STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION RALEIGH

DOCKET NO. E-7, SUB 1236 DOCKET NO. E-2, SUB 1228 DOCKET NO. G-9, SUB 767

BEFORE THE NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION

In the Matter of
Application of Duke Energy Carolinas, LLC,
Duke Energy Progress, LLC, and Piedmont
Natural Gas Company, Inc. for Expedited
Approval of Waivers

Only

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ORDER GRANTING
 ADDITIONAL TEMPORARY
 WAIVERS OF SPECIFIC
 PROVISIONS OF
 COMMISSION RULES

BY THE COMMISSION: On March 19, 2020, the Commission issued an Order Suspending Utility Disconnections for Non-Payment, Allowing Reconnection, and Waiving Certain Fees (Waiver Order) in Docket No. M-100, Sub 158. In summary, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and Governor Cooper's Executive Orders 116 and 117, the Waiver Order directed all jurisdictional electric, natural gas, and water and wastewater public utilities to (1) immediately cease customer disconnections for non-payment of bills, (2) waive the application of late fees, (3) suspend individual regulations and tariff provisions that prevent or condition reconnections of disconnected customers, and (4) provide appropriate notice to customers of these changes. The Waiver Order was effective on March 19, 2020.

Also on March 19, 2020, Duke Energy Carolinas, LLC (DEC), Duke Energy Progress, LLC (DEP), and Piedmont Natural Gas Company, Inc. (Piedmont, collectively the Companies) filed a letter in the above-captioned dockets requesting Commission approval to (1) suspend as of March 13, 2020, the disconnection of electric and natural gas service to the Companies' residential and non-residential customers who are unable to pay their bills, (2) waive for both residential and non-residential customers the application of late-payment charges provided for in the Commission's rules and the Companies' rate schedules, (3) allow reconnection of residential and non-residential customers who have recently been disconnected without assessment of a reconnection fee, (4) waive for both residential and non-residential customers the application of fees for checks returned due to insufficient funds, (5) waive for residential customers the transaction fees associated with the payment of electric and gas bills by credit card or debit card, and (6) use flexibility in applying other requirements for restoration of electric and gas services, including the guidelines for re-establishment of credit pursuant to Commission Rules R12-2 and R12-3.

In support of their request, the Companies stated that on March 10, 2020, Governor Cooper issued Executive Order No. 116 declaring a State of Emergency in North Carolina in response to COVID-19. In addition, they stated that the health and well-being of the Companies' customers and employees is their top priority, and that in

furtherance of this priority the Companies propose to implement the above described measures and mitigation strategies for the benefit of their customers and employees. Further, the Companies stated that on March 13, 2020, they ceased disconnecting electric and natural gas service to their residential and non-residential customers for non-payment of bills under the discretion granted by the Commission to DEC and DEP in Commission Rule R12-11(r) and to Piedmont in Rule R12-10 (n).

Finally, the Companies requested that the Commission issue an order on an expedited basis approving their requests, with an effective date of March 21, 2020, for those measures in addition to the suspension of service disconnections, and remaining in effect for all measures while the State of Emergency exists in North Carolina, or until otherwise ordered by the Commission.

On March 20, 2020, in a telephone conversation between counsel for the Companies and counsel for the Commission, counsel for the Companies stated that because of IT requirements the Companies are not able to implement the provisions of the Commission's Waiver Order regarding late fees and reconnection fees prior to March 21, 2020, and, therefore, the Companies requested that those provisions of the Waiver Order and this Order be effective for the Companies on March 21, 2020.

Based on the foregoing, the Commission finds and concludes that the provisions of the Commission's Waiver Order shall apply to DEC, DEP and Piedmont, except as otherwise modified in this Order.

With respect to modifications of the Waiver Order, the Commission finds good cause to order that DEC, DEP and Piedmont shall: (1) cease disconnections of residential and non-residential customers effective March 13, 2020, (2) waive late fees for both residential and non-residential customers, (3) waive for both residential and non-residential customers the fees for checks returned due to insufficient funds, (4) waive for residential customers the transaction fees associated with the payment of electric and gas bills by credit card or debit card, (5) use flexibility in applying the requirements for restoration of electric and gas services, including the guidelines for re-establishment of credit, and (6) implement the waivers and modifications enumerated herein in subparagraphs (2) through (5) effective March 21, 2020.

IT IS, THEREFORE, SO ORDERED.

ISSUED BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION.

This the 20th day of March, 2020.

NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION

Kimberley A. Campbell, Chief Clerk