

STATE OF INDIANA

INDIANA UTILITY REGULATORY COMMISSION

PETITION OF SOUTHERN INDIANA GAS AND)
ELECTRIC COMPANY AND INDIANA GAS)
COMPANY, INC. BOTH D/B/A VECTREN ENERGY)
DELIVERY OF INDIANA, INC. FOR AN)
AMENDMENT TO THE COMMISSION'S ORDER)
IN CAUSE NO. 44455 TO EXTEND THE)
EXPIRATION DATE FOR CONTINUATION OF)
THEIR RESPECTIVE BILL ASSISTANCE)
PROGRAMS UNTIL SUCH PROGRAMS CAN BE)
REVIEWED IN THE CONTEXT OF THEIR)
UPCOMING BASE RATE CASES)

CAUSE NO. 45405

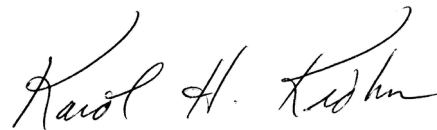
INDIANA OFFICE OF UTILITY CONSUMER COUNSELOR'S

PUBLIC'S EXHIBIT NO. 1 – TESTIMONY OF OUCC WITNESS
HEATHER R. POOLE

With the current requirement that all staff work from home, signatures for affirmations are not available at this time.

August 18, 2020

Respectfully submitted,



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TESTIMONY OF OUCC WITNESS HEATHER R. POOLE
CAUSE NO. 45405
SOUTHERN INDIANA GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY AND
INDIANA GAS COMPANY, INC.
BOTH D/B/A VECTREN ENERGY DELIVERY OF INDIANA, INC.

I. INTRODUCTION

1 **Q: Please state your name and business address.**

2 A: My name is Heather R. Poole, and my business address is 115 West Washington
3 Street, Suite 1500 South, Indianapolis, IN 46204.

4 **Q: By whom are you employed and in what capacity?**

5 A: I am employed by the Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor ("OUCC") as
6 the Assistant Director of the Natural Gas Division. I have worked as a member of
7 the OUCC's Natural Gas Division since December of 2010. For a summary of my
8 educational and professional experience, as well as my preparation for this case,
9 please see the Appendix attached to my testimony.

10 **Q: What are your recommendations?**

11 A: I recommend approval of Southern Indiana Gas and Electric Company ("Vectren
12 South") and Indiana Gas Company, Inc. ("Vectren North") both d/b/a Vectren
13 Energy Delivery of Indiana, Inc.'s (collectively "Vectren" or "Petitioners") request
14 to amend the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission's ("Commission") Order
15 dated September 10, 2014 in Cause No. 44455 to allow Petitioners to extend their
16 respective previously approved Universal Service Program ("USP") beyond
17 September 30, 2020, without modification except to their expiration date.

II. CURRENT USP AND VECTREN'S REQUEST

1 **Q: When was Vectren's current USP approved?**

2 A: Vectren's current USP was approved by the Commission in Cause No. 44455 on
3 September 10, 2014.

4 **Q: Describe the expiration of Vectren's current USP.**

5 A: Per Ordering Paragraph No. 3 of the Commission's Final Order in Cause No.
6 44455, if Vectren files base rate cases on or before September 30, 2020, the USPs
7 shall continue through the pendency of the cases, until a final order is issued. If
8 neither Vectren North nor Vectren South files a base rate case on or before
9 September 30, 2020, the programs shall terminate on September 30, 2020, and shall
10 not be considered under the Alternative Utility Regulation Act.

11 **Q: Describe Vectren's request in this proceeding.**

12 A: Vectren is requesting the Commission approve an extension of the USPs, without
13 modification to the terms except to their expiration dates, beyond September 30,
14 2020 until the Commission issues final orders in Vectren's upcoming base rate
15 cases, both of which are scheduled to be filed on or before December 31, 2020.
16 Vectren is not proposing to change any of the other terms or conditions of the
17 current USPs other than the expiration date. On August 14, 2020, the Parties from
18 Cause No. 44455 submitted an amendment to the Stipulation and Settlement
19 Agreement in Cause No. 44455, supporting Vectren's request in this proceeding.

20 **Q: Has the OUCC supported the USP in the past?**

21 A: Yes. The OUCC believes this program is in the public interest and has consistently
22 supported it and the extension of the Alternative Regulatory Plan that authorizes it.
23 In the earlier extensions, the OUCC proposed modifications and adjustments to the

1 program, and sought improvements in the sharing of costs and benefits between the
2 utilities and participating recipients.

3 **Q: Does the OUCC support the extension of Vectren's USP through the date of a**
4 **final order in their upcoming rate cases?**

5 A: Yes. The USP provides critical assistance to low income ratepayers, allowing them
6 to continue receiving natural gas service while contributing to the costs of the
7 utility's distribution system. The OUCC believes this is a critical program and
8 reaffirms its support. Given the current COVID-19 pandemic, low-income
9 customers that could qualify for the USP most likely have increased financial
10 needs. Extending the USP would provide an opportunity for those customers to
11 receive assistance to ensure they do not experience an interruption in benefits.
12 However, the OUCC reserves the right to raise issues related to the USP in
13 Vectren's upcoming rate cases, to be filed before December 31, 2020. The OUCC
14 believes this is a necessary protection for ratepayers to ensure that the programs
15 remain effective and cost efficient going forward.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

16 **Q: What are your recommendations regarding Vectren's requested extension of**
17 **the USP?**

18 A: The OUCC continues to support the USP and believes the USP extension is in the
19 public interest. Therefore, I recommend approval of Petitioner's proposed USP
20 extension, as well as the amendment to the Stipulation and Settlement Agreement
21 from Cause No. 44455 filed on August 14, 2020. The OUCC will review any
22 further extension of the USP when Vectren files its upcoming rate cases before
23 December 31, 2020 and reserves the right to raise any issues relating to the USPs at

1 that time.

2 **Q: Does this conclude your testimony?**

3 **A: Yes.**

APPENDIX TO TESTIMONY OF
OUCC WITNESS HEATHER R. POOLE

1 **Q: Describe your educational background and experience.**

2 A: I graduated from the School of Business at Ball State University in Muncie,
3 Indiana with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Accounting in May 2001, and a
4 Master of Science Degree in Accounting in May 2002. From September 2002
5 through September 2010, I worked for London Witte Group, LLC, a CPA firm in
6 Indianapolis, Indiana, as a Senior Staff Accountant. I prepared and reviewed
7 individual, corporate, not-for-profit, property and payroll tax returns; prepared
8 compilations, reviews and audit reports in compliance with GAAP for a variety of
9 utility companies and not-for-profit organizations; prepared depreciation
10 schedules; and guided clients through year-end accounting processes, including
11 preparation and review of adjusting entries. I prepared and reviewed Gas Cost
12 Adjustment (“GCA”) petitions, as well as annual reports filed with the
13 Commission for natural gas companies within the State of Indiana. I also prepared
14 rate case exhibits and schedules filed with the Commission on behalf of various
15 gas utility clients.

16 In December 2010, I began my employment with the OUCC as a Utility
17 Analyst II. In October 2012, I was promoted to Senior Utility Analyst. In
18 February 2017, I was promoted to Assistant Director of the Natural Gas Division.
19 My current responsibilities include reviewing and analyzing rate cases filed by
20 Indiana natural gas, electric and water utilities with the Commission. I also review
21 GCAs, special contracts, tariff, financing, certificate of public necessity, pipeline

1 safety adjustment, gas demand side management, alternative regulatory plan, 7-
2 Year Plan, Federal Mandated Cost Adjustment Tracker, and TDSIC Tracker cases
3 for natural gas utilities.

4 In May 2016, I passed the Certified Public Accountant (“CPA”) Exam and
5 obtained my CPA license in June 2016. While employed at the OUCC, I
6 completed NARUC’s Utility Rate School hosted by the Institute of Public
7 Utilities at Michigan State University and the Institute of Public Utilities
8 Advanced Regulatory Studies Program at Michigan State University. I am also a
9 member of the Indiana CPA Society.

10 **Q: Have you previously testified before the Commission?**

11 A: Yes. I have testified in GCAs, rate cases, TDSIC tracker cases, 7-Year Plan cases,
12 tariff, gas demand side management, and special contract cases involving gas and
13 water utilities. I also provided extensive testimony in the Commission’s
14 investigation into the existing GCA procedures and schedules.

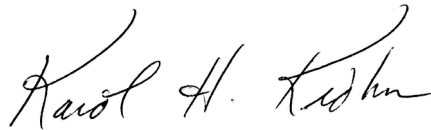
15 **Q: What review and analysis have you conducted to prepare your testimony?**

16 A: I reviewed the petition, testimony, and amendment to the Stipulation and
17 Settlement Agreement from Cause No. 44455 submitted in this Cause, and also
18 participated in a pre-filing meeting with Petitioner’s representatives to discuss this
19 case. I was part of the OUCC case team and testified in Petitioners’ last USP case
20 (Cause No. 44455). I also re-reviewed the petition, testimony and Final Order
21 issued on September 10, 2014 from Cause No. 44455.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

This is to certify that a copy of the foregoing ***OUCC'S TESTIMONY OF HEATHER R. POOLE*** has been served upon the following counsel of record in the captioned proceeding by electronic service on August 18, 2020.

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Heather A. Watts
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Indiana, Inc., a CenterPoint Energy Company**
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