BEFORE THE STATE CORPORATION COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF KANSAS

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In the Matter of a General Investigation into the Confidential Status of Certain Documents Related to Costs Incurred During Winter Storm Uri.

Docket No. 24-GIMX-376-GIV

NOTICE OF FILING OF EXHIBITS OF THE OKLAHOMA CORPORATION COMMISSION IN OCC DOCKET NO. PUD 2022-00003, DATED FEBRUARY 10, 2022, LISTING FOR FEBRUARY 2021: (1) THE SUPPLIER IDENTITY, AND (2) THE AMOUNT PAID TO EACH SUPPLIER FOR NATURAL GAS PURCHASED IN FEBRUARY 2021

COMES NOW James P. Zakoura ("Requestor") and respectfully files:

"Notice of Filing of Exhibits of the Oklahoma Corporation Commission in OCC Docket No. PUD 2022-00003, Dated February 10, 2022, Listing for February 2021: (1) the Supplier Identity, and (2) the Amount Paid to each Supplier For Natural Gas Purchased in February 2021,"

and states to the State Corporation Commission of the State of Kansas ("Commission" or

"KCC") as follows:

The Oklahoma Corporation Commission

1. The KCC issued its Order in KCC Docket No. 21-EPDE-330-GIE on June 1,

2023, permitting Empire to recover \$10.8 million in "Additional Natural Gas Costs" and

"Additional Purchased Power Costs."

2. Empire District Electric (Liberty) states, on <u>November 14, 2023</u>, in its Response

in opposition to the Kansas Open Records Act ("KORA") of Requestor:

"Liberty's gas supply information and gas purchasing process, including its historical gas supply invoices, is clearly a trade secret and confidential commercial information." (Page 2 of Exhibit A, attached hereto.)

3. On <u>February 10, 2022</u>, the Oklahoma Corporation Commission ("OCC"), in OCC Docket PUD 2022-00003, published a listing of natural gas suppliers, and the amount paid to each natural gas supplier, by every OCC jurisdictional utility that sought recovery of either "Additional Natural Gas Costs" and "Additional Purchased Power Costs," from retail ratepayers in Oklahoma. (Exhibit B)

4. On <u>February 10, 2022</u>, the Oklahoma Corporation Commission, in Case No. PUD

2022-00003, set forth in a "public" document the suppliers of natural gas to Empire District

Electric Company (Liberty) for February 2021, and the dollar amount paid to each natural gas

supplier, along with the same information for purchased power costs – a total of \$144,306,537 of

"Additional Natural Gas Costs," and \$93,707,456 of "Additional Purchased Power Costs."

5. On November 13, 2023, Requestor, in his "Request for Reconsideration and

Clarification" of the "ORDER ON PETITION FOR RECONSIDERATION" filed in this Docket

(KCC Docket No. 24-GIMX-376-GIV), stated as follows, at page 6:

"The Commission Can Preserve the KCPA Claims of 850,000 Retail Ratepayers, with No Adverse Effect on any Utility, By Simply Ordering the Utilities to List the Suppliers' by Name and the Amount Paid to Each Such Supplier-An Identical Action Voluntarily Made by Kansas Gas Service Company on July 30, 2021."

Requestor hereby files Notice of Filing of Exhibit of the Oklahoma Corporation
Commission in OCC Docket No. PUD 2022-00003, dated <u>February 10, 2022</u>, Listing for
February 2021: (1) the Supplier Identity, and (2) the Amount Paid to each Supplier For Natural
Gas Purchased in February 2021, for the following (Exhibit B, attached hereto):

- Public Service Company of Oklahoma
- Empire District Electric
- Summit Utilities Oklahoma, Inc. (Formerly CenterPoint)
- Oklahoma Gas & Electric
- Oklahoma Natural Gas
- Arkansas Oklahoma Gas
- Fort Cobb Fuel Authority

- Panhandle Natural Gas
- Canadian Valley Electric Cooperative

The category of information requested by the Requestor, has been made "public" by the

Oklahoma Corporation Commission, on February 10, 2022 - - 21 months ago.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ James P. Zakoura

James P. Zakoura, KS 7644 FOULSTON SIEFKIN LLP 7500 College Blvd., Suite 1400 Overland Park, KS 66210 Telephone: 913-498-2100 Email: jzakoura@foulston.com *Requestor*

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a copy of the above and foregoing was electronically filed with the Kansas Corporation Commission on November 27, 2023, and that one copy was delivered electronically to all parties on the service list as follows:

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/s/ James P. Zakoura

James P. Zakoura, KS 07644 *Requestor*

LAW OFFICES OF



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November 14, 2023

Sent by Electronic Mail

Ms. Lynn M. Retz Executive Director Kansas Corporation Commission 1500 SW Arrowhead Road Topeka, Kansas 66604-4027

> Re: Kansas Open Records Act ("KORA") Request Docket No. 21-EPDE-330-GIG

Dear Ms. Retz:

Mr. Zakoura requests the Kansas Corporation Commission ("Commission") provide him copies of un-redacted natural gas purchase invoices submitted by The Empire District Electric Company d/b/a Liberty ("Liberty") to the Commission in Docket No. 21-EPDE-330-GIG ("330 Docket"). The invoices related to natural gas fuel supplies purchased by Liberty during Storm Uri. Liberty designated the redacted information as confidential trade secrets because public disclosure of the information would cause substantial harm to Liberty's customers by interfering with Liberty's ability to acquire adequate natural gas fuel supplies at a reasonable price. Accordingly, Liberty objects to the disclosure of the un-redacted natural gas purchase invoices.

Liberty purchases natural gas supplies in order to fuel its natural gas powered electric generation units. Those generation units include Riverton 10, Riverton 11, Stateline 1, Energy Center 1, 2, 3 and 4, Riverton 12 and the Stateline Combined Cycle unit. The natural gas commodity industry is an unregulated and highly competitive market. In general, maintaining the confidentiality of each element of a natural gas purchasing strategy is absolutely essential to ensure equal bargaining positions between the different participants involved in the natural gas commodity industry. More specifically, if Liberty is required to publicly disclose any element of its gas purchasing strategy, it would eliminate Liberty's equal bargaining position. Elimination of that equal bargaining power

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would place Liberty at a competitive disadvantage compared to those participants who are not required to disclose elements of their gas purchasing or gas sales strategies to the public.

Under K.S.A. 66-1220a (a), the Commission has a duty not to "disclose or allow inspection by anyone, including, but not limited to, parties to a regulatory proceeding before the commission, **any information which is a trade secret under the uniform trade secrets act, K.S.A. 60-3320**, or any confidential commercial information of a corporation...regulated by the commission unless the commission finds that disclosure is warranted after consideration of four factors." (Emphasis added).

Liberty's gas supply information and gas purchasing process, including its historical gas supply invoices, is clearly a trade secret and confidential commercial information. K.S.A. 60-3320(4) defines "trade secret" to mean,

...information, including a formula, pattern, compilation, program, device, method, technique, or process that (i) derives economic value, actual or potential, from not being generally known to, and not being readily ascertainable by proper means by, other persons who can obtain economic value from its disclosure or use, and (ii) is the subject of efforts that are reasonable under the circumstances to maintain its secrecy.

Liberty's gas supply information clearly meets the definition of a trade secret. Liberty's gas supply information derives its economic value by not being known by other participants in the natural gas commodity market. Moreover, disclosure of said information could provide those participants economic value at the expense of Liberty and its utility customers.

If the Commission were to require Liberty to disclose un-redacted natural gas supply invoices for natural gas purchased by Liberty to fuel its generation units during February 2021, then all of the participants in the natural gas commodity market (both suppliers and other purchasers) would have access to that information. Those participants would have the names of Liberty's suppliers, specific contract quantities, specific contract prices, specific contract terms and delivery locations. Liberty, on the other hand, would have none of that information from any of the other participants in the natural gas commodity market, who are not required to publicly disclose such information. This would mean that a municipality or industrial customer directly connected to Southern Star's interstate pipeline, who is competing against Liberty for the same natural gas supplies to fuel their electric generators or their natural gas fired boilers, would have all of Liberty's natural gas purchasing information. However, Liberty would not have that same information relating to the municipality or industrial customer. Liberty and its customers would be placed at a competitive disadvantage in Ms. Lynn M. Retz Page 3 November 14, 2023

obtaining those natural gas supplies that it and the municipality and the industrial customer are competing against each other to obtain. If Liberty's historical gas supply information is maintained as confidential, then it and its customers are not placed at a disadvantage and can equally compete for natural gas supplies against the municipality, the industrial customer, the marketer or other gas purchaser in the natural gas commodity market.

Not only is Liberty placed at a disadvantage at competing with other natural gas purchasers in the natural gas commodity market if its information is released to the public, it is also placed at a disadvantage in negotiating with gas suppliers, if those gas suppliers have all of Liberty's historical gas contracts and invoices. If gas suppliers can extrapolate the information in Liberty's February 2021 natural gas invoices to determine whether Liberty pays below or above the index price at certain delivery locations because that information has been made public, then Liberty and its customers lose their equal bargaining powers because Liberty does not have that same information from the gas suppliers because that information is not subject to public disclosure.

Both the U.S. Supreme Court and the Kansas Supreme Court recognize the importance of maintaining the confidentiality of an entity's trade secrets and commercial information. Both courts have recognized "that the common-law right of public inspection must bow before the power of the court to insure that records will not be used to gratify private spite...or [be used] as sources of business information that might harm a litigant's competitive standing." See, Stephens v. Van Arsdale, 227 Kan. 676, 688(1980) (citing Nixon v. Warner Comm'n, Inc., 435 U.S. 589, 598 (1978).

This Commission has recently addressed whether natural gas supply contracts and invoices relating to Storm Uri are confidential trade secrets protected from disclosure per the factors set forth in K.S.A. 66-1220a. See, Order on KORA Request, Docket No. 24-GIMX-238-MIS ("238 Docket"), October 12, 2023. In the 238 Docket, Mr. Zakoura filed a KORA request asking the Commission to provide un-redacted natural gas supply contracts and invoices relating to purchases made by Black Hills Energy during Storm Uri. Black Hills objected. It made the same arguments being made by Liberty in this docket. The Commission applied the factors set forth in K.S.A. 66-1220a and held that natural gas supply contracts and invoices relating to Storm Uri were confidential trade secrets and not subject to disclosure. The Commission found that disclosure of contracts and invoices may affect a natural gas distribution company's ability to compete for low cost gas supplies in the future, which would cause harm to both the utility and the public. See, Order on KORA Request, 238 Docket, October 12, 2023, page 4, paragraph 10. The Commission held that it was unclear as to how disclosure would aid the Commission. It found that alternatives to disclosure existed for Mr. Zakoura through his class action cases. Id.

This Commission reached a similar conclusion a couple of times in Docket No.

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21-KGSG-332-GIG ("332 Docket") relating to the same issue. In the 332 Docket, Mr. Zakoura requested on several occasions that Kansas Gas Service's natural gas supply contracts and invoices relating to Storm Uri be made public. Kansas Gas Service contended that the redacted information in the contracts and invoices constituted trade secrets and if released to the public could place the utility at a competitive disadvantage in acquiring natural gas supplies for its customers. In denying Mr. Zakoura's request, the Commission held:

...disclosure of the information as requested in NGTCC's motions holds great potential of harm to current and future Kansas natural gas customers through higher purchased gas costs. A general argument in favor of transparency cannot outweigh this very real harm to customers. The Commission agrees with Staff that the extraordinary nature of Winter Storm Uri does not warrant deviating from long standing and well-reasoned Commission practices related to non-disclosure of trade secrets and confidential commercial information.

Order Denying NGTCC's Motion to Remove Confidential Designations for Certain Documents, 332 Docket, dated September 9, 2021, page 9, paragraph 17.

The Commission reached the same conclusion in Docket No. 22-GIMX-171-MIS, See, Order on KORA Request, 22-171 Docket, dated December 9, 2021, page 3, paragraph 8.

More recently, the Commission issued an Order Opening General Investigation in Docket No. 24-GIMX-376-GIV (November 9, 2023). The Commission noted that it has recently received several requests from Mr. Zakoura for the Commission to publicly disclose natural gas invoices relating to Storm Uri. The Commission stated that in the Storm Uri dockets, including Liberty's Storm Uri docket, all parties, including, Staff, CURB and the Kansas Attorney General's Office had access to all of the natural gas supply information subject to the Protective Orders issued by the Commission in order to protect the confidential gas supply information from being released to the public. The Commission concluded that while it is generally disinclined to revisit its confidentiality designations, given the unique nature of Storm Uri and the passage of time, causes it to reevaluate whether the confidential designation relating to the natural gas supply information relating to Storm Uri "should remain in place, be modified, or lifted, entirely." Id. at paragraphs 2-3, page 2. Based upon this recent Order, it would appear to be appropriate that a decision on Mr. Zakoura's request for Liberty's un-redacted natural gas supply invoices relating to Storm Uri be deferred to the Commission's general investigation. The Commission took a similar position in the 238 Docket, where it maintained the confidential designation on Black Hills' un-redacted gas supply invoices until a decision is made in the general investigation. Order on Petition for Reconsideration, 238 Docket, page 5, paragraph 15 (November 9, 2023).

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Based upon the analysis conducted by the Commission in its recent decision in the 238 Docket, and its decisions in the other above-referenced dockets, Liberty requests that (1) the Commission find that the redacted information in the natural gas supply invoices constitute trade secrets, as defined in K.S.A. 60-3320(4); (2) based upon the factors set forth in K.S.A. 66-1220a, find that disclosure of said confidential information is not warranted; and (3) deny Mr. Zakoura's request for said confidential information. In the alternative, Liberty requests that the Commission retain the confidential designation on the requested documents and defer Mr. Zakoura's request to its general investigation.

Sincerely,

James G. Flaherty jflaherty@andersonbyrd.com

JGF:rr

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Oklahoma Corporation Commission Public Utility Division Cause No. PUD 2022-00003 Public Service Company of Oklahoma

Provider/Seller/Service Provider Name	Penalties Paid	Total Expense Paid
Purchase Power		
Calpine Oneta Power, LLC	\$0.00	\$ 1,440,061.00
Exelon Generation Company, LLC	\$0.00	\$ 73,761,323.00
Westar Energy, Inc	\$0.00	\$ 19,153,788.00
Southwest Power Pool	\$0.00	\$ 416,686,804.00
Natural Gas Commodity		
Clearwater Enterprises, LLC	\$0.00	\$ 2,993,921.00
Eco-Energy Natural Gas, LLC	\$0.00	\$ 22,621,675.00
Enable Energy Resources, LLC	\$0.00	\$ 126,405.00
Koch Energy Services, LLC	\$0.00	\$ 8,582,931.00
Macquarie Energy, LLC	\$0.00	\$ 15,369,068.00
Mercuria Energy America, LLC	\$0.00	\$ 21,099,731.00
NextEra Energy Marketing	\$0.00	\$ 18,754,496.00
Sequent Energy Marketing, LLC	\$0.00	\$ 1,346.00
Southwest Energy Management, LP	\$0.00	\$ 1,993,024.00
Spire Marketing, Inc	\$0.00	\$ 3,908,650.00
Tenaska Marketing Ventures	\$0.00	\$ 72,393,312.00
United Energy Trading, LLC	\$0.00	\$ 1,427.00
natural Gas Balancing(Inbalances)		
Enable Oklahoma Intrastate Transmission, LLC	\$0.00	\$ 14,288,303.00

Oklahoma Corporation Commission Public Utility Division Cause No. PUD 2022-00003 Empire Distric Electric Company

Provider/Seller/Service Provider Name	Penalties Paid	Тс	otal Expense Paid
Natural Gas Commodity			
BP Energy Company	\$0.00	\$	11,672,522.0
Conexus Energy, LLC	\$0.00	\$	52,289,517.0
ETC Marketing, Inc	\$0.00	\$	183,217.0
Koch Energy Services, LLC	\$0.00	\$	17,524,369.0
Spire Marketing	\$0.00	\$	472,932.0
Tenaska Gas Storage, LLC	\$0.00	\$	62,163,980.0
Transportation Services			
Southern Star Centeral Gas Pipeline, Inc	\$0.00	\$	296,782.7
Transmission Services	1		
City Utilities of Springfield	\$0.00	\$	5,500.0
Associated Electric	\$0.00	\$	9,670.6
MISO	\$0.00	\$	266,961.0
Southwest Power Pool	\$0.00	\$	1,838,818.1
Net Purchased Power			
Southwest Power Pool	\$0.00	\$	91,586,507.9

Oklahoma Corporation Commission Public Utility Division Cause No. PUD 2022-00003 Summit Utilities Oklahoma, Inc (Formerly CenterPoint)

Provider/Seller/Service Provider Name	Penalties Paid	Тс	otal Expense Paid
Continental Resources	\$0.00	\$	18,873,500.00
Koch Energy	\$0.00	\$	1,779,786.11
Macquarie	\$0.00	\$	4,358,383.15
Mieco	\$0.00	\$	104,647.35
SES	\$0.00	\$	38,880,323.27
Spire Marketing	\$0.00	\$	82,125.05
Spotlight Energy	\$0.00	\$	2,241,382.29
SW Energy	\$0.00	\$	12,413,740.72
Targa Gas Mkt	\$0.00	\$	126,639.80

Oklahoma Corporation Commission Public Utility Division Cause No. PUD 2022-00003 Oklahoma Gas & Electric

Provider/Seller/Service Provider Name	Penalties Paid	Penalties Paid Total Expense Paid		
Natural Gas Commodity				
Blue Mountain Midstream, LLC	\$0.00	\$	12,565,750.00	
Cimarex Energy Co.	\$0.00	\$	16,850,602.00	
Clearwater Enterprises, LLC	\$0.00	\$	29,334,136.00	
Conexus Energy, LLC	\$0.00	\$	37,550.00	
ConocoPhilips Company	\$0.00	\$	23,994,802.00	
Continental Resources	\$0.00	\$	3,834,375.00	
Devon Gas Services, LP	\$0.00	\$	6,300,555.00	
Eco-Energy	\$0.00	\$	21,371,223.00	
Enable Energy Resources, LLC	\$0.00	\$	16,993,423.00	
Koch Energy Services, LLC	\$0.00	\$	112,608,142.00	
Macquarie Cook Energy, LLC	\$0.00	\$	15,275,090.00	
Mercuria	\$0.00	\$	69,957,142.00	
MidCoast Marketing (uslp)	\$0.00	\$	69,300.00	
Oneok Field Services Company	\$0.00	\$	10,292,785.00	
Sequent Energy Management	\$0.00	\$	44,173,608.00	
Southwest Energy LP	\$0.00	\$	98,598,486.00	
Spire Marketing, Inc	\$0.00	\$	74,150,219.00	
Tenaska Marketing Ventures	\$0.00	\$	125,428,028.00	
Twin Eagle Resource Mgmt	\$0.00	\$	27,161,361.00	
Vitol	\$0.00	\$	32,919,651.00	
Transportation Services				
Enable	\$0.00	\$	1,673,610.00	
Oklahoma Gas Transportation	\$0.00	\$	124,039.00	
Oklahoma Natural Gas	\$0.00	\$	31,201.00	
Southern Star	\$0.00	\$	39,130.00	
Storage Related Expenses		1		
OneOk Gas Storage	\$0.00	\$	421,736.00	
Purcahsed Power				
Blackwell Wind, LLC	\$0.00	\$	187,068.00	
CPV Keenan Renweable Energy	\$0.00	\$	214,785.00	
Taloga Wind, LLC	\$0.00	\$	187,056.00	
Overruns				
Enable	\$0.00	\$	28,142.00	
OneOk Gas Storage	\$0.00	\$	42,608.00	

Oklahoma Corporation Commission Public Utility Division Cause No. PUD 2022-00003 Oklahoma Natural Gas

Provider/Seller/Service Provider Name	Penalties Paid	Total Expense Paid
Blue Mountain	\$0.00	\$ 36,629,405.0
Castleton Commodities	\$0.00	\$ 133,380.0
Chevron	\$0.00	\$ 108,736,777.0
Conoco	\$0.00	\$ 16,500.0
Enable Energy Resources	\$0.00	\$ 7,516,200.0
ETC	\$0.00	\$ 93,695,166.
Koch	\$0.00	\$ 37,375,375.
Macquarie	\$0.00	\$ 118,720,193.
Marabou	\$0.00	\$ 185,419.
Mercuria	\$0.00	\$ 13,207,150.
NextEra	\$0.00	\$ 411,075,931.
OFS	\$0.00	\$ 7,200,000.
Sequent	\$0.00	\$ 106,401,750.
Spire	\$0.00	\$ 3,405,202.
SW Energy	\$0.00	\$ 297,161,143.
Tenaska	\$0.00	\$ 42,500,843.
Ultimate CNG	\$0.00	\$ 140,972.

Oklahoma Corporation Commission Public Utility Division Cause No. PUD 2022-00003 Arkansas Oklahoma Gas

Provider/Seller/Service Provider Name	Penalties Paid	 Total Expense Paid
BP	\$0.00	\$ 2,225,421.5
Element Markets	\$0.00	\$ 51,244.4
Stephens Production	\$0.00	\$ 1,925,223.3
Spire Marketing	\$0.00	\$ 42,023,756.9
Tenaska Marketing	\$0.00	\$ 49,140,453.2
Williford	\$0.00	\$ 854.4
Camterra	\$0.00	\$ 13,683.9
Hanna Oil & Gas	\$0.00	\$ 10,701.1
Crown	\$0.00	\$ 3,233.3
Foundation	\$0.00	\$ 4,473.9
Webb	\$0.00	\$ 32,987.3
Merit	\$0.00	\$ 33,497.1
Titan	\$0.00	\$ 4,133.4
Jaco	\$0.00	\$ 1,183.9
Stigler	\$0.00	\$ 3,696.1
Wentworth	\$0.00	\$ 346.3
Black Hills Energy	\$0.00	\$ 29,818.5

Oklahoma Corporation Commission Public Utility Division Cause No. PUD 2022-00003 Fort Cobb Fuel Authority

Provider/Seller/Service Provider Name	Penalties Paid	Tota	al Expense Paid
Symmerty/CenterPoint	\$0.00	\$	1,342.57
Clearwater ONG	\$0.00	\$	25,227.41
Clearwater	\$0.00	\$	383,824.44
CenterPoint	\$0.00	\$	258.75
Petrol Energy	\$0.00	\$	15,702.98

Oklahoma Corporation Commission Public Utility Division Cause No. PUD 2022-00003 Panhandle Natural Gas

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\$0.00	\$	32,591.54
\$0.00	\$	26,698.15
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Oklahoma Corporation Commission Public Utility Division Cause No. PUD 2022-00003 Canadian Valley Electric Cooperative

Provider/Seller/Service Provider Name	Penalties Paid	То	tal Expense Paid
Purchased Power			
Western Farmers Electric Cooperative	\$0.00	\$	15,969,775.55
Related Expense-Gross Receipts Tax			
Western Farmers Electric Cooperative	\$0.00	\$	313,935.51