

BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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IN THE MATTER OF :
THE APPLICATION OF POTOMAC :
ELECTRIC POWER COMPANY FOR :
AUTHORITY TO IMPLEMENT A : Formal Case No.
MULTIYEAR RATE PLAN FOR ELECTRIC: 1156
DISTRIBUTION SERVICE IN THE :
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA :
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Washington, D.C.

Tuesday, September 29, 2020

The virtual community hearing in the above-captioned
matter began at 2:00 p.m., pursuant to notice, held
virtually.

BEFORE: WILLIE L. PHILLIPS, Chairman
RICHARD BEVERLY, Commissioner

Reported by: Felicia Newland

Job No. CS4262884

P R O C E E D I N G S

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CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Good afternoon, everybody. We are going to call the Virtual Community Hearing of the Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia in formal Case No. 1156 in the matter of the application of Potomac Electric Power Company for authority to implement a Multiyear Rate Plan for Electric Use and Service in the District of Columbia.

I'm Willie L. Phillips, the chairman of the Public Service Commission. I'm joined by Commissioner Richard Beverly.

For the record, today is September 29th, 2020. And we are convening this hearing at 2:00 p.m. in a virtual setting. This community hearing is being held to discuss Pepco's rate case increase application.

For background, on May 30th, 2019, Pepco filed an application with the Commission requesting authority to increase existing distribution rates as subsequently updated by

1 \$147 million through the implementation of a
2 multiyear rate plan, this is also called MRP, for
3 the years 2020 through 2022. The order 20349, an
4 MRP enhanced proposal. An alternative to the
5 original MRP proposal.

6 Pepco represents that if fully
7 approved as followed, the original MRP proposal
8 would translate to an increase in distribution
9 rates of approximately \$8.21 in 2020, \$3.84 in
10 2021, and \$3.41 in 2022 for a residential
11 standard service customer who uses 692 kilowatt
12 hour per month. That's typical customer usage.

13 Pepco also represents that if
14 approved, the MRP enhanced proposal, with certain
15 rate offsets, would result in an increase in
16 distribution rates of approximately \$0 in 2020,
17 \$0 in 2021, and \$7.97 in 2022 for typical
18 residential customers.

19 Should the Commission reject
20 Pepco's original MRP proposal and MRP enhanced
21 proposal, Pepco's application includes a
22 traditional rate case that request, if fully

1 approved, an increase in rate in base
2 distribution rates of approximately \$77 million
3 resulting in an increase in rate base
4 distribution rates of approximately \$7.92 for
5 original SOS customer who uses 692 kilowatt hours
6 per month.

7 Under the District of Columbia
8 code, the Commission may approve Pepco's MRP as
9 an alternative form of regulation if the
10 Commission finds that the MRP: A, protects
11 consumers; B, ensures the quality, availability
12 and reliability of Pepco (internet connection
13 lost.)

14 You may wonder what rates are
15 regulated by the Commission and are subject to
16 this rate case. One part is what we call the
17 distribution rate. That's local delivery
18 service.

19 It is also what it cost Pepco to
20 deliver electrical service to customers and Pepco
21 is the only company authorized in the District to
22 distribute electricity. That rate covers meter

1 reading, wires, poles, conduits, repairs,
2 restoration after storms and all the things that
3 operate the delivery system for the District.

4 There's another part of your bill
5 which is for electricity itself. And customers
6 in the District since 1999 have been allowed to
7 choose from several companies or suppliers that
8 are licensed by the Commission who sell
9 electricity. If you don't choose an electricity
10 supplier or a competitive company, you are put
11 into what we call standard offer service, or SOS.

12 Pepco administers that, but those
13 rates for electricity itself is not subject to
14 this hearing and is not something actually that
15 the Commission regulates. Those electricity
16 supply rates are set by the market and are under
17 Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, or FERC,
18 jurisdiction.

19 And then the third part of your
20 bill is taxes, surcharges, and fees that the D.C.
21 Council authorize and/or set.

22 This community hearing is being

1 held to provide interested persons who wish to
2 comment on the MRP and the enhanced MRP
3 application an opportunity to do.

4 First, I would like to acknowledge
5 Commissioner Richard Beverly for any comments
6 that he might have.

7 COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: Thank you,
8 Chairman.

9 I just wanted to thank everyone for
10 taking the time to share their thoughts with us
11 on this important case. I know there are a lot
12 of people who have signed up to testify, so I
13 don't want to hold this up further since I
14 understand we have a hundred people, or so, to
15 share their thoughts today. So thank you all for
16 taking the time to speak with us today.

17 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you,
18 Commissioner Beverly.

19 I would also like to recognize the
20 participation of the Office of the People's
21 Counsel, Sandra Mattavous-Frye, who is the
22 statutory representative and party to all of our

1 cases.

2 I'm not sure if we have -- I know
3 we have OPC on the line, but I just wanted to
4 acknowledge Office of the People's Counsel who's
5 always a part of our -- well to anything that we
6 have here at the commission.

7 As Commissioner Beverly mentioned,
8 because of the large number of registered
9 participants, we are requesting that all
10 participants limit their comments to three
11 minutes. We encourage everyone to submit any
12 additional written comments or statements to the
13 Commission by sending them to Brinda
14 Westbrook-Sedgwick, Commission Secretary of the
15 Public Service Commission. You can do that at
16 PSC-Commissionsecretary@DC.gov.

17 Persons have until the close of the
18 record, and the record will close in this
19 proceeding, on December 18, 2020, to submit their
20 comments.

21 With that, we will start this
22 virtual community hearing by calling the first

1 preregistered witnesses. Before we do that, do
2 we have any housekeeping matters, Commission
3 Secretary?

4 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: No, sir,
5 not at this time.

6 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Okay. The
7 Commission Secretary will now call the
8 preregistered participants. While you are
9 speaking, please speak clearly and loudly since the
10 hearing is being recorded. I will ask you to state
11 your name and whether you're testifying as an
12 individual or whether you are representing an
13 organization. If you are representing an
14 organization, please identify that organization.

15 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: The first
16 witness is Graylin Presbury.

17 GRAYLIN PRESBURY: Hello. Good
18 afternoon, Members of the Public Service
19 Commission. I am Graylin Presbury, the parent
20 president of the D.C. Federation of Civic
21 Association, president of the parent Citizens
22 Association located in Ward 8. And I am a member

1 of the Utility Consumers Advisory Network at the
2 Office of the People's Counsel. And I am not
3 receiving any compensation for my testimony.

4 As a leader, the Federation
5 strongly objects to Pepco's proposal. When
6 everyone is trying to make due and many with
7 less, Pepco wants to charge more. By Pepco's own
8 calculation, its original request to raise the
9 average residential consumer's bills by about \$16
10 per month, that's the average, so some will be
11 paying more and some will be paying less. And
12 Pepco wants you, the Public Service Commission,
13 to change the whole process for setting
14 electricity rates. Instead of covering what it
15 has spent to provide us with electricity, it
16 wants your approval for three consecutive years
17 of rate increases based on estimates of what it
18 may spend during that time.

19 Pepco's proposal is a new multiyear
20 rate plan. And if Pepco gets this MRP, it has
21 some additional protections for rate changes
22 during the COVID-19 emergency. Pepco claims that

1 the new plan will freeze rates until
2 January 22nd, but actually Pepco will raise our
3 rates and give us back the first year of the
4 increase for credits it already owes us for
5 federal taxes collected that the company no
6 longer has to pay due to the Trump's
7 administration federal tax cut.

8 Meanwhile, over 4 percent of
9 District households have lost income during the
10 coronavirus emergency over the last seven months,
11 which is forecast to last another year, provided
12 we have a vaccine by the first couple of months
13 of 2021.

14 In short, many District residents
15 are struggling to pay their bills while Pepco is
16 looking for you to approve raising nearly another
17 \$136 million more from its D.C. customer base.
18 Families are already having to decide whether to
19 buy food or pay their rent and utilities and many
20 could imminently face eviction.

21 If Pepco gets this proposed rate
22 increase, it will be the breaking point for many

1 resident households, especially seniors and other
2 low-income households, including many essential
3 workers.

4 Pepco's proposal not only has
5 adverse implications for our cost of electricity,
6 it will reduce our ability to retain our energy
7 future and the kind of investments that are made
8 for long term, that means fewer hearings and less
9 public oversight. Pepco wants its proposed
10 multiyear rate plan to be approved by the end of
11 the year. It must not --

12 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Mr. Presbury,
13 your three minutes has run. I'm going to give you
14 a minute to please wrap up your comments, please.

15 GRAYLIN PRESBURY: It must not be
16 allowed to implement such rate increase and allow
17 whatever policies it chooses. Pepco utility
18 company must be held responsible for following the
19 law and allowing justifications for the rates and
20 services it proposes. Thank you for this
21 opportunity to testify in this important
22 proceeding.

1 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
2 your testimony.

3 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Tyler
4 Fitch.

5 TYLER FITCH: Hi, all. Can you hear
6 me?

7 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: We can hear you.

8 TYLER FITCH: Great.

9 Good afternoon, Commissioners
10 Phillips and Beverly. My name is Tyler Fitch.
11 And I represent We Power DC, a coalition of
12 ratepayers across D.C., and organizations working
13 towards a more democratic power system in the
14 District. I want to thank the Commission for a
15 chance to speak today and for its commitment to
16 acting on behalf of D.C.'s ratepayers.

17 The Commission has an incredible
18 opportunity before it. It could fulfill its duty
19 to serve the public interest and support D.C.'s
20 most vulnerable citizens or it can concede it's
21 oversight authorize and embrace a multiyear
22 profit plan for Exelon.

1 We already know that Pepco doesn't
2 need to hike its prices because the Commission
3 rejected a price hike last time. And we know
4 this price hike won't get us closer to our
5 environmental goals because a Pepco exec said so
6 at a deposition. Based on those facts alone, the
7 Commission should reject the proposal.

8 But now Pepco is seeking new
9 profits during the biggest economic and public
10 health crisis in a century. In D.C., 65,000
11 workers, over 11 percent of our workforce are
12 still out of work. The Pepco's own filings to
13 the Commission shows that over 50,000 households
14 and businesses, a sixth of Pepco's customers in
15 the District, have been unable to pay for their
16 electricity since the pandemic began.

17 And until Pepco puts its ratepayers
18 first and would respond to historic disruption by
19 doing what they can to ensure that people are
20 protected, but Pepco doubled down on the request
21 for higher rates. And even called their new
22 proposal a rate freeze in bad faith. During a

1 once-in-a-lifetime event, Pepco executives chose
2 profit-making over protecting their people.

3 And, in fact, in an Exelon
4 shareholder event earlier today, that's
5 September 29th, they're already planning on
6 profiting from future investments in D.C.
7 There's nothing just or reasonable about that.
8 And without a doubt, it's not in the public
9 interest.

10 The facts are that Exelon and
11 Pepco's executives aren't moving us closer to
12 reaching our climate goals, and they're
13 absolutely not ensuring that our electricity
14 rates stay affordable. And if they get what they
15 want, the Commission will have even less
16 authority to apply oversight.

17 It's said that mergers create
18 efficiency. And maybe that's true. This
19 proposal would extract profit off the backs of
20 working D.C. ratepayers more efficiently than
21 they ever have before and sacrificing the health
22 and dignity of our neighbors and our climate

1 goals in the process.

2 This proposal to us is proof that
3 we indeed need a change. We need a management
4 system that's democratically accountable at every
5 turn, one that puts people first and doesn't take
6 a cut of every utility bill for profit. One that
7 takes D.C.'s climate goals seriously instead of
8 quietly trying to squash them.

9 We need more democratic power and
10 it starts by rejecting this rate case. Thank you
11 very much.

12 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
13 your testimony.

14 Call the next witness, please.

15 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Thank
16 you. The next witness -- pardon me. The next
17 witness is Phillip Haughton. Mr. Haughton, are you
18 on the line?

19 Next we'll move to Mr. Wren Patton.

20 WREN PATTON: Yes. I'm here.

21 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Thank
22 you.

1 WREN PATTON: Hi. My name is Wren
2 Patton. I am a D.C. resident in Ward 3. I'm here
3 on behalf of the Sunrise Movement. Sorry, let me
4 look at my notes here. The Sunrise Movement is an
5 organization you're familiar of. Mostly young
6 people, we are fighting for planning to start
7 climate change and create millions of jobs in the
8 process. Here in the D.C. hub, we are mostly young
9 people in their early 20s, who just graduated
10 college. We've got some older people, too, but the
11 average age is 22.

12 And when you're 22 experiencing the
13 second major recession of your young life and
14 entering adulthood during a global pandemic that
15 has the richest billionaires. We've seen them
16 gaining even more astronomical wealth while the
17 working class is barely skipping by, you really
18 start to question what is going on around here.

19 And a big part of our theory of
20 change here at Sunrise is that it's a very big us
21 out here. Like the we, and the we the people,
22 all of us, the non-billionaire class, we are most

1 certainly the majority, but we don't have any
2 power. And in the fight for our global future,
3 because honestly that's all we're really asking
4 for, between now and 2025, just a shot at good
5 jobs and a liveable future. In this fight for a
6 liveable future, there is a very, very small
7 group of billion-dollar companies that are tied
8 to the fossil fuel industry. And there is
9 certainly a question that utilities like Pepco
10 and Exelon are tied to the fossil fuel industry.

11 We've now seen for decades across
12 the country the most private utilities are
13 actively resisting the clean air transition. And
14 many are actively buying off politicians with
15 campaign contributions to do it.

16 The electric utility industry is a
17 barrier to solving the climate crisis. And this
18 has to stop. Younger generations are demanding
19 that it stop because we'll be around in 2050,
20 when the decisions you make in this decade right
21 now will have an impact.

22 This price hike would go to

1 increasing profits, not towards renewable energy.
2 Pepco admits their price hike would not fund
3 clean energy. And they have provided zero
4 evidence that the price hike advances D.C.'s
5 climate goals. Their construction plan budget
6 does not include any battery storage or
7 distributed solar. And currently Pepco derives
8 only 6 percent of its energy source fuel mix from
9 renewable energy.

10 D.C. has the most ambiguous energy
11 goals of any city in the country, 100 percent
12 renewable energy by 2032. And that's going to be
13 a challenge if we carry on with business as
14 usual. And I'm here on behalf of the young
15 people in D.C. to ask that you stop climate
16 mitigation down the road for future generations
17 to deal with. We need you to act boldly right
18 now.

19 Pepco's proposal doesn't even
20 attempt to support D.C.'s ambiguous climate
21 goals. We need to go back to the drawing board
22 and make a plan that actually reflects the

1 public's interest, because this ain't it. We are
2 out of time for business as usual and we will be
3 opposing everything they do that doesn't get us
4 closer to our climate goals. And I sincerely
5 hope this Commission will join us by rejecting
6 this request for a price increase. Make a
7 decision here that is really in the public
8 interest and reject Rate Case No. FC 1156,
9 because we've got to do better. Thank you for
10 allowing me to testify.

11 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
12 your testimony.

13 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next
14 we'll call Jennings Harnett. Mr. Harnett.

15 Next we'll move on to Katherine
16 Nielsen.

17 KATHERINE NIELSEN: I'm here.

18 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Thank
19 you.

20 KATHERINE NIELSEN: Okay. My name is
21 Kate. And I'm speaking on behalf of Metro D.C.
22 DSA. Pepco's plan to increase its rates over the

1 next three years places an unjust economic burden
2 on D.C.'s most vulnerable residents. And reveals
3 an unrealistic long-term plan with regard to
4 climate change. And that is why we strongly oppose
5 Pepco's multiyear rate application and ask the PSC
6 reject it.

7 First, and most importantly, we
8 simply cannot afford higher utility bills.
9 Pepco's rate application overwhelmingly affects
10 its residential customers. Already a quarter of
11 D.C.'s residents qualify for low-income energy
12 assistance. And of those who qualify, black
13 residents are overrepresented. Single-parent
14 households and the elderly are also
15 overrepresented among that pool. And that was
16 before the pandemic triggered our current
17 economic recession.

18 The cascading economic affects of
19 the COVID-19 closures make it especially
20 important that we stand with those in our
21 community who are energy burdened as it is.

22 The PSC cannot allow Pepco to raise

1 its rates because of the unjust impacts it would
2 have on the D.C. community. And the PSC must
3 step in to protect D.C. consumers, because Pepco
4 has not been forthcoming about how its proposal
5 would impact D.C. residents' energy bills. They
6 say that they are freezing rates, but in reality,
7 Pepco is using the benefits that have already
8 accrued to its ratepayers to obscure the fact
9 that they are increasing our utility cost. But
10 make no mistake, it's still a rate increase in
11 the middle of the pandemic.

12 And so what exactly does Pepco plan
13 to do with its increased cash flow? Based on
14 their rate application, we know that Pepco is not
15 investing in the kinds of infrastructure that
16 will ensure addressed transition to renewable
17 energy. Even as historical rainfall floods
18 basements in Eckington, and the fifth hottest
19 D.C. summer on record wraps up, Pepco wants to
20 pretend its business as usual.

21 There are no capital improvements
22 in this application that would bring it in

1 compliance with D.C.'s clean energy goals. And
2 it will already take a huge effort to transition
3 its current energy mix to 100 percent renewable
4 energy.

5 With the current proposal before
6 the PSC, Pepco has revealed to us that it's
7 unserious about making the challenges to switch
8 to clean energy. And this is an inadequate and
9 unacceptable given the scale of the climate
10 crisis that the D.C. area is facing.

11 At a minimum, Pepco should face
12 increase regulatory oversight, not less. And
13 they should absolutely not be allowed to lock in
14 rate increases over the next three years. It's
15 clearly an unjust and unreasonable proposal. And
16 the PCS should recognize that and reject this
17 rate application. Thank you for your time.

18 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
19 your testimony.

20 Next witness.

21 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Thank
22 you. Next witness is Will Flagle.

1 Mr. Flagle, are you on the line?

2 CARMEN DAVIS: No, he's not going to
3 testify.

4 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Thank
5 you.

6 Next we'll will Alyssa Morrison.
7 Ms. Morrison.

8 Next we have Andrea Crooms.

9 ANDREA CROOMS: I'm here.

10 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Thank
11 you.

12 ANDREA CROOMS: My name is Andrea
13 Crooms. And I'm a resident of the Ward 5 here in
14 Washington, D.C. I am opposing the rate increase
15 as it exists for three reasons. The first reason
16 is that the multiyear rate plan is overly
17 complicated and compounded by Pepco's numerous
18 errors. As an energy professional, an attorney, an
19 engineer, and fully trained by both Neighborhood
20 and the Institute of Public Utilities, and still I
21 have spent over 60 hours of my own time in attempts
22 to understand this application.

1 It is impossible for the ordinary
2 citizens of D.C. to effectively understand what
3 is going on in this rate case and determine how
4 they could testify in a way that would
5 effectively meet their needs and their desires.
6 I oppose the rate increase because our world is
7 in crisis, our city is in crisis. I live down
8 the street from the D.C. area food bank, and I
9 see the lines there. And I see the struggles of
10 all of -- many of my neighbors. And I look at
11 40 percent of my neighbors not being able to meet
12 their needs, meets their bills. I look at over
13 150,000 people hungry. I look at one in 11
14 people before COVID needing assistance of that
15 food bank, and I wonder how Pepco could come to
16 the city and ask us to increase any costs on
17 people who are already wondering where the next
18 thing -- when the next thing is going to hit
19 them.

20 It's been a very difficult year in
21 the city, not only because of COVID, but because
22 of the civil unrest that has occurred in attempts

1 to try to achieve some level of equality in this
2 country. We can't -- we have to expect the
3 investors of the utility to tighten their belts
4 in the same way and suffer the same types of
5 austerity that locals are suffering through
6 COVID.

7 We have to expect Pepco to find
8 ways to cut administrative costs and reduce the
9 burden internally, not seek additional funds from
10 ratepayers. When we look at things like the
11 administrative costs that they're spending just
12 to do collections in the city, the burden is
13 completely unreasonable when asking to increase
14 the cost to the ratepayer.

15 When we get to the end of this
16 crisis, there's another crisis on the horizon.
17 That crisis is already affecting us as we see the
18 hurricanes and the wildfires of this year. We
19 know that the climate crisis is coming. The
20 mayor knows the climate crisis is coming and the
21 city council knows the climate crisis is coming
22 and that's why the city has the most ambitious

1 renewal energy goals in the country.

2 And we now have an opportunity
3 within the Public Service Commission to implement
4 those goals. And there is the opportunity to
5 regulate with those expectations in mind. I'm
6 asking the PSC to take those goals into factor
7 and take the current Pepco filing and see that it
8 doesn't meet those goals. Demand that we look at
9 a utility system that allows distributed solar,
10 demand that the types of improvements that they
11 make do not add to the energy justice burden
12 already on the poorest wards of the city, demand
13 that we make actual change in the actual lives of
14 the people who have lived here for generations.
15 Thank you.

16 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next --

17 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
18 your testimony.

19 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Pardon
20 me, sir.

21 Next we'll call Holly Pollinger.
22 Ms. Pollinger, are you on the line?

1 Next we'll call Maggie Simpson.

2 MAGGIE SIMPSON: Yes. Hello, this is
3 Maggie Simpson. Hi there. I am here just on my
4 own. I'm not representing any organization. I've
5 been advised that I should make clear that I have
6 no affiliation with any party to this case. And I
7 haven't received, nor will I receive, any
8 compensation or incentive from Pepco. I'm a
9 resident of Ward 3 in the District.

10 I feel that Pepco is claiming that
11 it will provide customer assistance programs in
12 conjunction with its MRP approvals. But that
13 this is entirely misleading. The COVID-19
14 pandemic programs that Pepco is planning to offer
15 will last only for a year. And Pepco only wants
16 to provide them if its unwarranted multiyear rate
17 increase plan is approved. This is dishonest.
18 And especially in light of the tremendous adverse
19 impact of the COVID-19 emergency. It's shocking
20 that Pepco is trying to tie proposed relief and
21 rate increases together.

22 The PSC should not be asked to

1 approve a supposed relief program and at the same
2 time have to agree to long-term changes in the
3 rate setting procedure.

4 These MRP proposals raise questions
5 about forecasting demand, about service, about
6 ways to ensure reasonable rates for customers.
7 Their consideration should not be rushed. After
8 all, Pepco is doing just fine, so what's the
9 hurry?

10 Pepco's doing so well in fact that
11 the CEO of its parent company, Exelon, made
12 almost \$15 million last year in salary and stock
13 options. And the president and CEO of Pepco
14 Holdings brings over five million -- brings in,
15 sorry, over \$5 million annually in total
16 compensation. Clearly to pay such compensation,
17 Pepco and its affiliates are making massive
18 profits. Bundling its MRPs, which are designed
19 to generate even more profit, with proposals to
20 assist consumers during this health and economic
21 emergency seems disingenuous at best.

22 In fact, it appears to be a blatant

1 attempt to hold consumer relief hostage. Hostage
2 to getting an agreement to higher rates and a bad
3 rate-setting process in the future.

4 I ask the PSC, would you demand,
5 please, that Pepco propose a consumer relief
6 program separate from these MRPs. And please,
7 please, do not pass the MRPs without a longer
8 period for review and analysis of their
9 implications. Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
11 your testimony.

12 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next
13 we'll call Keith Prushankin.

14 KEITH PRUSHANKIN: Hello. Good
15 afternoon.

16 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Good afternoon.

17 KEITH PRUSHANKIN: I've lived in
18 Washington, D.C. for three years now. I don't have
19 stock options. I'm just a working-class guy.
20 Other than being somebody who grumbles about the
21 traffic on 66 and roots for the Nationals, who I am
22 is someone who recognizes the knife's edge that

1 many thousands of our neighbors are currently
2 standing on. Never before in our lifetime is this
3 more real than it has become since the economic
4 disaster caused by decades of federal apathy
5 compounded by COVID-19, and the unwillingness of
6 our elected officials to address the fundamental
7 and underlying disorder that goes to the heart of
8 American life.

9 This is the economic inequality
10 that is keeping millions of our countrymen in
11 terror and indignity, in which the company with
12 the world's largest economy should be rightly
13 ashamed. We have an opportunity today to halt
14 another in the series of injustices that afflicts
15 our people.

16 And that's why I urge you to reject
17 Pepco's profit mongering. The people of
18 Washington who are under attack by a pandemic
19 that has devastated their jobs and a system that
20 has left them without health care cannot afford
21 to pay higher bills for an essential service, all
22 in the interest of satisfying a corporation's

1 profits.

2 Second, I urge you to enact a
3 District-wide moratorium on utility shut-offs.
4 Protect the people when we need it most. Don't
5 leave us out in the cold as our children connect
6 to school, as we shelter inside to preserve our
7 health, and as we cling to each other against the
8 raging storm outside. And let's use this crisis
9 as an opportunity to build back better.
10 Eliminate D.C.'s contract with Pepco and help
11 start a utility that is owned and managed by the
12 people. By increases prices, meddling in D.C.
13 politics and actively working to stop climate
14 action, Pepco and Exelon have consistently show
15 that they are not operating in the public
16 interest.

17 The creation of a publicly owned
18 and managed utility would allow the District to
19 reinvest its profits into its own energy
20 infrastructure, ensure clean air across all
21 neighborhoods, and create jobs to help us build
22 the recovery that we so desperately need.

1 A previous speaker mentioned that
2 families are already having to choose between
3 buying food, paying their rent and paying their
4 utilities. Do not make that choice any more
5 difficult for those families. Make the morale
6 choice. Stand up for the people, not
7 corporations. Stand on the side of history.
8 Stand with the American working class. Thank
9 you.

10 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
11 your testimony.

12 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Hayley
13 Harman. Hayley Harman, are you on the line?

14 Next we'll call Christopher Bangs.

15 CHRISTOPHER BANGS: Hello.

16 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Good afternoon.

17 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Hi.

18 CHRISTOPHER BANGS: Hi. So my name
19 is Chris Bangs. I am Ward 2 resident. And I am an
20 activist with Metro D.C. Democratic Socialist of
21 America. I'm going to be testifying by myself and
22 not organization. I'm testifying to urge the

1 Commission to reject the rate hike. The rate hike
2 is already -- it's proposing increases to our bills
3 when they're already too high.

4 According to We Power D.C.
5 something like 50,000 Pepco customers have fallen
6 into debt with Pepco just during this pandemic
7 alone. And that's even on top of the regular and
8 far too high economic burden that utilities place
9 on working families in D.C. Sadly, also in D.C.,
10 over the last few decades, we've seen more and
11 more black people and working-class people being
12 forced out or priced out of our neighborhoods,
13 while fancy condos are being built. So too many
14 people are facing too much of an economic burden
15 and adding the significant price increase will
16 just make it worse.

17 What's more, you know, Pepco
18 doesn't need this money. Pepco made something
19 like \$110 million of profit in the first quarter
20 of 2020 alone. And executives are saying that
21 they can expect even more profit if they get
22 these price hikes. So Pepco does not need this

1 money to run an electricity system that works for
2 D.C. families, they are just looking for the rate
3 increase to line their pockets.

4 They also weaken our regulatory
5 oversight and permit them to raise prices again
6 in 2021 and 2022. So in my opinion, you can't
7 trust -- you can't trust them to act in our
8 interest. You can't give them pre-approval to
9 continue to raise our electricity prices. We
10 need more oversight of Pepco, not less.

11 Maybe most importantly, we are in
12 the middle of a climate crisis. We've seen it so
13 dramatically this summer with the wildfires all
14 across the west and the extreme hurricanes and
15 all of the other ways that the climate crisis has
16 really killed people and destroyed lives and
17 destroyed homes and communities. And will
18 continue to do it. We need a global climate
19 leadership and not more of the same.

20 And this price hike will not even
21 go towards renewable energy. Pepco has not been
22 a leader on clean energy. And it has not

1 promised to be a leader on clean energy with this
2 money. So I want to speak in support of all of
3 the We Power D.C. demands to reject this price
4 hike, to enact a permanent moratorium on utility
5 shut-offs, to cancel all utility bed and keep the
6 workers who work for Pepco and work for our
7 community safe. To invest in green recovery.
8 And to ultimately eliminate D.C.'s contract with
9 Pepco and start a community-owned utility. So,
10 again, I urge you to reject this rate case and
11 stand with working people in D.C. Thank you so
12 much.

13 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you.

14 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next we
15 call Sarah Rain Tree. Sarah Rain Tree, are you on
16 the line?

17 Next we'll call Louis Dave. Louis
18 Davis, are you on the line?

19 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: If you're on the
20 line and you're trying to speak, we can't -- there
21 you go.

22 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: There he

1 is.

2 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: We can't hear you
3 if you're speaking.

4 Commission Secretary, do we have
5 the speaker?

6 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: I'm
7 sorry, what was that, sir?

8 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Do we have the
9 speaker on the line or do -- if not, move on.

10 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: I -- hold
11 on one second. I saw him, but it appears that he
12 dropped. May have I have a moment, sir? Hold on
13 one second, please. Let me send a message to IT.

14 CARMEN DAVIS: He needs to unmute his
15 device.

16 Mr. Davis, we can't hear what
17 you're saying. You need to unmute yourself.

18 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Please move to
19 the next speaker and we can come back when
20 Mr. Davis is on the line.

21 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Thank
22 you, sir.

1 The next person we're going to call
2 is Imara Crooms.

3 IMARA CROOMS: I'm here. Can you
4 hear me?

5 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Yes.

6 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: We can hear you.

7 IMARA CROOMS: Awesome. So hello.
8 And good afternoon. My name is Imara Crooms. I am
9 a resident of Ward 5. I feel like it's weird that
10 we even have to have this conversation today.
11 Obviously, obviously, I think it's necessary that
12 we reject Pepco's price hike. Across America
13 200,000 people are dead. We face the highest
14 unemployment rates since the Great Recession. The
15 economy of D.C. is devastated. We're all sharing
16 in a common mutual suffering and mutual immunity.

17 Everyone's having a hard time, but
18 for some reason we think it's unfair for Pepco's
19 investors to share that burden. The gall and
20 absurdity of proposing a rate hike at this moment
21 in our history, it's just stunning and
22 reprehensible. In a moment where we should be

1 working as a community to support each other,
2 this is what we get. I don't understand why we
3 aren't talking about how to keep families' power
4 on. I don't understand why we're not talking
5 about how to protect D.C.'s taxpayers. How is it
6 in this moment that our concern should be Pepco's
7 investors who already have essentially a
8 guaranteed profit? People are going to use
9 power. Maybe just once they can accept that gift
10 for what it is, rather than squeezing us for all
11 that we're worth.

12 In case it hasn't been clear, I
13 want to reiterate my request that we reject this
14 rate case and we reject this price hike and
15 disgusting attempt to kick the people of D.C.
16 while they're down. That's it. Peace.

17 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
18 your testimony.

19 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next
20 we'll call Ed Lazere. Ed Lazere, are you on the
21 line?

22 Next we'll call Yesenia Rivera.

1 Yesenia Rivera, are you on the line?

2 Next we'll call Laura Lara Levison.

3 Lara Levison, are you on the line?

4 LARA LEVISON: I'm here.

5 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Thank
6 you.

7 LARA LEVISON: Thanks. My name is
8 Lara -- oh, sorry. I'm on backlit. Oh, well,
9 sorry about that. My name is Lara Levison. And
10 I'm a Ward 6 resident of 35 years and a D.C. Sierra
11 Club member testifying as an individual. I urge
12 the Commission to reject Pepco's proposed rate
13 increase in FC 1156.

14 Pepco's plan is not in the interest
15 of the public for several reasons. First, as
16 others have so eloquently said, so many people
17 are unemployed or underemployed because of the
18 pandemic, many of them even unable to buy enough
19 food. So this is not the time to raise
20 electricity rates. Pepco's assistance programs
21 are not truly generous as the programs are tied
22 to the rate increase and the company will make

1 money from the assistance programs.

2 Second -- there's a bit of
3 background noise. I'm not sure where that's
4 from. Second, before rewarding its shareholders
5 and management, Pepco should make sure that
6 workers who do construction on behalf of Pepco
7 are earning a living wage and good benefits. The
8 jobs that Pepco provide should allow workers to
9 live without the need for public assistance.

10 Thirdly, and a more technical
11 point, the discussion of performance-based
12 regulation and other rate designed questions was
13 required in a 1156, but remains unresolved.
14 These questions should be returned to active
15 consideration in FC 1130.

16 Finally, as others have pointed
17 out, this plan ignores the climate crisis. When
18 I learned about global warming in the 1990s, I
19 didn't think I would see the effects in my
20 lifetime, but they're now literally all around
21 us. The first half of this year was the second
22 hottest globally and the records that go back 141

1 years. Like COVID-19, climate change will do the
2 most harm to the most vulnerable people in our
3 city. When there's a heatwave and people can't
4 afford to turn on air conditioning or even to
5 have it, they can die, especially the elderly and
6 vulnerable.

7 It's time for all of us, including
8 Pepco, to treat climate change like the crisis it
9 is. Pepco should move rapidly to support and
10 promote distributed generation energy efficiency
11 in the electrification of vehicles and buildings.
12 The Commission could also take a step in the
13 right direction on a electrification by
14 supporting expanded electric vehicle programs
15 under docket FC 1155, and adding electrification
16 to the whole building, low-income efficiency
17 program pending in Docket FC 1148.

18 I'd like to suggest that the
19 Commission could also consider instituting a
20 percentage of income payment program like the one
21 enacted in the Virginia Clean Economy Act that is
22 now being implemented in our neighbor state of

1 course Virginia.

2 I support the joint motion filed in
3 August by the Office of the People's Counsel and
4 all major nonutility parties to this case, was
5 requesting that you direct Pepco to withdraw its
6 rate increase application, dismiss Pepco's
7 multiyear rate plan enhanced proposal and grant
8 additional consumer relief. Thank you for the
9 opportunity to testify.

10 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you.

11 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next
12 we'll call Pedro Alfonso, please. Mr. Alfonso, are
13 you on the line?

14 PEDRO ALFONSO: I am on the line.
15 Thank you. Chairman Phillips and Commissioner
16 Beverly, my name is Pedro Alfonso. I'm a D.C.
17 resident and a local CVE providing services to all
18 utilities. And we're located in the District of
19 Columbia. And I'm speaking today on behalf of the
20 Metro D.C. Hispanic Contractors Association.

21 Our association is in support of
22 the local utility request for multiyear rate

1 plan, MRP. The Commission has stated, and by
2 law, can adopt an alternative form of regulation
3 as it relates to rate recovery if three
4 conditions exist. First protection of consumers.
5 We find it this proposed multiyear plan provides
6 a cadre of consumer incentives that will contain
7 costs, even if that containment is in a short
8 run, it minimizes the impact and uncertainty of
9 rate hikes for all ratepayers in the future.

10 The proposed revised multiyear plan
11 includes targeted residential customer
12 enhancement that protects local residents such as
13 not applying any new distribution rates until
14 2020, extending assistance program, extending
15 consumer-based credit program, and increase in
16 caps on the residential aid discount. This
17 provides a strong basis for consumer protection
18 under a multiyear plan.

19 Second, the company must ensure
20 that the quality and reliability of providing
21 electrical power is maintained. I must applaud
22 the company's progress over the last seven years

1 since that the rate shall hit D.C. Tremendous
2 progress has been made in the areas of quality
3 and reliability. But it does concern our members
4 that the company's consideration to forgo and
5 delay \$60 million in infrastructure work. And
6 this should be closely monitored to make sure
7 that the gains and improvement of reliability
8 over the last few years are maintained.

9 Finally, the Commission is also
10 concerned if such a change will be in the best
11 interest of the public. As a board member of the
12 D.C. Metro Hispanic Contractors Association, and
13 a small business owner myself, it is important
14 that our members have a sense of certainty and
15 transparency when it relates to expected
16 increases in energy cost our businesses.

17 Energy costs looms large in a
18 financial stability of any business. And whether
19 it's fuel, it's electricity or gas, it's
20 important to have a stability of anticipating
21 costs. An MRP gives small businesses the basic
22 information needed to prepare for potential cost

1 increases and so do local residents. And they
2 can provide a reasonable budget plan at the same
3 time and ensure the local utility will
4 continually be financially stable.

5 It does give us a concerned
6 proposed Pepco multiyear plan that even with
7 improved change in current regulation to a
8 multiyear plan, that we could face an additional
9 rate increase over two years, essentially for
10 2022 and 2023. We understand that there are
11 increasing cost of energy just to -- energy
12 distribution to include maintenance and
13 enhancements in the system which must be covered;
14 however, a steady predictable increase in rate is
15 important to residents in our black and brown
16 small business members.

17 If there were ever a year to make
18 this change in the regulation to a multiyear
19 plan, this would be the year. The company's
20 revised plan that considers their impact of
21 COVID-19 on our community is appreciated.
22 Therefore, again, we support Pepco's request for

1 a change and the rate recovery regulation to a
2 multiyear rate plan.

3 It brings certainty, transparency
4 and stability to all ratepayers while reducing
5 the cost of annual litigation and, therefore,
6 concentrate the resources on maintaining and
7 improving quality and reliability. We must
8 encourage not only the D.C. PSC, but also the
9 D.C. Office of People's Counsel to monitor the
10 company's costs, their consumer programs, their
11 commitments to local and small businesses. And
12 the employment of black and brown residents,
13 which all these points should be the cornerstone
14 of this new multiyear rate plan.

15 Commissioners, thank you for this
16 opportunity.

17 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr.
18 Alfonso. Thank you.

19 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next
20 Mr. Ed Lazere.

21 ED LAZERE: Great. Good afternoon.
22 Thank you so much for the opportunity to testify

1 today. My name is Ed Lazere. And I am a candidate
2 for D.C. Council at large. I'm here today to ask
3 you to reject rate case No. FC 1156, the Pepco rate
4 case.

5 I've spent the last 20 years as an
6 advocate on issues of economic and racial
7 injustice in D.C. Through my leadership of the
8 D.C. Metropolitan Institute, including advocacy
9 on issues of energy affordability, I know that
10 funds in D.C.'s Low-Income Home Energy Assistance
11 Program run out every year, leaving thousands of
12 families with no help with bills. I personally
13 know families who have spiral into homelessness
14 after having their utilities shut off. And I'm
15 deeply concerned now about families that cannot
16 pay energy bills in the pandemic because they
17 lost their jobs through no fault of their own.

18 For all these reasons we should not
19 allow Pepco to raise electricity rates and bills
20 on D.C. households at this time. The added \$120
21 a year alone in 2020 would create added hardship
22 for families who already struggle -- who already

1 struggle to pay their bills, most of them black
2 and brown. Even before the pandemic many
3 low-income families struggled with energy bills
4 because lost wages and high housing costs left
5 them no room for other necessities.

6 When families spend nearly all of
7 their income for housing, they don't have enough
8 left over for food, bus fare for investing in
9 their children's future. Family stability and
10 child well-being will suffer. This rate increase
11 would worsen all of those.

12 Case FC 1156 with also allow
13 additional rate increases in 2021 and 2022
14 without Pepco having to come back to the
15 Commission. I oppose that as well. This rate
16 increase is not needed and there are no clear
17 benefits. Pepco Holdings made 110 million profit
18 in the first quarter of 2020. And when asked by
19 the Office of the People's Counsel whether the
20 rate increase would support adding clean energy
21 technology, Pepco said it would not; meaning this
22 price hike would do nothing to further D.C.'s

1 climate goals.

2 Finally, I urge the Public Service
3 Commission to adopt a permanent moratorium on
4 utility shut-offs. The District has a temporary
5 moratorium, but that will end shortly after the
6 pandemic emergency is over. And at that point,
7 any unpaid utility bills will be due. Thousands
8 of D.C. residents are at risk of being evicted or
9 having their utilities shut off. It would
10 immoral and a policy failure if even one family
11 faced eviction or loss of utilities because the
12 pandemic eliminated their job.

13 I support a permanent ban on
14 utility shut-off for anyone who got behind on
15 bills in the pandemic due to unemployment. And I
16 would urge the Public Service Commission to move
17 to a policy to ban all shut-offs, knowing how
18 traumatic and harmful they can be. We must find
19 alternatives to evictions and utility shut-offs.
20 Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

21 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you,
22 Mr. Lazere.

1 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Thank
2 you. And, Chairman, sorry, if I make take a moment
3 to remind the attendees to please keep your phone
4 on mute or your computer volume on mute unless
5 you're speaking, please. Thank you.

6 And next --

7 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Call the next
8 witness, please.

9 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Yes, sir.
10 Next were going to call Ann Mladinov.

11 ANN MLADINOV: Thank you. Thank you,
12 Chairman Phillips, and Commissioner Beverly. I'm
13 Ann Mladinov. And I'm representing by Advisory
14 Neighborhood Commission, ANC3B in Glover Park
15 Cathedral Heights. Our ANC submitted several
16 letters to the PCS on this case over the months.

17 We know community engagement is one
18 of the top three priorities for the PCS,
19 including listening to the voices of the people.
20 And as you heard, that is especially important in
21 this case, which is seeing the biggest utility
22 rate increase in District rate request and in

1 District history proposed change in the PCS's
2 whole approach for rate making that goes against
3 multiple policies and residents. And the
4 pandemic that is adversely affected almost all of
5 Pepco's ratepayers residents and businesses.

6 I do not know what is finally going
7 to be on the table in Pepco's multiyear rate
8 plans because a lot of the details in the
9 enhanced multiyear rate plan have not yet been
10 specified. We don't know what investments would
11 actually be included or not included because
12 there is not a clear list.

13 We don't know what benefits Pepco
14 anticipates that those plans will provide. That
15 has not been provided. Pepco has not clearly
16 answered the criteria that were set out by the
17 PCS for judging alternative rate making.

18 And the forecast question, which
19 others have mentioned, is really critical. Pepco
20 has based this multiyear rate plan on forecasts
21 that were made before the COVID-19 virus had even
22 been heard of. And now it has changed almost

1 everything in the way that we live and the way
2 the economy works. And all of those forecasts
3 should be revisited and redone. Nothing is based
4 on those pre-COVID forecasts can be counted on.
5 And it doesn't make any sense to accept multiyear
6 rate plans that was based on those kinds of
7 values.

8 Pepco rushed into the original
9 multiyear rate plan without taking into account
10 all of the questions and concerns that were
11 raised by stakeholders. And then this June, when
12 it was obvious that the first multiyear rate was
13 not going to fly, Pepco hurriedly put together a
14 new multiyear plan, it was designed to sound more
15 appealing. But it is not necessary for Pepco to
16 get the multiyear rate plan increases in order to
17 provide benefits to customers, the kinds of
18 benefits that many of the witnesses have been
19 recommending.

20 Our ANC put forth three points;
21 adopt protection for customers who are having
22 trouble paying their utility bills. So during

1 the next few years they can get more generous
2 payment plans, be forgiven late fees, not worry
3 about disconnections, get extended discounts,
4 other kinds of assistance. Many jurisdictions
5 are doing this all over the country. The
6 policies do not have to be tied to multiyear rate
7 plans.

8 Look at the cost Pepco's already
9 encouraged to provide our service, as you always
10 do, and sort out which ones are appropriate for
11 ratepayers to have to cover. OPC found that
12 total would only be about 21 million, a little
13 close to 70 million Pepco requested. You can
14 decide to delay or phase any rate increase
15 needed. Maybe use rate credits and spare already
16 hurting customers with immediate hikes in their
17 bills. And deny Pepco's request for a multiyear
18 rate plan.

19 You know where to find the best
20 suggestion that Commission Beverly made in the
21 June 12, 2019 order launching this case and
22 repeated in your order of July 8, to take the

1 whole idea of multiyear rate plans and
2 alternative rate making out of the current rate
3 case and take it up in a separate process that
4 will be far more open to everyone in a stake in
5 how this works. Considering the goals and
6 options and implications for the customers and
7 the future of our electric system.

8 How will you correct the problems
9 that arises, especially overcharges? How will
10 you evaluate the forecast? How will you include
11 the public in the decisions of future investments
12 that might be part of a three-year plan?

13 The public needs to be included and
14 informed and heard in these major decisions that
15 affect all us for the short and long term, as far
16 as our costs and also the future of our
17 infrastructure and our environment. Please take
18 to heart your commitment to community engagement
19 and listen to the serious calls and concerns of
20 the people you serve.

21 Thank you again for holding this
22 hearing. And we hope to hear more in the

1 evidentiary hearings that I hope you will hold.

2 And if you want to consider another community
3 hearing when that's all cleared, that will be
4 great as well. We really want to be part of
5 this. You can tell how important it is. Thank
6 you again.

7 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
8 your testimony. And thank you. It's always good
9 to hear from our ANCs. Thank you.

10 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next
11 we'll call Peter Quinn-Jacobs. Mr. Jacobs, I can
12 see you, but I cannot hear you.

13 PETER QUINN-JACOBS: Hello. Can you
14 hear me now?

15 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Yes.

16 PETER QUINN-JACOBS: Okay. Great.
17 Hi. Thank you, Commissioners, for hearing my
18 testimony today. My name is Peter Quinn-Jacobs.
19 And I am a vice chair of the Clean Energy Committee
20 for the D.C. chapter of the Sierra Club. And I am
21 testifying on behalf of the Sierra Club today.

22 We ask you to reject Rate Case No.

1 FC 1156. The D.C. Sierra Club is dedicated to
2 protecting and improving the environment in the
3 nation's capital. We are grass-roots
4 organization with more than 3,000 dues-paying
5 members and more than 10,000 supporters in the
6 District.

7 The other day a friend told me that
8 the bar where she is working is going to close
9 its doors and she's going to be out of a job in
10 two weeks. And right now I'm thinking about
11 everyone who works at that bar and everyone else
12 across the District struggling to find a clear
13 path through this pandemic, including the workers
14 who do construction on Pepco's behalf.

15 The best and most that those
16 construction workers earn from Pepco is minimum
17 wage. And a larger portion -- and larger and
18 larger portion of contracted construction workers
19 on Pepco's projects actually make less than the
20 minium wage. And it's at this time that Pepco is
21 proposing a price hike. After this rate
22 increase, many of the people will build and

1 maintain our electric grid will not be able to
2 afford the electricity that they need to maintain
3 their homes and the well-being of their families;
4 meanwhile Exelon's CEO earned over 15 million in
5 salary and benefits last year. The hard-working
6 people of D.C. deserve better.

7 The cost of living has been
8 steadily rising and Pepco has no substantive
9 justification for increasing it further. At a
10 time when its stakeholders are already turning a
11 profit on their investments, Pepco wants to ask
12 for more money from District residents. And for
13 what? Its parent company, Exelon, wants to
14 improve its earnings, of course, but Pepco is a
15 regulated company, because it provides a
16 necessary service, its first duty is to the
17 ratepayers. Pepco needs to improve its service
18 if it wants to improve its earnings.

19 And the Sierra Club has some
20 recommendations. First, Pepco should demonstrate
21 that it will work with the government and
22 community leaders to reduce greenhouse gas

1 emissions. Pepco should prepare for an increased
2 amount of distributed generation and the
3 electrification of vehicles and buildings. The
4 Commission could start by supporting expanded
5 electric vehicle programs under Docket FC 1155
6 and adding electrification to the whole building
7 and low-income efficiency program pending in
8 Docket FC 1148.

9 The Commission could also consider
10 instituting a percentage of income payment
11 program like the one in the Virginia Clean
12 Economy Act that's being implemented right now.

13 Second, Pepco should start
14 compensating its workers more equitably.
15 Compared to Washington Gas whose contractors earn
16 a living wage, receive affordable health
17 insurance and are eligible for retirement
18 benefits, Pepco is pretty far behind.

19 And finally, the matters of
20 performance-based regulation in other rate design
21 questions in FC 1156 remain unresolved. The FC
22 1156 discussion should inform further inquiry on

1 this subject and be redirected back to active
2 consideration in FC 1130.

3 In conclusion, Sierra Club urges
4 the Commission to reject Rate Case No. FC 1156.
5 It will further burden of low-income families
6 during already difficult times. It will not
7 bring us closer to achieving our climate goals.
8 It will not improve the well welfare of the
9 construction workers who need higher-paying jobs.
10 Thank you again for the opportunity to speak on
11 behalf of the Sierra Club.

12 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you, Peter.
13 And we thank the Sierra Club for participating.

14 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next we
15 call Pastor George Gilbert. Mr. Gilbert, are you
16 on the line?

17 PASTOR GEORGE C. GILBERT: Can you
18 hear me?

19 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Yes.

20 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: We hear you, yes.

21 PASTOR GEORGE C. GILBERT: Can you --
22 can you hear me?

1 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Yes, sir,
2 we can hear you.

3 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Yes.

4 PASTOR GEORGE C. GILBERT: All right.
5 Thank you.

6 To the members of the Public
7 Service Commission, I thank you for allowing me
8 to speak to you at this hearing. I am Pastor
9 George C. Gilbert, Sr., pastor of the Holy
10 Trinity United Baptist Church located at 4504
11 Golf Place, Northeast, Washington, D.C. 20019. I
12 am also representing the Missionary Baptist
13 Ministers Conference of Washington, D.C &
14 Vicinity, a membership of 250, representing over
15 20,000 people.

16 I think it's important for me to
17 let you know that I have lived in Washington,
18 D.C. since 1961. That's 59 years. Several years
19 ago when Exelon merged with Pepco, we were
20 told -- or rather we were promised that we would
21 have more efficient and better services. We were
22 also promised that the electric service for the

1 citizens of the District of Columbia would be
2 more affordable.

3 I'm sorry to say Pepco has not
4 fulfilled that promise. Here we are with Pepco
5 proposing about \$135.9 million increase of
6 services over the next three years. The records
7 show that Pepco, Exelon, had a profit of \$1.1
8 billion in the third quarter of 2019, and
9 \$1.4 billion profit in the fourth quarter of
10 2019. And I want you to notice I said 1.1
11 billion and \$1.4 billion, and not 1.1 and
12 \$1.4 million.

13 When I was in school I learned that
14 a profit is after all expenses have been paid.
15 Furthermore, the record shows that Pepco has
16 already received rate increases in 2017 and 2018.
17 Based on their history, it appears that Pepco
18 desires a plan to ask for a rate increase every
19 year. This does not seem fair to the ratepayers.

20 As one who pastors people who live
21 in the District of Columbia, I have members will
22 are finding it difficult to just put a roof over

1 their heads and food on their tables. With the
2 pandemic, which has hit us hard, statistics tells
3 us that nationally, nationally, 16 million people
4 have experienced unemployment and a great number
5 of these employed people are citizens of the
6 District of Columbia.

7 I find it very insensitive of Pepco
8 to put more burden on the backs of the people who
9 are faced with health issues due to the
10 coronavirus, unemployment --

11 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Hello,
12 Pastor Gilbert.

13 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: I believe we lost
14 Pastor Gilbert.

15 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: I believe
16 we did. Okay. Next we'll call Pastor Graylin
17 Hagler. Pastor Hagler, are you on the line?
18 Pastor Graylin Hagler?

19 Next we'll call Pastor Lionel
20 Edmonds. Mr. Edmonds, are you on the line?

21 PASTOR LIONEL EDMONDS: Yes, I am
22 here.

1 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Thank
2 you, sir.

3 PASTOR LIONEL EDMONDS: Hello. My
4 name is H. Linoel Edmonds. I am the pastor of
5 Mount Lebanon Baptist Church in Washington, D.C. A
6 church that has been in the District since 1899. I
7 am also cofounder of the Washington Interfaith
8 Network, of whom I am representing. An
9 organization consisting of nearly 40 institutions
10 and over 100,000 District residents. I live in
11 Ward 6 of the District.

12 The pathway to this hearing at
13 times have reminded me of the songs that I used
14 to dance to by the group called
15 Parliament-Funkadelic. And I'll use part of
16 their songs in this testimony to state my case.

17 The Public Service Commission has
18 treated the members of the organizations that I
19 represent, as Parliament-Funkadelic would like to
20 say sometimes like cosmic slop. The funky in a
21 negative kind of way, difficulty that we had to
22 hurdle during the mere process of signing up for

1 this hearing deserves a public flashlight to be
2 shined upon it. Magic brain is a melody that
3 plays in my mind recalling what we had to go
4 through just to get to this point.

5 The Washington Interfaith Network
6 plans to organize until we tear the roof off this
7 sucker, letting the power of an organized people
8 swing down like a sweet chariot.

9 Now, I want to testify briefly that
10 any conversation about a rate increase for Pepco
11 is premature. It should not even be discussed
12 until greater public benefits from Pepco to the
13 public sector are guaranteed. In particular, the
14 Washington Interfaith Network is asking Pepco to
15 adhere to our corporate accountability and racial
16 equity agenda, that is Pepco must commit to an
17 increase in the share of Pepco's investment in
18 black-owned firms. It must go from the paltry
19 \$11 million that Pepco invested last year in
20 local D.C. black firms to the creation of a
21 five-year, low-interest \$50 million working
22 capital loan program for black firms.

1 Secondly, Pepco must commit to an
2 increase in local hiring at Pepco and their
3 related contractors. That means Pepco must hire
4 more residents from Ward 5, Ward 7, and Ward 8 of
5 our great city.

6 Finally, Pepco must commit to
7 expand the use and affordability of green energy
8 as well as making power more affordable during
9 this great pandemic. Let the light shine from
10 the lighthouse, shine on us. God bless you.

11 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
12 your testimony.

13 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next
14 we'll call Ms. Laney Scott.

15 LYNETTE SCOTT: Hello. I'm here.

16 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Thank
17 you.

18 LYNETTE SCOTT: To the Commission, my
19 name -- to the Commissioners, excuse me, my name is
20 Lynette Scott. And I bring you greetings on behalf
21 of the Missionary Baptist Ministers Conference of
22 Washington, D.C. & Vicinity. I am in opposition of

1 Pepco's proposed rate increase and urge the
2 Commission to withdraw their proposal without
3 delay.

4 And I do that for three reasons.
5 First, Pepco violated the law. They did that
6 when they failed to include in their proposal
7 submitted to the Commission on June 1st, 2020,
8 the details required under D.C. law that triggers
9 when a utility is requesting a multiyear rate
10 plan. Those details are -- and I'm sure the
11 Commission is very familiar with that, that the
12 increase will protect consumers; two, that it
13 ensures the quality, availability, and
14 reliability of electric services; and, three,
15 that the increase is in the best interest of the
16 public.

17 And Pepco has to demonstrate that
18 its increase met the Commission's criteria for
19 alternative rate-making mechanisms. Because
20 Pepco's application failed to include any of the
21 above information, the application is necessarily
22 deficient. So it would be no different than me,

1 a licensed attorney, electronically filing a
2 document in the wrong courthouse with the wrong
3 names and wrong information, but expecting the
4 case to moved forward anyway.

5 This is absolutely unacceptable.
6 And more than that, the file would be dismissed
7 by the court, not because a motion was filed, but
8 because the court would dismiss it on its own.
9 And so it is with Pepco, the application should
10 ultimately be withdrawn.

11 Second, and as so many others have
12 stated before me, COVID has rocked the nation to
13 its core. The economy is crippling. Folks are
14 wondering how they will make ends meet. And the
15 very last thing anyone wants to hear about is an
16 increase. Unless, of course, the increase is to
17 their bottom line. And so for Pepco, who lacks
18 no financial artillery, to be talking about an
19 increase, it completely demonstrates how tone
20 deaf they are. And so I would ask that Pepco, if
21 they're going to consider anything, consider how
22 it can extend grace and mercy, particularly to

1 the community and those from low-income
2 backgrounds, such as myself, in Ward 7 and 8.

3 Finally, third, the consumer will
4 ultimately have to bear the cost of this
5 increase. And what Pepco has yet to explain is
6 how this increase benefits the consumer. And so
7 the cost to benefit analysis has yet to be
8 expounded upon. So with that, thank you for
9 allowing me to testify.

10 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you.

11 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next
12 we'll call Pastor Frankey Grayton. Mr. Grayton,
13 are you on the line?

14 PASTOR FRANKEY GRAYTON: I am. Thank
15 you.

16 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: You're
17 welcome.

18 PASTOR FRANKEY GRAYTON: I am Frankey
19 Grayton, a Ward 6 resident and a member of the
20 Missionary Baptist Ministers Conference of D.C.
21 I'm also connected to Washington Interfaith Network
22 and support their work in this effort. I've been a

1 local planning contractor for years and so my heart
2 is sad when I think about the amount of money that
3 Pepco has spent with contractors and small amount
4 of money that they have spent out of their annual
5 budget with minority contractors.

6 I do want to say, too, that I'm not
7 being compensated for my testimony today. I do
8 believe that the rate increase should be denied.
9 D.C. has been a place that recently has become
10 hostile to people and -- marginalized people and
11 people of low economic -- people who are at the
12 bottom of the economic food chain. And Pepco
13 would make it even more -- make it even more so.
14 And so I would think that Pepco's rate increase
15 would make it more hostile towards people who are
16 struggling within our city.

17 Preachers serve two tasks, one of
18 those is to speak to the people for God, but it's
19 also to speak to power for the people. And a
20 rate increase is not in the best interest of the
21 citizens here in the District and the suburban
22 areas. And so it would not be in the best

1 interest of the citizens for a rate increase. It
2 might be in Pepco's best interest for a rate
3 increase, but it is not in the best interest of
4 the people here in the city. And so we would ask
5 you to reject Pepco's proposal. And I
6 respectfully submit my testimony, Frankey
7 Grayton.

8 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
9 your testimony.

10 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next we
11 call Louis Davis. Mr. Davis, are you on the line?

12 LOUIS DAVIS: Yes. Can you hear me?

13 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Yes.

14 LOUIS DAVIS: And sorry for the snafu
15 earlier. Good afternoon. I'm Louis Davis, Jr.,
16 state director of AARP, District of Columbia. On
17 behalf of AARP and our 83,000 members in the
18 District of Columbia, I appreciate the opportunity
19 to comment on the Pepco rate case filing.

20 For many of our members, and others
21 age 50 plus in the District of Columbia, on lower
22 fixed incomes, there are simply no room in their

1 household budgets for three years of electric
2 distribution rate increases. AARP has been an
3 active participant in the Pepco rate case, but
4 not as a formal intervener. I request that the
5 case be reconsidered in light of the COVID-19
6 pandemic and its impact on the case was
7 unfortunately rejected by the PSC. We also
8 support the intervener's motion to have the case
9 withdrawn entirely due to data flaws. But that
10 too was also rejected.

11 We were disappointed in both
12 orders. The Office of the People's Counsel
13 renewed its motion in a pleading dating
14 September 15th, which we also support.

15 Pepco has provided no assurance
16 that it has implemented quality control
17 mechanisms to ensure the reliability of future
18 data. In both MRP proposals, Pepco plans to
19 change its building determinants annually. As
20 such, the validity of the data used to calculate
21 the billing determinants is essential to Pepco's
22 plan design.

1 The multiyear rate scheme proposed
2 by Pepco would allow for rate increases for three
3 years in a row, adding up to 15 percent increase
4 in their electricity rates as originally filed.
5 Typically rate increase request must be filed
6 separately one year at a time. The process
7 requires giving the PSC a thorough opportunity to
8 review the filing using actual costs. Giving
9 Pepco authorization to raise rates for multiple
10 years in a row is poor public policy, whether it
11 be a federal income tax cut or the pandemic, the
12 future is too unpredictable. Three years of
13 preapproved rate increases without that full
14 accountability before each increase is
15 unacceptable. AARP urges the PSC reject this
16 request entirely. And require the standard
17 review process for each rate increase request.
18 One year of rate increase is enough.

19 Additionally, Pepco's requested a
20 44 percent increase in a customer charge on
21 monthly bills from 15.09 per month to \$22.60 per
22 month, phased in over three years. Customers

1 must pay this charge before they even turn on
2 their lights. If this request is approved, it
3 will make the Pepco customer charge in D.C. one
4 of the highest in the country.

5 Pepco had initially requested a
6 10.3 percent rate of return up from their current
7 9.52 percent. A rate of return that is already
8 higher than the national average. Given the drop
9 in interest rates due to the pandemic, we urge
10 this request also be lowered to reflect current
11 conditions.

12 Pepco also seeks to radically
13 change this regulation using a new system based
14 on incentives or rewards. The new proposed
15 regulatory scheme is more complicate and
16 time-consuming for all involved in the current
17 regulatory system. Further it could allow
18 special interest to highjack the regulatory
19 system.

20 We also urge the Commission to
21 cease allowing Pepco to moderate workshops and
22 stakeholders meetings in this proceeding. The

1 PSC staff or commissioners should act as
2 moderators. Further, when interveners make a
3 filing, the solution should be given and ordered
4 by and from the PSC, not another Pepco-run
5 workshop.

6 In closing, we ask the PSC, allow
7 only a one-year rate increase instead of three,
8 make no change to the customer charge, trim all
9 nonessential spending, reduce the requested rate
10 of return to reflect the drop in interest rates,
11 reject the move to incentive or performance-based
12 rate making, and carve out into a separate
13 proceeding if it must go forward. The matter is
14 too complicated, too time-consuming to be
15 discussed in a combined proceeding. The Pepco
16 three-year rate case must be viewed in light of
17 the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The filing was
18 prepared well before instructing the District,
19 pushing thousands of persons out of their jobs
20 and into unemployment lines and into harm's way
21 if they are front-line workers. Again, there's
22 simply no room in their household budgets for

1 three years of electric distribution rate
2 increases.

3 Thank you so much for this time to
4 testify here today.

5 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr.
6 Davis. We thank the AARP for participating in the
7 proceeding.

8 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next
9 we'll call Devaughn Jones. Devaughn Jones, are you
10 on the line?

11 Next we'll call Alfred Swailes.
12 Alfred Swailes, are you on the line?

13 ALFRED SWAILES: I'm on the line.
14 How are you doing?

15 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Well.
16 Thank you, sir.

17 ALFRED SWAILES: I don't know why I
18 can't get my video to work though.

19 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: We hear you loud
20 and clear, sir, please proceed.

21 ALFRED SWAILES: Okay. You don't
22 want to see me?

1 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: You know, I'm
2 glad to see you, I just don't want to hold us up.

3 ALFRED SWAILES: I know. Well, first
4 of all, I'm Alfred Swailes, a paint distributor. I
5 run a business here in the District of Columbia,
6 CDE. And the first thing I'd like to say is I --
7 you know, Ward 4, I've been in business 12 years.
8 And as a private citizen of the District of
9 Columbia, unlike everybody else, I just cannot
10 understand why in the middle of a -- of what we're
11 going through here in the whole country that Pepco
12 feels the need to actually ask for an increase. I
13 just can't understand that. That's -- you know,
14 even -- even if it was a strategic plan that
15 happened before this happened, after this occurred,
16 they should have enough business sense and city
17 pride to -- to at least pull it back.

18 And the last thing I want to say
19 before my three minutes is up is that as a
20 business owner, I have tried to do business with
21 Pepco over a number of years. Again, like I
22 said, I am a paint distributor, A&A Premium Paint

1 Distributor is the name of my company. And we
2 sell the spray cans from all of different
3 manufacturers that manufacture spray paint. And
4 I have not even been given an opportunity to even
5 get a bid. And I went to the vendors portal and
6 registered my company with them. They are just
7 not really open to really doing business with the
8 local people here for some reason. So I would
9 really say that we really need to look at the
10 business plans as far as, you know, before we
11 start talking about giving them increases of our
12 money.

13 We are in the midst of actually
14 doing a disparity study in the District of
15 Columbia, and that's one of the things that we
16 need to look at, how to -- how do actually
17 companies who actually take money out of D.C.,
18 how they actually put it back in order to make
19 our communities a lot better. Then, you know --
20 and then if they want to be part of the
21 community, then they should.

22 If they were -- actually, we don't

1 even know -- you know, from what I'm seeing is
2 they don't even need this money in order to, you
3 know, break even. It's all about profit. It's
4 not to make the system even better or, you know,
5 make it work better for us or, you know, anything
6 like that. So that's about -- my testimony is,
7 is before they really should be even considered
8 it, a rate increase, they need to at least pull
9 back and see where we are at after this
10 particular crisis that we're going through is
11 over. And then we need to also make sure that
12 they really are a part of this community and not
13 just sucking the money out and moving on and
14 taking it to another community and making their
15 community look a lot better than ours. Thank
16 you.

17 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
18 your testimony. We look forward to seeing you at
19 the next community hearing when you testify. Thank
20 you, sir.

21 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next
22 we'll call Courtney Lane. Courtney Lane, are you

1 on the line?

2 Next we'll call Laura Peterson.

3 Laura Peterson, are you on the line?

4 LAURA PETERSON: Yeah. Hi. Can you
5 hear me?

6 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Yes.
7 Thank you.

8 LAURA PETERSON: Okay. Great.

9 Good afternoon, Commissioners, and
10 everyone else on the line. My name is Laura
11 Peterson. And I am a Ward 2 resident. And I am
12 testifying as an individual. I am here before
13 you today to strongly urge you to reject the
14 Pepco rate case. We are in the middle of a
15 pandemic. Even when the public health crisis
16 officially ends, there is no end in sight to the
17 economic effect that this crisis is going to have
18 on D.C.

19 Many people have lost their jobs or
20 have had their hours cut and they're already
21 struggling to pay for things that are necessary
22 just for living. This is not limited to, but it

1 certainly includes electricity. Right in the
2 middle of all this, Pepco wants people to pay
3 more for electricity, a burden that many families
4 cannot afford and it will negatively affect their
5 standard of living. Even more, there's simply no
6 ethical rationale for this increase.

7 Pepco argues that they need to
8 increase rates to make upgrades to the grid and
9 to meet D.C.'s energy climate goals. However,
10 Pepco already makes millions of dollars in
11 profit. And they go in shareholders' pockets,
12 not into the upgrades. And they have no concrete
13 plans to actually make those goals. They've even
14 admitted this, that price hike funds are not
15 going towards clean energy technology.

16 If we want to meet these goals,
17 which we must if we're going to make any need for
18 reversal on the worldwide climate crisis, we need
19 to make some major changes and we need to start
20 making them now. So I urge you to push Pepco to
21 not only achieve those, but put us on a strong
22 path to meeting those goals.

1 It's also frustrating as a bill
2 payer to see a company try to pass on expenses to
3 me that don't actually benefit me or my community
4 or the city in any way. And that I know are just
5 turning in the profits for investors and
6 shareholders.

7 If I am going to pay more for a
8 service, I want to see very clear what the
9 benefit is, especially something like this,
10 something that's necessary just for survival.
11 Pepco has just not met that burden. Please
12 reject the Pepco rate case.

13 Thank you so much for taking the
14 time to listen to us and for considering our
15 perspectives.

16 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
17 your testimony.

18 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next
19 we'll call Bryant Avery. Bryant Avery, are you on
20 the line?

21 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Again, we'll
22 remind all the speakers, if you're not speaking, to

1 please mute your line.

2 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next
3 we'll call Aykul Yimaz.

4 AYKUL YILMAZ: Hi. Can you hear me?

5 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Yes.

6 AYKUL YILMAZ: Great. Thank you.

7 Commissioners, my name is Aykul
8 Yilmaz. I am testifying as a public witness. I
9 am a resident of Ward 3. And I've lived in the
10 District since 2013. And thank you for the time
11 to speak to you today.

12 D.C. Sierra Club, and I support the
13 comments that they submitted today. I'm speaking
14 to you today to ask you to reject Rate Case FC
15 1156, the Pepco rate case. And this is personal
16 for me. I am unemployed. The pandemic has made
17 it difficult to find work. I have savings to get
18 by so far, but to worry about rent, emergencies,
19 and utility bills. I also worry about people
20 less fortunate than me who are unable to pay
21 bills, getting utility shut-offs at this
22 extremely vulnerable time, when access to

1 housing, energy and water is the dividing line
2 between health and illness or even death.

3 And despite being out of work, I
4 understand that work means getting paid to
5 perform a service or make something. And I'm not
6 sure if Pepco understands that. The Office of
7 the People's Counsel has said that Pepco has not
8 demonstrated benefits to consumers from its
9 multiyear rate plan. Instead, Pepco is asking
10 you to approve a rate increase in the middle of
11 an unprecedented pandemic and economic downturn.
12 People in D.C. as a whole are barely getting by,
13 even with government help, which is about to get
14 cut off. Pepco is asking you to approve a rate
15 increase in the middle of a climate crisis, which
16 is already given, being under water, a new
17 terrible meaning, in D.C.'s and the world's most
18 vulnerable citizens, as flooding two weeks ago
19 showed us.

20 This plan does nothing to
21 acknowledge any of these realities. Instead,
22 Exelon's multi-millionaire CEO is asking you to

1 take more money from people who are struggling to
2 give him money for nothing. Money for nothing,
3 Dire Straits ought to be suing him for copyright
4 infringement. Rates for the next three years, we
5 can't even tell what the next three months will
6 bring, let alone the next three years. So I'd
7 ask you, Commissioners, please reject the rate
8 increase, because people in this city are reeling
9 from this pandemic. Reject it as long as Pepco
10 offers no concrete protections to its customers
11 from shut-offs, reject it as long as Pepco
12 doesn't plan to spend even a fraction of the
13 money they're asking for towards addressing the
14 climate crisis. This is the reality of the
15 situation now. And I hope that you, the
16 Commissioners, do get that and reject the Pepco
17 rate case. Thank you again for the opportunity
18 to comment.

19 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
20 your testimony.

21 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next we
22 call Levonnia Mobley.

1 LEVONNIA MOBLEY: Good afternoon.

2 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Good
3 afternoon.

4 LEVONNIA MOBLEY: Good afternoon,
5 Commissioners. My name is Levonnia Jeanette
6 Mobley. And I'm a long-time resident and chief --
7 and owner and chief operating officer of JPM Group,
8 a human resources and management consulting and
9 training firm. I come before you today to
10 participate as the Public Service Commission of the
11 District of Columbia considers a rate-making plan
12 which Pepco has proposed. The multiyear rate plan
13 will shift the way the Commission oversees future
14 energy rates. And also flexibility to the impact
15 of COVID-19 in the future.

16 Certainly at a glance, a
17 rate-making decision might not appear to be
18 timely during this pandemic. Yet, I think we
19 should take a moment and examine what Pepco has
20 done to support customers during the pandemic.
21 We will find that our local utility has been
22 right there with us. In March Pepco was among

1 the first companies in the nation to suspend
2 services connections and waive new late payment
3 charges for all customers and reconnect customers
4 previously disconnected. Of course, being a
5 business person, I can only imagine how much the
6 unexpected concession have on their bottom line.

7 It also came to my attention in
8 their file that Pepco made a faulty termination
9 error which some may point to as a reason to deny
10 the entire multiyear plan. But to their credit,
11 they corrected this error in the filing once they
12 caught it and brought it the attention of the
13 Commission and opponents. In today's -- and they
14 take ownership. And in this day and age, I
15 appreciate this transparency.

16 Having worked at the council and
17 having worked with individuals in the city, who
18 oftentimes needed help with their energy bills
19 and to see how the Good Neighbor Energy Fund and
20 many other funds have helped residents in the
21 District of Columbia, I have to say that they
22 have been a good corporate citizen. I'm also

1 very proud of the fact because I have been
2 involved with helping people find jobs for many a
3 year, that Pepco signed up to be a part of Mayor
4 Bowser key initiatives. D.C. Infrastructure
5 Academy, Department of Employment. This program
6 has been very successful. In August of 2019, the
7 Pepco utility program graduated the largest in
8 the first cohort with 22 students. Please note
9 that 100 percent of this graduates were made job
10 offers. It sincerely shows their commitment.

11 So in closing, I want to say that
12 having listened to the other testimony, but also,
13 more importantly, looking at the benefits laid
14 out for customers in the future. And for the
15 reasons I have it stated, I support the multiyear
16 plan, knowing full well that the Commission will
17 continue to closely monitor Pepco's rate changes
18 and insure transparency in its plans for
19 modernizing the grade in the future.

20 I thank you for giving me the
21 opportunity to testify.

22 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for

1 your testimony.

2 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next
3 we'll call Rosie Allen-Herring.

4 ROSIE ALLEN-HERRING: Good afternoon.
5 And thank you, Chairman Phillips, as well as
6 Commissioner Beverly.

7 United Way in the national capital
8 area has diligently worked for over 45 years to
9 support not only businesses, but to transform the
10 lives of individuals and families in the greater
11 Washington region. We have over 500 nonprofit
12 organizations as well as corporate and community
13 partners that we are committed to working with to
14 build a strong and vibrant community.

15 We want safe neighborhoods, we want
16 good health, we want excellent schools, we want
17 jobs that pay a liveable wage. These
18 partnerships have never been more important than
19 they are today. Together we must address food
20 and security, housing, health-related needs for
21 individuals and families impacted not only by the
22 pandemic of COVID-19, but also those pandemics of

1 social injustice.

2 Not only is the need for support
3 growing among our communities, but our partner
4 organizations are also experiencing financial
5 strain. For these reasons, we appreciate the
6 advanced proposal that Pepco has put forth and
7 filing it with the Public Service Commission for
8 the District of Columbia.

9 As a part of its multiyear rate, we
10 support it as well as the announcement that Pepco
11 made at the time that they would create a program
12 that would provide additional funding to
13 supplement existing energy assistance that many
14 of its customers so desperately need at this
15 time.

16 The proposal that Pepco filed in
17 its multiyear plan proceeding important
18 provisions that will not only certainly add
19 relief to its customer base, we support freezing
20 electric distribution rates of all customers for
21 the next 18 months, increasing funding available
22 for residential aid discount programs that is so

1 critically needed at this time. We also support
2 extending the customer credit that was secured as
3 a part of Pepco's merging with Exelon, providing
4 discounted rates to direct-service nonprofits as
5 well as houses of worship for a 1-month period
6 and offering payment plans to customers for up to
7 two years, to allow them to get back on their
8 feet, and providing zero interest loans to small
9 businesses with a focus on those designated in
10 opportunity zones to upgrade their lightning and
11 other equipment, to reduce their energy use and
12 their cost for years to come.

13 These are just a few of the
14 elements that we support in Pepco's proposal.
15 The sooner these kinds of programs are available
16 to District of Columbia residents, nonprofits,
17 and businesses, the sooner critical financial
18 relief can be provided.

19 While we recognize that at some
20 point there will be a rate adjustment, and we
21 expect the Public Service Commission to make sure
22 that it is reasonable. We also recognize that

1 continued investment in the electric system that
2 keep us all healthy and provides, you know,
3 service and support for our climate, we know that
4 that is a part of our collective future. The
5 proposal advanced by Pepco attempts to try to
6 balance this longer-term need with the reality
7 that we are all facing as a result of COVID-19
8 and other tragic events.

9 We appreciate the mission of the
10 Public Service Commission to ensure that the
11 utility companies provide safe, reliable, and
12 quality services at reasonable rates. We ask
13 your consideration of Pepco's filing in the near
14 term to ensure that there is longer-term
15 certainty for our most vulnerable neighbors.
16 Thank you so much for the opportunity to share
17 this testimony.

18 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you.

19 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next we
20 call Marli Kasdan.

21 MARLI KASDAN: Yes, I'm here. Can
22 you hear me okay?

1 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Yes.

2 MARLI KASDAN: Okay. Great.

3 Dear Commissioners, thank you for
4 the opportunity to testify today. My name is
5 Marli Kasdan. I'm a resident of Ward 6. And I
6 am testifying on behalf of 350 D.C., a local
7 climate justice organization in the District.
8 I'm testifying today to ask the Public Service
9 Commission to Reject Rate Case No. FC 1156. Due
10 to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is more important
11 than ever the PCS protect D.C.'s working families
12 and marginalized communities by rejecting Pepco's
13 request for a rate increase.

14 Through this rate increase, Pepco
15 is aiming to raise its energy crisis by nearly
16 \$136 million and to make an estimated \$145
17 million in profit every year on the backs of D.C.
18 residents. During this unprecedented economic
19 and public health emergency, rejecting Pepco's
20 request for a rate increase is critical.
21 Families and workers in D.C. simply cannot afford
22 an increase in their energy bills.

1 Due to the pandemic, thousands of
2 people in D.C. have lost their jobs. Blacks,
3 women, immigrants, black residents and young
4 workers have been hit the hardest. As winter
5 approaches, people will be forced to spend more
6 time indoors and students are attending school
7 remotely. Activities will continue to increase
8 energy bills. At the end of August, Pepco
9 reported that over \$50,000 customer, that amounts
10 to one in six customers in the District, have
11 fallen into debt with Pepco during the pandemic.
12 It is immoral to raise energy prices when D.C.
13 residents are already struggling to pay their
14 bills.

15 Furthermore, Pepco's plan would
16 weaken our regulatory oversight. In addition to
17 raising energy prices this year, Pepco is
18 requesting pre-approval to raise energy prices
19 again in 2021 and 2022. However, Pepco does not
20 need extra money to operate D.C.'s electricity
21 system. After accounting for operating expenses,
22 Pepco Holdings made \$110 million in profit in the

1 first quarter of 2020 alone. Executives are
2 telling shareholders that they can expect to see
3 even more profit if the price hike is approved.
4 We can't allow corporate shareholders to line
5 their pockets when D.C. residents are struggling
6 to pay their energy bills.

7 Lastly, none of Pepco's profits
8 from the rate increase would go towards making
9 D.C.'s energy cleaner. Pepco has provided no
10 evidence that price hike would meet D.C.'s
11 climate goals and their construction plan budget
12 does not include any funding for battery storage
13 or distribution.

14 The Office of the People's Counsel
15 previously expressed concern about Pepco's
16 expensive fossil fuel infrastructure projects.
17 Low-income residents should be included in energy
18 efficiency, modernization and renewable energy
19 infrastructure projects to lower energy bills and
20 build resilience. However, Pepco is not
21 prioritizing these types of investments.

22 Currently Pepco drives only

1 6 percent of its energy source fuel mix from
2 renewable energy while D.C. is committed to
3 having 100 percent hundred renewable energy by
4 2032. The PSC should not allow Pepco to increase
5 its profits while doing nothing to address the
6 climate crisis. Therefore, 350 D.C. and our
7 members are urging the PSC to immediately reject
8 Pepco's request for a rate increase.

9 In addition, we are calling for the
10 cancelation of all utility debt without passing
11 the cost on to ratepayers so that residents can
12 recover and rebuild with a clean slate.

13 Finally, in keeping with the D.C.
14 PSC mission to serve the public interest, the PSC
15 should invest in a green recovery and support the
16 creation of a publicly owned utility. Having a
17 publicly owned utility operator energy grid
18 instead of Pepco would allow the District to
19 reinvest profits in green energy infrastructure,
20 meet our renewable energy goals and create green
21 jobs for a just and resilient future. In
22 conclusion, 350 D.C. strong urges the PSC to

1 reject Rate Case No. FC 1156. And we urge the
2 PSC continue to provide space for transparency
3 and participation in this rate case. Thank you
4 for your time and consideration.

5 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you.

6 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next we
7 call Jean Stewart. Ms. Stewart, we cannot hear
8 you.

9 JEAN STEWART: Okay. Let me try this
10 then. Can you hear me now?

11 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Yes, we hear you
12 now.

13 JEAN STEWART: Okay. Great.

14 My name is Jean Stewart. I'm a
15 50-year resident and a tenant in a rental
16 apartment in Ward 1. And I'm speaking on my own
17 behalf. I am testifying in opposition to Case
18 No. FC 1156, the Pepco rate increase case. Since
19 I'm a renter and a retiree on a fixed income, the
20 increase would make it harder for me to maintain
21 my -- an acceptable lifestyle. If my electricity
22 cost increased by approximately \$120 in the first

1 year of this plan, this money would not be
2 available to meet my now more-expensive living
3 costs, especially for groceries. As a senior
4 with Type II diabetes, I am more vulnerable to
5 the COVID-19 virus. While I have a health
6 insurance, the rate increase would make it harder
7 for me to meet high co-pays if I were to be
8 hospitalized.

9 My concerns, though, go way beyond
10 my own welfare. I am also deeply concerned about
11 the effects of a rate increase on my fellow
12 citizens, especially those who are suffering the
13 most from the pandemic in the resulting economic
14 crisis.

15 Washington, D.C. has one of the
16 highest rates of inequality of any major city,
17 with the present health and economic burdens
18 falling most heavily on our black, Latinx, and
19 immigrant neighbors. A double crisis of pandemic
20 and job loss is a particularly terrible time to
21 be imposing a rate hike on already disadvantaged
22 residents.

1 Energy access is a human right,
2 especially crucial when families must have basic
3 energy resources for online learning, for jobs
4 that can be performed virtually, and for heating
5 and cooling that are essential for maintaining
6 decent health.

7 Pepco does not need the rate hike.
8 As many others have noted, Pepco Holdings made
9 over \$100 million in net profits in the first
10 quarter of this year. And it's telling
11 shareholders that they can expect higher profits
12 with this increase.

13 Worse, these profits would not be
14 used to move the city forward in its clean energy
15 goals, but will be used for construction projects
16 that would tie Pepco to an inefficient and
17 outdated power delivery system instead of a more
18 flexible distributed energy system.

19 As someone who participated in the
20 broad alliance of citizens groups working to
21 achieve the passage of the groundbreaking Clean
22 Energy Act of 2018, I am particularly outraged

1 that Pepco's proposed rate increase would do
2 nothing to get us towards the Act's goal of
3 100 percent clean source electricity by 2032.

4 I urge the Commission to reject
5 Pepco's request, also to enact and enforce a
6 permanent moratorium on utility shut-offs, and to
7 require that Pepco develop a plan to move to a
8 greener future.

9 And I thank you, Mr. Chairman and
10 Commissioner Beverly, for the opportunity to
11 testify in opposition to this unjustified rate
12 increase.

13 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you very
14 much for your testimony.

15 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next we
16 calling Jean Su. Jean Su, are you on the line?

17 Next we'll call Richard Lee.
18 Richard Lee.

19 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Mr. Lee, if
20 you're speaking, we can't hear you.

21 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Mr. Lee.
22 We may come back to Mr. Lee, if he can figure out

1 the issues here.

2 Next we call Cora Williams. Ms.
3 Williams, are you on the line?

4 CORA WILLIAMS: Yes.

5 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Thank
6 you.

7 CORA WILLIAMS: Good afternoon,
8 Chairman Phillips and Commissioner Beverly. And
9 thank you for your commitment to engaging our
10 citizens on this important issue. I am Cora
11 Williams, founder and president of Ideal Electrical
12 Supply, a minority and women-owned wholesale
13 distributor of electric products headquartered in
14 Ward 5 in the District of Columbia.

15 We provide electrical and
16 industrial products to the utility and
17 construction markets for commercial building and
18 infrastructure improvements. Since 1991 Ideal
19 has supplied products to the utility industry in
20 support of electrical transmission and
21 distribution systems, gas delivery,
22 infrastructure and water, for maintenance and

1 operations as well as new construction.

2 For well over a decade, we have
3 worked in collaboration with Pepco to support the
4 goals and providing a safe, reliable, secure,
5 affordable and clean energy grid. This work has
6 been considered as the population growth in the
7 District of Columbia as well as system
8 enhancements that are needed to ensure constant
9 supply of electricity.

10 My research indicates that the
11 proposed multiyear plan fully supports this goal
12 while offering a more transparent and precise
13 view of cost to each customer. As a business
14 owner, the ability to predict cost is an
15 extremely vital component of our operational
16 success.

17 Additionally, during these
18 challenging times, Pepco has enhanced this
19 proposal by freezing electric rates for the next
20 18 months, while continuing necessary
21 infrastructure and facility maintenance and
22 improvements. I also applaud the provision which

1 offers customers the ability to establish a
2 two-year payment plan. Based on the flexibility
3 offered by a multiyear plan, Pepco can offer
4 these innovative adjustments as a positive
5 response to help ease the harsh impact of
6 COVID-19 pandemic.

7 The multiyear plan also allows
8 Pepco to continue engaging the local business
9 community through its CBE and diversified
10 programs. These programs comprised of 37 percent
11 of Pepco's expenditures in 2019, while continuing
12 to perform the work necessary to modernize the
13 grid and making it more resilient and secure for
14 years to come.

15 The plan is structured to retain
16 the Commission's ongoing regulatory supervision,
17 making certain that Pepco's commitment to
18 creating significant social and economic
19 development benefits are actualized. I have
20 listened carefully to some of the arguments posed
21 against the plan; however, in my assessment, our
22 local diverse suppliers and District residents

1 can take advantage of business opportunities,
2 jobs and training, while supporting expanded
3 customer generated alternatives.

4 With your approval of the multiyear
5 plan, the stage is set to achieve a broad
6 spectrum of fundamental system requirements under
7 a highly transparent scenario. Increased and
8 improved power capacity will be created to meet
9 the growing needs of all who live and work in the
10 city in a cost-efficient manner. At the same
11 time, I encourage the Commission to enact as full
12 oversight to ensure the benefits that Pepco has
13 defined in its proposed plan are realized by its
14 customers. Pepco customers need this support now
15 more than ever.

16 In closing, let the record show I
17 support the proposal. Thank you for your time,
18 attention and consideration.

19 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
20 your testimony, Ms. Williams.

21 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next
22 Mr. Richard Lee. Mr. Lee.

1 Okay. Next we'll have David
2 Schwartzman.

3 DAVID SCHWARTZMAN: Yes. Good
4 afternoon. I'm David Schwartzman, representing the
5 D.C. Statehood Green Party. We strongly oppose
6 this proposed Pepco rate increase, but we're not
7 surprised, given the warnings of this outcome in
8 testimony and from our party and many others in the
9 D.C. community in opposition to the Exelon takeover
10 of Pepco, which was unfortunately approved by the
11 PSC in March 2016. Exelon is the nation's biggest
12 nuclear power corporation. An industry which has
13 been failing despite having been heavily subsidized
14 by taxpayers for many years.

15 A majority of black and brown
16 working classes is now challenged by this deep
17 depression driven by the COVID crisis. People
18 are forced to spend more time indoors and
19 students must attend schools remotely. All of
20 this increases energy bills, putting greater
21 burden on people experiencing joblessness.
22 Pepco's proposed rate increase would raise

1 residential bills in 2020, as well as the next
2 two years.

3 Now, speaking as a climate
4 scientist, Pepco's proposal doesn't even attempt
5 to support D.C.'s ambitious climate goals, as
6 several testified have already pointed out, and
7 particularly Sunrise.

8 We strongly support cancelation of
9 pending utility fees, which could be easily
10 financed by Exelon's profit stream. So Pepco
11 doesn't need this price increase. It would harm
12 thousands of D.C. residents who can't afford
13 these extra costs during the crisis.

14 Now, rather than Exelon owning an
15 electric utility, both PSC and a local elected
16 government should seriously consider public
17 ownership of our utilities. Municipalizing
18 Pepco, thereby, putting our supplier under full
19 public ownership make fully transparent
20 accountable, monitoring removing the
21 profit-hungry owners who do not serve the public
22 interest.

1 The option of D.C. public power
2 gained attention during the struggle to block
3 Exelon's takeover of Pepco. For example,
4 councilmember Mary Cheh initiated a feasibility
5 study to municipalize utilities. The American
6 Public Power Association points out that more
7 than 2,000 cities and towns in the U.S. light up
8 their homes, businesses and streets with public
9 power, electricity that comes from a
10 community-owned and operated utility.

11 Once created, a D.C. public
12 electric utility could help force the creation of
13 micro grids throughout D.C. thereby promoting
14 community-managed renewable energy systems in
15 parallel to the growing capacity of organic food
16 from neighborhood urban farms. D.C. could
17 achieve a 100 percent renewable energy supply,
18 with portable tanks on roofs, aggressive energy
19 efficiency coupled with a regional offshore wind
20 power supply. This transition could be promoted
21 with the timely creation of a D.C. public bank
22 receiving our tax revenues instead of Wall

1 Street. Partnering with local banks and, of
2 course, small businesses to leverage financing a
3 wind and solar power creation and an
4 energy-efficient technologies, for homeowners,
5 tenants, businesses, and city buildings, as well
6 as truly affordable housing which state of the
7 science energy efficiency.

8 And I'll close with a quote from a
9 Minneapolis resident. What we pay for our
10 utility bills would recirculate back into the
11 city general fund rather than us paying for
12 corporate jets, multimillion dollar lobby spree,
13 lavish executive bonuses, dividends to distance
14 out-of-state shareholders. It is demoralizing
15 that a distant corporate board of directors, in
16 this case Exelon, gets to decide where our energy
17 comes from by monopoly power. Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
19 your testimony.

20 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next
21 we'll call Justin McCarthy. Justin McCarthy.

22 Okay, sir. Now we are going to

1 take a break in the proceeding for 15 minutes.

2 So we will see everyone back at 4:17, please.

3 (Recess had.)

4 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Okay.

5 Good afternoon, everyone. We are now back on the
6 record. Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Please call the
8 next witness, please.

9 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Thank
10 you.

11 We are going to call Lauren
12 Jacobson. Lauren Jacobson, are you on the line?

13 Next we'll call Miles Holloman.

14 MILES HOLLOMAN: Yes.

15 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Miles
16 Holloman.

17 MILES HOLLOMAN: Yes.

18 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Thank
19 you.

20 MILES HOLLOMAN: Good afternoon. My
21 name is Miles Holloman. I'm a tenant in D.C. I'm
22 also a minister at Ebenezer Baptist Church. I help

1 in the community. I have an outreach, Love Song
2 Production, that is where it has implemented a -- a
3 just cause to intervene in youth violence. And so
4 I give you an -- understand, I've been in D.C. for
5 65 years. I was born here. And I've lived in my
6 community for 55 of those 65 years.

7 I'm testifying in protest against
8 Pepco's proposed rate increase. Although, I do
9 not get a bill directly from Pepco, subsequently,
10 any increase in my landlord's expenses will more
11 than likely be passed on to me. I am extremely
12 uncomfortable with facing an increase as any
13 ratepayer would. The timing for Pepco's proposal
14 for a rate increase seems out of touch with the
15 realities that many families in D.C. are
16 experiencing.

17 COVID-19 is still a pandemic. Jobs
18 have been lost. Families are having to
19 reorganize to accommodate online learning. And
20 families need to eat. I believe when I last
21 checked that the D.C. courts have at least 50,000
22 on an eviction backlog.

1 Now, my reality has Pepco -- as
2 Pepco has the largest electricity provider on the
3 East Coast having merged under the -- under
4 protest with Exelon. The money machine that
5 powers the powers of greed and misconduct did
6 persuade a spineless group of politicians, some
7 nonprofits as well as small businesses to
8 support. The truth is -- where was I -- as I
9 find my thought here. Truth is Exelon exploited
10 our region, giving hundreds of millions of
11 dollars of incentives to -- that forced deals
12 that now is pretty obvious will be at the expense
13 of ratepayers. The fact that -- that deal to
14 merge Pepco/Exelon was rushed through a system of
15 scrutiny screams corruption. A D.C.
16 councilmember who supported the deal was kicked
17 off the council and is now under investigation.

18 Another reality is that Pepco's
19 messaging is confusing. It's been reported that
20 the organization wants the ratepayers to conserve
21 energy, while language in the legislation allows
22 Pepco administers -- I mean, to administer a

1 charge rate to charge ratepayers for the lost
2 revenue from low usage. That's shameful.

3 A report says Pepco deals -- the
4 report says Pepco's deal to merge was for the
5 purpose of profit increase to which Pepco shares
6 have rose 27 percent. I find it striking that
7 Pepco had enough money to pay Metro to extended
8 operation hours for the National baseball team
9 championship game. And I'm sorry, but I believe
10 most of those fans were not from D.C. Metro is a
11 the multimillion dollar -- a multibillion dollar
12 business. And I might add, most of D.C. is
13 living from paycheck to no check.

14 Lastly, my discovery resources
15 would allow me to go on with some of this, but my
16 time is up. There is still a lot that I don't
17 know, and won't ever know, about the
18 improprieties that Pepco is trying to manipulate
19 with this rate increase. But needless to say,
20 right now is not the time. I appreciate the
21 opportunity to testify.

22 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Mr. Holloman,

1 thank you very much for your testimony.

2 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next
3 we'll call Denise Robbins. Ms. Robbins.

4 DENISE ROBBINS: Hi. Can you hear me
5 okay?

6 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Yes.

7 DENISE ROBBINS: Hello, everyone. My
8 name is Denise Robbins. I am the communications
9 director at the Chesapeake Climate Action Network,
10 where we represent 7,000 members in D.C. I'm also
11 a resident of D.C. Ward 1. I've lived here for
12 over eight years now.

13 And I'm testifying today to urge
14 the Commission to reject the Pepco rate case.
15 I'm asking this on behalf of the tens of
16 thousands of D.C. residents who are right now
17 living paycheck to paycheck, who have either lost
18 their job in the pandemic or getting by on
19 unemployment or they're essential workers putting
20 their lives on the line to keep this city going
21 every day while making minimum wage or slightly
22 more.

1 And are in a pandemic and Pepco
2 wants to increase our bills. You think they
3 better have a good reason for this request. But
4 we didn't get a good reason. According to the
5 Office of the People's Counsel, the request is
6 riddled with errors, miss-ups and false
7 information from the start. And it did nothing
8 to adjust our other major health and economic
9 crisis. That entirely has to do with Pepco's
10 business model; climate change. Not mentioned
11 once.

12 The OPC asked Pepco if the fixed
13 price hike was promising energy, Pepco said no.
14 It includes no battery storage, no distributed
15 solar. No acknowledgment that in this proposal
16 is in line with their very strong supposed
17 commitment to protect our climate. I will add
18 that even if they did adjust climate change,
19 adjusting climate change can be done in a way
20 that doesn't cost bills to increase, especially
21 for low-income ratepayers if it's done right,
22 through targeted investments and energy

1 efficiency. But Pepco's proposal does not
2 include any of that. Their proposal would hurt
3 low-income residents.

4 Not only are they requesting to
5 raise rates right now in the middle of a
6 pandemic, they're asking to raise rates multiple
7 times between now and 2023. And they're
8 proposing to weaken the PSC and the OPC's
9 regulatory review process at the same time. They
10 want more money and less oversight for a plan
11 that won't help solve global warming. This is
12 bad all around.

13 Nobody wants this rate hike except
14 for Pepco's shareholders. The D.C. government
15 work, the Pepco's workers union, and the OPC have
16 all filed motions to dismiss the price hike
17 entirely. Pepco will make 200 million per year
18 from this proposal. They made 110 million of
19 profit in the first quarter of 2020 alone.

20 I'd also just like to remind the
21 PSC that the Commission is now required by law to
22 incorporate the effects of global climate change

1 and the District's public climate commitment in
2 all of its decisions. This is a provision of the
3 Clean Energy D.C. Omnibus Act, which as
4 overwhelmingly supported by D.C. residents and
5 overwhelmingly passed by the D.C. Council.

6 Commissioners, we are looking to
7 you for leadership right now. You've been
8 leaders before. You rejected the
9 AltaGas/Washington Gas Light merger initially.
10 And the resulting agreement was much stronger.
11 You initially rejected the Exelon/Pepco merger,
12 expressing concerns about Exelon's conflict of
13 interest with our clean energy goal. And the
14 resulting agreement was stronger. Some of those
15 concerns are still there. So we're looking to
16 you for leadership again.

17 Please reject the rate hike and
18 make sure that the next proposal is much
19 stronger. We need to help families keep the
20 lights on in the pandemic and to adjust the
21 climate crisis. Require Pepco to submit a new
22 plan that will build a better clean energy

1 future, more solar in more ways that will clean
2 up our air and make our communities more healthy
3 and strong. Thank you so much for your time.

4 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thanks for your
5 testimony.

6 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next we
7 call Reverend William Lamar.

8 REVEREND WILLIAM H. LAMAR: Good
9 afternoon. And thank you for the opportunity to
10 testify this afternoon.

11 I found some language germane to
12 our work this afternoon on your website. The
13 mission of the public Service Commission of the
14 District of Columbia is to serve the public
15 interest by ensuring that financially healthy
16 utility companies provide safe, reliable, and
17 quality services at reasonable rates for District
18 of Columbia consumers while fostering great
19 modernization, conservation of natural resources,
20 preservation of environmental quality and
21 advancement of the District's climate policy
22 commitments.

1 Pepco is a monopoly, a monopoly
2 flushed with cash that does not ensure that all
3 of its contractors earn living wages and
4 benefits. This is diametrically opposed to your
5 mission of serving the public interest. Pepco is
6 a monopoly, a monopoly flushed with cash that
7 only spent \$11 million of over half a million
8 dollars spent with black-owned businesses. This
9 is diametrically opposed to your mission of
10 serving the public interest.

11 Pepco is a monopoly, a monopoly
12 flushed with cash that does not hire enough D.C.
13 residents despite first source. This is
14 diametrically opposed to your mission of serving
15 the public interest. Pepco is a monopoly, a
16 monopoly flush with cash that does not do enough
17 to green our energy or to make power affordable.

18 Pepco is a monopoly. And in the
19 words of my uncle in my hometown of Macon,
20 Georgia, Pepco is a gravy train with biscuit
21 wheels. Public Service Commissioners, you exist
22 to serve the public interest, in a time of

1 pandemic, during the second guild age of the
2 history of this nation where wealth and equality
3 has never been worse, in a time of great
4 suffering in this city, the only decision that
5 serves the public interest is to deny this fat
6 monopoly flush with cash, more gravy and more
7 biscuits at a time when the rest of us are
8 hungry. Serve the people, not the monopoly.
9 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

10 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
11 your testimony, Reverend Lamar.

12 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next
13 we'll call Reverend Lionel Edmonds. Mr. Edmonds
14 are you on the line?

15 Next we'll call Kory Stuer. Kory
16 Stuer, are you on the line?

17 KORY STUER: Hello. Can you hear me?

18 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Yes.

19 KORY STUER: Hi there. Thank you so
20 such for this opportunity to testify this
21 afternoon. So grateful to the members of the
22 Public Service Commission for making this possible.

1 My name is Kory Stuer. And I'm a
2 Ward 1 resident testifying as an individual and
3 Pepco customer. I'm here this afternoon to speak
4 out against Pepco's attempt to raise already high
5 prices while our community grapples with the
6 economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic. Like
7 many young professionals in D.C., I live with
8 multiple roommates in order to afford high-rent
9 prices. While I've been lucky enough not to lose
10 work yet during the pandemic, others of my
11 housemates have not been so lucky. We split the
12 cost of utilities and there's multiple upgrades
13 from home, we'll already paying more than usual.
14 If this rate case is approved, I worry about me
15 and my housemates' abilities to pay our bills.

16 But as we've heard repeatedly
17 today, people not being able to pay their utility
18 bills is not some hypothetical that may or may
19 not happen if this rate case is approved. At the
20 end of August, Pepco reported that \$50,000
21 customers, that is one in six in the District
22 have already fallen into debt with them during

1 the pandemic. Families across D.C. already
2 cannot afford their too-high utility expenses.
3 And as the winter months approach, that number
4 will only rise, especially as we face potential
5 further rounds of job cuts and losses.

6 And Pepco isn't even asking to just
7 raise the price once. They're planning
8 additional increases for 2021 and for 2022, and
9 asking for pre-approval in order to avoid public
10 scrutiny amidst what's sure to be a struggling
11 economy.

12 D.C. chief financial officer,
13 Jeffrey DeWitt, has estimated that the District's
14 current financials woes will last until at least
15 2021. And wage growth estimates for 2021 are
16 less than 1 percent. As we've also heard, Pepco
17 Holdings, meanwhile, made \$110 million in profits
18 in the first quarter of 2020 alone.

19 As D.C. community tighten our belt,
20 Pepco expects us to pay them even more so that
21 they can continue raking in profits for their
22 shareholders. It's wrong to pass on their creed

1 to already-struggling D.C. families. Because the
2 funds from the price hike apparently aren't going
3 to be invested back into D.C. As Pepco
4 themselves admitted to the Office of the People's
5 Counsel, their price hike won't be used to meet
6 what's required of them in order to fulfill
7 D.C.'s clean energy goals.

8 Thank you again for the opportunity
9 to testify this afternoon. You know, I wish that
10 could be here today talking not about a price
11 hike for Pepco this year and two more years to
12 come and we can instead talking about getting
13 more resources to our already-struggling
14 communities and creating a publicly owned utility
15 instead of giving more away into Pepco's
16 shareholder profit.

17 I urge the Public Service
18 Commission to reject this price hike in Rate Case
19 No. FC 1156 in full. Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thanks for your
21 testimony.

22 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next

1 we'll call on the registrant with caller ID No. 59.

2 Hello. Hello.

3 Hello.

4 LAUREN JACOBSON SPOKANE: Yes, hi.

5 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: May I
6 have your name, please?

7 LAUREN JACOBSON SPOKANE: Yes. I'm
8 on the list as Lauren Jacobson. Jacobson is my
9 middle name. It's Lauren Jacobson Spokane.

10 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Thank
11 you, ma'am. You may begin your testimony.

12 LAUREN JACOBSON SPOKANE: Wonderful.
13 Thank you.

14 Dear Commissioners, my name is
15 Lauren Jacobson Spokane. I'm the chair the board
16 of the New Synagogue Project, a justice-centered
17 Jewish community based in Northwest D.C., with a
18 membership of 250 families. I'm also a D.C.
19 resident and homeowner in Ward 4, where I've
20 lived for the past five years with my husband and
21 now eight-month-old son, who you may hear in the
22 background.

1 I'm testifying on behalf the new
2 synagogue project community to encourage the
3 Commission to reject Rate Case No. FC 1156, the
4 proposed Pepco price hike. As a community rooted
5 in Jewish values and striving for a more just and
6 equitable city. And with members who have
7 experienced job loss due to the pandemic, we
8 stand with our neighbors across the city in
9 opposing the unjust price hike.

10 Thousands of people in D.C. have
11 lost their jobs and Latinx, women, immigrants,
12 black residents, and young workers have been hit
13 hardest by our current crisis. As D.C. continues
14 to be a COVID-19 hotspot, people are spending
15 more time in doors and students have to attend
16 school remotely, all of this increases energy
17 bills, putting greater burden on people already
18 struggling to make ends meet and harming
19 thousands of D.C. residents.

20 It's simply unacceptable for Pepco
21 to be profiting off the backs of those in our
22 community who need support, not higher bills to

1 meet basic needs. After making \$110 million in
2 profit in the first quarter of this year alone,
3 Pepco does not need additional funds to implement
4 its plans.

5 Further, Pepco's proposed plan will
6 weaken oversight by pre-approving future price
7 hikes, when what we need is greater oversight.
8 The additional fees also won't support D.C.
9 meeting its climate goals, as Pepco has no plans
10 to use the funds to deploy clean energy
11 technology. We can and must do better as we see
12 the signs of climate catastrophe already
13 devastating communities across the country.

14 In addition rejecting the immoral
15 price hike, we urge the Commission to and ask the
16 District to enforce a permanent moratorium on
17 utility shut-off because energy access is a human
18 right, cancel all utility debt without tacking on
19 cost to ratepayers, eliminating late fees,
20 interest, security deposits and negative credit
21 reporting, which are unfair punishments that
22 burden low-income residents for using an

1 essential service. Keep workers safe by
2 providing living wages, paid sick leave, and a
3 PPE to Pepco's contracted workforce, invest in a
4 green recovery in keeping with the D.C. PSC
5 mission to serve the public interest. And
6 finally eliminate D.C.'s contract with Pepco and
7 start a community-owned utility, allowing D.C. to
8 reinvest profits into our own infrastructure.

9 Thanks to the Commission for
10 hearing my testimony. I hope that you'll
11 continue to provide space for transparency and
12 participation in the rate case and that you will
13 decide to reject Pepco's price hike proposal in
14 full.

15 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
16 your testimony.

17 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next
18 we'll call John Moore. John Moore.

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay. He's
20 coming.

21 JOHN MOORE: I'm good?

22 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Yes, we can hear

1 you, John.

2 JOHN MOORE: So my name is John
3 Moore. I'm a resident of Ward 4 and a parishioner
4 of St. John's Church, Lafayette Square. And I also
5 have been over the years worked with Washington
6 Interfaith Network with the D.C. Chapter of the
7 Sierra Club. I've been involved in starting up --
8 helping startup companies in D.C., and on the board
9 with affordable housing. But not -- I don't get
10 any money for any of this. I'm not getting any
11 money for my testimony.

12 So I'm speaking because I'm very
13 concerned about this proposal for Pepco's very
14 large increase and guaranteed profits over an
15 unprecedented three-year period with no interim
16 accountability or effective accountability. I
17 stand along with the People's Counsel on their
18 objections, which on the surface of it really do
19 mean that this rate case should not be going
20 forward until Pepco refiles. And I think that's
21 that basis alone for not continuing with the rate
22 case.

1 But I also believe that Pepco needs
2 to address certain other community-based
3 structural issues in the -- in areas affecting
4 the black and other minorities in the District.
5 The hiring of contractors, hiring of local
6 workers, paying good wages, providing safe
7 working conditions, but also really addressing
8 the environmental needs of the District and
9 finally affordability.

10 I've heard quite a few people that
11 are more detailed, so I'm not going to report on
12 it, but just basically all those things need to
13 be included in any rate case that provides the
14 kind of guaranteed return that is provided to a
15 utility like Pepco.

16 First, I would, however, like to
17 compliment Pepco to the extent it's been working
18 in the District to increase the use of solar
19 power and also other types of renewable energy,
20 but it needs to do more. I also would look
21 toward to working with Pepco to help do better
22 hiring and, in particular, their academy is

1 excellent.

2 So not wishing to state all the
3 points made in the submission of the Office of
4 the People's Counsel, I state that they -- their
5 objections should be taken at full force.

6 In the -- in the case of Pepco's
7 lack of minority contractors, Pepco needs to make
8 special efforts to identify and provide support
9 to black minority contractors. Last year Pepco
10 spent only 11 million on such contractors. This
11 slow rate is unacceptable. Pepco should include
12 a concrete plan to improve in this area in its
13 resubmitted proposal. And I do appreciate that
14 there are contractors that have worked with
15 Pepco, but there are many others and many of them
16 could be strengthened.

17 In the area of local hiring and
18 labor condition, Pepco needs to build its
19 local -- build up its local training at the D.C.
20 infrastructure academy in the District. In
21 particular, it needs to require contractors to
22 pay affordable wages and provide better working

1 conditions. In the environmental area, Pepco
2 should continue to work with the solar
3 environmental companies, groups, and with
4 individuals ratepayers. Pepco should be
5 including in its performed planning improving its
6 infrastructure to include solar and renewable
7 wind energy. It should also be setting up
8 structures that improve the usage of solar power,
9 there's mesh networks, there's all sorts of
10 things. There are no proposals to address these
11 environmental concerns in this -- in this rate
12 increase.

13 I think Pepco should also help
14 residents in something that's really important,
15 and actually would help Pepco's bottom line, and
16 that is helping residents that need monitor
17 assistance to get the stoves, furnace, et cetera,
18 to switch from gas heat and cooking, which are
19 environmentally negative contrary to the D.C.'s
20 plan, and also present health concerns. That is
21 something that would be really concrete in
22 helping the District.

1 Pepco needs to come back with a new
2 proposal to provide relief for D.C. residents
3 that can't afford to pay. It certainly needs to
4 do something better than just letting its
5 moratorium and with no provision or letting the
6 ratepayers that can't afford to pay. So I think
7 they certainly should adopt something like the
8 Virginia plan, where the repayments are based on
9 income.

10 Finally, and most importantly,
11 Pepco should have a current plan to fund the
12 structures to switch to non-carbon methane-based
13 electricity generation. This is extremely
14 important and it should not be avoided. And the
15 D.C.'s law and intention to be carbon neutral in
16 the not-so-distant future is very much a
17 priority.

18 So I thank you for having this
19 hearing, but I do call on the -- on the Public
20 Service Commission to fulfill its duties to
21 protect the citizens in all respects and reject
22 this rate case until some -- until Pepco comes

1 back with something new. Thank you again.

2 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
3 your testimony.

4 Next witness.

5 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next
6 we'll call telephone caller ID 63 with a telephone
7 number starting out at 202-583. Is the caller on
8 the line?

9 BARBARA MORGAN: Yes. This is
10 Barbara Morgan.

11 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Thank
12 you.

13 BARBARA MORGAN: Okay. Good
14 afternoon.

15 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Good afternoon.

16 BARBARA MORGAN: Chairman Phillip,
17 and members of Public Service Commission, and
18 fellow citizens of the District of Columbia, my
19 name is Barbara D. Morgan. And I live in the 3200
20 block of O Street, Southeast, in Ward 7.

21 I appreciate this opportunity to
22 provide comments in support of the withdraw of

1 Pepco's increase request and the call for the
2 dismissal of its multiyear rate hike plan. My
3 comments are presented as a private citizen of
4 the District of Columbia. I'm a native
5 Washingtonian. Let me make it clear that
6 unless -- unlike some who are offering comments
7 today, I have not received, and do not expect to
8 receive, any compensation or other financial
9 incentives from Pepco.

10 And as a lifelong resident who has
11 worked on behalf of the well-being of the
12 citizens population, including children, family,
13 senior citizens, which are seniors, and workers.
14 I am not only disappointed, but appalled that
15 Pepco would engage in a strategy that is sure to
16 negatively impact the welfare of the citizens
17 most vulnerable population.

18 Pepco informed the Commission that
19 it had used the wrong information to calculate
20 charges for commercial customers. This is a
21 major error that potentially could also harm
22 residential customers. If it were not for the

1 Office of the People's Counsel's recent efforts
2 to educate ratepayers about this swift and cruel
3 motion, many of us would be in the dark about the
4 brutal impact this motion will have on our lives.
5 I ask you, Pepco, are you a partner in this age
6 where lack of transparency is a new normal? How
7 can you push financial hardships on citizens
8 during the worldwide pandemic, which is -- which
9 people are struggling to -- for survival? And
10 where is your responsibility to thoroughly
11 educate and inform D.C. citizens?

12 Turn the lights on Pepco. We
13 demand that you put in motion on hold for a
14 complete and transparent review. Individuals and
15 groups have called that PSC reject this motion
16 because the proposed rate hikes are unjust and
17 unreasonable. Thank you D.C. Government, thank
18 you the Office of the People's Counsel, thank you
19 D.C. Water, and all of who have joined the call
20 for justice of affordable rates.

21 We are counting on you, Chairman
22 Phillips, do the right thing for the citizens of

1 the District of Columbia. And, again, thank you
2 for allowing me to weigh in on this very
3 important matter.

4 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
5 your testimony.

6 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: And,
7 Chairman, before I call the next witness, I would
8 like to ask that all of the registrants
9 participating by phone, if you could please put
10 your hands down until you hear your name. We're
11 trying to track as best we can and in the order
12 that we're going to call everyone. Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
14 that reminder.

15 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Okay.
16 And the next witness is Rachel Streeter. Rachel
17 Streeter, are you still on the line?

18 Next we'll call Lugenia Shaw.

19 RACHEL STREETER: Hi. I'm here. I
20 wasn't able to unmute myself. I didn't have the
21 permission just yet.

22 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Welcome.

1 RACHEL STREETER: Hi. Thank you.

2 My name is Rachel Streeter. I am
3 currently a Ward 8 resident; however, I'm a
4 second-generation Washingtonian. I am a person
5 who was raised by my grandmother, a woman who
6 took on two children in D.C. after being a
7 retired individual. And so her taking on that
8 responsibility, I witnessed how hard it was to
9 actually pay utility calls and utility bills and
10 manage and maintain a household. Also being an
11 individual who also had to witness during the
12 pandemic my grandmother catch the Corona. She
13 beat the virus and then went into hospice care, I
14 see the value of utilities. It's something that
15 you cannot go without. So, you know, to have a
16 breathing machine 24 hours a day, and then to
17 also be the mother of a severely asthmatic child,
18 to have him homeschooled currently.

19 Pepco is a company that we rely on
20 heavily in the District. And it's very
21 unfortunate that, you know, that they are
22 requesting this rate increase. So I would like

1 to put on record that I am opposed for their
2 request for the rate increase. And I believe the
3 requested amount is excessive. And it's not
4 warranted or necessary for a company -- I mean
5 for the size of a company such as Pepco. I also
6 trust the expertise of my consumer advocate at
7 OPC. And I would like the record to reflect
8 again that I vote no in this matter. Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you,
10 Rachel, for your comments. And we also -- we
11 appreciate your comments about your grandmother and
12 we hope that her health is improves. Thank you.

13 RACHEL STREETER: Thank you.

14 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next
15 we'll call Lugenia Shaw. Lugenia Shaw, are you on
16 the line?

17 We'll call Jazsmon Jones. Jazsmon
18 Jones, are you on the line?

19 Next we'll call Albert Bradford.
20 Albert Bradford, are you on the line?

21 Next we'll call Sebastian Rosemont.

22 SEBASTIAN ROSEMONT: Yeah. Hello.

1 I'm on the line.

2 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Thank
3 you.

4 SEBASTIAN ROSEMONT: Good afternoon,
5 Commissioners, and fellow D.C. residents testifying
6 today. My name is Sebastian Rosemont. And I live
7 in Ward 3. I work in the field of environmental
8 sustainability and I am an organizer with the Metro
9 D.C. Democratic Socialist of America; however, I'm
10 testifying as an individual today.

11 I am here today to urge the
12 Commission to reject Rate Case No. FC 1156, the
13 Pepco rate case. I have come to care strongly
14 about this case for two main reasons. The first
15 is about the community and prioritizing the
16 well-being of D.C. residents over Pepco's
17 profits. We are in the middle of an
18 unprecedented economic crisis sparked by the
19 Coronavirus pandemic. With a vaccine not likely
20 until next summer, we do not know how the virus
21 will continue to impact the city and its
22 residents through the following winter.

1 Thousands have already lost their jobs, including
2 close friends of mine and businesses are being
3 forced to close.

4 An economic recovery is expected to
5 take years. D.C. communities are desperate for
6 relief; meanwhile, Pepco made \$110 million in
7 profit in the first quarter of 2020, and has been
8 determined to move forward and raise electricity
9 rates year over year for the next three years.
10 All of this despite their application being so
11 misleading and full of errors that the D.C.
12 government, Pepco workers' union, and the Office
13 of the People's Counsel filed a motion to dismiss
14 the case entirely. This rate hike is pure
15 corporate creed and the Commission has the
16 opportunity to do the right thing for D.C.
17 residents by rejecting it.

18 And the second reason is
19 environmental, which is intimately tied to the
20 health and well-being of D.C. residents. And
21 it's extremely personal to me as a young man,
22 hoping to start a family one day. I am proud

1 that D.C. has the most ambitious clean energy
2 plan in the nation. The Clean Energy Act planned
3 to reach 100 percent renewable energy by 2032 is
4 the kind of bold leadership needed to mitigate
5 the climate crisis.

6 Pepco has a crucial role to play in
7 meeting that goal, and is failing us, if not
8 actively working against us. Pepco continues to
9 drag its feet with a pathetic five and a half
10 percent renewable energy in the 2018 Pulitzer
11 Board and no signs of improvement. The company's
12 recent construction plans fail to advance or even
13 consider clean energy solutions in the District,
14 such as distributed solar and battery storage.

15 Pepco's determination to put
16 short-term profits over the environment and
17 long-term health of D.C residents is
18 reprehensible. This behavior must not be
19 rewarded with three straight years of increased
20 profit margins. Washingtonians deserve a
21 government that puts D.C. residents first and an
22 energy provider that answers to the people and

1 rises to the historic opportunity to be a key
2 player in a green recovery, not like Pepco, which
3 is plowing ahead against all the evidence and
4 basic common sense to line its pockets during a
5 crisis. The Commission must reject Rate Case No.
6 FC 1156.

7 Thank you, Commissioners, for your
8 time today. And I look forward to your decision
9 to reject Pepco's price hike.

10 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
11 your testimony.

12 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGE: Next we'll
13 call William Gant. William Gant, are you on the
14 line?

15 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: You have to
16 unmute yourself, Mr. Gant.

17 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGE: Mr. Gant,
18 please unmute yourself.

19 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Ms. Secretary,
20 please come back to Mr. Gant.

21 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGE: Yes.

22 Dee Dunovant. Ms. Dunovant, can

1 you please unmute yourself?

2 DEE DUNOVANT: Yes.

3 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Thank

4 you.

5 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Yes.

6 DEE DUNOVANT: Can you hear me?

7 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Yes.

8 DEE DUNOVANT: Okay. I had to do a
9 lot of work to get the video going. If you will
10 just give me one moment because I wrote everything
11 down. To start off with yes. I'm Denise Dunovant.
12 It would be great if I could get this to work now.
13 And, gee, first is the role. I'm a parent, adult
14 parent -- parent of adult children. I am a
15 first-time grandmother during this COVID crisis.

16 This is all very hard. And just --
17 I'm just saying that to say that beyond anything
18 else, the timing is beyond atrocious. Okay. And
19 here it is. I finally found it. Okay. Denise
20 Dunovant. I'm a black American senior, over 60
21 years old and a grandparent since COVID-19. D.C.
22 resident, homeowner, of one of the few surviving

1 co-ops and business person, a contractor. A
2 situation that many of us are in not by choice,
3 but necessity.

4 I live in the 7th Ward. I'm an
5 East Capitol Gardens Cooperative homeowner, east
6 of the Anacostia. This is a heartless time to
7 consider a rate hike by Pepco. I'm so
8 overwhelmed that I am not free to feed my family.
9 Rate hike for profit during this pandemic. Hear
10 us, this is wrong.

11 I reject Rate Case No. FC 1156, the
12 Pepco rate case also known as the price hike. At
13 this time the cost of my electric bill has
14 doubled without a rate hike. For safety from the
15 pandemic, I am fortunate to be able to work from
16 home, but now I take on the cost for this. More
17 cost for everything essential to living. Pepco,
18 like the many corporations, benefit from the
19 increased cost of living without any specific
20 increase.

21 Adding any more is so insensitive
22 to the plight of the people. I only hope to

1 continue to be employed. Everyone does not have
2 this option at this time. Triple risks as a
3 black American senior and childcare provider of a
4 newborn during the COVID-19. I want to say safe.
5 And it is so hard. I fear so much for myself and
6 loved ones. The idea of Pepco using this time to
7 further line pockets with profit for societal
8 distress of a pandemic. Heartless. I am
9 personally compelled to write testimony against
10 the price hike because I can. Freedoms are
11 stepped on so often without a choice, we must
12 speak up when we can. I can, so I am engaging in
13 this case with testimony.

14 I would prefer to add any extra
15 costs to my expenses by adding to my food budget
16 since cost has gone up here, too. I have to rely
17 on any neighbor's generosity for getting food.
18 Again, safety. I used to get my food delivered.
19 We are surviving based on the generosity of our
20 community, not that of a business or Pepco.

21 Pepco doesn't need a price hike.
22 How much more is gained by people working from

1 home? At least \$10 per month more. I think the
2 increase stated is conservative. As I said, my
3 bill has already gone up from greater use.
4 Consider the fixed incomes in my community as
5 seniors, an increase will certainly be felt in my
6 D.C. community.

7 I wish to thank the Commission for
8 allowing this testimony. And urge you to
9 continue to provide space for transparency and
10 participation in the rate case. We must reject
11 the rate case in full. Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you. Thank
13 you for your testimony.

14 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGE: Next we call
15 James Farrell. James Farrell, are you on the line?

16 Next is Antonio Levy. Antonio
17 Levy, are you on the line?

18 Next we call Abigail Ulman.
19 Ms. Ulman, I see you.

20 ABIGAIL ULMAN: Can you hear me?

21 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGE: Yes.

22 ABIGAIL ULMAN: Okay. Good. Thank

1 you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is
2 Abigail Ulman. And I'm a resident of Ward 5. I'm
3 testifying today as an individual to urge the
4 Commission to reject the Pepco rate case. As a
5 Pepco customer, this rate hike will significantly
6 affect not only myself, but all District residents
7 who depend on Pepco for energy.

8 Pepco's proposed price hike would
9 raise these energy prices by approximately \$10
10 per month in the first year alone. This is
11 unacceptable, especially in the middle of a
12 pandemic, which has not only placed large
13 financial strain on thousands of D.C. residents,
14 but has also forced us to stay inside our homes
15 much more. Significantly increasing our energy
16 bills. At the end of August, Pepco reported that
17 over 50,000 customers, one in six D.C. customers,
18 have been unable to pay their electricity bills
19 during the pandemic.

20 Pepco's proposed price hike would
21 make energy and cost of living increasingly
22 unaffordable for more District residents at a

1 time when we need reliable electricity more than
2 ever. Energy is a human right. D.C. residents
3 should not have to choose between buying food and
4 paying their electricity bills, especially when
5 leaving their homes due to lack of electricity
6 means exposing themselves a deadly disease. At a
7 time when over 147,000 residents have filed for
8 unemployment, this price hike is unnecessary and
9 cruel.

10 Further, Pepco, and its price hike,
11 cannot be trusted. And parties who have
12 testified otherwise have clear financial interest
13 in the rate increase. Having received hundreds
14 of thousands of dollars from Pepco and having
15 Pepco executives sit on their board of directors.

16 Pepco does not actually need the
17 money they would generate from a price hike to
18 offer the electricity system. Pepco Holdings
19 made \$110 million in the first quarter of 2020
20 alone. And last time Pepco applied for a price
21 hike, the Commission found that Pepco should
22 actually decrease prices, not raise them. Pepco

1 has clearly demonstrated that they care about
2 profit over people.

3 Pepco's proposed price hike would
4 place additional financial burden on D.C.
5 Residents without contributing to D.C.'s clean
6 energy goals. Pepco has flatly admitted that
7 their price hike would not fund deployment of
8 clean energy technology, which would leave the
9 District offtrack in its goal of 100 percent
10 renewable energy by 2033.

11 Pepco has clearly shown that they
12 will not hesitate to harm District residents and
13 the environment in the middle of a pandemic to
14 gain more profit. This is unacceptable. And I
15 urge the Commission to reject the price hike.
16 Upholding the PSC's mission to serve the public
17 interest by ensuring that utility companies
18 provide safe, reliable, and quality utility
19 services at reasonable rates for D.C. customers.
20 In a time when access to affordable and reliable
21 electricity is more necessary than ever for D.C.
22 residents to stay safe, work and learn from home,

1 Pepco must not be allowed to raise rates and
2 fourth burden District residents at the sake of
3 gaining more profit they do not need. Thank you
4 for your time.

5 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you.

6 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGE: Next we call
7 Vaughn Thomas. Vaughn Thomas, are you on the line?

8 Next we call Dr. Shelia Brooks.
9 Sheila Brooks, are you on the line?

10 SHEILA BROOKS: Yes, I am. I'm here.

11 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGE: Thank you.

12 SHEILA BROOKS: Thank you so much for
13 having me today. Good afternoon, Commissioners.
14 Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you about
15 the Pepco multiyear rate proposal. I'm Dr. Sheila
16 Brooks, founder, president and CEO of SRB
17 Communications.

18 Our certified business enterprise
19 is a full-service advertisement, marketing and
20 public relations agency that specializes in
21 multicultural markets and content production.
22 We've been located in Ward 2 for 28 of our 30

1 years in business in Washington, D.C. We provide
2 brand awareness and communication services to
3 several of the agencies in Washington, D.C. and
4 throughout this country, primarily energy and
5 utilities, higher education, transportation and
6 government agencies and colosseum and sports
7 authority clients.

8 And for any business, the ability
9 to carefully budget for the future is foremost.
10 So I appreciate the multiyear plan, the approach
11 to provide advanced baseline revenue and budget
12 information that clearly explains what the
13 process that utility would use to project
14 expenses. Approval and implementation of this
15 forward-looking tool would also both foster
16 productivity and cost control, while providing
17 benefits that are not only measurable, but
18 qualitative and quantitative for all customer
19 classes.

20 It's also significant that the
21 Commission's ability to conduct judicious reviews
22 as well as clearly outlining to ensure the

1 appropriate level of accountability and
2 transportation is consistently maintained.

3 Pepco has been a long-time strong
4 commitment to good corporate citizenships,
5 supporting numerous community development
6 activities while also providing programs to
7 assist vulnerable seniors and low-income
8 residents. Diversity and inclusion initiatives
9 are also a part of Pepco's core functional values
10 in outreach to the community.

11 And as a black business owner in
12 Washington, D.C., Pepco's commitment to
13 addressing the economic development of the black
14 community through increasing its annual black
15 business spend, as you heard so much today, as
16 part of its rate increase is very important to
17 me. This strategy would help Pepco be a leader
18 and addressing profound issues that Washington,
19 D.C. and this nation faces.

20 And since the onset of the COVID-19
21 crisis, the utility has acknowledged that many
22 more citizens and business and faith-based

1 institutions and others are now economically
2 threatened, but in response to the multiyear
3 plan, it proposes expanding several of its
4 ongoing relief offerings, including a freeze of
5 energy delivery rates at current levels, more
6 than 18 months until January 2022. Additional
7 relief proposals also offer payment payments up
8 to 24 months for customers impacted by COVID-19.

9 And that establishes a small
10 business bill that's a deferrable program,
11 longer-term payment plans to help restart the
12 economy and great discounts to non-profits and
13 houses of worship.

14 The multiyear plan would also
15 provide Pepco with the ability to create
16 long-term budgets that would keep energy
17 affordable for customers, create hundreds of jobs
18 and bolster the local and regional economy by
19 more than \$500 million.

20 With that said, in conclusion, I
21 urge the Public Service Commission to strongly
22 consider a balanced plan that supports the

1 growing needs of the District of Columbia. Thank
2 you in advance for your consideration and for
3 your time.

4 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
5 your testimony.

6 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGE: Next we call
7 Kevin Anderson. Kevin Anderson, are you on the
8 line?

9 KEVIN ANDERSON: I'm here.

10 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Thank
11 you.

12 KEVIN ANDERSON: Chairman Phillips,
13 and members of the Public Service Commission of the
14 District of Columbia. Good afternoon. My name is
15 Kevin Anderson. And I appreciate the opportunity
16 to speak at today's community meeting about the
17 multiple benefits that I see in Pepco's proposed
18 multiyear year plan.

19 I have been a resident of the
20 District of Columbia for 25 years. I've seen the
21 city change dramatically from where I was in the
22 early '90s. And mostly for the better. It is

1 for this reason that six years ago I chose to
2 double down on my investment in this great city
3 and open Standard Title Group and Standard Legal
4 Group. STG and SLG are D.C.-based boutique and
5 specialized real estate settlement and related
6 legal services companies. Standard Title Group
7 handles real estate settlements of all shapes and
8 sizes. We pay particular focus on our
9 ever-growing network and client base of real
10 estate developers and entrepreneurs within the
11 Washington, D.C. Metro area.

12 Standard Legal Group is the arm of
13 our company that handles general real estate
14 related insurance. And more importantly is the
15 entity that handles all of our condominium
16 conversion work. We have even our pipeline of
17 condo projects go from just a few small
18 conversion projects when we opened our company
19 six years ago to a current roster of a
20 condominium projects topping almost one hundred.

21 These conversions range in size
22 from two-unit conversions of our D.C. row house

1 to a ground-up structure of a multi-lease
2 projects in the opportunity zones across the
3 city. We are proud of the hard work and
4 perseverance it took to achieve this path of
5 growth and excited for what the future holds for
6 us and the citizens of this great city.

7 Those in the real estate
8 development profession like all others, under the
9 current pandemic we are living and doing business
10 is quite challenging. And let's face it, no ones
11 wants an energy rate increase, particularly
12 during these economic times. But I come to you
13 to add my voice to this discussion because I see
14 real benefits from what Pepco is proposing. And
15 I want these benefits to be realized by the D.C.
16 residents and small businesses like mine.

17 Pepco is proposing to modify the
18 electric utility rate and making construction and
19 multiyear plan filing. Unlike Pepco's previous
20 rate-making filings, this proposal is about more
21 than its simple rate adjustment. Rather what is
22 being proposed is a comprehensive change in the

1 language. PCS regulates our local utilities and
2 rates.

3 This is significant because the
4 current process has been in existence since the
5 PSC began oversight. So why is such a good
6 change this time? Currently Pepco performs the
7 work needed to enhance the district's power grid,
8 retain technical competence and maintain the
9 systems. Then they come before the PSC to seek
10 reimbursement for their expenditures. Clearly
11 adjustment request.

12 Historically rarely has received a
13 one-to-one cost recovery in its rate adjusted
14 request before the PSC. As a small business
15 owner, I simply would not remain in business if
16 we were unable to recover expenditures.

17 The proposed multiyear plan shifts
18 the way that PSC authorizes new rates while
19 protecting customers and enhancing
20 accountability. To this end, if adopted, the PSC
21 will review what Pepco plans to spend before
22 those investments are actually made. Then every

1 year, the PSC will review Pepco's spending and
2 performance to hold the company accountable.
3 This examination of plan expenditures is exactly
4 how any successful business operates and brings
5 the District of Columbia in alignment with 39
6 other states, which have adopted similar
7 rate-making approaches.

8 Moreover, from the customer's side,
9 we are provided with advanced information on the
10 plan projects and initiatives. This plan is then
11 approved and the utility must execute on the plan
12 and perform accordingly. The multiyear plan
13 provides deferring distribution portion of bills
14 for up to two months and allowing small
15 businesses to pay the balance over a 18-month
16 period. This gives companies a chance to catch
17 up.

18 In addition, the enhancements that
19 Pepco is proposing in their modification to the
20 original multiyear plan filing have a number of
21 components which supports small businesses. For
22 example, a company is proposing to freeze its

1 distribution rates for all customers for 18
2 months until 2022, and then only seek to one and
3 a half percent increase for the period of 2019
4 and 2022.

5 Considering that the District has
6 not had a delivery rate increase since 2014, this
7 is quite substantial and will help small business
8 as we work to recover from the pandemic.

9 I know a number of small business
10 owners -- sorry about that. I know a number of
11 small business owners who are seeking debt
12 financing to get through this rough period, and
13 appreciate that Pepco is proposing in this plan a
14 provision for no-interest loans allow small
15 businesses to increase our energy efficiency.

16 Moreover, we value that they are
17 proposing to retain job creation and local
18 contracting while deferring \$60 million in
19 capital expenditures. Clearly, this is a
20 critical component of the multiyear plan. As we
21 look for contracting opportunities with Pepco's
22 myriad of construction projects to improve

1 reliability.

2 Commissioner Phillips, we look to
3 you and your fellow Commissioners to give Pepco's
4 multiyear plan your consideration. This plan
5 will bring rate making into the future. And it
6 is -- it's good for small businesses, such as
7 mine, and the District of Columbia's economy.

8 As I mentioned from the outset, I
9 have lived and worked in the District for more
10 than 25 years. The economic impact this pandemic
11 has, and will continue to cause, has the
12 potential for putting thousands of small
13 businesses, such as mine, out of business. We
14 can't afford to roll back all those years of
15 progress, health and prosperity, but it will take
16 the fortitude and courage of our elected and
17 appointed government officials, such as
18 yourselves, to ensure that this doesn't happen.

19 We stand ready to help in any way
20 we can, you only need to say the word. Thank you
21 for your consideration.

22 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for

1 your testimony.

2 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGE: Next we
3 calling Matthias Paustain. Matthias Paustain, are
4 you on the line?

5 Next we call Barbara Morgan.
6 Barbara Morgan, are you on the line?

7 CARMEN DAVIS: She already spoke,
8 Brinda.

9 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Thank
10 you.

11 Alan Kittrell. Alan Kittrell, are
12 you on the line?

13 SHARON KITTRELL: Yes. Hello. Yes,
14 hi. Okay. Good afternoon. My name is Sharon
15 Kittrell. And I am a lifelong D.C. resident of
16 Ward 4. I am not affiliated with any organization,
17 am I being compensated for my testimony today. I'd
18 like to thank the Public Service Commission for
19 this opportunity to hear my comments regarding
20 Pepco's proposed multiyear rate increase. I'd also
21 like to thank the Office of the People's Counsel
22 for their continued advocacy for D.C. residents and

1 for keeping us abreast of all utility issues and
2 facts.

3 Considering this is the third rate
4 increase request since the merger between Pepco
5 and Exelon, asking for another one now, I feel is
6 absurd. For every rate increase, Pepco has
7 received at least a third of the request. Now
8 Pepco is asking for additional money. Why? I
9 don't understand the logic, nor the need for a
10 hike in a \$32 million multiyear rate increase.

11 As noted by previous speakers,
12 Pepco really hasn't shown any reason for these
13 increases, nor do they expound on how D.C.
14 residents will benefit from them. As a result of
15 all of this, I am strongly opposing the proposed
16 rate increase for Formal Case 1156. Thank you
17 again for this opportunity to express my opinion.

18 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
19 your testimony.

20 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGE: Next we'll
21 call Hillary Kacser. Hillary Kacser, are you on
22 the line?

1 Next we'll call Lavinia Wohlfarth.

2 Lavinia Wohlfarth, are you on the line?

3 Next we'll call Stephanie Rones.

4 Stephanie Rones, are you on the line?

5 Next we'll call Amanda Farnan.

6 Amanda Farnan, are you on the line?

7 Next we'll call Sharon Goods.

8 Sharon Goods, are you on the line?

9 Next we'll call --

10 CARMEN DAVIS: Brinda, can you please
11 remove caller 486. She's -- Patricia Stocks should
12 be speaking for that name. She checked in earlier.
13 It's call user number 28.

14 PATRICIA STOCKS: Can you hear me?

15 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Who's speaking?

16 We can hear you.

17 PATRICIA STOCKS: Hello.

18 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Yes, identify
19 yourself. Who's speaking?

20 PATRICIA STOCKS: Can you hear me?

21 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: We can hear you,
22 yes.

1 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGE: We can hear
2 you. And who are you please? Identify yourself
3 please.

4 PATRICIA STOCKS: Patricia Stocks.

5 CARMEN DAVIS: She's speaking for
6 Sharon Goods, Brinda.

7 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Thank
8 you.

9 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Okay.

10 PATRICIA STOCKS: You can hear me
11 now?

12 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Yes, we can hear
13 you. Please proceed.

14 PATRICIA STOCKS: Okay. All right.
15 I'm Patricia Stocks. I live in Ward 6. When bills
16 arrived through the month, seniors, families and
17 heads of households has the tasks of balancing
18 their checkbooks. Today's pandemic has made
19 personal financial management even more
20 challenging, particularly for those of us who are
21 retirees. Regardless of your energy usage, expense
22 predictability allows you to plan accordingly.

1 That's why Pepco's proposal of a multiyear plan for
2 reviewing electricity rates helps retirees like me.

3 If Pepco was able to plan its
4 budget for the next two years, customers won't
5 see big unexpected spike in their monthly
6 electric bill. A review of this proposal shows
7 it preserves all the existing protections and
8 programs for low-income residents, including the
9 Residential Aid Discount, RAD, that covers the
10 entire distribution charge for qualifying
11 customers. Pepco -- it was also said that it has
12 in place a rate credit program that benefits
13 senior citizens and disabled people who do not
14 qualify for the RAD program. This means that
15 these customers will see their rates decrease for
16 the duration.

17 With the extension of funding for
18 the residential customer based rate credit
19 through December 2021, and extending payment
20 plans up to 24 months for customers to pay down
21 any balances accrued during the pandemic, Pepco
22 was putting forward programs to help residents

1 like me live more comfortably. We really have to
2 do a better job of making certain that utility
3 customers aren't negatively impacted by
4 regulatory proceedings and unanticipated costs
5 for delivering electricity.

6 Opponents have asked the Public
7 Service Commission of the District of Columbia to
8 withdraw the filing related to Pepco's proposed
9 multiyear rate plan. But this will negatively
10 impact the progress our D.C. residents are making
11 in charging their clean energy future.

12 Moreover, the Commission procedure
13 will not automatically result in an adjustment to
14 customs -- customer rates. And this is critical
15 to seniors on that fixed -- on fixed incomes.

16 Also, delaying gets us where we need to be.

17 Already considerable work in resources have gone
18 into the current process and it is time to enact.

19 Pepco's plan is a step in the right
20 direction for my checkbook. Withdrawing the plan
21 before the Commission is not in my interest.
22 Allow the proceedings to move forward so the

1 Commission can rule on the plan and let the
2 District align with the other 39 jurisdictions in
3 the country, which have adopted a similar
4 approach to rate making. Most importantly, allow
5 fixed-income seniors to have some future
6 predictability in our energy bills. Thank you
7 very much.

8 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
9 your testimony.

10 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next we
11 call Melvin Hardy. Melvin Hardy, are you on the
12 line?

13 Next we call John Moore. John
14 Moore, are you on the --

15 JOHN MOORE: I already spoke. Thank
16 you.

17 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEGE: I apologize.
18 Thank you.

19 Adam Baker. Adam Baker, are you on
20 the line?

21 Next Andrew Aurbach. Andrew
22 Aurbach, are you on the line?

1 Next Soyun Park. Soyun Park, are
2 you on the line?

3 Next we call --

4 CARMEN DAVIS: She is on the line.
5 Bruce, can you move her over, please?

6 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGE: Hi,
7 Ms. Soyun Park?

8 SOYUN PARK: Yes.

9 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGE: Thank you.

10 SOYUN PARK: I'm sorry. I need to
11 shrink my screen so that I can see my notes.

12 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Go ahead. We can
13 hear you, so take your time.

14 SOYUN PARK: Okay. I'm sorry, I'm
15 unable to shrink my screen. Is it the function of
16 being a speaker now that I can't shrink the screen?

17 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: I'm not sure, but
18 if you -- if you can just summarize for us what
19 your comments are and speak to us now, please.

20 SOYUN PARK: Okay. My name is Soyun
21 Park. I am with the Micro Business Network. I
22 represent small businesses, owner-operated, locally

1 owned and independently operated small businesses
2 with fewer than 25 employees. I am testifying
3 today to oppose Pepco Rate Case 1156. And I urge
4 the Commission to also oppose the rate case.

5 For the majority of D.C. residents,
6 2020 has been a year of extreme austerity.
7 Likewise for small businesses, our revenue has
8 dramatically or many are closing only a few
9 months into the pandemic. Those that are trying
10 to hold on are still operating at a significant
11 loss. In stark contrast, Exelon's shareholder
12 dividends have increased 20 percent and Pepco's
13 has increased 30 percent over the last five
14 years. Even with this increased revenue for
15 Pepco's most vulnerable workers who ensure our
16 safe utility service, their wages remain
17 stagnant.

18 If Pepco, as a public utility, is
19 going to prompt profits for itself and its
20 shareholders and not consider the well-being of
21 its workers or consumers, we call on the Public
22 Service Commission to step in.

1 With Rate Case 1156, Pepco has told
2 customers that rates will not go up until 2022.
3 And that when it does, the increase will only be
4 minor. But that is not true. A particular
5 concern to the Micro Business Network is that
6 certain commercial customers will see an increase
7 in over 70 percent in volumetric rates in 2021
8 alone. At the very least, Pepco should freeze
9 rates, if not provide other discounts like the
10 City of Seattle. It would be great to see the
11 Commission's leadership and require that 50,
12 60 percent discounts that Seattle City Light and
13 Seattle Public Utilities have offered its
14 customers.

15 It may take quite a while for the
16 District to recover from the economic impacts of
17 the pandemic, by Pepco's proposed relief programs
18 last only a year. We expect that if Pepco won't
19 extend the relief programs that the Commission
20 require it. In fact, COVID-19 relief programs
21 are needed right now and should not be tied to a
22 massive rate increase or the passage of this rate

1 case.

2 The Commission should go further
3 and require that payment plans begin with partial
4 forgiveness of unpaid bills. Small businesses,
5 like low-income residents and the elderly, are
6 juggling right now to pay rent and basic
7 utilities and barely making it. Not addressing
8 these needs will end in mass evictions and vacant
9 properties, which will have reverberating impacts
10 to the economic recovery of the city.

11 We urge that the Commission reject
12 this rate application. With the profits from the
13 first quarter alone, due to shelter orders, Pepco
14 should provide more programs to eliminate rate
15 fees and reconnection fees, provide retroactive
16 discounted service to consumers experiencing
17 hardship, extend payment plans, extend the
18 disconnection moratorium until joblessness and
19 underemployed are remedied and economic recovery
20 is well under way, forgive utility bills, which
21 are accruing now at alarming rates, and continue
22 to accrue month after month.

1 Thank you for this opportunity to
2 speak today. The residents of the District are
3 counting on the Commission to take leadership to
4 work with residential and commercial ratepayers
5 in good faith when the public utility will not.
6 Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you,
8 Ms. Park.

9 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGE: Next we'll
10 call Rosa E. Lee. Rosa Lee.

11 Next we'll call Richardson Theis.
12 Richard Theis, are you on the line?

13 Next we'll call Jeanette Kenne.

14 JEANETTE KENNE: Hello.

15 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGE: Yes. Hi,
16 Ms. Kenne.

17 JEANETTE KENNE: Hi.

18 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGE: We can hear
19 you. Are you set?

20 JEANETTE KENNE: I am. Okay. I'm
21 called Jeanette Kenne. Good afternoon.

22 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: I would ask

1 everybody to please mute your line if you're not
2 speaking. Please mute your line.

3 JEANETTE KENNE: Hello.

4 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGE: Yes, ma'am,
5 we can hear you.

6 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Please proceed.

7 JEANETTE KENNE: I'm called Jeanette
8 Kenne. Good afternoon, Commissioners, and
9 community participants. Thank you for allowing me
10 to come before you today to share my understanding
11 of the benefits of Pepco's proposed multiyear plan
12 and its enhancement.

13 I have observed firsthand the
14 changes and evolution our city has undergone.
15 Consequently, I want to offer my voice as the
16 Public Service Commission considers Pepco's
17 alternative rate plan.

18 I understand the multiyear rate
19 plan will provide customers with greater
20 certainty and predictable regarding -- ability
21 regarding future rate increases and transparency
22 around Pepco for months. Additionally, it allows

1 those of us who are on fixed income to project
2 budgets and plan our household energy
3 expenditures.

4 I have watched the District take on
5 the matter of a true national capital with new
6 neighborhood services and expanding real estate
7 market. Secondly, with such expansion, there is
8 an increase in demand for energy and new
9 technology to advance our progress. By granting
10 Pepco the ability to develop long-term -- hold
11 on. To -- to develop long-term budget across
12 multi years, the Commission will secure a rent
13 freeze for seniors, like me, and enhance energy
14 affordability for low-income customers.

15 This is important as we deal with
16 COVID-19 and are in the homes more -- consuming
17 more electricity with our computers, TVs, smart
18 phones, and iPad. Also a rate freeze until 2022
19 will help the local economy recover from the
20 shock we are all experiencing during this
21 pandemic.

22 Like members of AARP, I look to

1 Pepco to continue to work to protect the
2 retirees, seniors, those are fixed incomes, and
3 low-income residents. I appreciate that Pepco is
4 extending their existing energy assistance
5 program. Their residential customer, with credit
6 and senior discount program. Moreover, I value
7 the continued assistance for customers in part by
8 the COVID-19 pandemic, including suspending
9 services disconnection, waiving new late fees and
10 reconnection customers who we previously -- who
11 were previously discounted. This is critical to
12 all of us. This is why the multiyear plan makes
13 sense to me. But that --

14 (Music playing.)

15 JEANETTE KENNE: -- is part of the
16 community and compassion for seniors and those
17 experiencing difficulty.

18 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: If you could
19 conclude your comments briefly, Ms. Kenne.

20 (Echoing.)

21 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: It appears that
22 we're having some technical difficulties. We thank

1 you for your testimony Ms. Kenne.

2 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGE: Thank you.

3 Next we'll call Sheila Reid.

4 Sheila Reid, are you on the line?

5 SHEILA REID: Yes.

6 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGE: Thank you.

7 SHEILA REID: So do I just start
8 reading?

9 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Yes.

10 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGE: Whenever
11 you're ready.

12 SHEILA REID: I'm ready. Good
13 afternoon members of the Public Service Commission
14 and District of Columbia and community members. My
15 name is Sheila Cross Reid. And I am the owner of
16 Avanti Real Estate Services, a local real estate
17 services business located in Columbia Heights,
18 founded more than two decades ago. I'm also the
19 former chair of the District of Columbia Board of
20 Zoning Adjustment. Thank you for allowing me to
21 present today.

22 Clearly during these economic times

1 no one wants an increase in any of our household
2 expenditures, be it food, water or energy,
3 however, we all continue to consume these
4 resources even with the pressure of uncertainty.
5 Furthermore, every one of us holds the
6 expectation that Pepco will continue to serve our
7 critical energy needs throughout this pandemic.
8 Also, we expect the company to continue its
9 infrastructure investments and to maintain it and
10 increase reliability.

11 As a District of Columbia resident
12 and small business owner, I want to know what in
13 this rate proceeding benefits me and my
14 neighbors. Pepco's enhanced multiyear rate plan
15 filing includes important provisions that offer a
16 certainty and relief to business owners and
17 others who need support during this challenging
18 time.

19 Pepco is offering to freeze
20 electric rates for all customers until 2022.
21 Additionally, they are offering a small business
22 the ability to utilize a payment plan for up to

1 two years to allow us time to spread out energy
2 payments out and catch up. This gives me the
3 type of certainty I need to make more-informed
4 decision for my business.

5 The proposed plan offers increased
6 funding for the Residential Aid Discount Program,
7 a program which is critical to relieving the
8 energy burden on low-income individuals. This is
9 important to many District residents, including
10 some of the employees of my construction company
11 and its subcontractors, so I value this.

12 Lastly, the plan proposes the
13 creation of a zero-interest loan program for
14 small businesses, with the focus on those
15 designated in opportunities zones to upgrade
16 lighting and other equipment to reduce future
17 energy. This is smart and aligns with the
18 District's Clean Energy Act, which will help
19 future generations who will call the District
20 home.

21 Commissioners, small businesses are
22 the life blood of this community. And I join a

1 host of others in being grateful for your
2 continued oversight and Pepco's involvement in
3 the support of the communities. Thank you for
4 allowing me to testify today.

5 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
6 your testimony.

7 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGE: Next we call
8 Hillary Kacser.

9 HILLARY KACSER: Can you hear me now?

10 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGE: Yes, we can.

11 HILLARY KACSER: Oh, you can. I
12 can't believe it. All right. That's wonderful.
13 You can still hear me?

14 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Yes.

15 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGE: Yes.

16 HILLARY KACSER: Oh, beautiful.
17 Thank you. I apologize for that. I'm very
18 grateful to Mr. Cho and to Ms. Carmen for bringing
19 me back in because I was here before and I could
20 not unmute. So thank you all for all your work and
21 for this opportunity. And for all the other people
22 who are out here there today on behalf of this

1 important topic.

2 My name is Hillary Kacser. I am an
3 individual. I'm not representing any
4 organization, nor am I being paid. And I firmly
5 and soundly oppose this rate hike. And I will
6 tell various reasons, people before me have
7 spoken so eloquently to many of the issues as far
8 as people struggling now with COVID and the --
9 all the history with the merger. I love these
10 ideas about making it a community utility.

11 But the specific reasons that I'm
12 opposing it today that I wanted to put on record
13 with you was, first of all, I assume that you
14 know about, and perhaps it has been mentioned in
15 other testimony today that I didn't hear, but on
16 Friday, September 25th, the Energy and Policy
17 Institute reported that Chris Crane, CEO of
18 Exelon, who took over Pepco back in 2016, Chris
19 Crane, the parent company CEO got over
20 \$15 million in salary and benefits in 2019. And
21 he's not a -- these massive windfalls for
22 executives are throughout that parent company.

1 And are extremely harmful for us customers and
2 ratepayers.

3 This proposed rate increase, which
4 I oppose, is almost \$136 million that Pepco wants
5 because of Exelon, we call it Pepco, but -- and
6 but Pepco is currently making for Exelon about
7 \$145 million profit every year off of D.C.
8 residents. So this would still -- regardless of
9 all this talk about, you know, stabilization, the
10 proposal would increase residential bills this
11 year and in the next two years.

12 And the most important thing to me
13 is the climate goals. Pepco doesn't attempt to
14 support these. Pepco doesn't need this price
15 hike. And it's going to hurt a lot of people.
16 Please stop the price hike. And I don't know how
17 much time I have left, but I'd like to leave you
18 something that was written a long time ago, at
19 least make you remember my testimony that much
20 more.

21 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: You have about 30
22 seconds.

1 HILLARY KACSER: Met we in forest or
2 thy rushing brook or in the beach, the margin of
3 the sea to dance to the whistling wind, but thy
4 brawls have disturbed, therefore, the winds in
5 revenge sucked up from the sea contagious fogs
6 falling in the land, every pelting river overboard
7 their contents. The folds stands empty in the
8 drowned fields. Sweet summer buds are filled up
9 with mud. The seasons alter, the spring, the
10 summer, chilly autumn, every winter changed. The
11 amazed world now knows not which is which. And
12 this evil comes from our debate. From our
13 dissention. We are the parents and origin. Thank
14 you very much.

15 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
16 your eloquent testimony. Thank you.

17 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGE: Next we call
18 Raymond East. Raymond East, are you on the line?

19 RAYMOND EAST: Yes. Yes, I'm on the
20 line.

21 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGE: Thank you.

22 RAYMOND EAST: I want to thank our

1 members of the Public Commission for taking my
2 response. I don't receive any commission -- or
3 compensation for these remarks. And I want to
4 greet Commissioner Phillips and Commissioner
5 Beverly. Thank you so much for this opportunity.
6 I also want to thank all of the District of
7 Columbia residents who have spoken. We have a
8 couple of diversities. But I find myself on the
9 side of the majority of people who have testified
10 today opposing this rate increase. At least, at
11 the very least, to delay it.

12 I live in Ward 8. And I've been
13 there. And I'm pastor of St. Teresa of Avila
14 Catholic Church, a church 140 years old in Ward
15 8. I'm a 23-year resident of Ward 8. Our most
16 famous representative, or neighbor, was Frederick
17 Douglas. If you go up to his house, and he's two
18 blocks away from our church, if you go up,
19 there's a porch overlooking the District of
20 Columbia. And now a beautiful bridge with arches
21 is being built. It's a white bridge with white
22 arches. But to me if Fred Douglas was looking

1 out over the project, he said, "This would be a
2 bridge to nowhere and certainly not toward me."

3 It's a bridge to nowhere for three
4 reasons. First, if granted, we'd be forced a
5 three-year rate increase. And even though it
6 says that that increase is tied out, our
7 residents in Ward 8 have no choice but to pay the
8 increase. Secondly, I agree with Reverend
9 Holloman, that this charge follows a -- takes
10 many of our residents from paycheck to no check;
11 that is we have one of the highest rates of
12 unemployment in the District, we have the rate of
13 homelessness, lowest wages in the District and
14 the least opportunity. We find ourselves in all
15 kinds of opportunity deserts.

16 And there's one more reason. Why
17 won't Pepco make any deal to improve the lots of
18 the citizens in Ward 7 and 8 and to agree on a
19 proposition that helps to combat climate change?
20 And we go from these arches. And I propose an
21 alternative. Ward 8 residents like me, who are
22 forced to pay increases, are asking for a program

1 that would have a green benefit, a new bridge. I
2 have great faith that we'll do the right thing,
3 that the Public Service Commission will do the
4 right thing and reject this proposal.

5 Because a green bridge would go in
6 the right direction. First, it would provide
7 jobs, green jobs right now, and a living wage for
8 all those who already have jobs -- low-wage jobs
9 with Pepco. It would guarantee a rate increase
10 that would provide a living wage.

11 Secondly, it would provide green
12 investment in our citizens, especially black
13 contractors. \$500 million spent last year for
14 construction and only 11 million for black
15 contractors. Black contractors matter. And they
16 deserve a much larger share that would -- that
17 which is representative of the black population
18 here.

19 Finally, we need a green fruit --
20 we need green infrastructure. A green
21 infrastructure will help us meet our D.C. climate
22 goals for 2032. I think we can do this if we get

1 another chance. To delay this rate increase and
2 then instead go on. I speak in union with our
3 Washington Interfaith Network pastors who have
4 already spoken, and we urge Pepco to reconsider.
5 And the Commission please withdraw and deny this
6 rate increase -- this rate increase. Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
8 your testimony.

9 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next we
10 call Rosa Lee. Rosa Lee, are you on the line?

11 ROSE LEE: Yes, I am. Good
12 afternoon. And thank you very much for coming back
13 to me. I will make my comments brief, but thank
14 you for hearing my testimony.

15 I'm a resident of River Terrace
16 community and have lived -- and I'm a member of
17 the WIN Organization. I have lived in River
18 Terrace for 34 years. And when I moved here, I
19 knew very little about Pepco, except that they
20 produce electricity and we had to pay. Over the
21 years, thanks to the efforts of Mr. George
22 Gurley, a community activist, I was given a great

1 education about Pepco. And I also received a
2 great -- a greater education about Pepco just
3 listening to the testimony of others today.

4 But I do want to go on record that
5 being as a public monopoly, Pepco, for us to not
6 request a rate increase at this time. I think a
7 rate increase is a bad time as a result of the
8 goal pandemic that we're in and the employment
9 situation of many persons in this community,
10 especially black residents. So I'm basically
11 going on record saying that -- I'm not speaking
12 for the whole River Terrace community, but I am
13 speaking for myself as a resident of the
14 community, that we oppose the rate increase at
15 this time. Thank you very much.

16 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you.

17 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGE: Next we call
18 Jonah Goodman.

19 JONAH GOODMAN: Good evening. My
20 name is Jonah Goodman. I'm an ANC commissioner for
21 single-member district 4C10 in Ward 4. We're
22 testifying today to request the Commission reject

1 Pepco's request for a rate hike. While I wish I
2 could provide testimony citing more data points in
3 this filing, I know that I personally was sent
4 filing changes from Pepco just four days ago. And
5 I will venture to guess that most of the residents
6 I represent in D.C. will be impacted likely haven't
7 even had a chance to read these updates. Secondly,
8 these came out after the deadline to testify here
9 today. We're doing a tremendous disservice to the
10 residents of D.C. by having incomplete data in
11 Pepco's filing and now last-minute updates.

12 Ward 4 has seen the highest rate of
13 COVID cases in the District. Ward 4 also has one
14 of the highest portions of seniors living in D.C.
15 Combined, these households are going to be the
16 hardest hit by these rates. The reality here in
17 my community is that Ward 4 mutually can't keep
18 up with the demand for donated groceries from our
19 neighbors in need. We're simply trying to
20 survive at the moment. Today we're talking about
21 whether we should raise electricity cost for them
22 to keep their refrigerator running or their

1 computer working for remote schooling.

2 Pepco's request to offer ways to
3 defer payments, but lacks any deep empathy or
4 understand the financial anxiety for most.
5 Families have been devastated economically.
6 Delaying payments in a time when Pepco would then
7 also be increasing future rates only compounds
8 the issue. Pepco's consumer assistance programs
9 are nice on paper, but unless we are guaranteed
10 safety for every person who needs it, it's not
11 enough to offer help to some.

12 Asking consumers to contribute to
13 assistance programs to help neighbors instead of
14 Pepco lowering cost is embarrassing. We can see
15 the community interest in this case through the
16 amount of people who have waited hours to testify
17 already today. What this doesn't reflect, but
18 which the Office of the People's Counsel does
19 represent, are the residents who don't have the
20 privilege to be able to wait hours to join this
21 hearing.

22 I'm asking the Public Service

1 Commission to listen to the Office of the
2 People's Counsel which represents us and reject
3 Pepco's request to increase their profit margins
4 during this global emergency. Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
6 your testimony.

7 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next
8 we'll call Claudia McKoin. Claudia McKoin, are you
9 on the line?

10 Next we'll call Enid Doggett. Enid
11 Doggett, are you on the line?

12 Next we'll call Sharon Pugh.
13 Sharon Pugh, are you on the line?

14 Next we'll call Brenda Dever.
15 Brenda Dever, are you on the line?

16 We may have to come back to
17 Ms. Dever.

18 Herman Rip Preston.

19 HERMAN RIP PRESTON: Yes, I'm here.
20 Can you hear me?

21 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGEWICK: Yes,
22 sir, we can.

1 HERMAN RIP PRESTON: Good afternoon,
2 Commissioners. My name is Herman Preston. I am
3 appreciative for the opportunity to speak with you
4 today regarding Pepco's filing of this multiyear
5 plan, which is being considered before the Public
6 Service Commission in the District. This plan
7 deserves your careful attention to its provisions
8 affecting the residents, small businesses impacted
9 by COVID-19.

10 I lived in Ward 5 for many of my --
11 and my neighbors who are seniors, retirees, who
12 have worked and contributed to the quality of
13 life in the District of Columbia. I feel that
14 the enhanced benefits for the multiyear plan will
15 help, those are fixed income, particularly during
16 COVID's pandemic.

17 I consider myself fortunate to live
18 in Ward 4. It is with numerous small retails
19 among the 12th Street Corridor, including and New
20 Union Market, the hardwares stores, and some
21 local restaurants. Certainly the New Union
22 Market and the redevelopment around our Catholic

1 University area, which brought those employed in
2 others, further expanding our restaurant choices.

3 Families in this ward and people in
4 Ward 5 are part of diverse and knowledge
5 homeowner population, which really makes the ward
6 a great place to live and raise a family. I
7 think the part, for me, that no want an energy
8 rate increase. We can't afford one or one that
9 is unpredictable. This is one of the benefits of
10 the Pepco purposes multiyear plan because it
11 today rates certainty, which is important to all
12 of us, particularly those of us on fixed income.
13 And during this pandemic, rate certainty is
14 invaluable.

15 I am a part of a chorus of people
16 who value that Pepco is proposing to forego rate
17 increases until 2022. This rate freeze would
18 help all customers, particularly those who are
19 facing economic uncertainly during the pandemic.
20 The company has gone further in proposing a
21 management provision, which would expand income
22 eligibility limits on low-income residents who

1 are behind on their energy bills. This is
2 particularly important as many have seen their
3 income reduced during this stay-at-home order and
4 they have fallen behind on their energy bills and
5 mortgages.

6 It is helpful to Ward 5 retailers
7 that Pepco is offering to extend its budget
8 billing program to help small business with
9 moderate payments, this will assist retailers as
10 they manage their energy cost. Further through
11 the multiyear rate plan, small business will have
12 the ability to defer their distribution portions
13 of their bills up to two months and can pay the
14 balance over 18 months period. Many Ward 5
15 businesses will welcome this.

16 I'm aware that there are those who
17 oppose this multiyear plan and have expressed
18 concerns with Pepco's proposal. We understand
19 some of the concerns expressed around the rate
20 determination error, which Pepco has made in its
21 filing. Unfortunately, Pepco identified the
22 error and notified the Commission opponents and

1 then corrected it. Now that the data error would
2 not have affected the residential or the small
3 business customer rates. Consequently, none of
4 the apparent objective raised any concerns to
5 justify the processing and denying the public
6 purpose of the multiyear benefit. Especially
7 when we need a rate freeze, extension of
8 customer-based rates, expansion of a residential
9 aid discounting programs and rate discount for
10 our churches, our nonprofit. In fact, we need
11 this now more than ever.

12 So we look forward to the Public
13 Service Commission to move this proposal forward
14 with all due speed. Simply put, we are ready for
15 Pepco's multiyear plan to be adopted. Thank you
16 for your time and attendance.

17 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
18 your testimony, Mr. Preston.

19 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGEWICK: Next we
20 call Gretchen Wharton. Gretchen Wharton.

21 GRETCHEN WHARTON: Yes, I'm here.

22 CARMEN DAVIS: She's holding.

1 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGEWICK: Okay.

2 GRETCHEN WHARTON: Good afternoon,
3 Commissioner Phillips, and members of the Public
4 Service Commission of the District of Columbia. My
5 name is Gretchen Wharton. And I'm chair of Shaw
6 Main Street, a nonprofit supporting and promoting
7 retailers in the Shaw neighborhood. Also a native
8 Washingtonian who has lived in Shaw all of my life.
9 Thank you for allowing me to present to you today
10 at that rate hearing.

11 No one wants an energy rate
12 increase, even during the best of economic times,
13 but when I reviewed the information about Pepco's
14 filing in Formal Case FC 1156, I saw several
15 specific benefits for our Shaw Main Street
16 businesses.

17 The multiyear plan allows business
18 owners to better predict and budget for future
19 energy cost. Moreover, it offers flexibility, so
20 Pepco can make innovative adjustments in how it
21 is responding to COVID-19 pandemic. This is
22 vital to Shaw Main Street's retailers and

1 neighborhood residents, as we deal with both the
2 ravages of the pandemic and this summer's civil
3 unrest.

4 More than 30 Shaw retailers
5 sustained damage ranging from broken windows to
6 theft of tens of thousands of dollars of
7 equipment and inventory. The hard work and
8 investment made in the Shaw community is
9 something we treasure. And as we rebuild, we
10 need our energy supplier to be a partner in this
11 effort.

12 Since 2003, Shaw Main Street has
13 been creating a sustainable, self-sufficient
14 business district, where residents and visitors
15 can live, work, shop, play, pray, and learn
16 within a vibrant walkable community. With well
17 over \$3.5 billion in developments completed, and
18 more on the way, Shaw is the heart of the city.
19 From the new Wholefoods market on Florida Avenue
20 to Apple Carnegie Library, Shaw is an integral
21 part of what makes the District of Columbia
22 great.

1 We view this alternative
2 rate-making proposal as Pepco's efforts to
3 support businesses by providing certainty around
4 energy cost and other benefits. This will go a
5 long way in helping us to recover from the
6 economic impact of the pandemic. Our businesses
7 need predicability, and Pepco's proposal will
8 help Shaw businesses as they position themselves
9 for recovery. Equally important, the utility is
10 proposing to continue investing in the local
11 energy grid, even as it defers the \$60 million in
12 capital expenditures over the next two years.
13 This will allow the company to mitigate rate
14 adjustments and freeze rates at their current
15 level until 2022. This freeze on distribution
16 rates offers needed support as businesses
17 struggle to survive.

18 We have heard much being made about
19 the fact that during these proceedings Pepco
20 notified the Commission and opponents that it
21 found an error in calculating rate determination
22 for certain classes of commercial rate payers. I

1 am glad that they caught this and corrected it;
2 however, I'm not certain that this justifies
3 restarting these proceedings, which have gone on
4 more than a year. It would be unfortunate for
5 all of the small business benefits to dissipate
6 due to a data error.

7 We encourage the proceedings to
8 continue. Evaluate the proposal appropriately
9 and let it stand on its merit. Shaw Main Street
10 supports the multiyear plan provision to extend
11 the budget billing program to help small
12 businesses like those who are members of Shaw
13 Main Street moderate payment.

14 This will be useful as utility
15 payments can be spread across operating budgets.
16 Further, through the multiyear plan, our
17 retailers will have the ability to defer the
18 distribution portion of their bill for up to two
19 months and then pay the balance over an 18-month
20 period. This will assist Shaw Main Street's
21 retailers as they work their way back to
22 recovery.

1 Thank you to the Commission for
2 continuing to engage the community, albeit
3 virtually, during the pandemic. Shaw Main Street
4 is glad to be able to advocate for businesses and
5 to support the benefits provided by Pepco's
6 multiyear plan. Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
8 your testimony.

9 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGEWICK: Next we
10 call Rick Lee. Rick Lee, are you on the line?

11 Next we call Daniel Flores.

12 DANIEL FLORES: I'm here. Can you
13 hear me?

14 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGEWICK: Yes, we
15 can. Thank you.

16 DANIEL FLORES: Thank you very much
17 for the opportunity, Chairman Phillips and
18 Commissioner Beverly. My name is Daniel Flores.
19 I'm the vice president of the Greater Washington
20 Board of Trade. And thank you again for the
21 opportunity to comment on Pepco's multiyear rate
22 plan.

1 As we've heard before the COVID-19
2 pandemic has challenged businesses and
3 communities and has depleted budgets across the
4 Washington region and the U.S. The last few
5 months have been incredibly difficult for
6 everybody. The District of Columbia's economy
7 has been significantly impacted and revenue
8 losses are at unprecedented levels which mean the
9 difficult choices and decisions have to be made.

10 Our economy is heavily dependent on
11 the hospitality industry. And this is a service
12 field that relies on people being present to be
13 served. This changed our landscape
14 significantly. Corporations are not exempt from
15 this impact. Our traditional way of doing
16 business will be changed for the unforeseeable
17 future. The impact to business is directly
18 impacting those that are employed by this very
19 entity. With employment, so many are struggling.
20 And the ripple effects have been particularly
21 devastating to our community.

22 Now, with that said, it is now time

1 to begin rebuilding. It's never too late to
2 start this. However, we must do so in
3 understanding the science that is related to this
4 pandemic and act in accordance while moving
5 forward in a way that does not threaten the
6 progress that has been made. The enhanced
7 proposal Pepco filed in its recent multiyear rate
8 plan includes important provisions that will
9 provide certainty and relief for all customers
10 during these more challenging times.

11 I want to recognize the efforts
12 made by Pepco to freeze rates until 2022, by
13 filing the multiyear plan and the other programs
14 offering that will provide the relief required to
15 survive what will likely be the greatest
16 challenge of our lifetime.

17 Now, the Board of Trade, we
18 understand it's critical of ensuring that the
19 power supply to our business and homes remain
20 strong. Ongoing investments to ensure safe,
21 reliable, resilient, secure and sustainable
22 energy helps to drive the local economy. Through

1 the employment and contracting opportunities for
2 local and diverse businesses, we must begin
3 rebuilding the local economy. And the
4 electricity sector is even more important today
5 for that transformation.

6 Pepco proposed several enhancements
7 through its multiyear plan with the Public
8 Service Commission to address the impacts of
9 COVID-19 and respond to issues raised by
10 stakeholders, parties to the proceedings and the
11 Commission. The modified plan freezes the
12 distribution rates for another 18 months for all
13 customers, extend the customer base rate credit,
14 and expands and proposes new customers for
15 programs for many of those who are struggling
16 most due to the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic as
17 mentioned before.

18 This means that Pepco's D.C.
19 customers won't see an increase in their delivery
20 rates until 2022. The last energy delivery rate
21 adjustment request was made back in 2017, when
22 customers saw a small rate reduction.

1 In addition to deferring any
2 increases to energy delivery rates until 2022,
3 Pepco proposes a series of programs and funds to
4 help customers during this difficult times.
5 These programs include the existing of creating
6 new payment plans to provide up to 24 months for
7 residential and small businesses, customers to
8 pay down any balances accrued during and for a
9 period of time following the pandemic. The
10 company's budget billing program will be extended
11 to small and medium commercial customers. The
12 company will apply any residential or small
13 business customer deposits on hand to pay down
14 balances accrued during the pandemic. And Pepco
15 will make a \$100,000 contribution to the
16 shareholder's fund -- a contribution using
17 shareholder funds, excuse me, created -- create a
18 good Neighbor Energy Fund, among other things.

19 These program offerings will assist
20 residents and small business, houses of worship
21 and nonprofits. With this proposal, small
22 business owners, such as restaurants and retail

1 establishments, are provided the confidence to
2 open up shop and create a sustainable business
3 for themselves and their employees.

4 We must all do our part. And it's
5 interesting -- and it is interesting, as I
6 reflect, that we are submitting these comments in
7 the context of rate adjustment request; however,
8 it is in the confidence of this proceeding that
9 assistance is being advanced at levels that did
10 not previously exist. Pepco has tracked balance
11 between paramount service continuity, relief for
12 all of its customers, and an awareness of a need
13 to advance protections simultaneously.

14 I want to thank you for the
15 opportunity to provide comments and for your
16 consideration. Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
18 your testimony.

19 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGEWICK: Next
20 we'll call Rick Lee. Mr. Lee, are you on the line?

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: She said now
22 that their departments have opened back up, so they

1 have to go back to their department --

2 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Whoever is on the
3 line -- hello. Hello.

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So that's
5 where that lady, Ms. Anderson, went. She was --

6 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: You'll have to
7 come back to --

8 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next call
9 Mike Segal. Mike Segal, are you on the line?

10 Next we call Jonathan Viera.
11 Jonathan Viera, are you on the line?

12 Next we call Pastor Clifford
13 Beckford. Pastor Clifford Beckford, are you on
14 the line?

15 Next we call Steven Stein -- I'm
16 sorry, David Stein. David Stein, are you on the
17 line?

18 Next we call Ibrahim Mumin.
19 Ibrahim Mumin, are you on the line?

20 IBRAHIM MUMIN: Yes, I'm on the line.
21 Can you hear me?

22 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGEWICK: Yes.

1 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Yes, we can hear
2 you.

3 IBRAHIM MUMIN: Okay. Thank you.

4 Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, and
5 the Commissioners. Thank you for the opportunity
6 to speak before you on this important issue. I
7 am Ibrahim Mumin, a long-time resident of the
8 District of Columbia and a supporter of
9 African-American and human rights issues.

10 As a civic legal and neighborhood
11 development consultant, I pay close attention to
12 the deepening needs of residents. Meeting the
13 demands of electricity in a sustainable and
14 cost-effective way is one of the greatest
15 challenges we face under normal circumstances.
16 And today, with COVID-19, this crisis is keeping
17 so many quarantined at home and dependent on safe
18 and reliable power, strategic forecasting is
19 required more than ever before.

20 It is true we as a community are
21 struggling, therefore, this proposal will benefit
22 many with a better understanding on how our

1 electric bills will be structured over time.

2 Pepco's multiyear rate plan is designed to
3 address our central community electricity
4 obligations while increasing billing
5 predicability for most customers.

6 Under the auspices of my continuing
7 commitment to work closely with and represent
8 neighborhood residents, senior citizens,
9 faith-based organizations, businesses and
10 schools, I am pleased to know Pepco's enhanced
11 proposal offers a variety of relief options to
12 its customers, particularly those impacted by the
13 health crisis.

14 Important provisions of the
15 proposal include holding all electric rates
16 stable for the next 18 months until 2022. Pepco
17 is also increasing its residential discount
18 program funding and offering payment plans up to
19 two years to further ensure the ongoing reduction
20 in the energy cost burden on low-income
21 individuals.

22 Additionally, recently Pepco

1 announced its community scholars program will
2 provide grants to UDC and some other community
3 colleges and support students as get funding
4 reinforces that workforce and career development
5 opportunities, including for apprenticeships,
6 will provide a pool of local talent which is
7 critical to the company's commitment to the
8 community.

9 Pepco's provision of near-term
10 relief helps to support the critical needs of an
11 increasing number of residents in our community
12 during this pandemic is particularly significant.
13 The multiyear rate is structured to balance our
14 future needs with the current challenges
15 confronting our city, including the most
16 vulnerable among us. At the same time Pepco's
17 proposal assures that current system upgrades and
18 normal maintenance requirements will continue
19 during this period.

20 While these supportive actions are
21 appreciated, I recognize to some -- at some point
22 rate adjustments will be required to cover costs.

1 I also understand that continued investment in
2 the electric system that sustains our community's
3 health and safety is essential to our collective
4 future.

5 Since the onset of the multiyear
6 rate application process, we have seen a concise
7 and transparent example of what Pepco has done to
8 inform its customers of the plan and its benefits
9 in creating a more-technically advanced and
10 progressive rate and determination platform.

11 I have seen where critics have
12 requested the proposal be withdrawn. These
13 enhanced benefits and other proposed actions are
14 even more meaningful considering the fact that
15 Pepco customers have not experienced a rate
16 increase since 2014, while many projects and
17 initiatives to maintain and improve our electric
18 grid infrastructure continue to rise.

19 My research has shown that adoption
20 of the proposal helps align the District of
21 Columbia with over 30 other states across the
22 nation with similar forward-thinking plans. I

1 encourage you, Mr. Chairman, and members for your
2 positive consideration of Pepco's multiyear plan
3 while protecting customers, especially those that
4 need it most during these difficult times and
5 into the future. Thank you for the opportunity
6 of providing this testimony.

7 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you, sir.

8 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGEWICK: Thank
9 you.

10 Next we call Emily Durso. Emily
11 Durso, are you on its line?

12 EMILY DURSO: Yes, I am.

13 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGEWICK: Thank
14 you.

15 EMILY DURSO: Good afternoon,
16 Commissioners. And thank you for hosting this
17 meeting to solicit public comment on Pepco's
18 multiyear plan.

19 I'm a native Washingtonian. And
20 for some time I have been tracking Pepco's new
21 forward-thinking proposal for rate determination.
22 I am trusting that many of the benefits described

1 about not while approving the safe delivery of
2 reliable energy, but support the District's
3 recovery during our current crisis.

4 I am writing to you to express my
5 view that this alternative approach, when
6 adopted, can provide a more modern approach to
7 adjusting our electric rates. The put also puts
8 the District of Columbia in parity with nearly 40
9 other states who have instituted their own
10 versions of alternative rate making.

11 First, I believe it is time for the
12 District to make a big commitment to
13 environmentalism and renewable energy. We are
14 going to have to make some dramatic changes and
15 make important infrastructure investments that
16 will help guide us towards being a cleaner and
17 greener city.

18 Pepco's proposal structure to
19 support those goals and move ahead together with
20 our citizens to build a stronger, smarter,
21 cleaner energy future for our communities. I
22 also appreciate the plan enhanced -- increased

1 accountability through Public Service Commission
2 oversight. Although Pepco has a good record
3 supporting its customers, it is important that we
4 have a strong review process in place. I believe
5 Pepco's inclusion of increased public oversight
6 mechanisms in their plan is a clear indication
7 they are operating in good faith.

8 Pepco has also taken this
9 opportunity to enhance its proposal to help
10 customers, businesses, institutions recover from
11 the impacts of COVID-19. For example, rates can
12 be frozen at current rates until the beginning of
13 2022. The customer-base rate will be extended
14 through 2021, with up to 24 months payment plans
15 for those impacted by the pandemic and rate
16 discounts for nonprofits and faith-based
17 institutions are being proposed.

18 Finally, I was happy to see that
19 this plan will provide us with clear and set
20 rates that residents like me can use to project
21 our energy cost every year. As someone who
22 appreciates the value of the budget, this plan

1 will help me manage my bills. I think everyone
2 deserves fair and consistent utility bills and
3 this plan will allow Pepco to provide that.
4 Thank you very much.

5 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you.

6 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGEWICK: Next we
7 call Tory Tomlinson. Troy Tomlinson.

8 NEISHA TOMLINSON: Good.
9 Mr. Tomlinson had an unfortunate business
10 commitment that has conflicted with this
11 opportunity, so I'm speaking on his behalf. And I
12 know that he and I appreciate the opportunity to
13 share his comments at this public meeting.

14 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGEWICK: May I
15 have your name, please.

16 THE WITNESS: My name is Neisha
17 Tomlinson.

18 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGEWICK: Thank
19 you.

20 NEISHA TOMLINSON: No problem.
21 Over the past few months, as the
22 world and the District of Columbia reacted to the

1 COVID pandemic crisis, as a long-time homeowner
2 in Ward 4 on behalf of my family and business, I
3 began to keep tabs on what steps different
4 organizations throughout the city and service
5 providers took to support their customers. And
6 in my research, I learned that Pepco's quick
7 response to prohibit all power disconnections and
8 provide financial relief to customers who were
9 experiencing economic struggle. Although, I have
10 been lucky to be financially stable throughout
11 the crisis, I am happy to know we have
12 organizations like Pepco ensuring the most
13 vulnerable among us have security during
14 uncertain times. Pepco's response to the
15 COVID-19 crisis is a great example of how they
16 truly have interest of the District of Columbia
17 citizens at heart.

18 And to provide some rationale
19 behind why I am writing today to express my
20 supporter for their proposed multiyear plan. As
21 we move on to the recovery phase of this crisis,
22 one thing people will be looking for is

1 stability. I think there's no better way for
2 Pepco to help provide financial predictability to
3 residents than having set fair and -- having set
4 fair rate for power consumption.

5 We also need reliable and secure
6 service. This is a key to our economic stability
7 and growth. It's also the key to our ability to
8 look towards alternate energy generation that
9 customers can choose from. And Pepco has shown
10 this commitment to moving towards that.

11 We all understand that rate
12 increases that impact the budget of homeowners
13 and businesses with their thoughtful
14 consideration and we understand that, you know,
15 many are not in favor of even raising the topic
16 during this pandemic, if at all. I do note,
17 however, that we have not experienced a rate
18 increase from Pepco since 2014.

19 Their multiyear plan also commits
20 that all such work to maintain and improve upon
21 our electric grid system and its infrastructure
22 is ongoing, while our rates remain frozen until

1 2022.

2 And of significant import to me is
3 that the Commission's oversight and public review
4 of Pepco's accountability is ensured to continue
5 on a regular basis. I believe this plan will
6 bring long-awaited stability to our utility bills
7 that will benefit everyone. I trust Pepco and I
8 trust their plan and look forward to the Public
9 Service Commission, their consideration of a full
10 proposal and its benefit and its consideration as
11 it relates to the benefit of customers. Thank
12 you.

13 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
14 your testimony.

15 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGEWICK: Next we
16 call Cornelius Ejlogu. Cornelius Ejlogu, are you
17 on the line?

18 Next we call Reyna Askew.

19 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: I believe we have
20 Cornelius on the line. Unmute yourself, sir.

21 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGEWICK: Thank
22 you.

1 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Mr.
2 Ejlogu. Perhaps we'll come back.

3 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: I saw him. I
4 want to give him the opportunity if we can.

5 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGEWICK: Okay.

6 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: There we are.
7 Unmute yourself. We can't hear you. We still
8 can't hear you, sir. Okay. Unfortunately, I
9 believe we have to circle back.

10 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGEWICK: Okay.
11 Next we call Reyna Askew. Reyna Askew, are you on
12 the line?

13 Next Angela Wilson. Angela Wilson,
14 are you on the line?

15 ANGELA WILSON: Yes, I'm here.

16 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGEWICK: Thank
17 you.

18 ANGELA WILSON: Hello. I'm Angela
19 Wilson, attorney at the Washington Interfaith
20 Network representing over 40 institutions and tens
21 of thousands of D.C. residents and allies. We have
22 had over a hundred residents try to join this

1 hearing with some challenges.

2 As the prophet warned us in the
3 book of Surak, we are not to delay our turning to
4 do justice. We are not to rely on our wealth and
5 accomplishments to say we've done enough. As the
6 community and as individuals, we must continue to
7 act for justice.

8 Corporate leaders like Pepco must
9 do more to achieve equity in our capitol city.
10 We're asking Pepco to act on Win's agenda for the
11 public interest to help implement care for D.C.,
12 the corporate accountability and racial equity
13 campaign for good jobs, fair compensation for
14 contractors, improve local hiring, investing in
15 black local businesses, addressing 77 acres of
16 land at Benning Service Terrace, at the service
17 center, and addressing affordable green energy
18 and wealth and credit returns to our hurting
19 communities.

20 Pepco must invest its talent,
21 money, and assets in creating jobs for people
22 living in our poorest wards. Pepco must do

1 long-term strategic business planning in
2 partnership with WIN and other allies to improve
3 minority training and hiring into
4 family-sustaining jobs, jobs with health
5 insurance and a pension.

6 Pepco must take affirmative steps
7 to include black institutions, residents,
8 businesses in its long-term planning. For
9 example, in exploring and implementing new
10 technologies, including Green Tech. Pepco must
11 reach out to black students, workers, educators,
12 black institutions, black businesses, and others
13 with deep interest in our cities and
14 neighborhoods, those voices are oftentimes
15 sidelined and silenced.

16 Pepco has the resources to bring
17 black voices into the mainstream and make them
18 heard among those who influence high-level
19 decision-making in D.C. Pepco must insist that
20 our elected officials from Pepco lobbies to
21 influence regulatory decisions, also ensure
22 robust funding for education, including training,

1 apprenticeship, and other vocational training
2 that benefits our most disadvantaged citizens,
3 including returning citizens.

4 It would be premature for the
5 Public Service Commission to decide profit rates
6 for Pepco. First Pepco must address some key
7 interest to our community. Pepco's ability to
8 raise its rates and increase its profits and
9 Exelon's profits and shareholder's returns must
10 be conditioned on a social compact, a social
11 contract to achieve equity in D.C. WIN
12 congregations, our members, have a huge stake in
13 that compact. Let us do right by the people who
14 provide these profits for Pepco. Not some time
15 in the future, but right now. People's lives are
16 depending upon this bold action. We ask that you
17 take bold action and do right for your people.
18 Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
20 your testimony.

21 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGEWICK: Next we
22 call Karen Shannon.

1 KAREN SHANNON: Yes. Can you hear
2 me?

3 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGEWICK: Yes, we
4 can. Thank you.

5 KAREN SHANNON: Okay. My name is
6 Karen Shannon. Good evening, Mr. Chairman, and
7 members of the Commission. As a part of the
8 restaurant community of Washington for more than 40
9 years, I appreciate the chance to participate in
10 today's hearing and weigh in on the proposal, the
11 Pepco plan, that we believe will assist businesses
12 in need and could actually support the survival of
13 D.C. independent restaurants. So I speak in
14 support.

15 For more than 20 years, I operated
16 an Italian restaurant on Connecticut Avenue in
17 Northwest D.C. Since then I have remained active
18 in the industry through various management and
19 consulting positions. Additionally, I have been
20 intricately involved in all issues of the D.C.
21 restaurant world as a restaurant association
22 board member since 1990 and now a director

1 emeritus. I offer this background on myself to
2 support an historical perspective of the many
3 challenges and financial obligations facing
4 restaurants, utilities being one.

5 However, I have more recent
6 experience, stepping back into an ownership role
7 with a pop-up business on Georgia Avenue,
8 Northwest for most of 2018. I cite this endeavor
9 in particular, as of that time my electric bill
10 with surprisingly higher than I had anticipated.
11 Just a few short months after opening my small,
12 mostly carry out, with a modest income stream, I
13 had to go into a Pepco payment plan. I requested
14 one and received assistance. And I honored this
15 plan even after closing the shop.

16 Also as I evaluate my options for
17 diving back into the business and recreating my
18 pop-up as an established brick and mortar, this
19 Pepco proposal becomes a critical point of my
20 analysis. COVID-19 forwarded my efforts in this
21 direction, but I'm hopeful with support, such as
22 that one proposed by Pepco in its enhanced plan,

1 my dream can be realized.

2 So bear with me a minute, I want to
3 give you a little bit of statistics. With our
4 current climate amid an unprecedented time for
5 our country, and for comers overall, the
6 restaurant industry, perhaps more than any other
7 have suffered significant sales and job losses
8 since COVID began. Across the country, estimates
9 are that eight million jobs have been lost,
10 accounting for more than two-thirds of the entire
11 restaurant workforce nationwide.

12 In D.C., we're 96 percent a
13 full-service restaurants are independently
14 operated. These businesses have been hit the
15 hardest. In the city, restaurants reduce staff
16 by an average of 93 percent. In the Washington
17 area, 40 percent of all restaurants closed their
18 doors at the start of the pandemic, and many that
19 are open now are experiencing minimal sales of
20 70 percent reduction.

21 Now after restaurants have
22 navigated the phases of opening this string and

1 summer, every restaurant is struggling with a new
2 dilemma; how to maintain their operations when
3 the weather turns colder and most seating
4 capacities will be diminished. How can revenue
5 sustain the expenses of winter? How can this
6 industry once again contribute to the city's
7 economy?

8 So in light of these desire
9 statistics, you might think this position of the
10 restaurant industry would be against Pepco's
11 proposal. Not so. If the president and CEO of
12 the restaurant association, Kathy Hollinger, had
13 spoken today, she would agree with this. Pepco
14 has been a greater supporter of the small
15 business community and is proactive in creative
16 in its thinking in how to provide meaningful
17 relief.

18 Pepco's plan, now pending before
19 the Commission, will provide restaurants and
20 their employees with a helping hand as they
21 navigate the uncertainty and tumultuous times.
22 The freezing of electric distribution rates for

1 all customers for the next 18 months will help
2 restaurants plan. Also small business bill defer
3 and payment plans to help restart the economy are
4 value-added asset.

5 Restaurants are an industry built
6 on data and bringing people together. Because so
7 much of our future is unknown, the freeze and
8 other enhancements will help provide restaurants
9 with clarity and certainly during uncertain
10 times. Specifically payment plans for up to two
11 years will help provide a level of economic
12 stability and forecast. Enabling restaurants to
13 focus on ramping back up, hiring more employees
14 and serving more customers. These mechanisms for
15 support are tailored to the unique needs of our
16 industry.

17 And for those reasons, I
18 respectfully ask that you consider FC 1156, so
19 they all may benefit from the proposed customer
20 enhancement. Pepco's plan shows a commitment to
21 assisting its customers, and in turn, supporting
22 our entire community's effort to rebuild during

1 and after the pandemic.

2 I am aware that critics of Pepco's
3 proposals are out there. I have actually
4 listened to the testimony all day. There's no
5 time for the significant rebuttals. I was going
6 to try that, but in the interest of time I will
7 not address them. And I won't offer that. I
8 will say it seems that the Pepco multiyear plan
9 is an improved way to address the realities of
10 utilities in any metropolitan region like D.C.

11 So as a member of the District of
12 Columbia's restaurant community for most of my
13 career and in commiseration with all of my fellow
14 owners and associates for many years, I welcome
15 and commend Pepco's efforts during this
16 challenging time. And I thank you today.

17 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: We thank you for
18 your testimony. And we thank you for representing
19 the restaurant association.

20 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGEWICK: Next we
21 call Andrew Aurbach.

22 ANDREW AURBACH: I know it's been a

1 long day, Commissioners. My name is Andrew
2 Aurbach. I'm the owner of Rivendell International,
3 a small communications firm in D.C. I live in Ward
4 3. And just parenthetically, I serve on the D.C.
5 Historic Preservation Review Board, but I'm
6 speaking today in an individual capacity. So thank
7 you for allowing me to come before you.

8 We're living in an unprecedented
9 time. And now, more than ever, we want to
10 provide comments on the filing that is before
11 you. This filing and proposed alternative rate
12 making is creative, forward-thinking, and aligns
13 with the District. More than 30 states, which
14 have approved a similar version of regulatory
15 review. I fully appreciate the task before the
16 Commission as you weigh different perspectives
17 related to Pepco's proposal.

18 However, in reviewing this
19 submission, it seems apparent that Pepco is
20 making a concerted effort to balance a
21 progressive rate-making model with District
22 resident and small business interests. Pepco's

1 filing enhancement and its public benefits seem
2 to accomplish this.

3 I'm pleased to see the District of
4 Columbia leading the way in renewable energy
5 legislation which the Sierra Club praises as
6 having the strongest clean energy requirement in
7 the nation. We are positioned to ensure that all
8 of the city's electricity will come from
9 renewable sources by 2032. More than a decade
10 before any other energy-conscious state.

11 Importantly, the multiyear plan
12 enables Pepco to be an equal partner in the
13 District energy planning and conservation process
14 and introduces renewables and other tactics into
15 the system while taking advantage of new
16 technologies that can improve system performance
17 and meet ratepayers' changing energy needs.

18 The plan helps Pepco to better
19 detail how it will build, budget and forecast for
20 a smarter power grid, more widely incorporate
21 solar and innovative energy conservation
22 effectively.

1 Moreover, this plan appears to
2 provide Pepco with the flexibility it needs to
3 assist the District in meeting its Clean Energy
4 Act goal of implementing a 100 percent renewable
5 energy target by 2032. Such an ambitious goal
6 requires significant coordination with our local
7 energy providers to make sure that we have a
8 safe, solid, and sustainable framework in place
9 for the future. That's why I believe it's
10 crucial for Pepco and this processed multiyear
11 plan to be given every consideration.

12 One of the modifications which
13 Pepco made to their original multiyear plan was
14 to change the one-time reconciliation to a
15 true-up actual revenue and cost at the end of the
16 multiyear period. This is an important
17 concession, as it creates rate predictability and
18 certainty for the entire period and are reduces
19 overall administrative and filing burdens. Also,
20 this is more -- a more efficient use of the
21 Commission's staffing and resources and those of
22 us who will continue to be part of this process.

1 Because of the proposed multiyear
2 plan, it lets Pepco more accurately predict its
3 overall budget in future years, it affords
4 customers greater predictability as well. During
5 these times, it is -- it's welcoming to see the
6 impact that this plan will have on the local and
7 regional economy in the areas of job creation and
8 general economic activity.

9 As a small business owner, I can
10 unequivocally say that we need this level of
11 post-COVID economic development. With the Public
12 Service Commission of the District of Columbia
13 continuing to monitor Pepco's proposed rate
14 changes and ensuring transparency in its plans
15 for modernizing the power grid, the purposed
16 multiyear plan appears to be a positive step
17 forward for our city as we take critical steps to
18 ensure a cleaner energy future for generations to
19 come.

20 Thank you very much for your
21 consideration and I appreciate your making the
22 time for me.

1 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
2 your testimony.

3 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Next we
4 call Brenda Dever. Brenda Dever, are you on the
5 line?

6 Next we call Niki Davis. Niki
7 Davis, are you on the line?

8 Next we call Lance Bailey. Lance
9 Bailey, are you on the line?

10 Next we call Karl Mason. Karl
11 Mason, are you on the line?

12 Next we call Eric Azoyine. Eric
13 Azoyine.

14 Next we call Sherrita Noris.
15 Sherrita Noris, are you on the line?

16 SHERRITA NORIS: Yes, ma'am.

17 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Thank
18 you.

19 SHERRITA NORIS: Hi. My name is
20 Sherrita Noris. I am currently a resident of the
21 Washington, D.C. area and a laborer. I am here to
22 testify in opposition to Pepco's request to

1 increase electric rates.

2 This is my first time speaking in
3 front a public agency. And I had to take time
4 off work to speak with you today; however, I know
5 it is important that you know how Pepco treats
6 its workers who are contracted out. I have
7 worked for a union contractor for two months. I
8 have worked for Positive Construction Solution,
9 LLC, a Pepco contractor, for almost half a year.
10 I made \$14 an hour, and I did have health
11 insurance at all. My wages were incredibly low,
12 especially for this area. I struggle to cover my
13 bills monthly. You cannot survive on \$400 a
14 week -- per week. Sorry.

15 Since I started working for a union
16 contractor, I am making more money and I have
17 health insurance. I have the right -- I have
18 rights on the job and I have hope that I can make
19 a career in the construction industry.

20 The work me and my coworkers
21 perform, it is crucial, very crucial, to keeping
22 the lights on in D.C. We are essential workers.

1 And despite the global COVID crisis, we show up
2 to work on construction projects when we are
3 called. If it is a 100 degrees or 0 degrees, we
4 work outside in the cold.

5 And in the middle of the D.C.
6 streets -- sorry, I'm very nervous.

7 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Take your time.
8 Take your time. You're doing great.

9 SHERRITA NORIS: All right. I work
10 outside in the middle of D.C.'s busy streets, which
11 is not only difficult, but dangerous. Pepco is
12 asking to increase its rates by \$135.9 million over
13 the next several years. Even though the company's
14 revenues are increasing and its parent company,
15 Exelon, continues to increase payouts to
16 shareholders. But what about the workers?

17 Pepco increases its profit by
18 keeping their wages down. And Exelon's CEO made
19 over \$15.4 million last year. I stayed six
20 months and made \$5,200 and would have made
21 \$10,400 that year working for Pepco. Does this
22 sound fair to you?

1 There was so such turnover when I
2 worked for a Pepco contractor because the wages
3 were so low. The constant turnovers meant that
4 there were a lot of new workers who didn't know
5 what they were doing or who weren't invested in
6 the job. I was pushed out of my position for
7 speaking up for myself.

8 There were times where I brought up
9 my training due to negligence and was reprimanded
10 for it rather than using it to increase our
11 safety awareness. I would have stayed if I was
12 treated with dignity and if I was paid fairly for
13 the work that I did.

14 Pepco sets the low wages and no
15 benefits of its contracted-out workforces are not
16 its problem because it just hires contractors.
17 Pepco uses us an excuse and says that if workers
18 get paid more, customers' rates will increase.
19 This is false. I now work for a contractor who
20 pays good wages and offers benefits. Why can't
21 Pepco?

22 Because they are -- they are more

1 interested in paying themselves than paying the
2 workers like myself who do the back-breaking work
3 in the streets for the contractors. Pepco's
4 contractors' workers deserve better. D.C. and our
5 community deserve better. If you tell Pepco to
6 treat its contracted-out workforce better and with
7 dignity, they will. But I know that they won't do
8 it on their own.

9 I ask you to reject Pepco's request
10 to increase rates. Unless Pepco requires its
11 contractors to increase their workers' wages and
12 benefits, unless we have protection, Pepco will
13 continue to profit off low-paid laborers.

14 I would like to know if my coworkers
15 can speak at this time?

16 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: How many
17 coworkers do you have with you?

18 SHERRITA NORIS: They're on the list,
19 but we had technical difficulties.

20 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Okay. So are
21 they with you now where you are?

22 SHERRITA NORIS: Yes, sir, they are.

1 They are right here.

2 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Quickly.

3 SHERRITA NORIS: If I can say thank
4 you for letting me speak. And I'm sorry for being
5 nervous.

6 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: No, you did a
7 wonderful -- you represented yourself and your
8 union well.

9 SHERRITA NORIS: Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Who do we have
11 here?

12 ERIC AZOYINE: Eric Azoyine. Good
13 evening Chairman Phillips and Commissioner Beverly.
14 My name is Eric. I'm here to testify in opposition
15 of Pepco's request to increase electric rates.

16 It's important for you to know how
17 Pepco treats its contracted-out workers. As a
18 laborer, I frequently work in D.C. performing
19 work for Pepco contractors. Inside the trench
20 box to service new residential communities. My
21 starting rate three years ago was at \$14 per
22 hour. If I received a raise, it was the minimum,

1 just meeting the minimum wage standard in the
2 city.

3 While working in the industry, I
4 saw how common it is for laborers working for
5 Pepco contractors making the minimum, few
6 benefits. And, you know, me and my coworkers,
7 we're just seeking for opportunity where we can
8 get our work's worth. Me and my coworkers deal
9 with cold temperature, extreme heatwaves outside,
10 and exposing ourself to complicated jobs, usually
11 work with live electricity while we're doing the
12 work. Pretty much exposing ourself to danger.

13 In the construction industry,
14 during this pandemic, my and myself, in my case,
15 I can say that it's taken a turn for a change.
16 You know, we don't know what to expect. I don't
17 know if you guys have children. I do. We
18 seek -- they've been taking online courses,
19 virtual learning as we say. And, you know, my
20 wife, she would bring, you know, that extra money
21 into the household, now she had to leave her job
22 to actually put the kids through school, online

1 learning. And where does that put me? It puts
2 me in a position where I have to seek for
3 overtime. If there's not overtime, I have to
4 look for another way to make money.

5 So this is why I'm calling you to
6 let you guys know that Pepco is asking for this.
7 Think about it twice. And make sure the workers
8 benefit out of this, especially the construction
9 workers. Thank you. That's all I have to say.

10 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
11 your testimony.

12 LANCE BAILEY: Hello. Good evening.

13 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Hello.

14 LANCE BAILEY: How are you all doing?

15 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Good.

16 LANCE BAILEY: Thank you for the
17 opportunity. Good evening, Chairman Phillips and
18 Commissioner Beverly. I appreciate you giving me
19 the opportunity, along with my coworkers. My name
20 is Lance Bailey. And I'm here to testify in
21 opposition to Pepco's request to increase the
22 electric rate. Can you guys hear me okay? Okay.

1 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Yes, we can hear
2 you.

3 LANCE BAILEY: Awesome. Awesome.
4 Again, like my coworkers, this is my first time
5 speaking in front of any public agency, so I'm a
6 little bit nervous. But, you know, I took the time
7 today to come together with my coworkers to just
8 express how we feel about how Pepco treats its
9 contracted-out workers.

10 I worked for a nonunion contractor
11 for over a year. Before when I worked with a
12 nonunion contractor, unfortunately, I did not
13 have any benefits, any benes. I didn't get any.
14 My pay was \$13 an hour. And, unfortunately, even
15 in D.C. where the minimum wage was \$14 an hour, I
16 was still getting paid 13. So this was also an
17 issue.

18 For the past year and some change,
19 I worked for a union contractor. I see the
20 difference, not just in my paycheck, but also the
21 working conditions, the way I'm treated on the
22 job. And I see that there's an actual path for

1 me to be able to improve my quality of life, not
2 just cover my bills, but be able to move my
3 family ahead.

4 Like my coworker before me said,
5 outside essential workers on the front line,
6 we're exposed to all the elements, we're exposed
7 to COVID-19. And I also am concerned about my
8 future.

9 You know, again, you know, we, as
10 essential workers, we keep the lights on in D.C.
11 Construction workers, we are essential. You
12 know, despite this global COVID-19, we show up
13 when we're called. You know, no matter what the
14 weather is. So what we're asking is for our
15 concerns not to fall on deaf ears. And we're
16 asking you all to please consider that if, in
17 fact. Pepco is going to benefit from this, and
18 we, as the workers, that are going to be having
19 to pay higher rates, then we also benefit as
20 well.

21 My coworker talked about the
22 constant turnover and what that means to us, the

1 low wages that these contractors actually pay. I
2 believe that Pepco's construction workers
3 deserves better, D.C. deserves better. If you
4 told Pepco to treat its contracted-out workforce
5 better, they will. But they won't do it on their
6 own.

7 I that you reject Pepco's request
8 to increase rates unless Pepco requires its
9 contractor toes increase their workers' wages and
10 benefits. Unless workers have protections, Pepco
11 will continue to profit off low-paid laborer. I
12 pray that you take action and you can make a
13 difference in the lives of hundreds of workers
14 like myself and my coworkers. Thank you for
15 listening.

16 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you. Thank
17 you for your testimony.

18 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGEWICK: Thank
19 you.

20 The next witness we're going to
21 call is Brian Littimer. Mr. Littimer, if you're
22 calling, if you're joining by the phone, can you

1 please use Star 33 to raise your hand?

2 CARMEN DAVIS: Star 3.

3 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: I'm

4 sorry, Star 3 to raise your hand.

5 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Ms. Secretary --

6 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Yes, sir.

7 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: I believe we're
8 near the -- we're at the end of the list and I know
9 it's been a long day. And I would just like for
10 anyone who signed up, called in and waited all day,
11 if you have not been called on, please press Star 3
12 and we would like to hear from you. We do not want
13 to leave with anybody on the line who's waited and
14 has not had an opportunity to speak.

15 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGEWICK: Sir, if
16 I may, we have Mr. Vaughn Thomas, who's on the line
17 now and ready to speak.

18 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Please proceed.

19 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGEWICK: Thank
20 you.

21 VAUGHN THOMAS: Hello. Can you hear
22 me now? Hello.

1 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Yes, we can hear
2 you. Yes.

3 VAUGHN THOMAS: Okay good. Thank
4 you. Thank you, Chairman Phillips and,
5 Commissioner Beverly, for holding this public
6 hearing for FC 1156. My name is Vaughn Thomas.
7 I'm a business agent for LIUNA, Local 11. We
8 represent more than 3,500 members across the DMV.
9 About one-third of the members are D.C. residents.
10 Most of our members are employed underground
11 utility infrastructure construction.

12 What we have noticed is that we are
13 the huge disparity among the different types of
14 utilities construction projects. With D.C. Water
15 and Washington Gas project paying high wages and
16 Pepco projects paying lower wages, this is
17 because Pepco contract out construction is
18 dominated by nonunion contractors who pay as
19 little as possible when they do the work for
20 Pepco and rates to the bottom. And the workers
21 are suffering from low pay and no benefits.

22 That's part of your discussion in

1 the rate case. We at LIUNA, Local 11, ask that
2 you request Pepco to adopt a labor standards to
3 address the rates to the bottom of the project
4 workers.

5 Thank you very much for allowing me
6 to call back. And I apologize for earlier.

7 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: No worries.
8 Thank you. We are glad to have you.

9 We had some -- we had a few folks
10 who did raise their hand. Let's hear from them
11 now. They will be called by the Commission
12 Secretary.

13 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEGEWICK: I need a
14 moment to get the names together, sir. Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Everybody just
16 pause for a moment. We're not going to recess,
17 we're going to push through and make sure everyone
18 has an opportunity to be heard.

19 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEGEWICK:
20 Chairperson, Carmen Davis is going
21 to call the telephone numbers for the speakers
22 and then they will give us their name.

1 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Okay.

2 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK: Thank
3 you.

4 CARMEN DAVIS: Okay. Bruce, we have
5 caller 18, 240-380.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That's me.
7 Thank you very much.

8 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Please identify
9 yourself.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: My name is
11 Lynn Voyer [spelled phonetically]. And I stand
12 with my pastor, Reverend Williams, from
13 Metropolitan AEM, and also a member of Washington
14 Interfaith Network. So I just want to also say
15 Public Service Commission, you represent the
16 people. All I have to say is deny FC 1156. This
17 is a pandemic. This is immoral. People are
18 suffering while CEOs are making thousands and
19 millions of dollars and so it is only just for you
20 not to consider FC 1156. Thank you for hearing me.

21 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you for
22 your testimony.

1 CARMEN DAVIS: Okay. Next is caller
2 76, Rose 202-832.

3 HENRIETTA SMITH: Hi. Good afternoon
4 Members of the Public Service Commission of the
5 District of Columbia. I'm Henrietta Smith, founder
6 and president of Vital Business Solutions, a
7 District of Columbia-based firm offering coaching,
8 management of businesses restructuring services to
9 meet the changing needs of any profession climate.
10 Thank you for providing an opportunity to share my
11 thoughts with Pepco's multiyear rate plan now being
12 considered by the Commission.

13 As a native Washingtonian, a D.C.
14 resident and a D.C. business owner, I truly
15 appreciate the flexibility offered by multiyear
16 plan and the relief it offers. Pepco also
17 denoted that it would extend several existing
18 energy-assisted programs, including a
19 company-funded customer base rate credits for
20 residential customer, an addition nine months
21 through the end of 2021. By extending existing
22 or creating new pay plans to provide up to 24

1 months for residential customers to pay down any
2 balance accrued during the pandemic, as well as
3 after for a specific amount of time, D.C.
4 residents can better plan their budgets and
5 allocate more money for food and personal items
6 they consider crucial at this time.

7 I am aware that there are voices
8 suggesting that this is not the time to even
9 consider increasing our electric rate. Often you
10 will read articles from CEOs about the pandemic,
11 COVID-19, and more recently the protest against
12 the country, but it's not often that a proposal
13 is written with such an investment to give back
14 to the D.C. community for the extensive amount of
15 time.

16 This pandemic has traumatized so
17 many D.C. residents, that worrying about paying
18 the Pepco utility bills should not be one of
19 their problems at this time; however, my review
20 of some of the available information describing
21 Pepco's enhanced proposal, the multiyear rate
22 plan shows Pepco truly cares about me and our

1 D.C. residents. I recognize the careful thought
2 that went into this proposal and the true
3 commitment of community support, the corporate
4 partnering that Pepco is exhibiting to D.C.
5 residents.

6 Pepco shows me and my neighbors
7 they truly care about us. I am thankful that
8 Pepco is acting as a true corporate partner to
9 our community during this difficult time. Please
10 find an appropriate balance regarding the
11 importance of Pepco continuing its important
12 work, which impacts our quality of life and
13 helping residents through these times with new
14 programs that can help them withstand these
15 times. And I thank you very much.

16 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you.

17 CARMEN DAVIS: Caller 78, the phone
18 number is 202-829.

19 BRENDA DEVEREUX: Hello, okay. You
20 hear me.

21 CARMEN DAVIS: Yes.

22 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Yes, we can hear

1 you.

2 BRENDA DEVEREUX: Good. I have been
3 waiting a long time here. Good afternoon members
4 of the Public Service Commission and the District
5 of Columbia and community members who have joined
6 us for today's community meeting. My name is
7 Brenda Devereux. And I am pleased to share my
8 opinion of Pepco's multiyear plan filing under
9 consideration today.

10 We are living in an extraordinary
11 time. And those of us who are a long-time
12 District of Columbia residents find our city's
13 evolution remarkable, exciting, and full of
14 wonder and promise. As chair of the Paul
15 Devereux Memorial Lecture, I am proud of our
16 commitment to providing a forum for dialogue to
17 inform, delight, and educate future architects of
18 the District of Columbia.

19 The Paul Devereux Memorial Lecture
20 commemorates the life legacy of my husband, Paul
21 Devereux, FAIA NOMAC, a noted African-American
22 architect whose award-winning structures have

1 helped to create a new spirit in Washington, D.C.
2 So as a resident of Shepherd Park, D.C., since
3 1977, and a current member of Ward 4 Arts
4 Humanities and Creative Economy Commission, I
5 look for models that would make our city an even
6 greater place to live.

7 It is with this level of leadership
8 in mind that I look to the Public Service
9 Commission, PSC, of the District of Columbia as I
10 share my opinion on the benefits of Pepco's
11 alternative rate-making proposal, the multiyear
12 plan.

13 Unlike previous Pepco's rate-making
14 filings, the proposal is not simply about the
15 rate adjustment, rather, what is being presented
16 is a change in the needs of which the PSC
17 regulates utility delivery rates. The current
18 process has been in existence since the PSC began
19 oversight, so we certainly want to pause and
20 consider why a change is needed.

21 Currently, Pepco's rate
22 reimbursement is done, as I understand, by

1 post-work. Essentially Pepco performs the
2 requisite work needed to enhance the District's
3 power grid, retains technical competence,
4 investigates new technology, which comes with a
5 prices as we go deeper in studying the cutting
6 edge in the new technology, the new paradigm. As
7 we look at Telsa's AC technology, consider this.
8 Then I further understand that Pepco comes before
9 the PSC to seek reimbursement for their
10 expenditure is through a rate adjustment request.

11 The proposed multiyear plan shifts
12 the way that the PSC authorizes new rates while
13 protecting customers to enhance accountability.
14 This is important to me and other residential
15 ratepayers in the District because it provides
16 for the PSC's annual review and oversight of
17 Pepco's spending, while at the same time it
18 provides for the PSC to conduct an annual
19 evaluation of the utility's performance, which is
20 very important. This gives us the checks and
21 balances that we want in our system.

22 Further, this new approach brings

1 the District of Columbia in alignment with over
2 35 states which have adopted similar rate-making
3 approaches. Clearly those Commissions also see
4 the benefit of forward-looking rate proceedings.

5 While I am interested in all of the
6 benefits for which the multiyear plan offers the
7 District residents and small businesses, what
8 strikes me most is the proposal to freeze rates
9 until 2022, and extend the residential assistance
10 program for those in need.

11 These provisions are clearly needed
12 during this pandemic economy. And I am
13 encouraged by Pepco's continued efforts to
14 support the small business community. As with
15 any change in a regulatory process, there are
16 opponents to the multiyear plan. There are those
17 who oppose the plan because change is
18 uncomfortable. And there is concern that the
19 Commissions' oversight might somehow be
20 diminished.

21 Nothing could be further from the
22 truth. In fact, it appears that there will be

1 increased oversight since the Commission will be
2 conducting annual reviews of the utility's
3 performance. Also there are opponents who argue
4 that the entire 16-month proceedings should be
5 vacated because Pepco made a rate determination
6 error in its filing. What is admirable, however,
7 is that the company identified its own error,
8 brought it to the attention of the Commission and
9 publicly corrected it. Moreover, the error had
10 no impact on residential customers.

11 Commissioners, we are all living in
12 a time of unusual challenge. And I believe in
13 your leadership. Pepco's multiyear plan proposal
14 deserves your consideration because it brings
15 rate-making change for progress and economic
16 benefits, which we would not see under the
17 current structure. I thank you so much for
18 allowing me to speak with you this evening.
19 Thank you again.

20 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you. Thank
21 you for your patience waiting to speak.

22 Next witness.

1 CARMEN DAVIS: Just a couple more.

2 Caller 74, the phone number is
3 410-900.

4 CORNELIUS EJLOGU: Yes. Good
5 evening. I don't know if you can hear me this
6 time, this is my second try.

7 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: I can hear you.
8 What's your are name?

9 CORNELIUS EJLOGU: This is Father
10 Cornelius. I am the pastor at St. Luke's Catholic
11 Church in Washington here. I'm also a resident of
12 Ward 7. I have been a resident for over seven
13 years. I would like to say on the record that I
14 oppose to the rate increase by Pepco. I'm here in
15 collaboration with Washington Interfaith Network, a
16 great organization of faith-based communing. I try
17 to help those who are kicked to the curb.

18 And speaking about kicking one to
19 the curb, I believe Pepco has done so, and
20 continues to do so to D.C. residents for far too
21 long. And like they say in the streets, if
22 somebody gets away with it, then they're going to

1 do it again. This company has turned a blind eye
2 to the suffering of the people, especially during
3 this pandemic.

4 How can a company that made over
5 \$110 million the last few months be asking those
6 who are struggling to get by a few more -- 136
7 more million dollars? I think this is a clear
8 example of one or a company being tone deaf.
9 Rather than ask for a hike in price, I think
10 Pepco needs to work on the sensitivity and work
11 on the problem. At this time, I know we -- we
12 are going through a lot of trials and
13 tribulations and so this is not a time to even
14 bring such a topic up. It's not even the time to
15 think about a price hike.

16 Pepco has had an unhealthy
17 relationship with our community. And this
18 unhealthy relationship is what W.B. Yeats
19 describes as things falling apart. When the
20 center can no longer hold, the falcon no longer
21 hears the falconer and things will fall apart.
22 If we don't put a check to how Pepco does things

1 and especially how they want to increase rates
2 for communities and residents of the District of
3 Columbia, things will be eventually fall apart
4 and the center will no longer hold.

5 So I am here to ask that rather
6 than speak about price hike, Pepco needs to
7 reinvest, give back to the community some of the
8 things that they have promised. Number one,
9 Pepco needs to hire a little bit more -- not a
10 little bit, needs to hire more local residents.

11 I live in Ward 7, and I can tell
12 you there's not a lot of Ward 7, men and women,
13 who work with Pepco. And that's a shame. Pepco
14 also needs to invest in black-owned firms, local
15 firms. There is nothing as immoral as using the
16 \$500 million in projects and only of 11 them went
17 for black business, black contractors. Pepco
18 needs to fix its inequality problems and stop
19 asking for more money.

20 As the pastor of St. Luke's
21 Catholic Church for the past seven and a half
22 years, I have to come up with over 3 to \$4,000

1 every month to pay Pepco. So definitely I'm not
2 looking for an increase. And so my friends who
3 are in the Washington Interfaith Network.

4 Pepco also needs to act and
5 reinvest in the 77 acre at Benning Service
6 Center. It need to use that land for the
7 community. Uplift it and not let it sit there
8 like it is right now. You know, we are
9 complaining about people being kicked out of the
10 community, people being kicked out of Washington,
11 D.C. So that could be a piece of property that
12 can be used for the community. Pepco also needs
13 to increase its green energy. In order to obtain
14 the clean energy goal that the District of
15 Columbia has set for itself, a beautiful goal.

16 And finally, Pepco should stop
17 asking for an increase and rather focus on even
18 decreasing some of their bills. If Pepco truly
19 cares about our community, then some of the
20 profits that they have made over the past couple
21 of months should be used to wipe out all of the
22 debts of low-income communities. If they truly

1 care then they must reinvest and give back, not
2 in words, but in action, back into Ward 7, Ward
3 8, Ward 5.

4 That is my view. And so I'm asking
5 this Public Service Commission, you able
6 Commissioners, I'm asking you to very vehemently
7 reject this Pepco's proposal for a multiyear rate
8 increase. It is unprecedented in the District of
9 Columbia for us, who are residents here, it is
10 insensitive, it is down right morally wrong. It
11 is unwarranted. And it's inhumane especially as
12 people deal with the deaths of their family
13 members as contracting this COVID-19.

14 I thank you for giving me a second
15 opportunity to testify today. And I ask that you
16 please don't let us down. Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you.
18 Thanks again for your persistence, sir.

19 CARMEN DAVIS: Next is caller 75,
20 202-246.

21 ENID DOGGET: Hello. This is Enid
22 Dogget. I don't know if you can hear me.

1 CARMEN DAVIS: Yes, we can hear you,
2 Ms. Dogget.

3 ENID DOGGET: Okay. Great. All
4 right. I want to first thank all of you for your
5 patience today in the way that you have dealt with
6 the varying opinions that you've received. I am a
7 resident of Ward 5 and an owner of a business in
8 Ward 5, Inspired Media. And I am also a former
9 communications director for a labor union, the
10 American Federation of Government Employees. And I
11 also work with the coalition to bring the Clean Air
12 Energy D.C. Act to fruition, which is -- and I'm an
13 advocate of renewable energy.

14 With that aid, I'm also an advocate
15 of the Pepco multiyear rate increase. And
16 there's a lot of reasons why. I know a lot of
17 them have to do with any expert knowledge of what
18 it takes to do this particular -- to provide
19 electricity and to provide services for our
20 community.

21 With that said, as an
22 African-American business owner, I want to add my

1 voice to this discussion because of the benefit
2 that I see Pepco as done for the community and a
3 lot of the things that they are proposing to do
4 for the community and to provide economic remedy
5 for the businesses that are suffering through
6 this particular pandemic and the financial
7 shortfalls the pandemic has brought about. I
8 think that the proposal multiyear plan will also
9 help the Public Service Commission in how you
10 authorize the rates.

11 And finally I want to say that I
12 think that it's going to be the rate making of
13 the future. And I also think that I want to
14 thank you in advance for this time to let me
15 testify on behalf of this rate increase, because
16 I do think this is a benefit to the community and
17 the low-income community as well. Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: We thank you.
19 Thank you so much.

20 Commission Secretary, do we have
21 anyone else or was that the final last word?

22 BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGEWICK: One

1 more.

2 CARMEN DAVIS: One more. Erika
3 Wadlington.

4 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Here we are.

5 ERIKA WADLINGTON: Hello, can you
6 hear me now?

7 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Yes, we can hear
8 you.

9 ERIKA WADLINGTON: All right. Thank
10 you so much. I appreciate the indulgence for
11 allowing me to provide comments. My name is Erika
12 Wadlington. And I am the director of Public Policy
13 with the D.C. Chamber of Commerce. By way of
14 background, the D.C. Chamber has been the voice for
15 all businesses here in the city for over 80 years,
16 proudly serving a diverse membership of nearly
17 1,400 member companies, ranging from small
18 startups, CBEs, mid-size firms to larger
19 corporations.

20 The D.C. Chamber has continued to
21 uphold its commitment to delivering the capital
22 to businesses and citizens. We provide

1 invaluable tools to help businesses develop,
2 improve their business climate and attract new
3 businesses to D.C., while inherently empowering
4 residents to economic growth and sustainability
5 outcomes.

6 Our mission in many respects aligns
7 with the undercurrent of today's hearing. Pepco
8 has proposed to adjust customer rates through a
9 forward-looking plan that is consistent with
10 proven business principles. It is critical to
11 evolve and to not be stagnant. This construct
12 that is currently in place has largely been
13 adhered to for the history of the company. And
14 if we look to a moment -- if we took a moment and
15 reviewed the rate-making nationally, one would
16 find that an overwhelming majority of states have
17 adopted alternatives, and the time has come for
18 the District to do the same.

19 I recognize that change is not
20 always easy. And I've taken the time to review
21 the concerns expressed by some of the
22 stakeholders. What is important to underscore is

1 that the preponderance of concerns involve
2 transparency, accountability and oversight.

3 The plan that is before the
4 Commission addresses each of these areas. And
5 you, the Commission, continue to possess the
6 authority to exercise oversight annually over
7 Pepco and executing against its approved plan.

8 Further, it affords you a higher
9 level of oversight concerning the proposed
10 budget. The framework will hold Pepco to a
11 higher accountability standard for remaining in
12 the budget for work that is approved and
13 executed.

14 As structured, the proposed plan
15 will enable enhanced adaptability to align with
16 the District of Columbia's priorities. The
17 period that is upon us would have been
18 unimaginable this time last year. However, we
19 must reorganize and set forth a course that is
20 consistent with the current state of affairs
21 while driving towards a full recovery and
22 economic resurgence. Critical infrastructure

1 powers the future. Residents and businesses rely
2 even more today on a safe and consistent supply
3 of electricity. Our quality of life and economy
4 is dependent on it. The electric system has to
5 be maintained and remain secure, which requires
6 investments to achieve.

7 Further it must enable the
8 District's climate change goals, which will
9 support the green economy that is and is
10 resulting. I am clear that this is not the most
11 optimal time to be discussing a rate change as it
12 impacts all.

13 Pepco recognizes this as well. And
14 I want to acknowledge the filing it made earlier
15 in June, clearly enhancing the plan with direct
16 benefits to customers. What is also notable is
17 that the company proposed to reduce its return
18 equity and to forgo tens of millions of dollars.

19 In addition the company advanced a
20 suite of programs that would provide the relief
21 that virtually every customer groups needs at
22 this time, included proposing not to -- including

1 proposing to not only allow rates to go into
2 effect until January 2022. The filing reflects
3 great care and awareness.

4 Finally, as the company moves
5 forward, there will be an enhanced benefit to the
6 entire region in excess of a half a billion
7 dollars and over 800 jobs into our local economy.
8 As the leader -- as a leader and the voice of
9 businesses, the D.C. Chamber recognizes such
10 actions are needed to enable the resurgence
11 referenced earlier.

12 In addition, I respectfully request
13 that the Commission act on the programs that will
14 provide relief to customers now. Being on the
15 front lines with businesses, we know that it will
16 be welcomed as we reopen and restructure
17 considerate of the signs. I respectfully request
18 your consideration of a proposal that is
19 considerate of the company's needs to operate
20 while protecting our customers. Thank you for
21 the opportunity to share our perspectives.

22 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: All right. We

1 thank you. And we thank the D.C. Chamber for
2 participating.

3 All right. I'm going to give
4 myself 30 seconds and then I would like
5 Commissioner Beverly to close us out. And I
6 think this (internet froze up) virtual hearing
7 and I think it went exceptionally well. Just a
8 reminder, everyone please file any comments that
9 you want to make that you didn't make today in
10 the record on our website, Formal Case No. 1156.
11 A recording of today's hearing will be available
12 within 48 hours on the Commissions's website.

13 So with that, I'll turn the floor
14 over to Commissioner Beverly.

15 COMMISSIONER BEVERLY: All right.
16 Well, I would certainly like to thank you,
17 everyone, for sticking with this long enough to
18 share the comments, especially those people who
19 waited until the end of the day, having sat through
20 the whole thing. I can understand how some of you
21 are tired, so I appreciate that fortitude.

22 I would like to hear or at least

1 see the written comments of people who testified
2 today, particularly those who had some detailed
3 points or points that they were trying to make
4 that I may not have been able to write down
5 quickly enough to capture everything. So I'd
6 like to be able to see those whenever you can
7 submit them. So not just the things that you
8 didn't say, I'd like to see in writing the things
9 that you did.

10 So with that, I certainly don't
11 want to keep -- if anybody's still there, I don't
12 want to keep anybody any longer than we've been.
13 So that's all I have to.

14 CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS: Thank you,
15 Commissioner. So that concludes our community
16 hearing. Goodnight.

17 (Whereupon, at 7:12 p.m., the virtual
18 hearing was concluded.)
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21
22

CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

I, FELICIA A. NEWLAND, CSR, the officer before whom the foregoing virtual hearing was taken; that the virtual hearing was taken by me in stenotype and thereafter reduced to typewriting under my direction; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by and of the parties to the action in which this virtual hearing was taken; and, further, that I am not a relative or employee of any counsel or attorney employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.



FELICIA A. NEWLAND, CSR

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