## STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE



May 17, 2018-4:17 p.m.
Concord, New Hampshire

RE: DG 18-050
LIBERTY UTILITIES (GRANITE STATE ELECTRIC) CORP. d/b/a LIBERTY UTILITIES: Investigation to Determine Rate Effects of Federal and State Corporate Tax Reductions for Step Increase
(Hearing on the Merits)

PRESENT: Chairman Martin P. Honigberg, Presiding Commissioner Kathryn M. Bailey Commissioner Michael S. Giaimo

Clare E. Howard-Pike, Clerk

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Court Reporter: Susan J. Robidas, NH LCR No, 44
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PROCEEDINGS
CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: We're here in Docket DE 18-050, which is Liberty Utilities (Granite State Electric) Corp.'s filing regarding changes in federal and state tax rates. We have one exhibit up here on the table, which I'm sure will be explained. But before we do anything else, let's take appearances.

MR. SHEEHAN: Good afternoon, Commissioners. Mike Sheehan for Liberty Utilities (Granite State Electric.)

MR. BUCKLEY: Good afternoon, Chairman and Commissioners. My name is Brian D. Buckley. To my left is Mr. James Brennan. We are here with the Office of Consumer Advocate, representing the interests of residential ratepayers.

MR. DEXTER: Good afternoon.
Dexter and Suzanne Amidon for the Commission Staff. Joining us today is Jay Dudley from the Electric Division.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: And how
are we proceeding on this one, Mr. Sheehan?
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MR. SHEEHAN: Thank you. The Company has premarked four exhibits. Exhibit 1 is Commission Tab 5, April 13 Mullen technical statement and attachments; Exhibit 2 is Tab 7, the April 25 Mullen supplemental technical statement and attachments; and Exhibit 3 is Commission Tab 11, the testimony just filed, $I$ don't have a date written down -- by Mr. Mullen; and then tab -- I mean Exhibit 4 is the piece of paper that's in front of you which should look familiar by now, and it's the same document we used in the prior proceedings with a docket number for this case.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Anything
we need to deal with before we have the witness sworn in?

MR. SHEEHAN: None from me. CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Would you do the honors, please.
(WHEREUPON, STEVEN E. MULLEN was duly sworn and cautioned by the Court Reporter.)
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## DIRECT EXAMINATION

BY MR. SHEEHAN:
Q. Mr. Mullen, please state your name and your position with Liberty.
A. My name is Steven Mullen. I'm the senior manager of rates and regulatory affairs for Liberty Utilities Service Corp.
Q. And Mr. Mullen, you just heard me describe the first three exhibits that have been marked: A technical statements with attachments by you, dated April 13, which is Exhibit 1; a supplemental technical statement and attachments by you, dated April 25, which is Exhibit 2; and testimony you filed on or about May 10 in this matter, which is Exhibit 3. Do you have those in front of you?
A. I do.
Q. Do you have any changes to any of them?
A. I have. For the first two, I have some labeling corrections that $I$ had mentioned in my testimony, which is Exhibit 3.

If you turn to Exhibit 1, the first page, right under the two bullets, the first
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sentence that has a date of July 1, 2017, that should be May 1, 2017.

Further down that same page, at the start of the next paragraph, the same change; July 1, 2017 should be May 1, 2017.

And if you turn to Attachment 1 of that filing, on Lines 1 and 2, the dates of July 1, 2017 should be May 1, 2017.
Q. And those were all changes to Exhibit 1. Do you have changes to any other exhibits?
A. I have two more on that same thing. On Attachment 2, and you've heard this before, Line 1 and Line 23, the dates of July 1, 2017 should be May 1, 2017. I have too many dates in my head.

Exhibit 2, some of the same information was provided.

If you turn to Supplemental Attachment 1, Lines 1 and 2, the dates of July 1, 2017 should both be May 1, 2017.

And if you turn to labeled "CORRECTED Attachment 2," Lines 1 and 23, the dates of July 1, 2017 should both be May 1, 2017.

As mentioned in my testimony, there's no
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changes to the actual calculations. These are all labeling.
Q. Aside from those, or with those changes in mind, do you here today adopt your testimony and these two technical statements of your testimony today?
A. I do.
Q. And could you give us a very high overview of what the Company is proposing in this docket.
A. Yes. Essentially I like to kind of refer to this myself as "dollars for dollars." Calculate the tax impact related to changes in federal and state taxes. And overall what the Company has proposed is that other rate increases, distribution rate increases that would have otherwise taken effect on June 1st, 2018, the Company's proposal is to offset those increases fully with the impact of tax reform.

Also, as part of the proposal, the Company has proposed to end sooner than it would have happened the remaining recovery of rate case expenses and recoupment from the Company's most recent rate case, DE 16-383.
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So that would basically give customers a more immediate decrease to their rates for the ending of that collection than what would otherwise have occurred on January 1st, 2019.
Q. So is it fair to say the amount of decrease due to tax reform more than offsets all the other rate changes we've discussed over the last two weeks in 16-383, 18-034 and the retail rate case? Is that correct?
A. Except for the last case. It would offset the distribution rate increases that were proposed in 18-034 and 16-383.
Q. And there's some extra after it offsets all those costs; is that correct?
A. Correct.
Q. And how is that treated?
A. There is, if you turn to --
Q. And by "excess," I mean there's more of the tax savings that has not been used up yet, if you will.
A. Correct. If you turn to Attachment 1 of Exhibit 1, this schedule runs through the numbers that $I$ just mentioned in words. And after taking the impact of tax reform, this
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Q. Mr. Mullen, if I could ask you to turn to Exhibit 3, which is the most recently filed testimony. Bates Page 11, Lines 7 through 8, there's a table there that $I$ think does a really good job of summarizing everything that's going on here. It's similar to what Attorney Sheehan just covered, but slightly more recent.
A. Yes, it's essentially the same numbers we just ran through. Yes.
Q. Right. So would it be accurate to say here that the chart at Line 7 through 8 essentially describes the two sides of the ledger relative to the revenue requirements, with one side being a permanent reduction associated with the tax decrease and the other side being the various increases which had already been planned and approved, with a net overall decrease of $\$ 442,365$ ?
A. After offsetting those other increases, yes.
Q. And for my own clarity here and the clarity of the record, are there expenses within this overall calculation that are one-time expenses, non-permanent, non-recurring, that
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only reduce the revenue requirement at this time for this, I guess you would say year?
A. Yes, there are some.
Q. And can you identify those?
A. Well, the rate case expenses on Line 5, again, that's a limited time. That would have been a limited-time recovery for the remainder of the year. And the O\&M for the VMP on Line 6, that is something that is
looked at each year, and the rates are
adjusted accordingly based on the change from one year to the next.
Q. And so what would happen if next year the O\&M value associated with the REP above the base case were not the value that it is here, the \$552, 414?
A. Well, $I$ guess it depends on if it's higher or lower.
Q. Let's say it were just the base case.
A. If it were just the base case, then there would be no incremental spending above the base case. So there wouldn't be... if we recover -- if we offset the 552,000 this year, then if you look from this year to next
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year, there would be no incremental recovery one way or the other because what we would be -- the difference wouldn't change.
Q. So can you just describe to me why, using the tax reform to offset the O\&M expense above the Commission-approved base case of $\$ 1.5$ million won't result in a de facto increase to the base case REP and O\&M allowance?
A. Because this is also a test year. And as it is a test year, when we normalize our test-year revenues, any changes related to the REP, the VMP, O\&M, that will be factored into the normalized test-year revenue.

Having the test year coincide with the year that this is all happening was actually advantageous, because having that rate case coming up, then we'll be able to make sure that everybody is made whole and that going forward the annual revenues will be at the right level.
Q. Can you tell me today whether the Company is planning to increase that O\&M base case value in the next rate case?
A. I can't. I do not know.
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Q. I understand. Yeah.

Can I ask you now to turn to Bates 14, Line 9 through Bates 15 on the top there? And I'm going to ask you some questions about that $\$ 38,000$ figure we've heard about in previous dockets relative to this June 1st rate change.

Can you please summarize for me the reason for the remaining $\$ 38,855$ ?
A. Yes. If you turn to Attachment 2 -- excuse me -- Exhibit 2, and if you look at Supplemental Attachment 1, this goes through the calculation of how that $\$ 38,000$ remainder was determined. Starting on Line 12, you take the annual revenue reduction, which was calculated on Line 3, and you look at the amount -- the portion of the year prior to this June 1st proposed rate change. So that's five months. So if you take the annual impact times five-twelfths, the 601,380 on Line 14 represents the amount of the annual impact to lower taxes that would not otherwise have been reflected on June 1st, 2018. So that's really like a
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one-time item.
So, then, if you compare that to what's on Line 18 -- and I will get to the derivation of Line 18 in a minute -- Line 18 is the amount of recoupment of rate case expenses remaining to be recovered. And that's for the period June 1st, 2018 through December 31st, 2018, the end of the 20-month recovery period that was approved in the 16-383 settlement agreement.

In order to get to that number, on Line 15 and 16 are numbers pulled right from the settlement agreement, which are annualized amounts of recoupment. And actually, I see a typo here. That's what $I$ get for cutting and pasting. Line 16 , the word "recoupment" should say "rate case expense." So, both of those numbers on Lines 15 and 16 were the annualized amount. And again, in order to do -- to figure how much to increase rates at the start of this recovery, we used the annual revenues, and we used the annualized amounts of those recoupment and rate case expenses. Those annualized amounts totalled
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964,330, which is the sum below Line 16. Since there's only seven months remaining of 2018 over which the annual amount would be recovered, that amounts to the 562,526 that I've calculated on Line 18 as to the amount of those two items that have still yet to be recovered. If you compare that 562 on Line 18 to the 601,380 on Line 14, you end up with an excess of just under \$39,000.
Q. And the company has proposed -- is it correct that the Company has proposed to defer this until the next rate case to cover future rate case expenses?
A. Yes. As I explained in my testimony, since it's really a one-time calculation, it's just trying to treat this one-time item the same as rate case expenses will be. We know we're going to have rate case expenses coming. And considering the relatively small amount of that, which I think if you were to put it in a rate calculation, I'm not even sure if that would show up in a customer bill. I'd have to do the calculation. But it being relatively small, we figured that with all
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the other changes and all the other offsets that we're doing, having that remainder and just putting it against costs that would otherwise be charged to customers in the future, we figured that was a reasonable proposal. I've reviewed other filings by other utilities, and there's a variety of things that have been proposed; some have been against storm reserves and other types Of accounts like that which basically operate in the same manner. Again, being a relatively small amount, we figured we'd treat this one-time thing similar to how the reminder of the 601,000 was being treated.
Q. And is it correct that you provide your reasoning for this at the bottom of Bates 14 of the document we've been discussing?
A. Yes.
Q. And essentially reading from Line 20, you note this is a one-time event, and that's part of the reasoning.
A. Correct.
Q. So aren't there other components within this rate change that we just spoke about -- I
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think it was at Bates 11 -- that are also one-time events?
A. Yes, as we previously discussed.
Q. Mr. Mullen, the Office of the Consumer Advocate has some concern here that, especially in the case of -- I guess this has been discussed in previous dockets -- where this would not be earning any interest as it defers, that this would be more appropriately returned to ratepayers.
A. And as $I$ discussed in the earlier proceeding, and I will say on the record here, the treatment is really no different than any rate case expenses that we incur over the course of a proceeding. Those don't accrue interest either. So, I mean, this is just a similar type of treatment. Once we start incurring the first rate case expenses, then the net amount that would be in the deferral account will actually end up being a positive number. And I can imagine that the Office of the Consumer Advocate would not want us to recover interest on that amount.
Q. That is definitely correct. But in this
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case, we are dealing with a piece of tax reform, a reduction in the revenues required by the Company that flows through from tax changes rather than rate case expense. Would you say that's correct?
A. That's correct. And we've also provided for approximately $\$ 2$ million of benefit to customers as compared to the $\$ 38,000$ we're talking about.
Q. Mr. Mullen, could you conceive of a mechanism which would flow that $\$ 38,000$ back to customers prior to the next rate case reconciliation?
A. I can conceive, you know, lots of things. You know, I think our proposal stands on its own as a way to get a lot of relief to customers pretty quickly. You know, I don't think anybody is going to be -- I don't think anybody is going to hold out to the ends of the earth for $\$ 38,000$. But, you know, our proposal -- we put our proposal together the way we did it to try to match up certain pieces that fit together quite well.
Q. And I agree with you on that. But I think
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that there have been -- it's been expressed by parties in at least one, if not two, of the various proceedings related to the June 1st rate change, that possibly this $\$ 38,000$ could go towards reducing what would otherwise be a rate increase that would take effect on June 1st.
A. Yes. And as I've said, the number is relatively small. But we will do whatever the Commission decides coming out of the proceeding related to the $\$ 38,000$.
Q. And the OCA appreciates that, Mr. Mullen. MR. BUCKLEY: No further questions. CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Mr. Dexter.

MR. DEXTER: Thank you. CROSS-EXAMINATION

BY MR. DEXTER:
Q. Mr. Mullen, I'm looking at Exhibit 2,

Supplemental Attachment 1. And you mentioned earlier that the Company's proposal is to return roughly $\$ 2$ million in tax benefits to customers. Am I correct that that $\$ 2$ million
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is the 1.4 million on Line 3 and the 601,000 on Line 14?
A. Correct.
Q. And you propose different treatments for those two amounts; correct?
A. Yes.
Q. Could you explain why there's different treatment for those two amounts?
A. Because one was calculated as the annual impact. And basically when we came to the $\$ 1.4$ million, we just started looking at what else was happening on June 1st. And, you know, the numbers matched up well. Plus, it provided for an additional little more than 1 percent decrease to distribution rates. And the 600,000 that is explained in my testimony, that is more of a one-time type of event. And we felt it was appropriate to match that up against another one-time or limited-time event $I$ would say related to the remaining recoupment and rate case expense recovery.
Q. Why is the 601,000 a, quote, unquote,
one-time event?
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A. Because as you look at the annual rate level, rates will decrease on June 1st by $\$ 1.4$ million. However, the revenue at the end of the year, if you looked at the total year, since the rates had not been reduced prior to June 1 , the annual rate level would be that much higher. But 1.4 million is the annual impact. If you were to take the 600,000 as, again, an annual impact, you'd be
double-counting that amount. I had some discussion of this as kind of a -- it was more of a heads-up in Exhibit 2, on Page 2 of my supplemental technical statement, explaining why the 601,000 is really a one-time event. And this goes to my discussion about looking at the -- since we have a test year now as well, looking at the normalized revenue on an annual basis. If the annual impact of lower taxes is 1.4 million, that's all that the annual impact should show when you normalize the revenue. And, again, we'll have a full year of lower tax expense in the test year. If you were to layer on top of that the 601, 000, you'd in
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effect double-count that. So it has a different nature because it's what existed prior to reducing rates. If rates had been reduced January 1st, the impact would still have been $\$ 1.4$ million.
Q. So is it correct to say that the Company's proposal is to pass back $\$ 1.4$ million on an annual, ongoing basis?
A. That is the annual impact here. And as I discussed with Mr. Buckley, some of these things are one-time. So we have to take a look at -- and everybody will have an opportunity to review when we do the rate case filing and we look at the normalized revenues because of all the ins and outs that go on in the course of the year. We have to take a look at what is a normal level of revenue, especially taking into account the impact of lower taxes.

What we've done now, and again, where it was beneficial having the timing of the test year, if some of these are one-time, or if they're not, what we're really doing is we're providing immediate rate reduction or rate --
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either rate reduction or offsetting other rate increases that otherwise would have happened. And that's where I go with my "dollars for dollars" lingo.
Q. But the 1.4 million is proposed to be sent back to the customers through a base rate adjustment, negative adjustment, reduction of 1.06 percent; correct?
A. That's the remainder of the four -- of the 1.4 million. That's the $\$ 442,000$.
Q. And then turning to the $\$ 38,000$ which appears on this page also -- or $\$ 39,000$ I guess it is on Supplemental Attachment 1, under the Company's proposal to offset this against future rate case expenses, when would that $\$ 39,000$ be returned to customers, and through what mechanism?
A. Well, that would be through an adjustment. Typically what happens with Granite State is an adjustment to distribution rates at the end of a proceeding. And so that would happen, you know, following the end of the proceeding. The rate case expenses that would be recovered would be that much lower.
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Q. And when would that be, date-wise?
A. Well, as I play this out, if we make the filing in April of next year, if we get permanent rates effective May 1 of 2020, it would start then.
Q. And over what time period would it be sent back to customers starting May 1, 2020?
A. Depends on what period of recovery the parties agree to in that proceeding. The last rate case for Granite State had a 20-month recovery period. But a lot of that is going to depend on what else is happening in the case and the amount of rate case expenses incurred.
Q. So in the last rate case, it was a 20-month period? Is that what you said?
A. I did.
Q. So under that scenario, then the pass-back would carry into the end of 2022; is that right?
A. 2021 .
Q. 2021. So if the same format was followed in the next rate case, the last dollars of this would be passed back 12/31/2021.
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A. Correct.
Q. And then that would be through a rate deduction, presumably, if we followed the model that was set up in the last Granite State Electric case.
A. It would be through a lower recovery of rate case expenses, that at the end of the December 2021 the rate case expense recovery would then come out of rates.
Q. And then I believe, again, if we follow the model from 16-383, that would be a base rate deduction were not for this intervening tax change.
A. You lost me there.
Q. Sorry. Under the settlement, when you got to the end of the rate case recovery period from 16-383, rate case expense recovery period, what rate change would happen at that time?
A. The annualized recovery rate case expenses and recoupment would come out of rates. As discussed earlier, the total amount of those annual amounts was $\$ 964,000$. So the annual amount of that would have come out of rates effective after December 31st of 2018. In
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this case, we proposed to stop that much sooner, effective June 1.
Q. Right. And my question is: When you say "come out of rates," is that base rates or through a surcharge? How does that happen?
A. Base rates.
Q. And again, I think we discussed this. I'm getting the cases mixed up. It might have been in the prior docket. But we discussed at least the way rate case expenses were dealt with in the last case, they're not reconciled to actual recovery; is that correct?
A. That's correct.
Q. Now, a few days ago the Commission reviewed your Company's filings in what you call the annual retail rate filing. I forget the docket number. 18-051 maybe. Do you recall that?
A. I was there at the end of the proceeding.
Q. Mechanically speaking, would there be a way to include this $\$ 38,855$ in the filing of the rates proposed in that case?
A. Well, mechanically speaking, you can move
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dollars around, yes. I think you'd have to reopen that proceeding to change that. But as I said to Mr. Buckley, we'll do with the 38,000 whatever the Commission orders coming out of this proceeding.
Q. And the rates that were -- or the costs that were reviewed in 18-051, the annual retail rate filing, those mechanisms are reconciling; correct?
A. They are.
Q. So if the Commission were to order that 38,855 be delivered back to customers in that docket, there would be a better chance that the customers would get the 38,855 versus doing it through a rate case expense recovery mechanism, if we use the model that was laid out in 16-383. Would you agree with that?
A. No. I would say they'd get it one way or the other. We're not going to retain it.
Q. Yes, but you did agree that the rate case expenses aren't reconciled to actual recovery. So there is a chance for over or under recovery; correct?
A. It can work either way, so they may actually
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get more than that.
MR. DEXTER: That's all the questions we have.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Commissio ner Bailey.

COMMISSIONER BAILEY: Thank you.

INTERROGATORIES BY COMMISSIONERS:
BY COMMISSIONER BAILEY:
Q. I just have one question about the rate design in the $\$ 440,000$ that you're using to decrease the distribution charges.
A. Yes.
Q. The block charges, the usage-based charges, it seems like the reduction is more weighted in the first 250-kilowatt-hour charge than the excess 250-kilowatt-hour charge. But I thought that the settlement, one of the agreements in the settlement was to try to get those two rates to be the same.
A. Eventually, over three years.
Q. But doesn't this make it worse, harder for next year?
A. Make what worse?
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Q. The separation between the first 250-kilowatt hours and the excess?
A. No, because the way that the settlement reads is that you take the difference between the two and you keep ratcheting it down. So, to the extent that they change -- and what's not reflected in Exhibit 4 is one of the exhibits we talked about in the last case, which was the second step of moving the blocks closer, we wanted to keep this the same presentation as what was provided in the other dockets. But what would really happen here is that by implementing that second step of the phased reduction and the difference between the blocks is that there would be a slight -there would be a -- what you see on Exhibit 4 for the proposed rates for the first 250 kilowatt hours and the excess of 250 kilowatt hours, those rates, by factoring in that rate design change, those would actually be a little closer than what you see on this. The actual impacts would be slightly different. I mean, if you're looking at this bill impact for a 650-kilowatt customer, it's not going
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to make that much of a difference. If you added 500 kilowatt hours, it wouldn't make any difference because you'd have 250 and 250. So, for purposes of presentation, without confusing things and changing those rates for this exhibit to keep it the same, that would still -- that's going to be one other thing that just kind of factors in here effective June 1.

So, a long way of trying to answer your question, I don't think -- there shouldn't be a problem going to the third step of this because the third step of this is basically to make the blocks the same. So whatever they are, by the time we get to next year, May 1st, 2019, those blocks will be the same.
Q. And the difference between the two blocks if we implement this rate change on Exhibit 4, isn't the difference between those two blocks greater than -- maybe I'm wrong but...
(Discussion off the record among Commissioners.)

COMMISSIONER BAILEY: All
right. Okay. I'm all set. Thank you.
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BY COMMISSIONER GIAIMO:
Q. I'll continue on with the $\$ 38,000$ question.

Just so I understand this right, so, effective May 1st, 2020, for 20 months from that point forward, for 20 months, customers will receive a relatively small savings to capture the $\$ 38,000$ of savings which you're suggesting deferring until after the next rate case.
A. That's under the scenario posed by Mr . Dexter, where we had a similar 20-month recovery period.
Q. Okay. It could be fashioned differently is what you're saying?
A. Exactly.
Q. Thank you. That helps.

And my follow-up question is what number would be large enough for you to say let's return this number, let's return this amount immediately as opposed to waiting?
A. Well, I think you've seen that we took numbers that we determined were large enough
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to provide benefit for, and we did. This was just the remainder. And considering the very minimal impact it would have on a customer bill, we said, well, okay, it's -- as I said in my testimony, it's really a one-time thing. So if we know we're going to have rate case expenses coming up, you know, that would eventually be recovered for customers.
Q. And not to be argumentative, but it is possible that customers could leave over the next six months. And even though it's a small amount, that would be money that was not recaptured by those customers.
A. That's true. And we could also have customers who take service who didn't pay the higher tax.
Q. Fair enough.

COMMISSIONER GIAIMO: Thanks.
I'm good.
CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: I have no questions.

Mr. Sheehan, do you have
anything further for Mr. Mullen?
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## REDIRECT EXAMINATION

BY MR. SHEEHAN:
Q. Once again I need to beat the $\$ 38,000$ horse one more time.

Just as a matter of scale, Mr. Hall has done math for me. And I'm just going to ask you if you think this is an appropriate order of magnitude if you calculate a $\$ 38,000$ reduction in rates, it comes out to 4 cents per month. Does that sound like a right order of magnitude?
A. Subject to check, yes.
Q. And if we did that four-cent reduction per month, we'd have to increase it at the end of the time after recovering the $\$ 38,000$; is that correct?
A. Correct. And that goes again to my whole test-year normalization discussion.

MR. SHEEHAN: That's all I
have. Thank you.
CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: All
right. Thank you, Mr. Mullen.
Is there anything else we need to do before wrapping up?
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[No verbal response]
CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Without objection, we'll strike I.D. on Exhibits 1, 2, 3 and 4 and have the parties sum up. Mr. Buckley.

CLOSING STATEMENTS
MR. BUCKLEY: Thank you, Mr.
Chairman.
Subject to the resolution of the pendency of Docket 16-383's step increase discussion, and with the caveat that we very strongly believe that the $\$ 38,000$, roughly $\$ 38,000$ figure, should be returned to customers on June 1st, the OCA is supportive of this filing and recommends the Commission's approval. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Mr.
Dexter.
MR. DEXTER: Thank you, Commissioners.

Generally Staff is supportive of the filing. We believe the Company did a nice job in returning this $\$ 1.4$ million to customers quickly, as well as the $\$ 600,000$ to
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customers quickly. And we appreciate the proposal to get that money back to customers in a timely fashion.

Regarding the $\$ 39,000$ we've discussed a number of different ways, I've asked the witness what he thought mechanically might work. I believe Staff's recommendation would be to return this \$39,000 through the annual retail rates that we just went to hearing about 10 days ago. And our reasons for that are two: One is those rates would be effective June 1st and so the money would start to flow back to customers right away; and second, that rate is reconciling, so that the $\$ 38,000$-- the $\$ 39,000$ would be returned in full. There wouldn't be any over or under recovery to worry about. We think that would be the easiest way to do it. That rate is designed for annual changes with recoveries of over and under. So with that, we recommend the Company's filing as submitted, with that change for the $\$ 39,000$.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Thank
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you, Mr. Dexter.
WITNESS MULLEN: May I
approach counsel for a second?
CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Sure.
MR. SHEEHAN: I thought
counsel was supposed to approach him.
CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Off the record.
(Discussion off the record)
CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Mr.
Sheehan.
MR. SHEEHAN: Thank you.
We appreciate the other
parties' support for this filing. A lot of thought and effort has gone into it over the last six months, as not only New Hampshire, but nationwide, as we all struggle with the new tax law. And so I appreciate the support and we ask the Commission approve it.

As to the possible retail rate mechanism for returning the $\$ 38,000$, there would have to be a determination of what bucket it goes in. Retail rate only has certain buckets of money to put it in. It
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probably wouldn't be good to put this kind of money into the transmission charge. And I'm not sure what the others are. But it may raise stranded costs. It may raise more complications and issues than it's worth. So I'd just ask that -- but I fall back to what Mr. Mullen said. We'll do what you tell us to do. CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Thank you, Mr. Sheehan. All right. With nothing else to do, we will close the hearing and take the matter under advisement and issue an order as quickly as we can.
(Hearing concluded a 4:55 p.m.)

C ERTITICATE
I, Susan J. Robidas, a Licensed Shorthand Court Reporter and Notary Public of the State of New Hampshire, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate transcript of my stenographic notes of these proceedings taken at the place and on the date hereinbefore set forth, to the best of my skill and ability under the conditions present at the time.

I further certify that I am neither attorney or counsel for, nor related to or employed by any of the parties to the action; and further, that $I$ am not a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed in this case, nor am I financially interested in this action.

Susan J. Robidas, LCR/RPR Licensed Shorthand Court Reporter Registered Professional Reporter N.H. LCR No. 44 (RSA 310-A:173)
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