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	Page 1
1	PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
	OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
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J	COMMUNITY HEARING
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5	DODWIL GAGE NO. 1100 IN THE MARTIN OF THE
6	FORMAL CASE NO. 1180, IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF WASHINGTON GAS LIGHT COMPANY
0	FOR AUTHORITY TO INCREASE EXISTING RATES AND
7	CHARGES FOR GAS SERVICE
8	+ + + + +
9	THURSDAY
	APRIL 10, 2025
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	The Public Service Commission met at
12	the Dorothy I. Height/Benning Neighborhood
	Library, 3935 Benning Road, NE, Washington,
13	D.C., at 5:30 p.m., Emile C. Thompson, Chairman, presiding.
14	
15	PRESENT
	EMILE C. THOMPSON, Chairman
16	TED TRABUE, Commissioner
17	
	ALSO PRESENT
18	BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDWICK, Commission Secretary
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2122	
23	
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25	Job No. CS7273071

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2 (5:44 p.m.)

CHAIR THOMPSON: Okay, good evening, everybody. You may notice we have one empty seat. Commissioner Beverly is on his way, but traffic is a little bit more than expected this evening. But in the interest of time, and being respectful of your time, we want to go ahead and get started.

So, let me begin by saying we're going to call to order this community hearing of the Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia in Formal Case Number 1180, in the matter of the application of Washington Gas Light Company for authority to increase existing rates and charges for natural gas service.

I am Emile C. Thompson, Chairman of the Public Service Commission. I am joined by Commissioner Ted Trabue, sitting to my left. the record, today is April 10th, 2025, and we are convening this hearing at 5:45 p.m. at Benning/Dorothy Height Neighborhood Library, at 3935 Benning Road, NE, Washington, D.C.

This community hearing is being held to discuss the rate increase applications filed by

April 10, 2025

1 WGL on August 5th, 2024. The requested rates are 2 designed to collect approximately \$257.2 million in total revenue, representing a \$45.6 million 3 4 increase in weather-normalized annual revenue. This includes a transfer of \$11.7 million in 5 costs associated with the natural gas systems 6 7 upgrades previously approved by the Commission in 8 PROJECTpipes. 9 The net increase in new revenues is 10 \$33.9 million, reflecting an approximate 11.9 11 percent increase over current rates. If granted 12 in full, the average bill increase for 13 residential sales heating and cooling customers, 14 based on an annual usage of 627 therms, would be about \$15.33, or 17.63 percent. 15 16 Now, when you look at your bill, you may 17 wonder, what rates are regulated by the Commission and are subject to this rate case? 18 19 One part is what we call the distribution rate. 2.0 That's delivery. That's what it costs WGL to 21 deliver natural gas service to customers. 22 WGL is the only company authorized in the District to distribute natural gas. 2.3 24 That rate covers meter reading, the 25 meters, the pipes, the customer service people,

the repairs, the restoration after storms, all
the things to operate the delivery system for the
natural gas system in the District. The
Commission regulates distribution rates.

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There's another part of the bill that is for natural gas itself. The Commission does not regulate natural gas supply, except for default natural gas service.

And then the third part of your bill is taxes, surcharges, and fees that the D.C. Council authorizes and/or sets.

Our role as regulators is to ensure that essential natural gas service is available, adequate, provided to all who require it, and that the services will be priced at a reasonable level.

Specifically, in evaluating WGL's application, the Commission must consider the safety, the economy of the District, the conservation of natural resources, and the preservation of environmental quality, including effects on global climate change and the District's public climate commitments.

Pursuant to its statutory and constitutional rights, the utility is permitted

to fully recover the cost of providing this essential service.

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This community hearing is being held to provide interested persons who wish to comment on the WGL application an opportunity to do so. Representatives of organizations shall be permitted a maximum of five minutes for oral presentation. Individuals shall be permitted a maximum of three minutes for oral presentation.

First, I would like to acknowledge Commissioner Trabue for any comments.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good evening, everyone. I wanted to iust briefly say thank you so much for showing up on time on this beautiful day here in the District of Columbia. And we look forward to your testimony tonight. We know you're taking time out of -- you know, being away from your families and loved ones here in the evening. But thank you so much for coming out. And the testimony that you provide is very, very important for our understanding of the community's interest in this very, very important matter. So, again, thank you for coming out, and we look forward to your

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Page 6 1 testimony. 2 CHAIR THOMPSON: Thank you. I would also like to recognize the participation of the 3 4 Office of People's Counsel for the District of Columbia. I know we have three representatives 5 6 here. If they would like to stand, just announce 7 themselves. 8 MS. SOLOMON: Hello, everyone. I am 9 Alya Solomon, External Affairs Officer with the 10 Office of People's Counsel. Unfortunately, 11 People's Counsel Sandra Mattavous-Frye could not 12 be here today. She had a death in the family. 13 And so we are here representing her. And I'm 14 here with my colleagues, Sheryl, Mia, and Alicia. 15 Thank you. 16 CHAIR THOMPSON: Thank you. We will 17 first start this community hearing by calling the 18 preregistered witnesses. And so the Commission 19 secretary will now call the first preregistered 2.0 witness. 21 MS. WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Gail Sullivan? 22 (Off-microphone comments.) 2.3 MS. SULLIVAN: Okay. First, I think 24 it's unfair that we only get three minutes, but

I'm going to talk fast.

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I would just like to know, do all of you all live in Washington, D.C.?

CHAIR THOMPSON: Yes.

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MS. SULLIVAN: You do? Okay.

(Simultaneous speaking.)

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: I am a fourth-generation Washingtonian. I've never lived outside of the city.

MS. SULLIVAN: Okay. The second thing
I want to know: have y'all changed y'all's
mission statement? Because when you call down
there now, only thing they say is how can we help
you set up a bill payment plan. Nothing else.

You all are transferring us right to the phone company, the gas company, or the electric company. It's like we're not being helped. So did you change your mission statement or whatever requirements you had for us, and we didn't get a copy?

And so, next -- I mean, I'm just asking, because that's all we get. When people tell me they called down there, they don't help you with anything else but setting up a bill.

So next is to Washington Gas. As a customer to Washington Gas, I expect, and I

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Page 8

thought your requirement was, to provide natural gas to my house under 24-hour monitoring and constantly upgrading your bill. And that should be part of the contract of a utility company.

2.0

I have not gotten a letter saying that y'all no longer do that, that y'all have taken the money that is supposed to be with the monitoring and the upgrading. And I don't know what you've done with it. Have you given it to yourselves? Because you haven't given me any money back.

And so to ask me now to give you more money for something I have been paying you for all along to keep your infrastructure safe, and now I feel like I'm being blackmailed to give you this increase or I'm going to die. Because then you only want to provide your infrastructure to the curb. You want me to now pay you an extra 5.99 a month to take care of it from the curb to inside my house, when I didn't run those pipes.

So I don't know what the utility company's responsibility is, but I know now that they didn't do that, or they wouldn't be asking us for a raise. If they had been taking care of their responsibility to me, as a customer, their

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infrastructure should not need money from me,
because I've been paying them every month to keep
their infrastructure going on.

So they have admitted that they're not doing it. "We need money to upgrade it." And if we don't do it, are we going to die because it's not safe now? But I'm still paying you every month to bring it in my house?

So, that infrastructure, you have done nothing with it. Where is the money? And so when they asked you for it, we shouldn't have even been here. I'm sure you just laughed at them and said that's your job. You should have done it, and you should have had them arrested.

I feel I've been embezzled out of my money. I feel it's fraud on their part, because they are not providing me safe money [sic].

Now, they could have sent us all letters and said, I'm sorry, y'all are getting bad pipes, and y'all are paying us to not do anything for it. We haven't gotten any -- I haven't gotten a letter, okay? So what have they been doing with my money?

And as the Public Service Commission, you say you're on our side, but we shouldn't even

be here, because you should have just told them that you must be kidding.

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Have you tried to get them arrested for fraud, for taking our money, for not providing a good, safe infrastructure? And for them to basically tell us that our pipes are going to blow up, and we're going to -- I mean, our life is in danger now every time we turn on the stove. And I love my gas stove.

So what is the utility company's responsibility to the customer? And every time they want something, they think we should pay for it. And we've been paying them every month.

So I just ask the Public Service Commission, what are you telling them? Did you call the district attorney for D.C. and get them for fraud when you found out they took that clause out of their contract? Because that clause is gone. Because they are not taking care of their contract.

Their contract is to give me a safe natural gas into my house, and they're telling me now it's not. They've admitted it. So do they get any accountability for not doing what they've told me, as a customer, they would do for me?

1 And so if you're turning them down, and you just wanted us to come here and tell them 2 that, I hope I've met your requirement. 3 Because 4 I don't like the idea that they're asking me to pay them twice. And I don't like the idea that 5 6 all this time my life has been in danger because 7 they have never taken care of the infrastructure. 8 They keep saying it's crumbling, it's in 9 bad shape, we need to do new pipes. And when you 10 said you okayed the pipe distribution, why? 11 That's what they're supposed to do. 12 I mean, am I wrong? Is the utility 13 company just supposed to find some gas supplies 14 and give us gas? They're not supposed take care 15 of how it gets to us? What is in their -- what 16 is not in their contract? And do y'all have a 17 copy what you all haven't been doing, and y'all 18 took it out? Because, I mean, y'all having been 19 getting away with that for years. 2.0 So that is my concern that, as a senior 21 citizen on a fixed income, they must be crazy. 22 I'm done. 2.3 (Applause.) 24 CHAIR THOMPSON: Thank you, Ms. 25 Sullivan. I would note, in case you want this,

- we do have members of our customer service team

 if you have specific concerns about the Public

 Service Commission's performance.
- MS. SULLIVAN: Where is y'all's mission statement? Where is it?
- CHAIR THOMPSON: It's the same it's

 always been, ma'am, to ensure that the utilities

 provide safe, affordable, reliable services to

 ratepayers while taking into account the

 District's climate commitments.
- MS. SULLIVAN: Well, not if it's asking
 me to do their pipes again. I'm saying they
 haven't been doing that.
- COMMISSIONER TRABUE: I think, Ms.

 Sullivan, are you referencing a letter that you
 may have received over the last couple of months
 that offered you an insurance policy on pipes
 that are inside of your home, effectively, on
 your side of the meter?
- MS. SULLIVAN: Yes. I didn't put them in there.
- COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Okay. I think
 that has drawn a lot of confusion in the
 community, quite frankly. I mean, to just be
 fair to Ms. Sullivan and her statement. I had to

Page 13 1 go up to Ward 4 and speak with a group of senior 2 citizens about that offering that's been put out, I don't believe by Washington Gas, but by an 3 4 independent organization. 5 And so -- but let me ask you the other 6 side of that question, though. Have you had any 7 gas interruptions at your home? 8 MS. SULLIVAN: No. 9 COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Okay. 10 (Simultaneous speaking.) 11 COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Do you have any 12 gas leaks? Are you smelling gas? 13 MS. SULLIVAN: No. 14 COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Okay, all right. MS. SULLIVAN: I mean, I haven't been 15 16 worried until they asked for this money and telling me the infrastructure is --17 18 COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Okay, yeah. 19 MS. SULLIVAN: -- it's gone straight to 2.0 crumbling. So now I am really worried. 21 COMMISSIONER TRABUE: I appreciate what you are saying. Can one of our customer service 22 23 representatives raise their hand so you can make 24 sure that you can connect with -- Ms. Sullivan, 25

can you see the rep in the back who's raised

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Page 14 1 their hand? 2 MS. SULLIVAN: There's no connecting me to what -- they're not going to charge me --3 4 COMMISSIONER TRABUE: They will allow you to understand exactly what that offering is. 5 6 You do not have to accept it. 7 MS. SULLIVAN: Oh, you mean the one 8 that's for the 5.99? 9 COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Mm-hmm, you do not 10 have to accept it. 11 MS. SULLIVAN: Of course I'm not 12 accepting it, but don't send it out once again 13 telling me if something happens to your pipes 14 then you have responsibility for it. That's not 15 16 COMMISSIONER TRABUE: But I wanted to 17 thoroughly explain to you. And I'm sorry we 18 don't have time to do that on the record tonight. 19 But there have been a number of people who have 2.0 raised concerns about that letter. Thank you, 21 though. 22 COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry to interrupt. 23 If we can just make sure that everyone speaks 24 into the microphone. I just want to make sure

it's caught on the record. I'm sorry about that.

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1 MS. SULLIVAN: That's the least of my 2 concerns, because I'm not going to pay for that. And if I die, I hope that -- well, I don't know 3 4 they won't be liable if I don't get the insurance policy. But that's how I look at it. 5 6 But my thing is, you haven't been doing 7 your job, and I want my money back. I've been 8 paying you every month. 9 MS. WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next is Catherine Ferguson. 10 11 MS. FERGUSON: Good evening, 12 Commissioners. I might be a little taller. 13 evening, and thank you for holding this hearing 14 for the public. 15 My name is Catherine Ferguson, and as 16 a Washington Gas Light customer and a resident of 17 Ward 6 since 1998, I am here tonight to express 18 my deep concerns about the ongoing failures of 19 WGL's PROJECTpipes initiatives and the harm that it inflicts on D.C. residents. 2.0 21 First, PROJECTpipes is charging exorbitant fees collectively for outcomes they've 22 2.3 failed to deliver. Although PROJECTpipes purports to "enhance the safety and reliability 24 of our system," the reality is that WGL, rather 25

than prioritizing the replacement of leaking pipes, has adopted a non-strategic approach and a costly approach to pipe replacement.

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As a result, in 2023, nine years and many millions of dollars after PROJECTpipes' inception, D.C. experienced more than 1,000 hazardous gas leaks, which I got that figure from your website. And there were many, many more in addition to that. It is outrageous that WGL now seeks a 43 percent funding increase while proposing to replace even fewer pipes.

Second, PROJECTpipes seeks to undermine the District's efforts to fight climate change in order to lock in its own corporate profits.

And I do really want to acknowledge people who seem to work for Washington Gas here, and I appreciate the great work that they do.

This issue is really with the corporate profits that we're talking about.

According to their proposal, WGL anticipates earning revenue from gas pipeline replacement through the year 2145, which is 95 years after the date D.C. has targeted to achieve carbon neutrality. I find it unconscionable that consumers would have to pay perpetual surcharges

for infrastructure that would be obsolete long before it is paid for.

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I volunteer with a group of high school students who are working to address climate change and I assure you that their generation feels betrayed by the environmental devastation they have inherited. We cannot ask them, and their children, and their children, to pay for the fossil fuel infrastructure that is destabilizing their futures.

Of course, I understand that these profit projections may well be a ruse to satisfy stockholders, because it doesn't really make sense, that level of profit, just as I understand that PROJECTpipes is likely a ruse from a business with a limited life-span to extract as much money as possible from D.C. residents.

If they were serious about this mission, they would start with leaky pipes, not just wholesale replacing pipes. Therefore, I respectfully ask the Public Service Commission to uphold its responsibility to protect the public interest with the following steps.

First, reject WGL's revised PROJECTpipes proposal and demand full compliance with Order

1 2200, end accelerated fossil fuel infrastructure 2 investment and associated surcharges immediately, prioritize replacing the highest risk and most 3 4 leak-prone pipes, require WGL to incorporate any necessary pipeline placements as part of its 5 routine operations -- which I think was Ms. 6 7 Sullivan's point -- without additional charges to 8 customers. 9 And one more point on the topic of climate change is that I deeply hope that we can 10 11 also hold Pepco rate hikes to a reasonable level. 12 That last one was a doozie. And if we are 13 electrifying our city, that is going to hit 14 people very, very hard. So, for the health of our environment 15 16 and the well-being of future generations, I ask 17 that you please guide or city towards a cleaner, 18 safer, and more sustainable energy future. 19 you. 2.0 (Applause.) 21 CHAIR THOMPSON: Thank you. 22 MS. WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: David Kaufman 23 (phonetic). 24 (No response.) 25 MS. WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: John Capozzi?

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MR. CAPOZZI: Good afternoon, Chairman Thompson and members of the Commission. My name is John Capozzi, and I live over in the Hillcrest neighborhood in Southeast D.C., proud resident of the city since 1978. And I'm speaking today not only as a long-time, but also someone who's been a stockholder in Washington Gas since the 1980s, and now a stockholder in AltaGas, as a matter of fact.

So, for many years I respected
Washington Gas management. I would go to their
stockholder meetings and always respected their
longstanding role as a responsible utility
serving the city. But, unfortunately, since the
purchase by AltaGas, my confidence in the company
has declined sharply since the acquisition.

Since the merger, AltaGas has shown a troubling pattern of broken promises and disregards to its obligations to D.C. residents. The company has failed to meet its legal commitments to invest in solar energy and clean energy jobs, resulting in a settlement that the D.C. Attorney General had to fine them over \$2.1 million in penalties.

Additionally, Washington Gas was

recently fined another \$1.1 million for widespread customer service failures, really an unacceptable outcome for a regulatory monopoly.

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So, as a stockholder, I find this deeply disappointing, not only because of the financial implications, but it reveals how little

Washington Gas appears to really care about the average ratepayer, as well as D.C. residents.

Despite hiring a formal city councilmember, which seemed really aimed at currying political favor or a smoothing over of community relations, the company has made little effort to actually serve or respect the views of D.C. residents and ratepayers.

AltaGas does not deserve a rate increase. They haven't earned it, and they haven't fulfilled their promises. It's not just bad corporate behavior; it's really a breach of the public trust.

AltaGas has made commitments to the Public Service Commission and then residents of D.C. in order to secure Washington Gas' acquisition. And their failure to meet these commitments should have consequences, not the rewards they are asking at this time.

Now, communities like mine in Southeast D.C., it's not just an inconvenience to have a rate increase. It's a hardship. Residents are already dealing with high costs of living and economic pressure, and raising rates in the face of AltaGas' poor performance would send the wrong message that big companies can make promises, break them, and still get away with what they want.

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That's why I strongly urge the

Commission to deny the rate hike at this time.

Instead, I recommend that they facilitate a

public meeting between AltaGas leadership -
specifically, Donald "Blue" Jenkins, the

president of Washington Gas; Vernon Yu, who's the

president and CEO of AltaGas; and members of the

D.C. environmental and civic community. Because

then, working together, we can bring some

transparency and support to help AltaGas finally

meet its clean energy commitments here in the

city.

I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify. And I am planning on appearing at the other hearings. I wanted to ask, is it proper to ask questions of the Commission during

Page 22 1 these hearings? CHAIR THOMPSON: The Commission, for the 2 3 most part, doesn't answer questions during these 4 hearings. 5 MR. CAPOZZI: Thank you. 6 COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Thank you, John. 7 MR. CAPOZZI: And then should I give you copies? 8 9 COMMISSIONER TRABUE: The Secretary gets 10 them. 11 CHAIR THOMPSON: Please do. Thank you. 12 (Applause.) 13 MS. WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Marka Peterson? 14 MS. PETERSON: Good afternoon. My name is Marka Peterson. I live in Ward 6. I have 15 been a resident of D.C. for over 35 years, and 16 17 was originally born here much longer ago than 18 that. 19 So, I didn't come with prepared remarks. 2.0 I just really came, I think, to echo what some of 21 the prior speakers have said. I don't support 22 PROJECTpipes. I don't support this rate 23 increase. 24 Washington Gas has previously sought

increases in funding, which your Commission has

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rejected, appropriately, I believe. And now they're coming back for more.

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I agree with the prior speakers that say that the company should be focusing on fixing leaks and remedying the most hazardous issues and not embarking on a huge expansion of the entire infrastructure, particularly at a time when we should be less reliant on fossil fuels.

I know, in my neighborhood, a lot of people are putting up solar panels. We're planning on renovating our house and mostly doing away with our gas. So this is sort of like, you know, the fossil fuels companies that are investing in oil in the ground that will never be utilized. And it's not where we should be putting our resources, and it's not consistent with the mission of the Commission.

And I also just wanted to point out a couple of additional facts, that low income households in the District already spend 7.5 percent or more of their income on energy bills.

And one in four D.C. households pays more than 15 percent of their income for energy bills.

And then, finally, I just wanted to, you know, echo what a couple of other people said

1 | that, as you know, the public utility is a

2 | monopoly. And so we don't get to vote. But it

is in your hands. You control this monopoly.

4 | That's how public utilities work. So we urge you

5 | to uphold your mission and reject this rate

6 | increase. Thank you.

7 CHAIR THOMPSON: Thank you, Ms.

Peterson.

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(Applause.)

CHAIR THOMPSON: So those are all the people that we had as signed up, either in advance or when they came in and registered. I just want to take a quick ask and see if there's anybody else from the audience who would like -- yes, ma'am? If you could, when you come to the podium, just please state your name nice and loud

18 MS. CLARK: My name is Carlin Clark.

19 And I'm extremely upset because INVAR (phonetic),

20 | INVAR when it's -- wait a minute, wait a minute.

21 INVAR, they want me to pay \$903. I'm not

22 working. That's my story, and I'm sticking to

23 | it.

24 (Applause.)

so we can --

25 CHAIR THOMPSON: Ma'am, let me just ask

Page 25 1 you one follow-up on that? You said INVAR? 2 MS. CLARK: INVAR. 3 CHAIR THOMPSON: Okay. They're one of those --4 MS. CLARK: CHAIR THOMPSON: Competitive suppliers? 5 6 MS. CLARK: Yes. CHAIR THOMPSON: Okay. Maurice, can you 7 8 speak with -- and, I'm sorry, I missed your name, 9 but --10 MS. CLARK: Carlin. 11 CHAIR THOMPSON: Okay. 12 MS. CLARK: Carlin Clark. 13 CHAIR THOMPSON: We're going to have somebody talk to you about that, see what we can 14 15 do about that. Thank you. 16 (Pause.) 17 CHAIR THOMPSON: Okay, if there are no 18 other comments, first I want to thank the people 19 who came out, our four people who spoke today. 2.0 Thank you for your comments at this community 21 hearing. 22 If you wish to file written comments or 23 statements, they can be filed sending them to 24 Brinda Westbrook-Sedgwick, Commission Secretary

of the Public Service Commission of the District

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of Colombia, at psc-commissionsectretary@dc.gov.

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Your oral statements were certainly recorded, and they will go into a transcript and part of the record of this case.

For further information on this case and WGL's application and all subsequent filings in the proceeding, they can be viewed on the Commission's website at www.dcpsc.org. Once at the website, open the eDocket tab, click on the search database, and input FC1180. Again, copies of the transcript of the community hearing will be available on the Formal Case 1180 docket.

There being nothing further, this concludes Formal Case No. 1180 community hearing. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Mr. Chairman, just this one quick note. I think we have another hearing coming up as well.

CHAIR THOMPSON: We do. We have two.

Yes, we have two more in this case. And, thank

you. I will note those for the record. The next

one will be on April 21st, at Petworth

Neighborhood Library, I believe, at 5:00 p.m.

And April 29th, 2025, at the Commission, which

will also have call-in capability. And the

Page 27 Commission is located at 1325 G Street, NW, Suite 800. And, again, that one will be April 29th at 6:00 p.m. COMMISSIONER TRABUE: Thank you. CHAIR THOMPSON: Thank you. (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went off the record at 6:11 p.m.)

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This is to certify that the foregoing transcript

Formal Case No: 1180

In the matter of: The Application of Washington Gas Light Company for Authority to Increase Existing Rates and Charges for Gas Service

Date: April 10th, 2025

Place: Washington, DC

was duly recorded and accurately transcribed under my direction; further, that said transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

Mae N Gus 9 Court Reporter

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