

1 PLACE: New Hanover County Courthouse

2 Wilmington, North Carolina

3 DATE: Wednesday, July 17, 2019

4 TIME: 7:00 p.m. - 7:41 p.m.

5 DOCKET NO: G-9, Sub 743

6 BEFORE: Commissioner ToNola D. Brown-Bland, Presiding

7 Chair Charlotte A. Mitchell

8 Commissioner Lyons Gray

9 Commissioner Daniel G. Clodfelter

10

11 **IN THE MATTER OF:**

12 Application of Piedmont Natural Gas Company, Inc.,

13 for an Adjustment of Rates, Charges, and Tariffs

14 Applicable to Service in North Carolina, Continuation

15 of its IMR Mechanism, Adoption of an EDIT Rider,

16 and Other Relief

17

18 VOLUME 3

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1 A P P E A R A N C E S:

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8
9 **FOR THE USING AND CONSUMING PUBLIC AND THE**
10 **STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA AND ITS CITIZENS IN**
11 **THIS MATTER OF PUBLIC INTEREST:**

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18 IDENTIFIED / ADMITTED

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P R O C E E D I N G S

COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Good evening.

Let's come to order and go on the record. I am Commissioner ToNola D. Brown-Bland, the Presiding Commissioner for this hearing. With me this evening are Chair Charlotte A. Mitchell; Commissioners Lyons Gray and Daniel G. Clodfelter.

I now call for hearing Docket Number G-9, Sub 743, In the Matter of an Application of Piedmont Natural Gas Company, Inc., hereafter Piedmont or Company, for an Adjustment of Rates, Charges and Tariffs Applicable to Service in North Carolina, Continuation of Its IMR Mechanism, Adoption of Its EDIT Rider, and Other Relief, Pursuant to North Carolina General Statute § 62-133 and Commission Rule R1-17.

On April 1, 2019, Piedmont filed an Application with the Commission requesting that the Commission approve, among other requests, its proposed increase in and revisions to its rates and charges for natural gas service in North Carolina, continuation of its Integrity Management Rider, also known as the IMR mechanism, implementation of a deferral accounting mechanism for certain distribution Integrity

1 Management Program expenses incurred in compliance
2 with the federal safety regulations, and adoption of
3 an Excess Deferred Income Tax Rider mechanism to
4 facilitate return to customers of deferrals in excess
5 deferred income taxes associated with reductions in
6 the state and federal tax rates occurring after the
7 Company's last general rate case.

8 Overall, across all customer classes, the
9 Company seeks a 9 percent increase in annual total
10 revenues to recover its costs. The Company states the
11 increase is necessary primarily due to substantial
12 capital investment in its system since its last rate
13 case in 2013. According to the Company, this
14 investment has been made to accommodate system growth
15 and to comply with federal safety requirements.

16 Filed with the Application were the
17 testimony of Company Witnesses Frank Yoho, Victor
18 Gaglio, Jack Sullivan, Bruce Barkley, Pia Powers,
19 Kally Couzens, Robert Hevert, Daniel Yardley, Dane
20 Watson, and Paul Normand.

21 Carolina Utility Customers Association,
22 Inc., Fayetteville Public Works Commission, Nucor
23 Steele-Hertford, a Division of Nucor Corporation, and
24 Carolina Industrial Group for Fair Utility Rates IV

1 filed Petitions to Intervene in this docket, which
2 were granted by the Commission.

3 The intervention and participation of the
4 Public Staff is recognized pursuant to State Statute
5 and Commission Rule.

6 On April 2nd -- or April 22, 2019, the
7 Commission issued an Order Establishing General Rate
8 Case and Suspending Proposed Rates.

9 On May 16, 2019, the Commission issued an
10 Order Scheduling Investigation and Hearings,
11 Establishing Intervention and Testimony Due Dates and
12 Discovery Guidelines, and Requiring Public Notice.
13 The Order scheduled hearings to receive the testimony
14 from public witnesses, one, for this date and time,
15 Wednesday, July 17, 2019, in Wilmington, last week on
16 July 9th and 10th for High Point and Charlotte,
17 respectively. After the public hearings, the matter
18 will resume in Raleigh on Monday, August 19, 2019 at
19 2:00 p.m., and will continue as required for the
20 testimony and cross examination of the expert
21 witnesses for Piedmont, the Public Staff and other
22 intervenors.

23 On June 10, 2019, the Attorney General for
24 the State of North Carolina filed a Notice of

1 Intervention. And the intervention and participation
2 of the Attorney General is recognized pursuant to
3 North Carolina General Statute § 62-20.

4 In compliance with the State Government
5 Ethics Act, I remind the members of the Commission of
6 our duty to avoid conflicts of interest, and I inquire
7 at this time as to whether any Commissioner has any
8 known conflict of interest with respect to this
9 docket?

10 (No response)

11 The record will reflect that no conflicts
12 were identified.

13 And I now call for appearances of counsel,
14 beginning with Piedmont.

15 MR. JEFFRIES: Thank you, Madam Chairman.
16 My name is Jim Jeffries. I'm with the Law Firm of
17 McGuireWoods and I'm here on behalf of the Applicant,
18 Piedmont Natural Gas Company. I'd also like to
19 introduce two of the folks from Piedmont that are with
20 me here tonight. Mr. Bruce Barkley who's Vice
21 President of Regulatory and Community Relations, and
22 Ms. Pia Powers who's Director of Rates and Regulatory
23 Affairs for Piedmont. And, if I may, Madam Chair,
24 Mr. Barkley and Ms. Powers -- if any of the folks

1 tonight would like to discuss either the matters that
2 are at issue in this rate case, or customer service
3 issues, or anything regarding Piedmont service,
4 Mr. Barkley and Ms. Powers will be happy to discuss
5 that with them after the hearing.

6 COMMISSIONER: Can the folks in the back
7 hear Mr. Jeffries -- heard what he said? All right.
8 They are indicating they could hear.

9 MR. LITTLE: Good evening, Your Honor. My
10 name is John Little. I'm an attorney with the Legal
11 Division, with the Public Staff, and with me tonight
12 is Geoffrey Gilbert with the Natural Gas Division of
13 the Public Staff.

14 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: All right.

15 MS. HARROD: Good evening, Commissioner
16 Brown-Bland and Commissioners. I am Jennifer Harrod,
17 Special Deputy Attorney General. I am representing --
18 I'm here on behalf of the Attorney General and the
19 State of North Carolina, and I represent the Using and
20 Consuming Public, the State and its citizens in this
21 matter of important public interest.

22 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Any preliminary
23 matters to come to our attention?

24 MR. JEFFRIES: Not that I'm aware of, Madam

1 Chair.

2 COMMISSIONER: Mr. Little, have you
3 identified witnesses who wish to speak tonight?

4 MR. LITTLE: Yes, Your Honor. We, so far,
5 have identified six witnesses who wish to speak
6 tonight.

7 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: All right. Just
8 a little bit about the proceedings tonight. These
9 proceedings were scheduled in response to Piedmont
10 having filed an Application for changes in their
11 scheduled rates. And the public -- the proceedings
12 have been scheduled in two parts which include a
13 public hearing portion and an evidentiary hearing
14 portion.

15 The public hearing portion is to -- for the
16 benefit of allowing the Commission to hear from the
17 customers and the people who are affected by the
18 proposed changes that Piedmont is seeking. The
19 hearings are important to us to hear what you think
20 and any issues that you may have regarding the
21 application. It also gives you a chance by bringing
22 matters to our attention that, if you're having any
23 particular issues with the Company, you might have a
24 chance to bring those forward and they can later be

1 dealt with in the proceeding, or as the Company has
2 indicated, they brought Mr. Barkley and Ms. Powers
3 here and they will be happy after the proceeding,
4 after tonight's hearing is over, to speak with you
5 regarding any questions you may have that are related
6 to this case.

7 Just by way of explanation, the Public Staff
8 here, many people get them confused with the
9 Commission itself, but they are separate and apart
10 from the Commission. They are not controlled by the
11 Commission. They do not answer to the Commission.
12 They answer to their own executive director and they
13 represent you, the Using and Consuming Public.
14 They -- at a later time, a couple of days from now I
15 believe, their recommendation in this matter as with
16 regard to this Petition will be due to be filed. And
17 that is something that you will all be able to see on
18 our website. There will be a public filing that will
19 be made.

20 The second portion of the hearing is
21 something that we typically refer to as the
22 evidentiary hearing and that is a hearing where the
23 parties to the case - the Company, the Public Staff
24 and, in this case, the Attorney General - will bring

1 forth, if they choose to, expert witnesses. Expert
2 witnesses are usually accountants, engineers,
3 economists or other specialists. And they bring them
4 forward to speak to the matters that are in the
5 Petition.

6 Going back to the Public Staff, I want you
7 to know that their job and function is to investigate
8 the application, to check behind what the Company has
9 alleged or is seeking, to justify -- or to verify in
10 their minds that -- that the allegations or -- that
11 the allegations in the application are accurate, that
12 the Company has spent money on the assets as they
13 claim, and that they are certain that those assets are
14 being used as part of the system and/or on your
15 behalf.

16 And just about the nature of these
17 proceedings themselves, they, of course, are not in
18 the nature of a protest hearing or a town hall. It is
19 one part of a court proceeding so courtroom decorum is
20 appropriate. You will not be able to ask the
21 Commission or my -- that includes myself or the
22 Commissioners over here to my left, not able to ask us
23 questions anymore than you would ask a judge if you
24 were in a trial proceeding. It's very similar in that

1 respect. When a witness comes forward and provides
2 testimony it will be under oath. The court reporter
3 will take that down verbatim. That statement will
4 also become part of the record and is available
5 publicly and you can see that on our web -- on the
6 Commission's website as well.

7 And, for tonight, and so that we may be
8 consistent as we have been with the other proceedings
9 we held, the witnesses will be time restricted and the
10 time per witness is three minutes. I ask when you see
11 the clock running down -- we have a clock here, it
12 should run down in reverse, when you see that one
13 minute is remaining, if you'll start making an effort
14 to wrap up your statements so you can keep it within
15 the three-minute limit.

16 And the last thing I think that I will bring
17 to your attention is this particular case and the
18 application, as I said is about the Company's request
19 for a rate increase. It is not about the siting of
20 any pipeline, and I understand that sometimes some
21 people are aware of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline and
22 wish to make comments about that, but this proceeding
23 has nothing to do with that. This Commission has
24 nothing to do with that. We're not able to make a

1 decision one way or the other that will have any
2 impact on whether that pipeline is approved or
3 disapproved. So I would ask that you limit what you
4 have to tell us about that. We're here to listen to
5 you. We want to hear what you have to say and we
6 certainly appreciate that you came out to tell us.
7 And with that, Mr. Little, will you please call your
8 first witness.

9 MR. LITTLE: Yes. The Public Staff would
10 call Lynn McIntyre.

11 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Can you get in
12 the box? Be careful. Take your time.

13 MS. McINTYRE: I'm glad I lost some weight.

14 LYNN McINTYRE;
15 having been duly sworn,
16 testified as follows:

17 COMMISSIONER: Mr. Little will get it
18 started for you.

19 MR. LITTLE: Thank you, Your Honor.

20 DIRECT EXAMINATION BY MR. LITTLE:

21 Q Ms. McIntyre, why don't you give us your full
22 name and address for the court reporter, please.

23 A 1113 Dawson, Wilmington.

24 Q And what's your first name?

1 A Lynn.

2 Q And your last name is McIntyre? Spell that,
3 please.

4 A M-C-I-N-T-Y-R-E.

5 Q And are you a customer of Piedmont Gas?

6 A Yes, I am.

7 Q What would you like the Commission to hear from
8 you tonight?

9 A Well, I am against the rate hike, needless to
10 say, and one of the reasons is that on my bill
11 every month there is a fee of \$10.00, and when I
12 called their customer relation lady and asked her
13 what that was for, she told me that was to make
14 up the shortfall of income during the summer
15 months. Now, as you have over a million
16 customers, and she assured me everybody that was
17 a customer paid this, that's an awful lot of
18 money. And I see -- if you get this every month,
19 I don't see any reason why you need to raise the
20 rates for the customers.

21 Q Is there anything else?

22 A No, that's it.

23 MR. LITTLE: Thank you. The Public Staff
24 has nothing further, Your Honor.

1 COMMISSIONER: Mr. Jeffries, do you any --

2 MR. JEFFRIES: No questions of Ms. McIntyre.

3 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Commissioners,
4 any questions?

5 (Shakes heads no)

6 Thank you for coming out, Ms. McIntyre. You
7 may step down, and please be careful.

8 A I hope I don't fall down.

9 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Mr. Little is
10 coming to help you.

11 (The witness is excused)

12 MR. LITTLE: Your Honor, going in order from
13 the sign-in sheet, the Public Staff will call Donna
14 Chavis.

15 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Be careful there.

16 DONNA CHAVIS;

17 having been duly sworn,

18 testified as follows:

19 COMMISSIONER: Mr. Little.

20 DIRECT EXAMINATION BY MR. LITTLE:

21 Q Ms. Chavis, start off with your full name, please.

22 A Donna Chavis.

23 Q Spell that last name for the court reporter,
24 please.

1 A C-H-A-V-I-S.

2 Q And are you a customer of Piedmont?

3 A No, I'm not.

4 Q What -- if you're not a customer, what is your
5 testimony dealing with?

6 A My interest is on behalf of the citizens where I
7 live which is a unit of coverage of Piedmont
8 Natural Gas and the concerns they have related to
9 this rate hike.

10 Q Okay. What would you like to tell the
11 Commission?

12 A And I do have written remarks. I would like to
13 say good evening and it's an honor to be before
14 you tonight, and thank you for your service.

15 You may have seen me in the
16 courtroom at every site --

17 Q Let me remind you there's a three-minute
18 timeline --

19 A I know.

20 Q You should get to either -- hurry up and get to
21 your --

22 A I've timed this. So I will begin. I come
23 tonight as a citizen of the globe, the country,
24 the State of North Carolina, and Pembroke of

1 North Carolina in the County of Robeson. To that
2 end, I am in agreement of the Public Utilities
3 Act of North Carolina. In Section 62-2,
4 declaration of policy number 3a, it states, to
5 that end, to require energy planning and fixing
6 of rates in a manner to result in the least cost
7 mix of generation and demand-reduction measures
8 which is achievable, including consideration of
9 appropriate rewards to utilities for efficiency
10 and conservation which decreases utility bills.

11 And Number 10 goes even further to
12 say, to promote the development of renewable
13 energy and energy efficiency through the
14 implementation of a Renewable Energy and Energy
15 Efficiency Portfolio Standard (REPS) that will do
16 all of the following: Diversify the resources
17 used to reliably meet the energy needs of
18 consumers in the State; provide greater energy
19 security through the use of indigenous energy
20 resources available within the State; encourage
21 private investment in renewable energy and energy
22 efficiency; and, provide improved quality and --
23 improved air quality and other benefits to energy
24 consumers and citizens of the State.

1 It is my considered opinion that
2 Duke's/Piedmont Natural Gas's rate hike request
3 does not meet the obligations set before the
4 Commission as laid out in the Public Utilities
5 Act.

6 You are being asked to give an
7 extraordinary 9 percent rate increase to recover
8 costs related to system growth, pipeline
9 integrity management, infrastructure investments,
10 and safety and security upgrades.

11 In the obligation that energy
12 planning delivers the least cost mix for
13 consumers, gas is no longer the least cost energy
14 source available. When you add the requirement
15 to promote the development of renewable energy
16 and to diversify resources used to meet the
17 energy needs of consumers, the Commission has at
18 least three legal requirements to deny the
19 requested rate hike. The request of a 9 percent
20 rate increase and an increase to a 10.6 rate of
21 return is not only unnecessary and unneeded as --
22 can I finish?

23 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: (Nods head in
24 agreement).

1 A -- unneeded as you heard multiple times in prior
2 comments, but it's also not in the best interest
3 of the consumer of this or the state. It will
4 delay the transition to more diversified
5 resources that indigenous energy resources
6 available within the State.

7 I call on the Commission to rely
8 on the charge that it is given under the Public
9 Utilities Act and deny the requested rate hike.
10 Thank you.

11 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Are there
12 questions for this witness?

13 MR. LITTLE: Nothing further from the Public
14 Staff.

15 MR. JEFFRIES: No questions, Madam Chairman.

16 A Thank you.

17 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Thank you,
18 Ms. Chavis. We're glad you came out tonight.

19 (The witness is excused)

20 MR. LITTLE: Next, the Public Staff would
21 call Nita Dukes.

22 NITA DUKES;
23 having been duly sworn,
24 testified as follows:

1 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Mr. Little.

2 DIRECT EXAMINATION BY MR. LITTLE:

3 Q Give us your full name and address for the
4 record, please.

5 A My name is Nita Dukes. I live at 194 North
6 Hillcrest Road in Siler City.

7 Q And will you spell your first name for us?

8 A N-I-T-A.

9 Q And what would you like to say to the Commission
10 tonight?

11 A Well, mine's kind of like more to Duke Power even
12 though -- and I do get Duke Power. I don't get
13 gas, but I do get Duke Power. But you mentioned
14 the Atlantic Coast Pipeline and people should not
15 be -- this is not what's supposed to be addressed
16 tonight. So you've heard -- I'm sure you've
17 heard some people elsewhere talk about the
18 fracking, the environment.

19 But my -- but I'm in awe of Duke
20 Power. I really think they've pulled a good one
21 off and I -- I -- my hats off to them because,
22 first, they convinced FERC that the ACP was
23 necessary as a fuel source for its gas-fired
24 power plants. Even though Dominion who's their

1 partner cut its demands by an equivalent of two
2 large gas-fired power plants to run through
3 Virginia, and North Carolina is now -- has a
4 booming solar industry which decreases the need
5 for gas-fired power plants, which may make the
6 ACP project possibly obsolete before it's even
7 completed.

8 But what I really love about what
9 Duke has done is they'll have a guaranteed
10 revenue stream, income stream for decades.
11 They -- for something that they don't even
12 probably -- may not even need due to the other
13 pipelines that are running through. They're
14 going to make a lot of money for their officers
15 and investors and help make up for some of the
16 loss probably that they suffered last year
17 because -- how do they do that? Well, they get a
18 15 percent guaranteed rate of return from
19 FERC but I -- I'm sorry, by the FERC guidelines.
20 First, they make the public pay for the pipeline
21 which is somewhere around \$8 billion now and then
22 they get the 15 percent rate of return until it
23 reaches full depreciation. So the -- the
24 shareholders and the officers are going to be

1 more than happy to share that revenue. That's
2 without even putting gas through the lines. Once
3 they put -- they don't even have to put that,
4 that's not a requirement. So once they put gas
5 through the lines, they not only make that 15
6 percent, they also can sell the gas and make
7 revenue off of that.

8 So what do they need the money
9 for? If they're going to make money through the
10 pipeline, why do they need to raise more of our
11 rates when we're paying for the pipeline and
12 they're getting the 15 percent, and we're paying
13 15 percent actually? It's just easy money for
14 them. So, hopefully, maybe they can -- the
15 profit that they make will help Lynn Good and her
16 staff and her shareholders go back to the revenue
17 that they once enjoyed, with a 55 percent
18 increase.

19 Anyway, but the -- so, even with
20 the cost of -- they've had some cost for delays,
21 that 15 percent will help pay for that, so either
22 way they are going to break even or make money.
23 So what do they need that increase for? But
24 anyway, so when you look at the business model

1 they've created quite the business model for
2 themselves but not for the general public that
3 has to pay for this.

4 I would like to --

5 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Ms. Dukes --

6 A -- quote Abraham Lincoln who said *you can fool*
7 *some of the people some of the time and you can*
8 *fool all of the people some of the time*, but that
9 last statement, *you cannot fool all of the people*
10 *all of the time*. Thank you.

11 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Are there any
12 questions for this witness?

13 MR. LITTLE: No, Your Honor.

14 MR. JEFFRIES: No questions.

15 A I would like to state that I got my resources
16 from the Southern Environmental Law Center.

17 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Thank you,
18 Ms. Dukes.

19 (The witness is excused)

20 MR. LITTLE: Next, the Public Staff would
21 call Amanda Robertson.

22 MS. ROBERTSON: These are a copy of my
23 remarks and I've got a copy of the report I'd like to
24 share with the Commissioners. I think there's enough

1 for everybody here to have one as well. Thank you.

2 AMANDA ROBERTSON;

3 having been duly sworn,

4 testified as follows:

5 DIRECT EXAMINATION BY MR. LITTLE:

6 Q Give us your full name and address, please.

7 A Amanda Robertson, 244 Prince Creek in Pittsboro,
8 North Carolina 27312.

9 Q And are you a customer of Piedmont?

10 A No.

11 Q And what would you like to tell the Commission
12 tonight then?

13 A I am here, even though I'm not directly impacted
14 by the rate hike, I am impacted by the rate hike
15 because it represents further infrastructure and
16 continued use of natural gas and a fossil fuel
17 that is frankly destroying the planet.

18 I have shared with you a 2050
19 scenario report. This is a scientific security
20 risk analysis from the National Centre for
21 Climate Restoration in Australia. It came out a
22 couple of months ago. You guys might have heard
23 about it through CNN and other sources. That's
24 the actual report. It anticipates climate change

1 impacts from known factors to project an outcome
2 for this planet and impacts on humanity 30 years
3 hence by 2050.

4 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Ms. Robertson,
5 you might want to slow down just a tad so she can
6 catch it.

7 A Sorry. Sorry.

8 I use this as a basis of my own
9 testimony today and will be quoting directly from
10 this report.

11 "Recently, attention has been
12 given to a "hothouse Earth" scenario, in which
13 system feedbacks could drive the Earth System
14 climate to a point of no return, whereby further
15 warming would become self-sustaining. This
16 "hothouse Earth" planetary threshold could exist
17 at a temperature rise as low as 2 degrees
18 Celsius, possibly even lower."

19 In this spirit, the report
20 sketches a 2050 scenario.

21 2020-2030: "The agreement in
22 the Paris Accords is politely ignored." By
23 "2030, carbon dioxide levels have reached 437
24 parts per million - they're right now at about

1 416, which is unprecedented in the last 20
2 million years, and warming reaches 1.6." It's
3 currently at 1.06.

4 And 2030-2050: They share that
5 this trajectory we will be at 3 degrees above
6 Celsius by 2050.

7 By 2050, "the hothouse Earth"
8 scenario has been realised." This is 30 years
9 from now.

10 "Thirty-five percent of the global
11 land area, and 55 percent of the global
12 population, are subject to more than 20 days a
13 year of lethal conditions, beyond the threshold
14 of human survivability.

15 The destabilisation of the jet
16 stream is impinging on life support systems in
17 Europe.

18 North America suffers from
19 devastating weather extremes including wildfires,
20 heatwaves, drought, and flooding." Huh.

21 "Aridification emerges over more
22 than 30 percent of the world's land surface.
23 Desertification is severe across the
24 south-western United States.

1 A number of ecosystems collapse,
2 including the coral reef systems, the Amazon
3 rainforest and the Arctic.

4 Deadly heat conditions persist for
5 more than 100 days a year in" much of the world,
6 "which together with land degradation and sea
7 level rise contributes to perhaps a billion
8 people being displaced.

9 Water availability decreases
10 sharply in the most affected regions at lower
11 latitudes, including the subtropics such as
12 Florida, affecting about two billion people
13 worldwide."

14 "Food production is inadequate to
15 feed the global population and food prices
16 skyrocket."

17 There is "a catastrophic decline
18 in insect populations, desertification, monsoon
19 failure and chronic water shortages, and
20 conditions too hot for human habitation and
21 significant food-growing regions."

22 Nations "around the world will be
23 overwhelmed by the scale of change and pernicious
24 challenges, such as pandemic disease.

1 The internal cohesion of nations
2 will be under great stress, including the in
3 United States, both as a result of dramatic rise
4 in migration and changes in agricultural pattern
5 and warming -- water availability.

6 The flooding of coastal
7 communities around the world, especially in the
8 Netherlands, the United States, South Asia, and
9 China, has the potential to challenge regional
10 and even national identities. Armed conflict
11 between nations and other -- over resources ...
12 "is likely and nuclear war is possible."

13 This scenario provides a glimpse
14 into a world of outright chaos on a path to the
15 end of human civilization and modern society as
16 we have known it, in which the challenges to
17 global security are simply overwhelming and
18 political panic becomes the norm.

19 What can be done to avoid such a
20 probable but catastrophic future? It is clear
21 that dramatic action is required this decade if
22 the "hothouse Earth" scenario, this decade, if
23 it's to be avoided.

24 But all you must ask -- all you

1 must ask - is there a need for this service and
2 is the cost reasonable? I say it's not
3 reasonable. This is a terrifying future.

4 And I hope you'll read the report
5 I attached and you can do the research yourself.
6 Because as somebody that's been fighting climate
7 for years, and years, and years, and I read it,
8 and I shifted from a path of migration or
9 mitigation to one that is really going to try now
10 and help communities adapt, because this is what
11 we are going to face if we let them control the
12 future of our energy. Thank you.

13 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Thank you, Ms.
14 Robertson. Are there questions for this witness?

15 MR. LITTLE: None from the Public Staff.

16 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: She has handed
17 out a policy paper that's entitled Existential
18 climate-related security risk: A scenario approach,
19 written by David Spratt and Ian Dunlop.

20 MR. LITTLE: Yes, I believe she referred to
21 it extensively during the testimony so the Public
22 Staff would ask that that be marked as Public Staff
23 Exhibit 1, pending any objections entered into the
24 record.

1 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Let's identify it
2 as Robertson Exhibit 1.

3 MR. JEFFRIES: We have no objection, Madam
4 Chairman.

5 (WHEREUPON, Robertson Exhibit 1 is
6 marked for identification.)

7 MR. JEFFRIES: I do have a question for
8 Ms. Robertson when it's appropriate.

9 CROSS EXAMINATION BY MR. JEFFRIES:

10 Q Ms. Robertson, do you have any affiliation with
11 the authors of this study?

12 A I do not.

13 Q Okay. Thank you.

14 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Questions by the
15 Commission?

16 (Shakes heads no)

17 Thank you, Ms. Robertson. Thank you for
18 coming out.

19 A Thank you.

20 (The witness is excused)

21 MR. LITTLE: Next, the Public Staff would
22 call Andy, is it McGlimon (spelled phonetically).

23 ANDY McGLINN;

24 having been duly sworn,

1 testified as follows:

2 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Mr. Little.

3 DIRECT EXAMINATION BY MR. LITTLE:

4 Q Tell us your name and address, please.

5 A My name is Andy McGlinn. I live at 3901 River
6 Front Place, here in Wilmington.

7 Q And spell your last name for us, please.

8 A M-C-, capital G-, L-I-N-N.

9 Q And are you a customer of Piedmont?

10 A I am.

11 Q What would you like for the Commission to hear
12 from you tonight?

13 A I have some written statements, if I can read
14 that?

15 Q Sure go ahead.

16 A So I am a volunteer leader with the Cape Fear
17 Sierra Club. As you know, Sierra Club is the
18 nation's oldest and largest environmental
19 advocacy organization. And I'm opposing this
20 unjust rate hike.

21 Fracked gas is dirty, dangerous,
22 one of the biggest contributors to climate
23 crisis. It makes sea level rise faster,
24 hurricanes stronger, heatwaves hotter. Here in

1 eastern North Carolina, that means we are more
2 threatened by hurricanes, flooding and
3 disappearing beaches. This threatens our
4 economy, our homes and even our lives.

5 Fracked gas is also linked to
6 negative health effects like premature birth,
7 breathing problems and even cancer.

8 Instead of locking us into decades
9 of dependence and polluting fossil fuels, PNG and
10 Duke should invest in clean renewable energy
11 technologies like wind and solar that are
12 affordable and abundant.

13 Nevertheless, not only are PNG and
14 Duke doubling down on antiquated technology, they
15 want to raise the rates for us to pay for them.
16 These rate increases have the biggest impact on
17 those who can least afford it and line the
18 pockets of polluting corporations that already
19 rake in billions of dollars of profits.

20 The fracking, the plastic pipeline
21 is a continuous contaminant cycle that is putting
22 our water, air, and the future of our planet in
23 severe danger. For the sake of our wallets, our
24 health, and our climate, our communities -- and

1 our communities the Commission should reject
2 these rate hikes.

3 Lastly, as a consumer of Piedmont
4 and Duke, I fully expect that if a rate increase
5 is granted that I, like all Carolinians, will see
6 an increase also on my Duke -- the Duke side of
7 my bill because they will claim that their fuel
8 costs have risen, even though it's really going
9 from their right pocket to their left pocket. So
10 I encourage you to reject this rate increase.
11 Thank you.

12 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Are there any
13 questions for this witness?

14 MR. LITTLE: No, Your Honor. No questions.

15 MR. JEFFRIES: No questions.

16 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Mr. McGlinn,
17 thank you for coming out, and we're glad you could let
18 us know how you feel.

19 (The witness is excused)

20 MR. LITTLE: The next would be Jeff Currie.

21 JEFFERSON CURRIE;

22 having been duly sworn,

23 testified as follows:

24 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Please be seated.

1 DIRECT EXAMINATION BY MR. LITTLE:

2 Q Mr. Currie, will you give us your name and
3 address, please?

4 A Jeff or Jefferson Currie. My address is 3856
5 Mitchell Road, Middlesex, North Carolina.

6 Q Spell your last name.

7 A C-U-R-R-I-E.

8 Q And are you a customer of Piedmont?

9 A No, I'm not.

10 Q Okay. What would you like to tell the Commission
11 tonight?

12 A I'm going to read a short statement. And -- and
13 I would like to start just by thanking the
14 Commission for your service and for having a
15 public hearing on this issue.

16 My name is Jefferson Currie and
17 I'm the Lumber Riverkeeper, or my job is about
18 protecting water quality in the Lumber River
19 watershed and stopping the negative impacts that
20 polluters and pollution have on our waterways and
21 communities.

22 I'm here tonight to ask the
23 Utilities Commission to deny Piedmont Natural
24 Gas's request for a rate hike. With the costs in

1 demand for natural gas predicted to decrease,
2 this rate increase is not needed and,
3 furthermore, it takes our eyes off the prize -
4 the clean and renewable energy that is our
5 future.

6 The infrastructure cited by PNG,
7 although not specifically named in filings, I
8 believe reflects in part the cost of their
9 recent, abased, older pipeline, and the proposed
10 Robeson liquified natural gas facility, LNG, that
11 Piedmont Natural Gas wants to build in the rural
12 Wacoma community in Robeson County, where we'll
13 have disproportionate impacts on the majority
14 American Indian community that lives there. This
15 facility is just over a mile from Oxendine
16 Elementary School and a Lumbee Holiness Methodist
17 Church. Both are in jeopardy from accidents and
18 explosions and illegal dumping such as the
19 groundwater contamination at the Huntersville LNG
20 site.

21 In 2018, in support of the LNG
22 facility in Robeson and surrounding counties, PNG
23 updated their pipeline, with work coming just
24 before Hurricane Florence. For those who live

1 near the long swaths of barren land where the
2 pipe was laid, this fresh pipeline served as its
3 own waterway contributing to the severity of
4 flooding. While PNG came out and checked those
5 lines after the hurricane, no one went
6 door-to-door to ask about those who suffered
7 because of their infrastructure.

8 PNG says the rate hike is not for
9 LNG construction in Robeson County, but their
10 infrastructure has been -- work has been ongoing
11 in support of that site. Come to Robeson County
12 and I can take you to sites where PNG is working
13 on the infrastructure now and has been working on
14 it, and is part of the reason for this rate
15 increase.

16 Piedmont Natural Gas, like their
17 owner Duke Energy, wants customers and
18 communities to pay for their unneeded
19 infrastructure and natural gas lines, while all
20 they give us is fear from disasters and
21 pollution. And I appreciate it.

22 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Are there any --

23 MR. LITTLE: No questions, Your Honor.

24 MR. JEFFRIES: No questions.

1 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: There are no
2 questions. We want to thank you for coming out,
3 Mr. Currie.

4 (The witness is excused)

5 MR. LITTLE: Your Honor, this is the last
6 witness that the Public Staff has identified as
7 wanting to testify tonight.

8 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: All right. Then,
9 ladies and gentlemen, that will conclude this hearing
10 and we will be adjourned shortly. I just will repeat
11 that all of you can follow these proceedings all the
12 way through to their conclusion on our website, which
13 is www.ncuc.net. And you go to the docket search
14 section, you input the Docket Number G-9, Sub 743.
15 You're also welcome to come, this hearing will resume
16 on August the 19th in Raleigh at 2:00 p.m. You're
17 welcome to attend and hear the experts for yourselves,
18 and what they have to say. If you're not able to,
19 again, the transcript, full transcript will be
20 available shortly after the conclusion of that
21 hearing, again, on our website.

22 With that said, we do appreciate you all
23 taking the time to come out. It is important and we
24 always welcome the opportunity to meet you and hear

1 from you. That concludes this hearing. We will be
2 adjourned.

3 (The hearing was adjourned at 7:41 p.m.)
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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, KIM T. MITCHELL, DO HEREBY CERTIFY that
the Proceedings in the above-captioned matter were
taken before me, that I did report in stenographic
shorthand the Proceedings set forth herein, and the
foregoing pages are a true and correct transcription
to the best of my ability.

Kim T. Mitchell

Kim T. Mitchell
Court Reporter