

BEFORE THE CORPORATION COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF KANSAS

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION ]  
OF GREAT PLAINS ENERGY INCORPORATED, ]  
KANSAS CITY POWER AND LIGHT COMPANY ] KCC Docket No. 18-KCPE-095-MER  
AND WESTAR ENERGY, INC. FOR APPROVAL ]  
OF THE MERGER OF WESTAR ENERGY, INC. ]  
AND GREAT PLAINS ENERGY INCORPORATED ]

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

ANDREA C. CRANE

ON BEHALF OF

THE CITIZENS' UTILITY RATEPAYER BOARD

March 12, 2018

1 **I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUD**

2 **Q. Please state your name and business address.**

3 A. My name is Andrea C. Crane and my business address is 2805 East Oakland Park Boulevard,  
4 #401, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33306.

5  
6 **Q. Did you previously file testimony in this proceeding?**

7 A. Yes, on January 29, 2018, I filed Direct Testimony on behalf of the Citizens' Utility  
8 Ratepayer Board ("CURB"). My Direct Testimony addressed the filing made on August 25,  
9 2017, by Great Plains Energy, Inc. ("GPE"), Kansas City Power and Light Company  
10 ("KCP&L"), and Westar Energy, Inc. ("Westar", collectively "Joint Applicants") requesting  
11 that the Kansas Corporation Commission ("KCC" or "Commission") approve an Amended  
12 Merger Agreement ("Amended Agreement") between Westar and GPE, the parent company  
13 of KCP&L.

14  
15 **Q. Please summarize the conclusions and recommendations contained in your Direct**  
16 **Testimony regarding the Amended Agreement and the proposed merger of Westar and**  
17 **GPE.**

18 A. As discussed in my Direct Testimony, there are several factors that make GPE a good  
19 candidate to merge with Westar. GPE, through KCP&L, already operates an electric utility  
20 that is contiguous to the Westar service territory. The KCC is familiar with KCP&L, and  
21 KCP&L is familiar with regulation in Kansas. KCP&L and Westar already share ownership  
22 of several generating facilities. These factors are all favorable and suggest that the merger of

1 Westar and GPE could result in considerable cost savings and other benefits for ratepayers.  
2 Nevertheless, in my Direct Testimony I expressed concerns that the proposals contained in  
3 the Application did not provide a reasonable sharing of the anticipated benefits between  
4 ratepayers and shareholders, and I recommended that the KCC adopt several additional  
5 safeguards if the merger was approved.  
6

7 **Q. What are the merger savings estimated by the Joint Applicants?**

8 A. The Joint Applicants estimate gross savings of \$627 million during the first five years  
9 following the merger. In addition to the gross savings of \$627 million, the Joint Applicants  
10 also expect additional capital and operational savings relating to the early retirement of  
11 certain KCP&L and GMO generating facilities, consolidation of the ownership of Wolf  
12 Creek, and avoidance or deferral of other capital projects. In the Application, the Joint  
13 Applicants proposed to provide retail electric customers with upfront bill credits of \$50  
14 million (total company) if the merger was approved. They also made various other  
15 commitments relating to headquarter locations, employees and related benefits, community  
16 involvement, financing and ring fencing safeguards, ratemaking and accounting treatment,  
17 affiliated transactions, quality of service, and reporting requirements.  
18

19 **Q. What additional safeguards did you recommend be adopted if the KCC approved the**  
20 **merger?**

21 A. In my Direct Testimony, I recommended that five additional safeguards be adopted if the

1 proposed merger was approved by the KCC. These include:

- 2 1. Total guaranteed bill credits of \$250 million over the next five years, including an  
3 initial ratepayer credit of \$100 million upon closing of the merger with an additional  
4 credit of \$50 million in each year from 2020 to 2022.
- 5 2. A moratorium on base rate increases for five years following the effective date of  
6 rates in each company's 2018 base rate case.
- 7 3. Rejection of the Joint Applicants' request to defer transition costs associated with the  
8 merger.
- 9 4. A limitation on dividends to 100% of net income, unless a higher level is authorized  
10 by the KCC, and a requirement to provide notification to the KCC if the debt  
11 component of the capital structure of the holding company ("Holdco"), Westar, or  
12 KCP&L exceeds 55%.
- 13 5. A commitment by the Joint Applicants to retain Westar's inclining block residential  
14 rate structure.

15 In addition to the above recommendations, CURB witness Stacey Harden  
16 recommended certain reporting requirements with regard to capital expenditures over the  
17 next five years and CURB witness Cary Catchpole recommended the expansion of certain  
18 reliability and customer service metrics and related penalties.

19  
20 **Q. Since your Direct Testimony was filed, have the parties engaged in settlement**  
21 **discussions?**

1 A. Yes, the parties to this case have engaged in subsequent settlement discussions. As a result,  
2 several parties have entered into a Non-Unanimous Settlement Agreement (“Settlement  
3 Agreement”) that recommends approval of the merger by the KCC, subject to various  
4 conditions. Parties to the Settlement Agreement include the Joint Applicants, CURB, the  
5 Staff of the State Corporation Commission of the State of Kansas (“Staff”), Sunflower  
6 Electric Power Corporation, Inc. (“Sunflower”), Mid-Kansas Electric Company, Inc. (Mid-  
7 Kansas”), Midwest Energy, Inc. (“Midwest”), Kansas Power Pool (“KPP”), and Brightergy,  
8 LLC.<sup>1</sup>

9  
10 **II. DESCRIPTION OF THE SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT**

11 **Q. Please summarize the terms of the Settlement Agreement.**

12 A. The Settlement Agreement recommends that the KCC approve the merger, subject to various  
13 conditions and commitments. The Settlement Agreement provides for initial up-front  
14 ratepayer credits to Westar and KCP&L retail electric customers of \$23,065,299 and  
15 \$7,514,220 respectively. These amounts are based on the Kansas-jurisdictional share of total  
16 upfront bill credits of \$50 million, as proposed in the Application. These credits will be  
17 allocated among the customer classes using the method recommended by Staff witness, Bob  
18 Glass, in his direct testimony, pages 15-18. Credits will be allocated among customers  
19 within each class on the basis of revenue, except for the residential class where credits will  
20 be allocated on a per-customer basis.

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<sup>1</sup> International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (“IBEW”) 304, 412, 1464, and 1613 and Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.

1           After the conclusion of KCP&L’s 2018 base rate case, both Westar and KCP&L will  
2           be subject to a five-year base rate moratorium. The signatories agree to recommend that the  
3           KCC authorize a return on equity (“ROE”) of 9.3% in the 2018 base rate cases, or to  
4           recommend a range that is not more than 20 basis points below or above the 9.3% ROE. In  
5           the event that the KCC authorizes an ROE for KCP&L or Westar that is below 9.3%, then  
6           the base rate moratorium period for that company shall be reduced to three years.

7           In addition, the signatories agree to support a second step increase in February 2019  
8           for Westar related to the termination of a wholesale contract with MKEC and the expiration  
9           of federal production tax credits related to the Central Plains and Flat Ridge wind farms  
10          placed into service by Westar in late 2008/early 2009 timeframe. The second stage increase  
11          related to the loss of the wholesale contract will be handled through the Retail Energy Cost  
12          Adjustment (“RECA”) mechanism.

13          The Settlement Agreement also provides for the inclusion in new base rates of all  
14          merger-related savings achieved at the update date in each case, defined as 60 days after the  
15          filing of each respective rate case. In addition, the Settlement Agreement identifies a  
16          minimum level of savings for each company (\$22.5 million for Westar and \$7.5 million for  
17          KCP&L) that will be included in new rates resulting from the 2018 base rate cases. Finally,  
18          the Joint Applicants have agreed to refund to customers all amounts related to tax reform  
19          from January 1, 2018 through the effective date of new retail rates, without any offsets  
20          related to alleged under-earnings.

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(“Walmart”) subsequently noted support for the Settlement Agreement.

1 **Q. Please describe the ratemaking treatment that will take place during the rate**  
2 **moratorium.**

3 A. In addition to the initial bill credits, the Joint Applicants have agreed to additional annual bill  
4 credits by March 31 in each year 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022 in the amount of \$8,649,487 for  
5 Westar retail electric customers and \$2,817,832 for KCP&L’s Kansas retail electric  
6 customers. These credits are based on an assumption of total credits of \$18.75 million in  
7 each of those years, bringing the total guaranteed ratepayer credits to \$125 million (total  
8 company). These additional annual credits will be assigned to each retail electric customer  
9 within the applicable Kansas rate jurisdiction based upon the same method as the original  
10 2018 fixed bill credits.

11 In addition, the parties have agreed to an Earnings Review and Sharing Plan  
12 (“ERSP”) for 2019-2022. During this period, the Joint Applicants will file annual earnings  
13 reports by March 31 following the end of each calendar year 2019 – 2022. If actual earnings  
14 (based on the 9.3% ROE and specified capital structures) exceed the fixed credits for that  
15 year referenced above, the excess earnings will be subject to a 50/50 sharing allocation  
16 between ratepayers and shareholders. Any additional credits to customers will be allocated  
17 among customer classes based on the allocations adopted in the 2018 base rate cases. Credits  
18 will be allocated to customers within each class based on revenues, except for the residential  
19 class where credits will be allocated on a per-customer basis.

20  
21 **Q. How are transition costs handled in the Settlement Agreement?**

1 A. The Settlement Agreement provides for the recovery of the Kansas-jurisdictional share of up  
2 to \$50 million of transition costs, which shall be deferred and amortized over ten years  
3 beginning with the effective date of the rates resulting from the 2018 base rate cases. The  
4 Settlement Agreement does not provide for the recovery of any transaction costs, consistent  
5 with the Application.

6

7 **Q. Are there other conditions and commitments contained in the Settlement Agreement?**

8 A. Yes, there are numerous other conditions and commitments contained in the Settlement  
9 Agreement. For example, the Settlement Agreement provides for the retention of an  
10 operating headquarters in Topeka for up to ten years following the merger and requires the  
11 Joint Applicants to maintain at least 500 employees at the Kansas headquarters location for  
12 at least five years. The Settlement Agreement also includes employee commitments  
13 regarding collective bargaining agreements, maintenance of comparable compensation  
14 levels and benefits for all employees for two years, and no involuntary severance of  
15 employees as a result of the Merger. The Settlement Agreement also includes management  
16 and organizational provisions regarding the Board of Directors post-merger.

17 There are also financial commitments regarding the separation of Holdco, Westar,  
18 and KCP&L, certain capital structure restrictions for each entity, and the requirement that  
19 separate debt be maintained by each entity. There are commitments by Holdco to provide  
20 sufficient capitalization to the Joint Applicants to allow them to provide safe and reliable  
21 utility service in Kansas. Holdco also agrees to maintain consolidated debt (excluding



1 short-term debt and debt due within one year) of no more than 65 percent of total  
2 consolidated capitalization, and KCP&L and Westar debt (excluding short-term debt and  
3 debt due within one year) shall be limited to 60 percent of capitalization. Holdco commits  
4 that Westar and KCP&L will not make any dividend payments to the parent company, or  
5 other upstream cash payment, to the extent that the payment would result in an increase in  
6 either utility's debt level (excluding short-term debt and debt due within one year) above 60  
7 percent of its total capitalization, unless the Commission authorizes otherwise.

8 There are also provisions regarding notification to the KCC in the event of a credit  
9 downgrade by Holdco, KCP&L or Westar, and requirements to develop plans to achieve an  
10 investment grade rating should a downgrade occur. Moreover, there is a requirement that  
11 the Joint Applicants hold ratepayers harmless in the event of a downgrade that is related to  
12 the merger. There is also a general commitment that ratepayers will not be adversely  
13 impacted on an overall basis as a result of the merger, and that future cost of service and  
14 rates will be set commensurate with financial and business risks attendant to their individual  
15 regulated utility operations.

16 The Settlement provides that goodwill resulting from the merger will be maintained  
17 on the books of Holdco and that the Joint Applicants will not seek to recover any goodwill from  
18 ratepayers. There is also a provision that ratepayers will be held harmless if goodwill is impaired  
19 for any reason. The Settlement Agreement also contains various provisions regarding affiliated  
20 interests, including filing and reporting requirements, and requires the Joint Applicants to comply  
21 with the Commission's affiliate transaction rules. The Joint Applicants have committed to

1 meeting with Staff and CURB no later than sixty (60) days after the closing of the merger to  
2 discuss the expected impact on the allocation of costs among Holdco's utility and non-utility  
3 subsidiaries and have committed to filing updates to the current Cost Allocation Manuals  
4 ("CAMs").

5  
6 **Q. Does the Stipulation contain conditions regarding quality of service?**

7 A. Yes, the Joint Applicants have agreed to provide annual reports on the quality of service.  
8 They have also agreed to penalties if certain benchmarks are not achieved.

9  
10 **Q. Does the Settlement Agreement include various reporting requirements?**

11 A. Yes, it does. The Settlement Agreement includes a recommendation that the Commission  
12 open a compliance docket to maintain merger-related filings. In addition, the Settlement  
13 Agreement provides for periodic meetings with Staff and CURB to keep the parties apprised  
14 of the status of integration implementation and to examine the actual benefits of the merger  
15 relative to expectations. It also recommends that the parties initiate a Capital Plan  
16 Reporting compliance docket during the rate moratorium to provide Staff and the  
17 Commission with the information and data necessary to understand forecasted and actual  
18 capital expenditures over a five-year period.

19 The Joint Applicants have agreed to various other reporting requirements, including  
20 a requirement to provide integrated resource plans ("IRP") filed in Missouri to the KCC.  
21 KCP&L and Westar will also provide Staff and CURB with access to all written information

1 provided to common stock, bond or bond rating analysts relating to KCP&L, Westar or any  
2 affiliate that exercises influence or control over KCP&L, Westar, or Holdco. The Joint  
3 Applicants will also make available all books, records and employees as may be reasonably  
4 required to verify compliance with KCP&L's and Westar's CAM and any conditions  
5 ordered by the Commission. The Settlement also assures Staff and CURB access to various  
6 other records and documents, including material related to the Board of Directors.

7  
8 **III. EVALUATION OF SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS**

9 **Q. Are you familiar with the standards used by the KCC to evaluate a settlement that is**  
10 **proposed to the Commission?**

11 A. Yes, I am. The KCC has adopted five guidelines for use in evaluating settlement agreements.  
12 These include: (1) Has each party had an opportunity to be heard on its reasons for opposing  
13 the settlement? (2) Is the agreement supported by substantial evidence in the record as a  
14 whole? (3) Does the agreement conform to applicable law? (4) Will the agreement result in  
15 just and reasonable rates? (5) Are the results of the agreement in the public interest, including  
16 the interests of customers represented by any party not consenting to the agreement?

17 I understand that CURB counsel will address item 3, i.e., does the Settlement  
18 Agreement conform to applicable law, in opening statements at the upcoming hearing. Since  
19 I am not an attorney, it is more appropriate for CURB counsel to address this issue than for  
20 me to address it. However, I will discuss the remaining four guidelines.

1 **Q. Has each party had an opportunity to be heard on its reasons for opposing the**  
2 **Settlement Agreement?**

3 A. Yes, they have. I participated personally in settlement negotiations in this case and each  
4 party had an opportunity to participate and be heard. The parties discussed issues, resolved  
5 certain numerical discrepancies, and negotiated aggressively. The negotiations were  
6 extensive and took place over many days. While not all parties are signatories to this  
7 Settlement Agreement, I believe that all parties had the opportunity to participate and to  
8 actively promote their positions. In addition, any party opposing the Settlement Agreement  
9 will have the opportunity to file testimony in opposition, to participate in the upcoming  
10 hearing on the Settlement Agreement, and to cross-examine the signatories on the provisions  
11 of the Settlement Agreement.

12  
13 **Q. Is the Settlement supported by substantial evidence in the record as a whole?**

14 A. Yes, it is. In addition to the Joint Applicants, numerous parties filed testimony in this case,  
15 including Staff, CURB, IBEW 304, Kansas Industrial Consumers Group (“KIC”), KPP,  
16 Kansas Electric Power Cooperative (“KEPCO”), Sierra Club, and Walmart. Much of the  
17 testimony that was filed expressed general support for a merger of Westar and KCP&L but  
18 also expressed concerns regarding the allocation of related benefits between ratepayers and  
19 shareholders. Additional issues were raised regarding the general level of rates in Kansas,  
20 potential labor dislocations, and environmental impacts. Both Staff and CURB proposed  
21 specific provisions that would result in a more equitable sharing of expected merger benefits

1 and would provide additional safeguards to Kansas ratepayers. The Settlement Agreement  
2 incorporates many of the provisions recommended by Staff and CURB, including higher  
3 guaranteed fixed credits to Kansas ratepayers and a rate moratorium. While the Settlement  
4 Agreement does not address all of the issues raised by all of the intervenors, the provisions of  
5 the Settlement Agreement do address many of the concerns raised by the parties and is based  
6 on the evidence in the record.

7  
8 **Q. Will the Settlement Agreement result in just and reasonable rates?**

9 A. Yes, the Settlement Agreement will result in just and reasonable rates. Both Westar and  
10 KCP&L will have rate cases in 2018 to determine appropriate base distribution rates for each  
11 utility. Therefore, the KCC will have the ability to ensure that just and reasonable rates are  
12 implemented in 2018. Base rates will then remain unchanged during a five-year rate  
13 moratorium period, providing further protection to ratepayers. Moreover, during this five-  
14 year period, ratepayers will receive a minimum of \$125 million in fixed bill credits. In  
15 addition, ratepayers will also receive 50% of any additional earnings in excess of a 9.3%  
16 ROE. These provisions will ensure that ratepayers will share in the benefits if actual merger  
17 savings are higher than projected. These provisions will also ensure that ratepayers will  
18 benefit from other factors, such as higher-than-anticipated revenues or additional cost savings  
19 that are not directly related to the merger.

1 **Q. Are the results of the Settlement Agreement in the public interest, including the**  
2 **interests of customers represented by any party not consenting to the agreement?**

3 A. Yes, given the conditions outlined in the Settlement Agreement, I believe that the proposed  
4 merger of Westar and KCP&L is in the public interest. As discussed previously, Westar and  
5 KCP&L are a good fit. The companies have contiguous service territory, which should  
6 maximize efficiencies of combining the utilities under common ownership. Both KCP&L  
7 and Westar are local companies with a significant presence in Kansas. Both are familiar with  
8 regulation in Kansas and the KCC is familiar with both companies. The companies share  
9 ownership of certain generating facilities in the region. For many reasons, Westar and  
10 KCP&L are good candidates for a merger.

11 Moreover, the Joint Applicants have estimated that the merger will result in millions  
12 of dollars of savings over the first five years, and even more if one assumes that savings will  
13 continue indefinitely. While I do not believe that savings after five-years should be given  
14 much consideration by the KCC, the savings expected during the initial five-year period are  
15 sufficient to provide real benefits to Kansas ratepayers resulting from the merger, especially  
16 given the level of fixed and guaranteed bill credits reflected in the Settlement Agreement.

17 During this period, ratepayers will benefit from minimum annual savings of \$22.5  
18 million and \$7.5 million that will be reflected in rates resulting from the 2018 base rate cases  
19 for Westar and KCP&L respectively. In addition, Westar and KCP&L ratepayers are  
20 guaranteed additional bill credits of \$23.06 million and \$7.51 million respectively in 2018,  
21 and of \$8.65 million and \$2.82 million respectively for each year from 2019-2022.

1 Ratepayers may also receive additional bill credits if actual earnings are higher than  
2 projected. Ratepayers benefit from an agreed-upon ROE of 9.3% that will be recommended  
3 by the signatories in the 2018 base rate cases and used in the earnings sharing tests during the  
4 rate moratorium period. Moreover, this ROE will be utilized for a five-year period, even if  
5 capital costs increase over this time.

6  
7 **Q. Does the Settlement Agreement provide additional ratepayer benefits?**

8 A. Yes, it does. In addition to the financial benefits discussed above, the Settlement Agreement  
9 also identifies quality of service benchmarks and provides for penalties in the event that these  
10 benchmarks are not met. In addition, the Settlement Agreement contains extensive reporting  
11 requirements, including reporting requirements related to capital investments made by the  
12 Joint Applicants over the rate moratorium period. In this regard, the Settlement Agreement  
13 addresses the concerns expressed by CURB witnesses Cary Catchpole and Stacey Harden in  
14 their Direct Testimonies.

15  
16 **Q. Are there other benefits to Kansas and its economy?**

17 A. Yes, Topeka will benefit from a commitment to retain an operating headquarters in Topeka  
18 for a period of ten years following the merger, and to maintain 500 employees at the Kansas  
19 headquarter for at least five years. In addition, employees of both Westar and KCP&L that  
20 live in Kansas are assured that they will not involuntarily lose their jobs as a result of the  
21 merger and are also assured of certain compensation and benefit levels for a two-year period.

1 The Joint Applicants have also committed to maintain certain levels of charitable giving and  
2 community involvement in the Kansas service territories, which will provide general benefits  
3 to the state and local communities.  
4

5 **Q. Does the Settlement Agreement reflect the consensus of a diverse group?**

6 A. Yes, it does. While not all parties to the proceedings are signatories to the Settlement  
7 Agreement, the Settlement Agreement does reflect consensus among a diverse group of  
8 parties representing various classes of customers, cooperatives, municipal energy providers,  
9 and other utilities. The fact that these diverse parties are signatories suggests that the  
10 Settlement Agreement is in the public interest and should be approved by the KCC.  
11

12 **IV. COMMISSION'S MERGER STANDARDS**

13 **Q. In addition to the criteria for evaluating settlements, have you also examined the**  
14 **Settlement Agreement in light of the merger standards that have been adopted by the**  
15 **Commission?**

16 A. Yes, I have. As discussed in my Direct Testimony, the KCC has adopted the following  
17 criteria to determine if the public interest standard had been met when evaluating a merger:

- 18 (a) The effect of the transaction on consumers, including:
  - 19 (i) the effect of the proposed transaction on the financial condition of the newly  
20 created entity as compared to the financial condition of the stand-alone  
21 entities if the transaction did not occur;





1 **Q. What additional safeguards did CURB recommend in its Direct Testimonies in order to**  
2 **ensure that the Commission’s Mergers Standards were met?**

3 A. In its Direct Testimonies, CURB recommended the following additional safeguards:

- 4 • Bill credits of \$250 million
- 5 • Five-year rate moratorium
- 6 • Rejection of the Company’s request to defer transition costs
- 7 • Notification to the KCC if debt levels exceed 55%
- 8 • Limitation on the amount of dividends to be paid absent KCC approval
- 9 • Retention of Westar’s inclining block residential rate structure
- 10 • Reporting requirements on capital expenditures
- 11 • Expansion of certain reliability and customer service metrics and related  
12 penalties

13  
14 **Q. Given the provisions contained in the Settlement Agreement, does the proposed merger**  
15 **meet the public interest standard based on the KCC’s Merger Standards?**

16 A. Yes, based on the KCC’s Merger Standards, the Settlement Agreement meets the public  
17 interest standard. Most of the concerns raised in my Direct Testimony were directed to the  
18 financial benefits of the merger and how those benefits should be passed through to Kansas  
19 ratepayers. I was particularly concerned that insufficient benefits were being passed through  
20 to ratepayers. I recommended a fixed credit bill credit of \$250 million (total company) over  
21 five years, instead of the \$50 million proposed by the Joint Applicants, and a five-year rate

1 moratorium. The Settlement Agreement provides for guaranteed bill credits of \$125 million  
2 (total company) and a five-year rate moratorium. While the \$125 million is less than I  
3 recommended, the Settlement Agreement also includes the potential for additional ratepayer  
4 credits based on actual earnings during the rate moratorium. In addition, the Settlement  
5 ensures that rates resulting from the 2018 base rate cases will reflect annual savings of at  
6 least \$22.5 million for Westar and of \$7.5 million for KCP&L.

7 In addition, while the Settlement does provide for the recovery of \$50 million in  
8 transition costs, this amount is approximately 30% less than the transition costs reflected in  
9 the Application. In addition, these transition costs will be amortized over a ten-year period,  
10 thereby further mitigating the rate impact to consumers.

11  
12 **Q. Please discuss the concern raised in your Direct Testimony regarding limiting the debt**  
13 **in the capital structures of Holdco, Westar, and KCP&L and imposing dividend**  
14 **limitations in certain circumstances.**

15 A. The Joint Applicants originally proposed to limit debt in the capital structures of Holdco,  
16 Westar, and KCP&L to no greater than 65%. In my Direct Testimony, I recommended that  
17 the Joint Applicants be required to notify the KCC if the capital structures of Holdco,  
18 Westar, or KCP&L exceeded 55% debt so that the Commission could determine whether an  
19 additional review was necessary. Similarly, I recommended that the Joint Applicants be  
20 required to notify the KCC if the payment of any dividends, either by the holding company or  
21 one of the Kansas-regulated subsidiaries, would result in a debt level above 55%.

1           The Settlement Agreement limits debt in the capital structure of Holdco to 65% and  
2           limits debt in the capital structures of Westar and KCP&L to 60%. Moreover, it restricts  
3           dividends from Westar and KCP&L if the payment of those dividends would cause the  
4           utilities to exceed this debt limitation. Given the extensive monitoring and reporting  
5           requirements contained in the Settlement Agreement, as well as other safeguards previously  
6           imposed by the KCC, I believe that the KCC and other parties will have an opportunity to  
7           monitor actual debt and dividend levels, at least during the term of the rate moratorium. If  
8           the KCC believes that additional monitoring safeguards are necessary at some point in the  
9           future, it can impose additional reporting requirements at that time.

10  
11 **Q. Does the Settlement Agreement meet the Merger Standards discussed in the Direct**  
12 **Testimonies of Ms. Catchpole and Ms. Harden?**

13 A. Yes, the Settlement Agreement contains quality of service benchmarks and penalty  
14 provisions in the event that these benchmarks are not met. In addition, the Settlement  
15 Agreement also contains a Capital Plan Reporting process so that the parties can review and  
16 evaluate capital spending over period of the rate moratorium. Therefore, the concerns raised  
17 by Ms. Catchpole and Ms. Harden have been addressed in the Settlement Agreement.

18  
19 **V. RECOMMENDATION**

20 **Q. What do you recommend?**

21 A. I recommend that the KCC find that all parties had the opportunity to participate in the

1 settlement process, that the Settlement Agreement is supported by substantial evidence in the  
2 record, that the Settlement Agreement will result in just and reasonable rates, and that the  
3 Settlement Agreement is in the public interest. I also recommend that the KCC find that the  
4 Settlement Agreement is in the public interest based on the Merger Standards that the KCC  
5 has adopted for merger transactions. Therefore, I recommend that the KCC approve the  
6 Settlement as filed.

7

8 **Q. Does this conclude your testimony?**

9 A. Yes, it does.

VERIFICATION

STATE OF FLORIDA )  
COUNTY OF BROWARD ) ss:

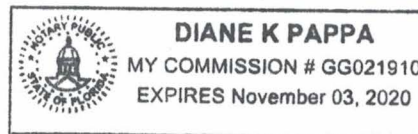
Andrea C. Crane, being duly sworn upon her oath, deposes and states that she is a consultant for the Citizens' Utility Ratepayer Board, that she has read and is familiar with the foregoing Testimony in Support of Non-Unanimous Settlement Agreement, and that the statements made therein are true to the best of her knowledge, information and belief

Andrea C. Crane  
Andrea C. Crane

Subscribed and sworn before me this 8<sup>TH</sup> day of March, 2018.

Notary Public Diane K Pappa

My Commission Expires: NOVEMBER 3, 2020



## CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

18-KCPE-095-MER

I, the undersigned, hereby certify that a true and correct copy of the above and foregoing document was served by electronic service on this 12<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2018, to the following:

MICHAEL E. AMASH, ATTORNEY  
BLAKE & UHLIG PA  
SUITE 475 NEW BROTHERHOOD BLDG  
753 STATE AVE.  
KANSAS CITY, KS 66101  
[MEA@BLAKE-UHLIG.COM](mailto:MEA@BLAKE-UHLIG.COM)

MARTIN J. BREGMAN  
BREGMAN LAW OFFICE, L.L.C.  
311 PARKER CIRCLE  
LAWRENCE, KS 66049  
[mjb@mjbregmanlaw.com](mailto:mjb@mjbregmanlaw.com)

ANDREW J. ZELLERS, GEN COUNSEL/VP  
REGULATORY AFFAIRS  
BRIGHTERGY, LLC  
1712 MAIN ST 6TH FLR  
KANSAS CITY, MO 64108  
[andy.zellers@brightergy.com](mailto:andy.zellers@brightergy.com)

GLENDA CAFER, ATTORNEY  
CAFER PEMBERTON LLC  
3321 SW 6TH ST  
TOPEKA, KS 66606  
[glenda@caferlaw.com](mailto:glenda@caferlaw.com)

TERRI PEMBERTON, ATTORNEY  
CAFER PEMBERTON LLC  
3321 SW 6TH ST  
TOPEKA, KS 66606  
[terri@caferlaw.com](mailto:terri@caferlaw.com)

DOROTHY BARNETT  
CLIMATE & ENERGY PROJECT  
PO BOX 1858  
HUTCHINSON, KS 67504-1858  
[barnett@climateandenergy.org](mailto:barnett@climateandenergy.org)

JONATHAN LESSER  
CONTINENTAL ECONOMICS, INC.  
6 REAL PLACE  
SCANDIA PARK, NM 87047  
[jlesser@continentalecon.com](mailto:jlesser@continentalecon.com)

DANIEL R. ZMIJEWSKI  
DRZ LAW FIRM  
9229 WARD PARKWAY STE 370  
KANSAS CITY, MO 64114  
[dan@drzlawfirm.com](mailto:dan@drzlawfirm.com)

SHANNON FISK, ATTORNEY  
EARTHJUSTICE  
1617 JOHN F KENNEDY BLVD  
SUITE 1675  
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19103  
[sfisk@earthjustice.org](mailto:sfisk@earthjustice.org)

SARAH STEELE  
GILMORE & BELL, P.C.  
ONE MAIN PLACE  
100 NORTH MAIN, STE. 800  
WICHITA, KS 67202  
[ssteele@gilmorebell.com](mailto:ssteele@gilmorebell.com)

DARRELL MCCUBBINS, BUSINESS MANAGER  
IBEW LOCAL UNION NO. 1464  
1760 UNIVERSAL AVENUE  
KANSAS CITY, MO 64120  
[kwhiteman@ibew1464.org](mailto:kwhiteman@ibew1464.org)

DAVID PINON, BUSINESS MANAGER  
IBEW LOCAL UNION NO. 1613  
6900 EXECUTIVE DR  
SUITE 180  
KANSAS CITY, MO 64120  
[local1613@earthlink.net](mailto:local1613@earthlink.net)

JASON IANACONE  
IBEW LOCAL UNION NO. 225  
IBEW Local 225  
PO Box 404  
Burlington, KS 66839  
[Jason.ianacone@gmail.com](mailto:Jason.ianacone@gmail.com)

JOHN GARRETSON, BUSINESS MANAGER  
IBEW LOCAL UNION NO. 304  
3906 NW 16TH STREET  
TOPEKA, KS 66615  
[johng@ibew304.org](mailto:johng@ibew304.org)

BRAD MILLER, East End Asst. Bus. Mgr.  
IBEW LOCAL UNION NO. 304  
IBEW Local Union No. 304  
3906 NW 16th Street  
Topeka, KS 66615  
[bradm@ibew304.org](mailto:bradm@ibew304.org)

RANDY ADAMS, BUSINESS MANAGER  
IBEW LOCAL UNION NO. 412  
1760 UNIVERSAL AVENUE  
KANSAS CITY, MO 64120  
[business.manager@ibew412.org](mailto:business.manager@ibew412.org)

JOHN KRAJEWSKI, PRESIDENT  
J K ENERGY CONSULTING LLC  
650 J STREET STE 108  
LINCOLN, NE 68508  
[jk@jkenergyconsulting.com](mailto:jk@jkenergyconsulting.com)

ALAN I. ROBBINS, ATTORNEY  
JENNINGS, STROUSS & SALMON, P.L.C  
1350 I Street, NW  
Suite 810  
WASHINGTON, DC 20005  
[arobbins@jsslw.com](mailto:arobbins@jsslw.com)

DEBRA D. ROBY, ATTORNEY  
JENNINGS, STROUSS & SALMON, P.L.C  
1350 I Street, NW  
Suite 810  
WASHINGTON, DC 20005  
[droby@jsslw.com](mailto:droby@jsslw.com)

ANDREA I. SARMENTERO GARZON  
JENNINGS, STROUSS & SALMON, P.L.C  
1350 I Street, NW  
Suite 810  
WASHINGTON, DC 20005  
[asarmentero@jsslw.com](mailto:asarmentero@jsslw.com)

SUSAN ALIG, ASSISTANT COUNSEL  
KANSAS CITY KANSAS BOARD OF PUBLIC  
UTILITIES  
701 N 7TH STREET  
KANSAS CITY, KS 66101  
[salig@wycokck.org](mailto:salig@wycokck.org)

ANGELA LAWSON, SENIOR COUNSEL  
KANSAS CITY KANSAS BOARD OF PUBLIC  
UTILITIES  
540 MINNESOTA AVENUE  
KANSAS CITY, KS 66101-2930  
[alawson@bpu.com](mailto:alawson@bpu.com)

ROBERT J. HACK, LEAD REGULATORY  
COUNSEL  
KANSAS CITY POWER & LIGHT COMPANY  
ONE KANSAS CITY PL, 1200 MAIN ST 31ST  
FLOOR (64105)  
PO BOX 418679  
KANSAS CITY, MO 64141-9679  
[ROB.HACK@KCPL.COM](mailto:ROB.HACK@KCPL.COM)

DARRIN R. IVES, VICE PRESIDENT,  
REGULATORY AFFAIRS  
KANSAS CITY POWER & LIGHT COMPANY  
ONE KANSAS CITY PL, 1200 MAIN ST 31ST  
FLOOR (64105)  
PO BOX 418679  
KANSAS CITY, MO 64141-9679  
[darrin.ives@kcpl.com](mailto:darrin.ives@kcpl.com)

ROGER W. STEINER, CORPORATE COUNSEL  
KANSAS CITY POWER & LIGHT COMPANY  
ONE KANSAS CITY PL, 1200 MAIN ST 31ST  
FLOOR (64105)  
PO BOX 418679  
KANSAS CITY, MO 64141-9679  
[roger.steiner@kcpl.com](mailto:roger.steiner@kcpl.com)

NICOLE A. WEHRY, SENIOR REGULATORY  
COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST  
KANSAS CITY POWER & LIGHT COMPANY  
ONE KANSAS CITY PL, 1200 MAIN ST 31ST  
FLOOR (64105)  
PO BOX 418679  
KANSAS CITY, MO 64141-9679  
[NICOLE.WEHRY@KCPL.COM](mailto:NICOLE.WEHRY@KCPL.COM)

ANTHONY WESTENKIRCHNER, SENIOR  
PARALEGAL  
KANSAS CITY POWER & LIGHT COMPANY  
ONE KANSAS CITY PL, 1200 MAIN ST 31ST  
FLOOR (64105)  
PO BOX 418679  
KANSAS CITY, MO 64141-9679  
[anthony.westenkirchner@kcpl.com](mailto:anthony.westenkirchner@kcpl.com)

BRIAN G. FEDOTIN, DEPUTY GENERAL  
COUNSEL  
KANSAS CORPORATION COMMISSION  
1500 SW ARROWHEAD RD  
TOPEKA, KS 66604-4027  
[b.fedotin@kcc.ks.gov](mailto:b.fedotin@kcc.ks.gov)

DUSTIN KIRK, DEPUTY GENERAL COUNSEL  
KANSAS CORPORATION COMMISSION  
1500 SW ARROWHEAD RD  
TOPEKA, KS 66604-4027  
[d.kirk@kcc.ks.gov](mailto:d.kirk@kcc.ks.gov)

MICHAEL NEELEY, LITIGATION COUNSEL  
KANSAS CORPORATION COMMISSION  
1500 SW ARROWHEAD RD  
TOPEKA, KS 66604-4027  
[m.neeley@kcc.ks.gov](mailto:m.neeley@kcc.ks.gov)

AMBER SMITH, CHIEF LITIGATION COUNSEL  
KANSAS CORPORATION COMMISSION  
1500 SW ARROWHEAD RD  
TOPEKA, KS 66604-4027  
[a.smith@kcc.ks.gov](mailto:a.smith@kcc.ks.gov)

MARK DOLJAC, DIR RATES AND REGULATION  
KANSAS ELECTRIC POWER CO-OP, INC.  
600 SW CORPORATE VIEW (66615)  
PO BOX 4877  
TOPEKA, KS 66604-0877  
[MDOLJAC@KEPCO.ORG](mailto:MDOLJAC@KEPCO.ORG)



WILLIAM G. RIGGINS, GENERAL COUNSEL  
KANSAS ELECTRIC POWER CO-OP, INC.  
600 SW CORPORATE VIEW (66615)  
PO BOX 4877  
TOPEKA, KS 66604-0877  
[briggins@kepco.org](mailto:briggins@kepco.org)

JAMES GING, DIRECTOR ENGINEERING  
SERVICES  
KANSAS POWER POOL  
100 N BROADWAY STE L110  
WICHITA, KS 67202  
[jging@kpp.agency](mailto:jging@kpp.agency)

LARRY HOLLOWAY, ASST GEN MGR  
OPERATIONS  
KANSAS POWER POOL  
100 N BROADWAY STE L110  
WICHITA, KS 67202  
[lholloway@kpp.agency](mailto:lholloway@kpp.agency)

ROBERT V. EYE, ATTORNEY AT LAW  
KAUFFMAN & EYE  
4840 Bob Billings Pkwy, Ste. 1010  
Lawrence, KS 66049-3862  
[BOB@KAUFFMANEYE.COM](mailto:BOB@KAUFFMANEYE.COM)

ASHLEY M. BOND, ATTORNEY  
KENNETH HOLMBOE  
1730 RHODE ISLAND AVENUE NW  
SUITE 700  
WASHINGTON, DC 20036-3155  
[amb@duncanallen.com](mailto:amb@duncanallen.com)

KENNETH M. HOLMBOE, ATTORNEY AT LAW  
KENNETH HOLMBOE  
1730 RHODE ISLAND AVENUE NW  
SUITE 700  
WASHINGTON, DC 20036-3155  
[kh@duncanallen.com](mailto:kh@duncanallen.com)

GREGG D. OTTINGER, ATTORNEY  
KENNETH HOLMBOE  
1730 RHODE ISLAND AVENUE NW  
SUITE 700  
WASHINGTON, DC 20036-3155  
[GDO@DUNCANALLEN.COM](mailto:GDO@DUNCANALLEN.COM)

JOHN MICHAEL ADRAGNA  
MCCARTER ENGLISH, LLP  
1015 15TH STREET, NW  
12TH FLOOR  
WASHINGTON, DC 20005  
[jadragna@mccarter.com](mailto:jadragna@mccarter.com)

KIMBERLY BRICKELL FRANK  
MCCARTER ENGLISH, LLP  
1015 15TH STREET, NW  
12TH FLOOR  
WASHINGTON, DC 20005  
[kfrank@mccarter.com](mailto:kfrank@mccarter.com)

WILLIAM DOWLING, VP ENGINEERING &  
ENERGY SUPPLY  
MIDWEST ENERGY, INC.  
1330 CANTERBURY ROAD  
PO BOX 898  
HAYS, KS 67601-0898  
[BDOWLING@MWENERGY.COM](mailto:BDOWLING@MWENERGY.COM)

ROBERT MUIRHEAD, REGULATORY-VICE-  
PRES CUSTOMER SERVICE  
MIDWEST ENERGY, INC.  
1330 Canterbury Rd  
PO Box 898  
Hays, KS 67601-0898  
[bmuirhead@mwenergy.com](mailto:bmuirhead@mwenergy.com)

ANNE E. CALLENBACH, ATTORNEY  
POLSINELLI PC  
900 W 48TH PLACE STE 900  
KANSAS CITY, MO 64112  
[acallenbach@polsinelli.com](mailto:acallenbach@polsinelli.com)

FRANK A. CARO, ATTORNEY  
POLSINELLI PC  
900 W 48TH PLACE STE 900  
KANSAS CITY, MO 64112  
[fcaro@polsinelli.com](mailto:fcaro@polsinelli.com)

BORIS STEFFEN  
RMS US LLP  
1861 INTERNATIONAL DRIVE  
SUITE 400  
MCLEAN, VA 22102  
[boris.steffen@rmsus.com](mailto:boris.steffen@rmsus.com)

SUNIL BECTOR, ATTORNEY  
SIERRA CLUB  
2101 WEBSTER, SUITE 1300  
OAKLAND, CA 94312-3011  
[sunil.bector@sierraclub.org](mailto:sunil.bector@sierraclub.org)

ANDREW J. FRENCH, ATTORNEY AT LAW  
SMITHYMAN & ZAKOURA, CHTD.  
7400 W 110TH ST STE 750  
OVERLAND PARK, KS 66210-2362  
[andrew@smizak-law.com](mailto:andrew@smizak-law.com)

JAMES P. ZAKOURA, ATTORNEY  
SMITHYMAN & ZAKOURA, CHTD.  
7400 W 110TH ST STE 750  
OVERLAND PARK, KS 66210-2362  
[jim@smizak-law.com](mailto:jim@smizak-law.com)

RENEE BRAUN, CORPORATE PARALEGAL,  
SUPERVISOR  
SUNFLOWER ELECTRIC POWER  
CORPORATION  
301 W. 13TH  
PO BOX 1020 (67601-1020)  
HAYS, KS 67601  
[RBRAUN@SUNFLOWER.NET](mailto:RBRAUN@SUNFLOWER.NET)

JAMES BRUNGARDT, MANAGER,  
REGULATORY RELATIONS  
SUNFLOWER ELECTRIC POWER  
CORPORATION  
301 W. 13TH  
PO BOX 1020 (67601-1020)  
HAYS, KS 67601  
[JBRUNGARDT@SUNFLOWER.NET](mailto:JBRUNGARDT@SUNFLOWER.NET)

DAVIS ROONEY, VICE PRESIDENT AND CFO  
SUNFLOWER ELECTRIC POWER  
CORPORATION  
301 W. 13TH  
PO BOX 1020 (67601-1020)  
HAYS, KS 67601  
[HROONEY@SUNFLOWER.NET](mailto:HROONEY@SUNFLOWER.NET)

AL TAMIMI, VICE PRESIDENT, TRANSMISSION  
PLANNING AND POLICY  
SUNFLOWER ELECTRIC POWER  
CORPORATION  
301 W. 13TH  
PO BOX 1020 (67601-1020)  
HAYS, KS 67601  
[atamimi@sunflower.net](mailto:atamimi@sunflower.net)

AMY FELLOWS CLINE, ATTORNEY  
TRIPLETT, WOOLF & GARRETSON, LLC  
2959 N ROCK RD STE 300  
WICHITA, KS 67226  
[amycline@twgfir.com](mailto:amycline@twgfir.com)

TIMOTHY E. MCKEE, ATTORNEY  
TRIPLETT, WOOLF & GARRETSON, LLC  
2959 N ROCK RD STE 300  
WICHITA, KS 67226  
[TEMCKEE@TWGFIRM.COM](mailto:TEMCKEE@TWGFIRM.COM)

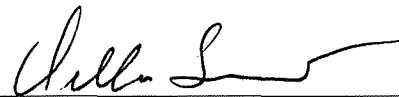
MARK D. CALCARA, ATTORNEY  
WATKINS CALCARA CHTD.  
1321 MAIN ST STE 300  
PO DRAWER 1110  
GREAT BEND, KS 67530  
[MCALCARA@WCRF.COM](mailto:MCALCARA@WCRF.COM)

TAYLOR P. CALCARA, ATTORNEY  
WATKINS CALCARA CHTD.  
1321 MAIN ST STE 300  
PO DRAWER 1110  
GREAT BEND, KS 67530  
[TCALCARA@WCRF.COM](mailto:TCALCARA@WCRF.COM)

CATHRYN J. DINGES, SENIOR CORPORATE  
COUNSEL  
WESTAR ENERGY, INC.  
818 S KANSAS AVE  
PO BOX 889  
TOPEKA, KS 66601-0889  
[cathy.dinges@westarenergy.com](mailto:cathy.dinges@westarenergy.com)

JEFFREY L. MARTIN, VICE PRESIDENT,  
REGULATORY AFFAIRS  
WESTAR ENERGY, INC.  
818 S KANSAS AVE  
PO BOX 889  
TOPEKA, KS 66601-0889  
[JEFF.MARTIN@WESTARENERGY.COM](mailto:JEFF.MARTIN@WESTARENERGY.COM)

DAVID L. WOODSMALL  
WOODSMALL LAW OFFICE  
308 E HIGH ST STE 204  
JEFFERSON CITY, MO 65101  
[david.woodsmall@woodsmalllaw.com](mailto:david.woodsmall@woodsmalllaw.com)



---

Della Smith  
Administrative Specialist