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June 6, 2024

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission  
400 North Street, Third Floor  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120

In Re: Docket No. R-2024-3046523 et al.

Dear Honorable Deputy Chief Mark A. Hoyer,

I oppose the general rate increase proposed by Duquesne Light Company (DLC) for electric base distribution services and residential customer charges to approximately 605,000 residential, commercial, and industrial customers in Allegheny and Beaver Counties.

Recently, I attended a United Way Legislative Briefing to learn more about what our neighbors are reaching out to 211 for assistance with. The number one issue that the United Way gets calls about is housing insecurity, followed closely by utility payments. This struggle to meet basic needs echoes what I see in my office. My staff spends a significant amount of time helping constituents with applications for the Property Tax and Rent Rebate program, which gives property tax relief to our seniors over 65 and people who have disabilities. We hear constantly that this annual rebate allows people to make ends meet and keeps seniors in their homes.

Many in the Pittsburgh region face an additional struggle when it comes to utility payments. Having one of the oldest housing stocks in the nation means that many homes in our region need significant repairs for them to remain habitable, let alone become energy efficient. These repairs are expensive and often times out of reach for families and seniors. As a result, homes use more energy, driving up utility bills. The cycle of unaffordable repairs driving higher utility bills is unending for these residents.

While the legislature works on a state level to bring additional funding for programs like Whole Home Repairs that will allow homeowners to make habitability improvements that drive their utility bills down, many are reliant on current universal service programs to keep the lights and the heat on throughout the winter months. Unfortunately, this proposed rate increase does not make any increase to DLC's current universal service programs in order to offset these rate

hikes. This means that the customers who are least able to afford the rate increases will face the highest burdens.

Duquesne Light is proposing cost benefits to Electric Vehicle users for charging during off-peak hours and other incentives. I am extremely grateful to DLC for being willing to address the need for EV drivers to charge responsibly and in a way that reduces strain on our electrical grid, but without a meaningful way of addressing equity and affordability, this plan will shift the burden of the rate increase on those least able to afford their basic utilities. Any settlement must contain consideration for these universal service programs.

Duquesne Light Company last raised rates 4.33% in 2021 and is now asking for an additional 6.25% increase. These repeated rate increases are taking their toll on both residents and small businesses alike. While it is important to continue to work to upgrade electrical infrastructure and improve system reliability, we cannot do so on the backs of those who can least afford it.

I cannot support this rate increase and I encourage the PUC not to approve the proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lindsey M. Williams". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "L".

Lindsey M. Williams  
38<sup>th</sup> Senatorial District