 225 to keep us in a liquid position, you know, following a future
2 storm in 2025.

3 **COMMISSIONER LEWIS:** No. No, thank you so much, Mr. Hand, for
4 answering all my questions. I want to say, while I do understand Entergy's
5 concerns regarding Hurricane Francine recovery, at this time, I do think this ask is
6 a little premature, but I am opposing this without prejudice. I do think there are
7 questions still that I want to get answered in the pending application looking at
8 whether the DRM mechanism makes the most sense. But I just wanted to be kind
9 of clear why I am opposing this. I do believe that you should be made whole for
10 prudently incurred storm restoration cost, and I see the logic, of course, of not
11 drawing down the entire storm escrow as we enter another season in a few months,
12 but there are just some other questions that I want to toy with. I mean, I know this
13 DRM mechanism is a 33-year recovery, so I want to look at that. I know in your
14 testimony you cited Hawaiian Electric and their downgrade and their risk liability
15 that we were seeing. I think there are some differences between what we see here
16 in Louisiana and what Hawaii Electric did, but also what Louisiana and Florida is
17 doing. I know there's been some proactive policies that Florida has taken on some
18 broad discretion. I'm not necessarily opposed to that, but I also want to toy with
19 that. So, I just think this is a premature ask, and so I just wanted to clarify that
20 would be the reason of my opposition today, but I look forward during application
21 process to digging into the application more, and getting some more questions
22 answered. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Okay. Commissioner Campbell, you want to get in on
2 this?

3 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** Yeah. I want to make a motion that we
4 approve this.

5 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** I think -- do we already have that?

6 **MS. BOWMAN:** We do.

7 **SECRETARY FREY:** Yeah. We have a motion

8 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** You do?

9 **SECRETARY FREY:** Yeah, we have a motion on the table.

10 **MS. BOWMAN:** We -- yeah. We have a --

11 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** You have an objection?

12 **MS. BOWMAN:** Yes. Yes, sir.

13 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** You have one objection, so we're going to
14 vote. Let me ask you something --

15 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Hold up, we're not through discussing it yet,
16 Commissioner. What -- did you want a discussion?

17 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** Yeah, I want to ask a question

18 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Okay. Good.

19 **MS. BOWMAN:** But can you use your microphone, please? Thank you.

20 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** These bonds that you're issuing, or you're
21 going to issue in the future, what rate of interest do you pay on them?

22 **MR. HAND:** So, to be clear, this --

23 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** I understand this.

1 **MR. HAND:** Okay.

2 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** But I'm talking about you have some other
3 bonds if you have storms, you said you have 250 million saved. About what interest
4 rate will you be issuing those bonds?

5 **MR. HAND:** So, the prior bonds that we're currently having the escrow, I think
6 the one tranche issued at about 4.28% and the other was right around there, so low
7 fours. I did see a report recently from J.P. Morgan kind of telling me what other
8 recent securitizations had priced at and it was a little bit higher and it was between
9 --

10 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** They're tax-free bonds; aren't they? They
11 should be.

12 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Tax free?

13 **MR. HAND:** I'm not sure about that, Commissioner.

14 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** Tax free.

15 **MR. HAND:** But the more recent bonds around the country have been coming in
16 higher depending on the tenor of the bonds, maybe 4.5 to 5%.

17 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** Find out. It looks like to me, municipal bonds
18 is doing municipal work, it'd have to be tax free.

19 **MR. HAND:** Yeah. The ones we've done in Louisiana -- and the secretary of the
20 LURC is over here and can probably explain it better than me.

21 **SECRETARY FREY:** And that's -- yeah. So, the statutes that were adopted
22 following Katrina, Rita that created the LURC, Louisiana Utilities Restoration
23 Corporation, is the conduit issuer for bonds. One of the reasons for doing that was

1 to get that tax-free benefit because -- and I know in those initial ones when we went
2 over to the bond commission there was some confusion understanding -- thinking
3 the state might be on the hook for it, but we explained to them how the structure
4 was set up --

5 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** People are paying for it.

6 **SECRETARY FREY:** Exactly. The ratepayers are responsible for it, LURC is
7 the conduit issuer. So, there were a lot of tax savings associated with those
8 positions at that time. With the most recent storms that the Laura, Delta, Zeta, Ida,
9 and Winter Storm Uri, there was a change to the securitization law that Entergy
10 filed under that new one, and it was my appreciation and, Lane, might -- I'd call
11 him up to jump in and explain if I'm getting confused on that because I know he's
12 done a lot of the bond work for us in the past, was because of some of the tax
13 positions we were able to achieve through those prior storms, tax code had changed,
14 so it was a different type of issuance for this one. But to your point, Foster, I think
15 there are still tax savings that will be realized and, you know, we have the LURC
16 meetings. We are still seeing tax benefits flowing back from Katrina, Rita on bills.
17 So, when you look -- if you're an Entergy customer and you see there's a storm
18 offset, it's because there's still tax benefits flowing back from those storms from
19 way back and I think that's still the case with this most recent, it's just a different
20 type of structure.

21 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Okay. I got a question. Staff, Marks and Pendergrass,
22 raise your hand over there. Marks and Pendergrass. Raise it up high. Okay. And,
23 Pendergrass, where we got --

1 **MS. BOWMAN:** Mr. Marks is not in the audience. He's upstairs.

2 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Okay. All right. Now, y'all work with Henderson

3 Ridge on this; didn't you?

4 **MS. ROBIN PENDERGRASS:** I have not worked [INAUDIBLE].

5 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** I thought Henderson Ridge was working on --

6 **MR. HAND:** Commissioner --

7 **MS. BOWMAN:** Yes, sir. Henderson Ridge is our outside consultant on it. We

8 have internal Audit Staff and Utility Staff also assigned, but the bulk of the work

9 will come from Mr. Barta.

10 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** That's right. Okay. That was just a point I wanted to

11 make --

12 **MS. BOWMAN:** Yes, sir.

13 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** -- in making a decision because I'm going to support

14 the Staff recommendation. Any other discussion?

15 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** Yeah, I got a discussion.

16 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Jean-Paul Coussan.

17 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** Larry, great to see you. The presentation that

18 you just gave, and I want to make sure that I'm hearing this correctly, this

19 methodology will save ratepayers \$13 million in carrying costs that would

20 otherwise could be, and under the law, would be recoverable after the prudence

21 review?

22 **MR. HAND:** That's correct.

23 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** That's correct?

1 **MR. HAND:** Yes, sir.

2 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** And then there's also a chance that we have
3 some line items that could be deemed not recoverable in the meantime?

4 **MR. HAND:** That's correct, also.

5 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** If we postpone this decision today, the 13
6 million or a pro rata share of that would begin to toll immediately; is that correct?

7 **MR. HAND:** Yeah, it'd be just pro rata over, you know, monthly to equal that.

8 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** And that would affect all ratepayers across the
9 board, low income and otherwise?

10 **MR. HAND:** It would.

11 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** You mentioned the Grand Gulf divestiture, and
12 I don't think I was here for the meetings that we discussed that issue and so I don't
13 want to belabor the point, but I would like to at least reiterate that -- you said it and
14 I wanted to ensure that it was heard that this Grand Gulf divestiture credit, i.e.,
15 reduction will happen starting March simultaneously with this issue should we vote
16 on it today; is that correct?

17 **MR. HAND:** That's correct.

18 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** And that would be a -- what was the number that
19 you gave, the reduction?

20 **MR. HAND:** I believe it's about 47 cents reduction for the Grand Gulf divestiture,
21 and the net of the two amounts would be 33 cents per month for a 1000 kWh
22 customer.

1 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** So, reductions and cost savings are -- you're kind
2 of, you know, singing music to my ears. Let's talk about another one. Next year
3 we're looking at a -- the Laura, Delta, Zeta rider falling off of bills; is that correct?
4 **MR. HAND:** No. The Laura, Delta, Zeta rider, that securitization bond has a term
5 of about 15 years. I think you're referring to --
6 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** Yes.
7 **MR. HAND:** -- the 2012 Hurricane Isaac charge falling off.
8 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** That's the -- that's correct. So, could you tell --
9 within -- in the year 2026, which rider will be falling off of all bills?
10 **MR. HAND:** It would appear in the bill as FSC III. That's what will disappear in
11 the bill. It's Finance Storm Charge III. That was from Hurricane Isaac in 2012.
12 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** Okay. And then, lastly, I think you alluded to it
13 a little bit, we have the ongoing resiliency docket, and you've stated that y'all are -
14 - the company is participating in the resiliency docket, robustly, and this
15 methodology as you look forward, if it works like we are anticipating in the savings
16 that we're looking at, if the resiliency docket meets the increased intensity of the
17 storms, then we could be seeing lower recoveries that are being sought by the
18 utilities. Is that what we're -- what we're hearing?
19 **MR. HAND:** That is exactly the intent and we saw some evidence of that for, you
20 know, the recent storms. When you look at Grand Isle, what was largely rebuilt
21 down there following Ida held up extremely well, and so even though that wasn't
22 an official resilience project, it was built to our current wind loading standards and
23 performed extremely well. Same with in that region a lot of poles replaced after

1 Hurricane Ida, those, too, held up very well. So, we do believe -- and resilience is
2 a -- it's a long-term investment. Florida Power & Light has been at it for two
3 decades, and we're just starting and so we have work to do, but I believe over time
4 we will see a significant reduction in the storm damages that we see following
5 future storms. And also, importantly for our customers, I think we will see shorter,
6 you know, duration outages following major events and also fewer customer
7 minutes interrupted. So, those are the big benefits of the resilience investment.

8 **SECRETARY FREY:** And, Commissioner, if I can jump in, I'm glad you brought
9 that up, Larry, I was curious. When we did the comparison for Francine, we looked
10 at Isaac because they took similar paths and the -- and Gustav as well. With Gustav,
11 I think we were about a billion dollars in recovery, Isaac was between 4 and 500
12 million, and we're looking at 158. So, I think that kind of makes the point, the
13 resilience we've seen is tremendously lowered the cost even though costs are higher
14 for everything now, so.

15 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** You --

16 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Okay.

17 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** Last comment. You mentioned -- well, you
18 mentioned Florida Power & Light. Commissioner Lewis mentioned the state of
19 Florida. State of Florida has a much higher denominator than us on a lot of issues,
20 so sometimes it's not comparing oranges to oranges for Florida's sake. But the
21 question I have is -- the question I have is sometimes Florida, they recover their
22 losses in a much quicker time period, and if we tried to do that around here, I think
23 that we'd have pitchforks through the door. And can you give me one example of

1 a storm rider, so to speak, that Florida used to recover over a quicker time period
2 than I think is feasible for the people of Louisiana?

3 **MR. HAND:** Yeah. And I think that's a great point to put it into context. Again,
4 not oranges to oranges or apples to apples. But for 2024, the three largest utilities
5 in Florida: Florida Power & Light, Tampa Electric, and Duke Energy Progress;
6 they saw -- they saw multiple storms in 2024 totaling in aggregate about 2.2 billion
7 or so of damages. Their commission recently approved for -- FP&L might have
8 been approved in December. Duke and TECO were approved in January. Very
9 significant storm charges. The top of the heap is Duke Energy Progress is
10 recovering \$32 a month from their customers starting March 1, Tampa Electric is
11 recovering \$20 a month, and lastly, Florida Power & Light is recovering I believe
12 \$12.02. To be fair, because of that higher denominator of customers and sales,
13 they're able to do that over 12 months, that's their policy issue. But that policy has
14 a price tag clearly and I don't believe that's affordable or workable for our customers
15 in Louisiana.

16 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** Okay. Thank you for your comments. I think
17 you enlightened me a great deal.

18 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Okay. Is there any other discussion? [NONE HEARD]
19 Well, I know that we got a no vote from --

20 **MS. BOWMAN:** Yeah. We had a we had a motion from the Chair, a second from
21 Commissioner Skrmetta, opposition from Commissioner Lewis.

22 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Is there any other opposition? [NONE HEARD]

23 **MS. BOWMAN:** So, we just need to roll call vote.

1 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Okay. Let's go ahead with a roll call vote.
2 Commissioner Campbell, how do you vote?
3 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** Yes
4 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Commissioner Lewis, you vote no.
5 **COMMISSIONER LEWIS:** No.
6 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** And Commissioner Coussan?
7 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** Yes.
8 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Commission Skrmetta?
9 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** Yes.
10 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Chair votes yes. So, it's a four to one vote, approves it.
11 So, thank you, Larry.
12 **MS. BOWMAN:** Exhibit Number 11 is Docket Number R-36131. This is the
13 Commission's determination of Commission jurisdiction over the various methods
14 of providing electricity to electric vehicles and the infrastructure associated
15 therewith. It's a discussion and possible vote on Staff's final recommendation on
16 remand. Pursuant to a directive issued at the Commission's July 2021 B&E, Staff
17 opened this rulemaking to determine the Commission's jurisdiction over electric
18 vehicle charging stations. Interventions were received by several parties. On July
19 26, 2024, Staff issued its final Phase II recommendation, which was accepted by
20 the Commission at its August '24 B&E, and was memorialized in General Order
21 dated September 10, 2024, corrected. On September 20, 2024, Entergy, CLECO
22 Power, and SWEPCO filed a joint motion for clarification or reconsideration of that
23 General Order In their motion, the IOUs noted several concerns, particularly with

1 Section 601, as it relates to being broad to prohibit all ownership of EV charging
2 stations from electric utilities, and that the Section 801 is inconsistent with the
3 definition of EV charging stations, missing important guidance and appears
4 incomplete. At the October 2024 Business and Executive Session, the Commission
5 granted that motion, thereby remanding and reopening the docket to review and
6 possibly clarify Section 601 and 801 of the General Order. On December 27, 2024,
7 Staff filed its proposed recommendation on remand and request for comments.
8 Responsive comments were received from several stakeholders. After reviewing
9 those comments, on February 7, 2025, Staff filed the recommendation on -- its final
10 recommendation on remand. The final recommendation included clarifications as
11 well as an amendment to remove an unnecessary provision from the definition of
12 electric vehicle charging station, clarification to 601, and a clarification to 801.
13 And Staff recommends that the Commission adopt the final recommendation on
14 remand filed on February 7, 2025, and after filing that, I believe the Chair has a
15 motion.

16 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Yeah, I make a motion. Would you read my motion
17 please?

18 **MS. BOWMAN:** Yes, sir. The Chair's motion is: I move that we approve Staff's
19 recommendation with the following amendment to -- amendment, it would be to
20 delete the second sentence of the proposed new Section 801, the specific words:
21 The Net Metering Rules. And that is the motion.

22 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Okay. Is there a -- we need a second on that?

23 **VICE CHAIRMAN LEWIS:** I'll second.

1 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Seconded by Commissioner Lewis. Is there any
2 objection or discussion? [NONE HEARD] Hearing none, it's in the books.
3 Thirteen.

4 **MS. BOWMAN:** Exhibit Number 12 is reports, resolutions, discussions. We have
5 two reports this month, and then a few ratifications. So, we'll start first with the
6 report from Staff regarding Louisiana's electric profile. It was a report from the
7 Louisiana Legislative Auditor, and this is going to be given by Secretary Frey, and
8 it'll also cover what Foster requested earlier.

9 **SECRETARY FREY:** Good morning, Commissioners. So, yeah, I think I talked
10 to a number of y'all about this, but we received a lot of questions and there was a
11 lot of media coverage about a document that was issued January 15 of this year by
12 Legislative Auditor that was titled Louisiana's Electric Profile. And some of the
13 headlines suggested it was an audit of the Commission. I think some of the
14 headlines misinterpreted what the report had said. It's all said, so I wanted to point
15 out some of the things in the report. There's a lot of really good things about the
16 Commission said in the report. But starting first, it's an informational report of the
17 Legislative Auditor, not an audit. And why is that important? Well, the
18 Commission is audited by the Legislative Auditor on a fiscal basis, essentially every
19 year, or every other year, and the Legislative Auditor also performs what they call
20 a performance audit, looking at how the Commission is doing its job. So, we had
21 one of those last year that dealt with our review of the broadband dollars through
22 the RDOF program. Kathryn and I worked very closely with the audit staff. They
23 had some recommendations for us. We accepted those recommendations. That's

1 the typical way an audit works. We work directly with them. As we were finishing
2 up that audit, they said, look, by the way, we're going to do an informational report
3 about the electric profile. Can you point us to some big dockets at the Commission?
4 So, it wasn't an audit. We pointed them in the right direction of where to look. So,
5 saying that it was auditing the Commission's, and there were findings, is not
6 accurate, and I just wanted to clear that up. Much of the data that was used by the
7 auditor and compliance report comes from the EIA, the U.S. Energy Information
8 Administration, and I've talked about this in the past. It is a fantastic source of
9 information on anything you can imagine. It's EIA.gov, so I encourage people to
10 go on there and play around, and I've spent a lot of time on there, and came up with
11 some interesting information. So, specifically what was in the report that got a lot
12 of the attention was it said, and this is not a surprise, we've heard this before, that
13 Louisiana has one of the highest per capita electric consumption rates. We use a
14 lot of electricity. There's a couple of reasons for that. One, we have a large
15 industrial load. We're one of the few states that the industrial load comprises the
16 bulk of the actual electricity consumed. And also, and this is a point that the
17 Legislative Auditor pointed out that can't be lost, that seven out of ten Louisiana
18 households rely on electric heating as well. That's not the norm in the country, and
19 you're going to see how that plays out here with these numbers I'm going to provide
20 you. On average, the Louisiana residential customer uses about 46 percent more
21 electricity than the average American. Again, that's based on the fact that we're
22 using electricity for both heating and cooling. But as we said before, our rates are
23 typically among the lowest in the country. And I know Commissioner Campbell's

1 made the point that these rates keep going up and that is absolutely the case, but
2 we're still consistently in that top three or four. The most recent data was from
3 December, I believe -- November or December. Louisiana was fourth, behind
4 Idaho, Utah, and South Dakota this month. New Mexico was actually a little bit
5 higher. A lot of states use a lot of coal. It is what it is on that. Even with some of
6 the highest usage, because the rates are typically low, our average electric bill was
7 16th. That was in the Legislative Auditor's report. Sixteenth in the country, so 16th
8 from the top, not insignificant. But this is what I thought was very interesting in
9 the report, that didn't really get much coverage. In the country, electric rates
10 between 2010 and 2023, that was the timeframe they looked at, have increased 38.6
11 percent. Almost a 40 percent increase in electric rates in the country, Louisiana
12 rates have increased 28.6 percent. So, we're increasing at a much lower level than
13 they are in the country. And another interesting fact, and this was on both the
14 national level and the state level, and I think this has a lot to do a lot with energy
15 efficiency efforts both at the state and local level, even though rates, that kilowatt
16 hour charge, are increasing 38 and 28 %, the average bill is increasing -- has
17 increased 23.8 % in the country and 15.3 % in Louisiana. So, you're seeing a very
18 large increase in the kilowatt hour charge, with a much smaller increase over 13
19 years in the actual total bill. But there was a point in there that I don't want to be
20 lost, and that's about the heating component of this. What would happen if you
21 added heating cost to the total utility bill when you're not using electricity for heat?
22 So, in the country, we use essentially four sources for heat, and I'm not going to
23 use wood. That's actually -- firewood would be another one. I don't think there's

1 any way for EIA to capture that information. But the main sources would be electric
2 heat, natural gas, propane, or fuel oil. The EIA does track fuel oil, natural gas, and
3 propane. So, using that same EIA website that was cited heavily in the audit, there's
4 something called the residential energy consumption survey dashboard, or RECS.
5 I printed out some of the pages the best way I would because I'm not very good
6 with spreadsheets. But I'll show y'all what it looks like and you can get this for
7 any state. So, what it does is it breaks it down under these categories: The total
8 number of housing units, so you can do that by nation as well the state; the average
9 square foot per house; the total site consumption per household; and MMBtu's,
10 million British thermal units, so that's going to factor in both gas and electricity;
11 the percentage of the households that use natural gas as main space heating fuel;
12 the percent that are all electric; and the percent of the households that have air
13 conditioning equipment. So, looking at those factors, and I'm going to focus on
14 the last three. Oh, and also, I'm sorry, the total site expenditures per household.
15 So, for the most recent date on this dashboard, the average household in the U.S.
16 for their utility bill would have been \$1,884 dollars for the year. That average
17 household has -- 51% of the households use natural gas as space heating fuel, 25%
18 are all electric, and 89% have air conditioning. That would come out to \$157
19 dollars a month on average. So, this is an all-in bill. This is your electric bill as
20 well as your heating bill, whether that be gas, fuel oil, or propane. For Louisiana,
21 and again, we were 16th in electric consumption, but when you add in the heating
22 costs as well, our annual expenditures would be \$1,704, that comes out to 142 a
23 month. Now, comparing that to the other states, where 51% of the average

1 household uses natural gas for heating, only 33% of Louisiana uses natural gas;
2 whereas 25% of the households in the country are all electric, 43 are in Louisiana;
3 and whereas 89 percent have air conditioning, surprisingly it's only 93% in
4 Louisiana. I'm not sure how you could make it without air conditioning in
5 Louisiana. So, we're using a lot more air conditioning obviously, and heat as well.
6 So, where does that number fall in? That puts us 38th. So, we have the 38th lowest
7 bills when you add in heating costs. So, we go from 16th, if you just capture
8 electricity, but when you add in the heating, and make it apples to apples with
9 everyone, we drop all the way down to 38th. I pulled the highest and the lowest,
10 just for comparison. Not surprisingly, Alaska is the highest. The average annual
11 bill would be \$3,000. Only 7% have air conditioner, but 57% use natural gas. And
12 I found this interesting, that Colorado is actually the lowest, which is somewhat
13 surprising, but there was a number that jumped out on that and it's 76% of the
14 homes in Colorado use natural gas as heating fuel, and only 10% are all electric.
15 So, moving on from that, and I said those numbers, the average numbers annually.
16 There were also findings on reliability, which is I know something we've talked
17 about quite a bit. Commissioner Lewis has a docket open right now to look at ways
18 we can get more granular looks at reliability. SAIDI and SAIFI were specifically
19 pointed out. They broke it down into the southern region, and looked at that area
20 only, which probably makes sense, because we're dealing with similar weather
21 events, similar types of vegetation. So, on SAIFI, which is the frequency of
22 outages, we had the third highest frequency of outages in the southern region.
23 Mississippi and Tennessee are higher. For the data used, the average outage is one

1 per year, per customer. Louisiana is 1.6. What I thought was interesting is only
2 one southern state was below that national average, and we've talked about them
3 already, it's Florida. So, as we're moving to more reliability, more resiliency, and
4 we're looking towards Florida, it's bearing out in the SAIFI numbers. And it's the
5 same thing with the SAIDI, which is the duration of outages. Mississippi and
6 Arkansas are higher than us. The average is two hours per year, Louisiana is 3.3.
7 And again, the only southern state that is below the national average in outages is
8 Florida. One thing the Legislative Auditor did point out is the Commission is
9 addressing a lot of these issues that we're seeing nationally through resilience, pole
10 viability, enhanced metrics to measure reliability. So, they did a good job of
11 looking at all the things we're working at right now. They've pointed out that we've
12 taken actions to help consumers reduce electricity consumption, both through our
13 residential energy efficiency program, as well as the customer centered options on
14 the industrial side to lower that industrial usage. They've also talked about the
15 Commission's recent efforts to diversify energy sources of generation to -- and also
16 to evaluate the state's electric infrastructure. And one thing that was interesting,
17 and when I finish up with this, and then we go to the current rates, where we are
18 now per utility, I don't think this is a surprise to any of you up there, that you are
19 the lowest paid Commissioners in the country, and it's not even close. So, currently
20 the Commissioner's salary is 45,000, with a vehicle allowance on that. That puts
21 it somewhere in the 53,000 salary range. There was a bill that we worked on back
22 in 2008, to increase that to 75,000 annually. It was actually passed by the

1 legislature, but vetoed by the governor. There hasn't been a bill introduced since
2 then.

3 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** Who was the governor there?

4 **SECRETARY FREY:** That would have been Governor Jindal.

5 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** Come on. Speak up.

6 **SECRETARY FREY:** It's Governor Jindal. And if I remember right, I think the
7 legislature may have amended that bill to put a rate increase for themselves as well.
8 It seems that -- Colby, is that accurate? Colby's saying no. So, maybe I'm
9 misremembering that. They did point out our neighboring states though.

10 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** You need to point out, too -- excuse me, you
11 need to point out that we meet once a month. And everybody else usually, like
12 Mississippi, my friends over there, they go to work every day. It's a little bit
13 different. And I'm not saying we don't work, but if you're a public service
14 commissioner in Mississippi, you have a job, you go to the office, you work every
15 day. You don't work with the Staff doing a lot of it -- it's different. That's why
16 we're having a hard time getting a pay raise.

17 **SECRETARY FREY:** Completely agree with that, Commissioner Campbell.
18 That is pointed out that we are part-time as opposed to other states that are full-
19 time. Now, I know part-time is a -- it's a term of art, but in Texas, for example, the
20 average salary is 225,000, Alabama is 99,207, and Mississippi is 95. So, they're
21 about all double, triple, or four times higher -- four times, there you go, in Texas.
22 And some of those, they've looked at that as well. And we've done studies before
23 looking at other states, and they also talked about the budget and staffing challenges

1 that put a burden on the Commission to do its job. So, yes, there's -- we obviously
2 would like reliability to be better, we would like usage to go down. But while that
3 was focused on, there's a lot of good things highlighting what the Commission has
4 done to address all of these issues throughout it, and I thank the auditors for the
5 report they put out. I know they put a lot of effort into it. We worked well with
6 them on the audit. And, you know, they ran this by us to make sure there weren't
7 any glaring errors in it, which we didn't see any glaring errors. I think there was
8 one or two things we pointed out that they corrected. To Commissioner Campbell's
9 question from earlier, so we are a little bit ahead of EIA. Donny puts these together
10 based on filings we get from the utilities. So, in February, and we do technically
11 see a little bit higher rates in February because of the fuel component, the average
12 cost per kilowatt hour was 12.9 cents. And I'm going to look the list, Foster, to see
13 who's the highest and the lowest. It looks like Panola-Harrison is 8.7. It's a big
14 jump from there. They're under an old legacy contract. I think, if I'm looking
15 right, the next lowest would be Northeast at 11.4, DEMCO at 11.9, and the highest
16 looks like it's Point Coupee at 15.9. The others all in the 13, 12 and 13 range.

17 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** Just for the record about pay raises, I voted
18 for a pay raise 200 years ago for the Public Service Commission. And we were
19 making \$24,000 a year. That's what we were making. And I never will forget,
20 how they wore the capitol out, the senate out to get it up to 45.

21 **SECRETARY FREY:** Forty-five.

22 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** And so I voted for the 45 and I'm glad I did.
23 But I mean it was 24,000 up to about 15 years ago.

1 **SECRETARY FREY:** I think it might have been further. I think it might have
2 been the late '80s early '90s that last increase.

3 **COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL:** Yeah, yeah. And people spend millions of
4 dollars to get elected. Now, that doesn't make a lot of sense, and you get paid
5 24,000 or 50,000 today. But, you know, we don't work every day like other people
6 do, or we don't have to, put it that way.

7 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** My turn?

8 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** Yep.

9 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** You know, I had a -- I'm sorry. I ran a business to
10 understand hiring, and firing, and turnover. And if you look at your turnover, and
11 it's people y'all have to -- there's a revolving door. It's because of pay, it's pay
12 scale. I think Taylor Barras knows business, you know, and I think we need to
13 bring that up and ask him. He was a banker. If I went to borrow some money from
14 him, he's looked at the turnover I was having at my company. He'd say, man, I
15 ain't going to loan you any money, you're going to go out of business. You know,
16 and I know it strains y'all and your help, but I'd like to see every one of the Staff
17 get a serious raise. Thank y'all for what y'all do. And as far as I'm concerned,
18 y'all are underpaid. All right.

19 **SECRETARY FREY:** Don't let Johnny hear that. No, I know he's watching. But
20 no, to that point, Commissioner, there was a fundamental change that occurred
21 about four years ago that I think is helping us moving forward and that was the
22 legislature redefining our inspection and supervision fees, which is well -- and the
23 other fees as well, that make up our funding. It's not statutory dedications, this was

1 then Representative Edmonds, now Senator Edmonds' bill as fees for service. And
2 that classification was very important dealing with the sweep issues we had dealt
3 with in the past, and the uncertainty of budgeting associated with that, recognizing
4 the fact that we're not taking any dollars from the general fund. It's the people we
5 regulate who pay into those funds. So, that was important and I think that's helped
6 with some stability. There's also been a lot of efforts on the state level for different
7 classes of employees to increase those pay levels, so hopefully, we're going to see
8 some relief there in the future.

9 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** I wish there was some way we could compare our state
10 to other states. You have some appointed commissioners, some elected. We're
11 elected here, and we have -- I think we have very good rates compared to the rest
12 of America. And I think the people that work here, you all folks deserve a lot of
13 credit for that, helping us. You assist us in every one of these meetings, with
14 recommendations from the Staff and all. You work hard. Anyhow, that's my two
15 cents right there. Okay. Commissioner Lewis?

16 **COMMISSIONER LEWIS:** Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank
17 you, Brandon, for such a thorough, kind of, report. From this report -- I mean, first,
18 I want to thank the auditors for providing this data. I think they put a lot of hard
19 work. I know you and the Staff put in some hard work for them, and this data, I
20 think, showcases some of the work that you talked about we should be doing, and
21 what we need to be doing. I mean, I think one place where this report shows that
22 we need to be doing some better IRP modeling, how that needs to include the best
23 outcomes for all parties. I mean, I think transmission expansion, grid reliability,

1 safe and reliable energy should be at the forefront of everyone's minds. I think as
2 a Commission, we need take some of these data points seriously. I mean, I think
3 we need to look at rules that are looking at more low-cost energy renewables, more
4 demand response, more energy efficiency, better interconnections across the grid,
5 and afford rates. I mean, I thank you for -- I was going to ask you a question, but
6 Chairman Francis got to it about the increase in turnover and if there is work that
7 we need to do looking at those fees to potentially even raise more revenue.
8 Because, I mean, I think as we enter a new era, the demand is coming, right? I
9 mean, if we're talking either about demand growth, we're talking about technology
10 advancements, we're talking about the speed that we need to look at some items. I
11 believe we need the support and the help to be able to look at that and do so. So, I
12 would love to talk with you more about that and how we can go. I mean, I think
13 one place where I just want to really highlight, where I think some of the work has
14 to be done here in Louisiana, was when we looked at -- and you touched on it, when
15 we looked the average monthly residential electric bill and how it was originally
16 16th in the highest. I thank you for adding that different context, but, I mean, I think
17 a place that we have to start doing some work that I've talked about is we're
18 traditionally around five percent late penalties for utility customers. It's one of the
19 highest in the nation. We are seeing that with the expansion of AMI, late fees just
20 seem to be a poor tax if we're going to be honest about it. And so I think we need
21 to really look at that. I think we need to look at customer notifications, customer
22 protections, and so I just wanted to highlight this report as a guiding post for the
23 work that we're here to do, and looking at some of those topics. And so some of

1 the things that -- I'm not going to pull the utilities up here, but I want them to start
2 thinking about utilizing this report is I want to see how you're identifying
3 vulnerabilities in the grid that leads to the reliability issues for major events. And
4 what about outages for fair weather days? I know we are still working on my
5 pending docket to update the SAIFI/SAIDI rules and look at some distribution level
6 data. But that is one of the biggest concerns that I hear quite often. I think,
7 secondly, we need to really take another examination at what hedging methods we
8 are using to ensure that natural gas price fluctuations are not making customers over
9 exposed to these price shocks. I mean, I think as we see the increase of AI, data
10 centers, load growth, that gas hedging is going to become a major tenet of how we
11 keep affordability. And then also, I think with freezes, and proposals that are
12 coming potentially from the budget negotiations and Congress, how are we
13 strategizing to planning for possible tariffs and changes in tax credits? I know we
14 have been doing a significant amount of work from what the IRA presented. I
15 applaud a lot of the utilities who are aggressive in going after some of those federal
16 dollars. I particularly want to thank Entergy for applying for multiple GRIP
17 applications. I know we did not receive one, but I know that work was done, and I
18 want to applaud you for that. But I also want us to all think about, if we are losing
19 some of those federal dollars that could've been able to make our grid more reliable
20 and more resilient, what other ways are we doing it to protect our customers? And
21 so those are just some of the things that I took [INAUDIBLE] report, and the last
22 thing I want to do is thank our Staff. I mean, when we look at the pending rule
23 dockets that the auditors listed, the pending applications that the utilities are doing,

1 this is a significant amount of work. As we've identified, we're one of the lowest
2 paid commissioners. From my research, one of the lowest staffed commissions in
3 the country, which makes this work extremely difficult for us to do the people's
4 business of Louisiana and I'm hopeful that this report helps us with our friends in
5 the legislature. And maybe we can pull Commissioner Coussan, since he's fresh
6 from there to help them make some changes for us to ensure that our agency can
7 move forward -- move correctly to meet the needs of the people. But I just wanted
8 to put some of those comments on the record from this report and thank the auditors
9 for bringing awareness of this data and information.

10 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Commissioner Coussan.

11 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** One follow-up. Chairman Lewis mentioned late
12 fees and I think there was some votes taken last year. Obviously, I wasn't part of
13 the Commission. As part of the large negotiation that I read about, there was a
14 reduction in late fees for one of the utilities who was here on a rate case if I'm not
15 mistaken.

16 **SECRETARY FREY:** That's correct.

17 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** So, I just ask if you could comment on that, just
18 remind me what happened.

19 **SECRETARY FREY:** That was -- if I remember, that was part of the Entergy
20 FRP extension. There were some reduction in rate fees there.

21 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** And was that reduction included in this audit
22 that they referenced?

23 **SECRETARY FREY:** I think --

1 **COMMISSIONER LEWIS:** Commissioner Coussan, if I may --

2 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** I don't think it was.

3 **COMMISSIONER LEWIS:** I don't think so because you were --

4 **SECRETARY FREY:** I don't think it was either.

5 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** So, I just want to commend the Commission, for

6 the hard work that they've done to lower the late penalties including Commissioner

7 Lewis, and to protect all of our ratepayers relative to those late fees.

8 **SECRETARY FREY:** You know, I think that the one thing -- and I said it and I

9 want to highlight it again, to your point there, in the Commission's work in the past

10 is -- the most telling thing was the increase both on the bills and the electric rate

11 throughout the country. I mean, it's going up everywhere, but we're not going up

12 at that same level. And in fact, on the chart, you saw increases on a yearly basis,

13 whereas we had a significant drop last year in rates. So, we are -- we're bucking

14 the trend there. Everything is more expensive, we know that, but we are not

15 increasing at the same level as other states or the country as a whole.

16 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Is it true with the numbers you gave -- the numbers you

17 gave, if we increase our gas a little bit, that look like it might result in a net savings?

18 **SECRETARY FREY:** It could. And look, I am not an engineer, but I have heard

19 from people who design the systems that one of the -- and look, I always use this

20 example, anyone who tailgates that runs a generator, not that I've done that, but if

21 you hook up a fan or something to that, and obviously a fan doesn't have a

22 compressor or a TV, it pulls very little juice. But hook a coffee pot to a generator,

23 just a coffee pot that has a heating element, and see how much strain it puts on that

1 generator for just a small coffee pot. And it's -- as I appreciate it, electric heating
2 strips are not dissimilar, and particularly if they're older, they're going to be less
3 efficient. So, they use a tremendous amount of electricity.

4 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** So, we had a gas stove and a pot of boiling water, we'd
5 save some money?

6 **SECRETARY FREY:** Those don't use as much and actually, on that dashboard,
7 you can actually look at hot water as well. It's a fascinating -- I mean, I seriously
8 encourage people to look at that website. There's so much information. It's hard
9 to sift through it sometimes, but on that chart, I could've broken that down and saw
10 how much the average customer in each state pays on hot water heating. I mean,
11 you can break it down that granular.

12 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** I think you may have a move and go back to drip pots,
13 you know. Well, I'll tell you, I'm pro gas. I'm not afraid or ashamed to say that,
14 so let's get out there and put out some more gas lines in. We're putting in a bunch
15 of transmission lines, put in some more gas lines. Get some more gas moving.
16 We've got to help our ratepayers. Okay. Next one, Kathryn.

17 **MS. BOWMAN:** So, still under Exhibit Number 12, we do have an update
18 regarding how the grid performed during the recent Gulf Coast blizzard of 2025.
19 And, Chair, you asked for just a brief report and summary for the three IOU's and
20 the two LDC's, so I guess I'd ask the three IOU's to come up first. Just introduce
21 yourself first, please.

22 **MR. HAND:** I'm happy to go first. I'm Larry Hand, again, on behalf of Entergy
23 Louisiana, and I'll give my report. As y'all know, we do have an LDC operation

1 in the Baton Rouge area currently, which is subject to a transaction with Delta
2 Utilities. So, I'll report on that at first, and then cover the electric grid. With regard
3 to the gas system in Baton Rouge, we didn't experience any significant issues
4 during the snowstorm. We had recently completed a lot of projects that allowed us
5 to more closely monitor the system and, you know, monitor, take actions as needed.
6 Following the storm, even though we didn't have issues, we've been kind of
7 following up to harden parts of it with different equipment so to avoid any potential
8 issues, hopefully. The weather is getting colder tonight, though I don't think we'll
9 experience the same thing. So, the gas system performed very well. I know there's
10 -- were summer storms and sometimes a concern that too many generators kicking
11 on will draw down the system. And that kind of goes into the electric side of the
12 house for Entergy Louisiana. During that winter event, we had peak outages across
13 the state. Relative to our 1.1 million customers, we had 6,500 customers out at
14 peak, and that peak occurred on Wednesday. That's January 22 at 8:45. The
15 following day, at 7:00 P.M., we had restored all the customers, except for about
16 100. So, largely knocked them out pretty quick. And thankfully, I think for all of
17 us, the weather we experienced was a very light, dry snow, and was windy. It
18 blowed it off. It blew it off of the conductors and so forth, so I think we were
19 fortunate. Regarding our generation fleet, Entergy's generation portfolio is about
20 12,000 megawatts of capacity. It performed very well during this event. As y'all
21 recall, following Winter Storm Uri, this Commission opened a docket to make sure
22 utilities that owned generation took steps to make sure it was winterized to kind of
23 correct any flaws we had in terms of the winterization. We frankly don't experience

1 -- most of the plants, gas plants, and coal plants in Louisiana are denied to let more
2 air in to cool it off, but when you have the cold weather, we learn we need to protect
3 wind blocks, things like that. So, we spent, following Winter Storm Uri, in the
4 years following, we spent significant amount of money to harden those points. And
5 as a result of that, we experienced winter temps at those generators even below
6 what we saw in Uri and didn't see what I would call freeze related outage during
7 the event. So, at all times during the event, Entergy had online and/or available to
8 MISO to dispatch, more generation than we had load on our system. So, I think
9 we're pretty pleased with the results of course. Nothing is ever perfect, and so we
10 -- we're going back through looking for lessons learned, if there are any, and to
11 make it better for next time. So, that's my report, pending any questions.

12 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Thank you.

13 **MR. MARK KLEEHAMMER:** Mark Kleehammer on behalf of CLECO. I will
14 echo most of the things that Larry mentioned. You know, every storm is different.
15 You prepare for the worst and hope for the best, and in this case, I think we had the
16 best. He mentioned the type of snowfall. Snow is not nearly as damaging as sleet
17 or freezing rain is to utility assets and the vegetation around it. So, we faired fairly
18 well, even though it was -- we had eight inches of snow in the Slidell, St. Tammany
19 region, which is the most in 130 years. We had a peak of about 893 customers
20 affected. I will say that, on average, our customers were restored within two hours.
21 That is a very, very different story than what we had in Uri years ago. A lot of that
22 had to do with generation. We were in the same boat where we had excess
23 generation in five of the six days of the storm. First one, was the first day when we

1 were ramping up a little bit. Part of that is due to committing Madison 3 in advance
2 for reliability purposes. It is also due to a lack of gas interruptions that we all saw
3 during Uri, and better performance, because we spent -- as did Entergy, CLECO
4 spent about \$6 million on winterization since the 2021 storms, which is installing
5 heat tracing devices, and improving insulation on piping, installing power blankets,
6 upgrading the wind breaks that he's mentioned, and generally replacing and
7 upgrading existing freeze protection equipment. Regarding the costs, if you recall
8 in Uri, we had significant pricing issues. LMP's were very high, generation was at
9 a premium, gas prices were very high. We did have gas prices spike, they averaged
10 about \$10 over those few days. However, I think we've mitigated the effect that
11 will -- customers will see through our fuel adjustment clause, partially by dedicating
12 Madison 3, which is a solid fuel unit, partially through hedges, partially through the
13 use of gas storage. In 2021, CLECO came to the Commission, and asked to defer
14 some of the cost for fuel because we had calculated fuel adjustment clause of \$84.
15 At this point, our estimate for next month is probably \$42, exactly one half of that.
16 So, again, very, very good performance by all of the units. I'd like to thank
17 everybody who works on the company, the frontline workers who were out there
18 restoring power, who did a great job, and the folks who are keeping the plants on,
19 which is very beneficial to customers. Going back a little bit, in our rate case, we
20 did modify the late fees. So, that is a big deal that CLECO took on last year. And
21 when you balance reliability and cost, I will just say we are very, very focused on
22 value for our customers. We take reliability extraordinarily seriously. CLECO is
23 the only utility in this state to have met or exceeded the SAIDI and SAIFI goals for

1 all 25 years since inception. And in 2024, we exceeded both SAIDI and SAIFI by
2 about 20, 25%. And that's a little bit of an uptick from the prior year -- better than
3 the prior year when we were dealing with some of the proactive measure to deal
4 with wildfires. So, I'm very proud of the performance and, you know, again, it's
5 easy to give a report when things went well, but they really did go well this year.

6 **MR. BRYAN BLANTON:** Hello. Bryan Blanton on behalf of SWEPCO. So,
7 echoing the same comments about the weather, we're very fortunate with the storm
8 that came through. So, SWEPCO experienced a total of 36,000 out, but in
9 Louisiana, it was just 9,500 with 8,800 of those customers in Shreveport district,
10 and then 750 in the valley district. So, the rest was in Texarkana, Arkansas,
11 Texarkana, Texas, and it was all vegetation related. All power was restored in
12 Louisiana within 8 hours, and then in Arkansas, it was 48 hours. SWEPCO
13 generation fleet: No operational issues at all. Everything performed well, and we
14 had all of our base contract crews, veg crews, and mutual assistance crews on
15 property.

16 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** I'll tell you, we need to get out there and blow a horn,
17 nobody else is going to do it. You need to get some folks to go to these Kiwanis
18 Club, Rotary Club, all these others and share a lot of this information out there. We
19 need to get it out. Commissioner Coussan?

20 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First, I want to
21 commend each of you and your companies. I want to commend many of the utilities
22 who aren't represented here at the table, from the co-ops to the small water utilities,
23 to other gas companies. And I'm not going to reiterate what you've already said

1 were the successes, but from my perspective, I want to commend you on the
2 communication that me and my Staff received, and the PSC Staff received because
3 it helps from an emergency response standpoint and that's critical, you know. It's
4 kind of funny, my first storm as a PSC member is a blizzard, you know, so I'll
5 always remember that. And so it provided some unique challenges as far as
6 accessibility, you know, to get to the lines, the poles, and to get to the transformers
7 and the breakers that were out. Fortunately, those were the types of problems we
8 were dealing with, but the communication that you gave me was able to leverage,
9 again, our communication with DOTD and with other local municipalities about
10 how we're going to get to those different locations, what bridges do we need to
11 open first, where do we need to send the tractors and the plows to get the roads
12 clear first so that we can get our constituents back up and running as quickly as we
13 can. So, I just wanted to commend you on the communication. Moving forward, I
14 think -- you know, I want to definitely improve and look at how we can improve
15 our communication, which I think is already there from the PSC Staff with
16 GOHSEP, and also with other local emergency response teams. Lafayette, we're
17 kind of fortunate to have our own Office of Emergency Preparedness in Lafayette.
18 Many of you know that because you communicate with them. But Lafayette was
19 also grateful that I was able to provide them with information from utilities that
20 don't report to the city of Lafayette, but right outside of Lafayette. And I was able
21 to give them that information because, as you know, Lafayette provides a lot of
22 services to surrounding communities and parishes as well. So, with that, I just want

1 to say thank you to each of you and, again, thank you to your staffs that did all the
2 heavy lifting on the ground during this storm.

3 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Commissioner Skrmetta.

4 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** Yeah. Just one thing I wanted to add. When
5 we were communicating, and I believe this was an Entergy issue, the grid itself
6 actually performed well, like you said, because it was more of a powder event
7 versus ice. But we also found that we -- the outages that we did experience, several
8 of them were from vehicles going off the road and actually taking out power poles
9 and knocking poles down. And then -- which was not related to a just -- you know,
10 vegetation issues. We had, you know, problems with poles being knocked down
11 and wires coming down, but, you know, commend you on very quickly getting
12 those poles back up. But when those poles come down, a lot of people go out
13 without power that, you know, is not relevant to the grid failing in and of itself. It
14 was an outside, you know, impact of a vehicle collisions. So, you know, thank you
15 very much for the crews that, you know, were able to get out there very quickly,
16 get a new pole up very quickly, and replace the wires. And I just wanted to tell
17 you, you know, and repeat the other commendations on this, but everybody did a
18 really good job on this, and, you know, thank goodness it was the kind of storm it
19 was. Otherwise, I think, if this had been a combination of ice and snow, we'd have
20 a much different result on this kind of discussion. Thank you.

21 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Commissioner Lewis.

22 **COMMISSIONER LEWIS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I first want to thank also
23 all the utilities for responding promptly and quickly to this extreme weather event.

1 I want to say that communication, at least over the tenure, has gotten significantly
2 amazing for us to be able to respond. And then also, when we're able -- vise-versa
3 when the communication comes to us, the timeliness. I'm really curious because I
4 know we've started to have some conversations about this around vegetation. I
5 know this is going to be a topic for the Commission in the upcoming months. And
6 so I know that it may not pertain to this storm, but if it does, I would just be kind
7 of curious on what was the, like, the divide between those outages that we would
8 count more just from the weather event versus those that would have some type of
9 vegetation management issues. And so, I won't ask you for that today, but if you
10 can look through that or if you have comments from the data that you saw, I'd be
11 interested in that. So, I'll stop there before I ask something else.

12 **MR. HAND:** Commissioner, it won't be scientific, but certainly to your point, the
13 vegetation was an issue, because even with the lighter snow, it does weigh down
14 branches. So, if you have branches overhanging, gets in two spans of conductors,
15 and you have an outage. So, vegetation was a big cause of the outage. We also
16 saw just with the -- you know, for ELL, we set a new winter peak load of 9,700
17 megawatts, which was our all-time peak, and it's not too far off of our all-time
18 summer peak, just to give you an example of how much electricity was being used.
19 And sometimes, that leads to overloading of transformers and substations, or on
20 poles. So, a lot of transformers were -- you know, they were pulling, you know,
21 electricity beyond the rate of capacity, so some transformer issues. And lastly, as
22 Commissioner Skrmetta said, despite a lot of good-hearted Cajuns having four-
23 wheel drive pick-up trucks, they're not trained to drive in the ice and snow. So,

1 many of the poles that we did lose, which is the most time-consuming restoration
2 is to go set a new pole, and challenging conditions were caused by public --
3 members of the public vehicle accidents.

4 **COMMISSIONER LEWIS:** Mark, anything?

5 **MR. KLEEHAMMER:** [NO AUDIBLE RESPONSE]

6 **COMMISSIONER LEWIS:** Same, yeah, and I figured that. And so I ask that
7 because I think one of the things that I would like this Commission to do -- and I
8 know I've talked with Secretary Frey about inviting Dr. Lawrence Kahn from
9 Tulane, one of the only vegetation management study professors to talk about this,
10 because I know this is going to be an ongoing issue and not just for weather events.
11 I mean, I know we've been -- the Commission has been engaged with the select
12 committee on beetles at the legislature because they have played a significant role
13 surprisingly in vegetation management and causing outages. So, I see this as a
14 holistic problem that is not just as frequent as we looked at. So, I wanted to thank
15 you for your timeliness, and then also I want us all collaboratively -- I think the
16 outage map that we have on the Commission is such a great tool. I know if we got
17 some more resources, we can do more. And so, I would love to work with my
18 colleagues in the Commission to see potentially -- I know the legislators appreciate
19 that tool but -- and Jessica works so hard on it to make sure that we can build a
20 system that is actually producing a lot more data and information that we can get
21 out to the services that Commissioner Coussan talked about that our local
22 governments do. So, while this one was not catastrophic, I do -- I appreciate the
23 work that allows us to build in systems and structures for when we do potentially

1 have something that's a little bit more catastrophic that allows us to get that
2 information out there. So, thank you, and thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** All right. Anything else? [NONE HEARD] Thanks,
4 fellas.

5 **MR. HAND:** Thank you.

6 **MR. KLEEHAMMER:** Thank you.

7 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Okay. Kathryn.

8 **MS. BOWMAN:** And then we asked Atmos and CenterPoint as well just to give
9 a brief update on how the natural gas grid did as well.

10 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Yeah, come on up.

11 **SECRETARY FREY:** And while they're coming up, you know, one thing, I had
12 stepped out, but I think Larry may have touched on this briefly. Winter Storm Uri,
13 I guess, which would be the most recent event to compare this to, we had Max Gen
14 events, both in SPP and MISO where all generation that could run, was running.
15 We had some curtailment load issues. I don't think we ever got past conservation
16 operations in need of MISO or SPP in this event. So, the grid itself performed much
17 better than it did in Uri, despite the widespread cold. I just -- that's more of a facet
18 of the cold weather than anything.

19 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Hey, fellas. What's your story?

20 **MR. BRIAN FRANCIS:** All right. Well, good afternoon, Commissioners.

21 **MS. BOWMAN:** There you go. Thank you.

22 **MR. FRANCIS:** Sorry about that. Good afternoon, Commissioners. Brian
23 Francis, vice president, rates and regulatory affairs for Atmos Energy. As you're

1 aware, Louisiana experienced extreme cold weather events in January, during the
2 weeks of January 6 and January 20, including the historic record snowfalls of
3 Winter Storm Enzo. In the days leading up to the winter weather events, Atmos
4 took a number of steps to prepare its system ahead of time including: We examined
5 our systems and our gas supply; we pulled ahead work orders, so that customer
6 work orders would be completed ahead of this storm; and in addition, we
7 voluntarily suspended disconnects in the days ahead of the storm. During the storm,
8 we continued to monitor our systems and we provided operational resources where
9 needed and continued to suspend non-emergency disconnects per Commission's
10 General Orders around extreme weather. As a result of the work leading up to these
11 events, Atmos' systems performed very reliably during the winter storm. Gas
12 supply was uninterrupted and on the whole, our gas system pressures remained
13 within limits to provide reliable service. While we did experience two localized
14 service outages, these impacted less than one half of one percent of our total
15 customer base. And for the majority for these customers, we had power back on
16 within eight hours, and for all available customers, we had power -- gas service
17 back on within 24 hours. So, in events like this, as Commissioner Coussan
18 mentioned, Atmos always works with the Commission to keep you all informed of
19 what's going on and how we're responding to it. Utilities is a 24/7 business, and
20 Atmos Energy crews and employees worked hard to coordinate with state and local
21 officials. We communicated with customers and we performed safe repairs so that
22 our system reliability would be there and that we would be the safest provider of
23 natural gas. That's my prepared remarks. Any questions?

1 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Francis, are we related?

2 **MR. FRANCIS:** You might be my uncle. For the record, no, sir.

3 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** I was trying to help you with the gas, but we're in
4 trouble now. Yeah, I got a [INAUDIBLE] --

5 **MR. FRANCIS:** I appreciated your comments earlier, yes, sir.

6 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** So, I know we had an interesting thing happen during
7 the storm. A lot of the generators on these homes didn't have enough gas because
8 there was such a suction on the gas line for the cold weather, so. And I'm sure y'all
9 are addressing that. Is there anything being done about putting larger lines in or
10 more lines?

11 **MR. FRANCIS:** Yes, that's a great question, Commissioner. And that is
12 something that's on our radar, and we're currently examining that. To your point,
13 a whole home generator, when it kicks on, that could be six to eight times the load
14 on our gas system versus just normal gas usage. So, we are talking with our
15 operations and customer service teams for ways to identify how many of our
16 customers have whole home generators and what areas those are in, and then, we'll
17 address how to best handle those. I do know that I've talked with our gas supply
18 specialist, who y'all may know. He was my predecessor, Shawn Audibert, but we
19 talked about gas supply in these situations with snow storms and hurricanes. And
20 we have had a really good success of having good constant gas supply for customers
21 during such weather events. But it is an issue that's on our radar and we're
22 examining further. So, if we need to address anything we will definitely do that.

1 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Well, you know, on electricity, we have a demand
2 charge on electricity to justify building generators and transmission to be fair to
3 everyone and there's no demand charge on natural gas. And I bet you a lot of those
4 folks wouldn't mind paying a demand charge to know they'd have gas during a
5 hurricane or the cold weather. Okay. Well, I don't want to take up all the time.
6 Go ahead. Oh, I'm sorry.

7 **COMMISSIONER LEWIS:** No, no, no. Thank you and thank you, Mr.
8 Chairman. I was actually going to, Brian, ask you a question very similar to the
9 Chairman. And so, I guess my question is I know there's been some issues of
10 identifying where those generators are, especially since the permitting process is
11 typically coming from local government, and so I'm curious, what has in your
12 service territory been those conversations with local government and also what
13 should we be doing in some of those conversations? Because, I mean, I think why
14 I find this to be an issue is, especially when we're talking about resource adequacy,
15 right? When we're talking about what that peak demand, I don't think you are
16 making the choices of considering all of the additional demand that would be used
17 from a generator. Especially as we, in the last -- one of the last exhibits talked about
18 how many of our heating and cooling is coming from the electric side. So, I'm
19 trying to see from the gas side what are you looking at, knowing that there's kind
20 of this outside control of your demand that's typically coming from the electric
21 side, because that's where our heating and cooling infrastructure is on.

22 **MR. FRANCIS:** Good question, Commissioner. And that is something that we're
23 looking at, you know. At Atmos, we're very focused on safety and providing

1 reliable service, especially in extreme weather events, winter storms and hurricanes.
2 Specific to any conversations with state and local officials, I'm not as familiar with
3 those conversations myself, but I can certainly come back to you with our
4 operations experts who have had those conversations and get you more details.
5 Certainly, the permitting is one side of it. We're also looking at when we go out to
6 make leak surveys or perform work at homes, just assessing if they have a home
7 generator and tagging that in our system, as well as potentially customer surveys
8 could be another way to find out exactly where that demand load is coming from.

9 **COMMISSIONER LEWIS:** No, and thank you. And while I have you, I also
10 want to thank Atmos for the community meeting you held in my district in
11 Avondale last week about the situation of the explosion. I still -- I know my
12 constituents were very pleased with the information that you provided the updates
13 on the infrastructure that you're updating. And so, while I had Atmos at the table,
14 I wanted to thank you for working with my office, Pastor Brown in Avondale, and
15 the entire Avondale community to address the situation and we hope to continue
16 that work forward.

17 **MR. FRANCIS:** That's fantastic. Thank you, Commissioner. I was there and
18 really enjoyed getting to meet Pastor Brown and the community. And you're
19 correct, the feedback that we got was the community was really appreciative that
20 we were there. We've been transparent with the community and we've been
21 accessible to them, just as a matter of point on that, you know, we had a number of
22 questions just as we were doing construction, how we would return their yards and
23 sidewalks to the shape that they were in prior to any construction that we did. And

1 the next day, we had people in the community, our crews were working and made
2 those adjustments. So, we've been very responsive to the community and we were
3 very appreciative to have a chance to appear in the community and address their
4 questions.

5 **COMMISSIONER LEWIS:** Thank you.

6 **MR. FRANCIS:** Thank you.

7 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** All right. Your turn.

8 **MR. JIM DICHARRY:** Good afternoon. Jim Dicharry with CenterPoint Energy.

9 As you all heard, we had a record storm here recently. CenterPoint serves a lot of
10 south Louisiana. We saw temperatures down as low as four degrees on one reading
11 in Jennings, Louisiana. So, very, very cold temperatures for us. Our system is
12 resilient. We didn't lose any gas systems. We maintained pressure, and we believe
13 this is attributed to investments we made into the system through pipe replacement,
14 pressure improvement projects, and advanced monitoring equipment, where we can
15 identify pressure issues more quickly. The event served as a good data point for
16 us. It's a good test to see how the system would hold up in a record event. We are
17 currently evaluating data right this point to determine if there's any improvements
18 that we can make. I spoke with a gentleman who's been in the company for 43
19 years in our south Louisiana operations, and he mentioned how well the system
20 held up. At this point, the closest next storm was in the '80s and he said it was a
21 market difference now, and a lot of this can be going back to the investment we've
22 made in the system.

1 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Anybody else? Y'all bring us some suggestions on
2 how we can get more gas out in the communities. I think it'll help the overall
3 balance of electricity and gas or fuel. Well, thank y'all for coming.

4 **MR. DICHARRY:** Thank you.

5 **MR. FRANCIS:** Yes, sir, thank you.

6 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Are any of the small gas companies here? South Coast?
7 Is there South Coast here?

8 **MR. RANDY YOUNG:** Yes, Commissioner, they are not here today.
9 [INAUDIBLE]

10 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** We're they here earlier or was it just you here
11 earlier?

12 **MS. BOWMAN:** And to be fair, I did not ask South Coast to be here to talk about
13 Exhibit Number 12, so just --

14 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** They had another exhibit.

15 **MS. BOWMAN:** They did, yes.

16 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** So, I'm just curious if they were here for that
17 and we just didn't catch them or were they well represented?

18 **MR. YOUNG:** Hello, Commissioner. Randy Young on behalf of South Coast Gas
19 and Pierre Part Natural Gas. So, no, I was here today and prepared to answer any
20 questions on the rate issues. But they were not here today and we just were not
21 aware of this topic.

22 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** Fair enough. Well, one of his lines of question
23 affected some of that smaller gas companies, and so just to the extent that they can

1 get back with us on those issues and let us know what the status is of their studies
2 from last year's storms. I think that'd be a good method of communication.

3 **MR. YOUNG:** Yes, Commissioner. I will definitely follow-up with them and
4 provide that information to the Commissioners.

5 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Good. Okay. Good. Randy, thank you.

6 **COMMISSIONER LEWIS:** And I know we're moving to the next exhibit and
7 we didn't call them up, but I did want to, at least in my district, thank DEMCO for
8 their outage reports. I want to say the hourly reports with the locations, with the
9 districts is extremely helpful. Especially for me to communicate with constituents
10 and as we get constituent calls, so I wanted to give a personal shout out to DEMCO
11 for that report. I know at sometimes I'm like oh, wow, it's an email every hour, but
12 I'm not going to complain because if I didn't get it every hour, I'd probably be mad
13 at you. So, to Randy, the team, Jeff, I just wanted to thank you all and all the
14 companies, right? Natural Water, they were -- the Magnolia, the communication
15 was just impressive to give us timely information. So, I didn't want anybody to go
16 unmissed, even though if we didn't call you up here. So, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

17 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** All right. What's next, Kathryn?

18 **MS. BOWMAN:** So, we have a couple of ratifications under Exhibit 12. I will try
19 to make these as brief as possible. The first is a discussion and possible vote to
20 ratify a vote cast by Commissioner Skrmetta acting as the Commission's
21 representative on the organization of MISO States Regional State Committee of
22 MISO. It is for ratification of a vote cast on February 4, 2025 by Commissioner
23 Skrmetta and we followed all the protocols set forth in Special Order 17-2019 to

1 consult with the Chairman and the Secretary prior to the vote. OMS submitted
2 feedback to MISO addressing MISO's expedited resource additional proposal, and
3 those comments supported the proposal, but opposed allowing an extension of the
4 commercial operation date beyond the initial generator interconnection. And based
5 on Staff's recommendations, Commissioner Skrmetta voted against that OMS
6 feedback due to the position on the extension. So, Staff recommends that the
7 Commission ratify Commissioner Skrmetta's vote on February 4, 2025, acting as
8 the Commission's representative, and, Commissioner Skrmetta, please nod if you
9 are abstaining.

10 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** Commissioner Skrmetta abstains in this vote.

11 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Make a motion we accept Commissioner Skrmetta's
12 votes at MISO.

13 **COMMISSIONER LEWIS:** I'll second.

14 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Any objection? [NONE HEARD] Hearing none,
15 moving forward.

16 **MS. BOWMAN:** So, the next vote ratification is a discussion and possible vote to
17 ratify several votes cast by Chairman Francis acting as the Commission's
18 representative on the Regional State Committee of the Southwest Power Pool. This
19 is on for votes taken on February 3, 2025, and again, Staff followed all the protocols
20 set forth in Special Order 17-2019 to consult with the Vice Chair and the Secretary
21 prior to these votes. The voting items are as follows: The first voting item adopted
22 a cost allocation method for provisional load that directly assigns transmission
23 upgrade costs. The second voting item approved a long-term planning reserve

1 margin policy paper, establishing a long-term planning reserve margin to provide
2 load serving entities and state regulators more notice. The third voting item
3 approved a 38% planning reserve margin for the winter season, and a 17 planning
4 reserve margin for the summer season. The fourth voting item approved an
5 expedited resource adequacy study. The fifth voting item approved congestion
6 hedging improvements to give more opportunities to receive long-term congestion
7 rights. And the sixth voting opportunity approved a request for an extension from
8 FERC of the six-month engagement period under the FERC Order 1920. The Chair
9 voted in favor of all of these items. Staff recommends that the Commission ratify
10 Chairman Francis' vote cast on February 3 -- votes cast on February 3, 2025, as the
11 Commission's representative of the SPP RSC, and I'm assuming, Chair, you
12 abstain?

13 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** I abstain.

14 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** Make a motion to accept his [INAUDIBLE] --

15 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Motion by Commissioner Coussan.

16 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** Second.

17 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Seconded by Commissioner Skrmetta. Any
18 discussion? [NONE HEARD] Hearing none, it's approved.

19 **MS. BOWMAN:** We have a couple of RTO ratifications as well. These are
20 ratifications of interventions of the Commission in RTO related or other FERC
21 related proceedings. This is ratifications on behalf of the Commission, and due to
22 the short deadlines allowed for these interventions, if advance Commission
23 approval is not possible, the Executive Secretary might authorize the initial

1 interventions, subject to ratification at a following B&E. Interventions were filed
2 on the Commission's behalf for the purposes of monitoring issues related to MISO
3 and other FERC proceedings in FERC Docket Numbers ER25-937, ER25-943,
4 EL14-12, and EL15-45. Staff recommends that the Commission ratify these
5 actions.

6 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** Move to approve the ratifications in those
7 mentioned dockets.

8 **COMMISSIONER LEWIS:** Second.

9 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Move by Commissioner Skrmetta, seconded by
10 Commissioner Lewis. And discussion or opposition? [NONE HEARD] Hearing
11 none, approved.

12 **MS. BOWMAN:** And we have one last agenda item to get through. It is Exhibit
13 13 and that's Docket Number U-37371. This is Entergy's formula rate plan
14 evaluation report for the test year ending December 31, 2023. It's a discussion and
15 possible vote on an unopposed joint report at the Commissioner Skrmetta's request.
16 On August 27, '24, Entergy filed its evaluation report for the test year and LEUG
17 and OxyChem filed timely interventions. Staff submitted its report on November
18 18, 2024, finding that the test year complied with the provisions of the rate case
19 settlement, and identified two disputed issues. On December 16, 2024, Entergy
20 submitted its response to Staff's report and the company noted that based on
21 discussions with Staff, they believed that each of the issues raised in Staff's report
22 could be amicably resolved. Based on additional information provided by Entergy,
23 related to these two issues, an amicable resolution was reached. On January 14,

1 2025, Staff and Entergy filed the unopposed joint report of Entergy’s test year
2 formula rate plan and noted that all disputed issues had been resolved as there is no
3 rate impact associated with the resolution. Staff recommends that the Commission
4 accept the unopposed joint report filed into the record on January 14, 2025.

5 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Chair moves to accept Staff’s recommendation.

6 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** Second.

7 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Seconded by Commissioner Skrmetta.

8 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** Yes, sir.

9 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Any opposition or further comments? [NONE
10 HEARD] Hearing none, it is accepted. Is that it?

11 **MS. BOWMAN:** We have to have a motion to adjourn.

12 **VICE CHAIRMAN SKRMETTA:** Move to adjourn.

13 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Move to adjourn by Skrmetta.

14 **COMMISSIONER COUSSAN:** Second.

15 **CHAIRMAN FRANCIS:** Second by Coussan. It’s over.

16

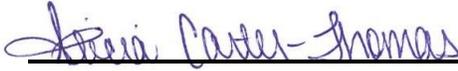
17 **(WHEREUPON THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED)**

18

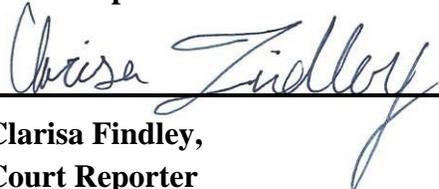
1 I certify that the foregoing pages 1 through 106 are true and correct to the best
2 of my knowledge of the Open Session of the Business and Executive Meeting
3 held on February 19, 2025 in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

4 *****

5 **Rough Draft prepared by:**

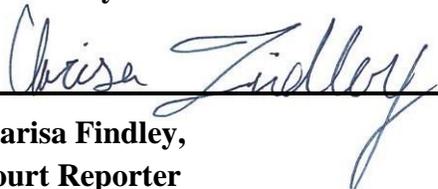
6  March 5, 2025
7 **Alicia Carter-Thomas,** **Date**
8 **Court Reporter**

9  March 5, 2025
10 **Key-Anna Freeman,** **Date**
11 **Court Reporter**

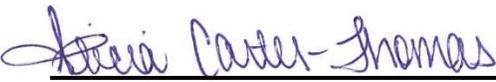
12  March 5, 2025
13 **Clarisa Findley,** **Date**
14 **Court Reporter**

15 *****

16 **Proofed by:**

17  March 7, 2025
18 **Clarisa Findley,** **Date**
19 **Court Reporter**

20 **Finalized by:**

21  March 10, 2025
22 **Alicia Carter-Thomas,** **Date**
23 **Court Reporter**