1		STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
2		PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
3	ή	
4		5 - 10:48 a.m.
5	Concord, New	Hampshire
6		NHPUC JUN18'15 PM 3:59
7	RE:	DE 09-035 PUBLIC SERVICE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE:
8		Distribution Service Rate Case. (Hearing regarding the Continuation
9		of the Reliability Enhancement Program)
10	PRESENT:	Chairman Martin P. Honigberg, Presiding
11		
12		Sandy Deno, Clerk
13		
14	APPEARANCES:	Reptg. Public Service of New Hampshire: Matthew J. Fossum, Esq.
15		
16		Reptg. Residential Ratepayers: Susan Chamberlin, Esq., Consumer Advocate James Brennan, Finance Director
17		Office of Consumer Advocate
18		Reptg. PUC Advocate Staff:
19		F. Anne Ross, Esq. Thomas C. Frantz, Director/Electric Division
20		Reptg. PUC Staff:
21		Suzanne G. Amidon, Esq. Grant Siwinski, Electric Division
22		•
23	Со	urt Reporter: Steven E. Patnaude, LCR No. 52
24		

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1 PROCEEDING

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: We're here this 2 3 morning in Docket DE 09-035, which is Eversource Energy's 4 Reliability Enhancement Program docket. As the "09" 5 implies, it's an old docket. There is a program 6 reference, the Reliability Enhancement Program is set to 7 expire at the end of this month. There was a filing 8 asking that it be extended. It's now been wrapped into this "settlement" thing I've heard something about. And, 9 10 I know there's parties here who were not here for the 11 earlier three hearings to help walk us through what it is 12 the Parties would like to have done with this docket. 13 So, before we go any further, let's take 14 appearances. 15 MR. FOSSUM: And, good morning. Matthew 16 Fossum, here for Public Service Company of New Hampshire 17 doing business as Eversource Energy. 18 MS. CHAMBERLIN: Good morning. 19 Chamberlin, Consumer Advocate. With me today is Jim 20 Brennan. 21 MS. ROSS: Good morning, Commissioner. 22 Anne Ross, and with me today is Tom Frantz. We're 23 appearing as adjudicative -- Advocate Staff, excuse me, in

this docket, because of our support of the Settlement

1	Agreement, which was filed in this docket, as well as some
2	others.
3	CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Thank you. The
4	adjudicative staff is up here on this one. You're
5	advocates on this one.
6	MS. ROSS: Got it.
7	MS. AMIDON: Good morning. Suzanne
8	Amidon, for Commission Staff. With me today is Grant
9	Siwinski, an Analyst in the Electric Division.
LO	CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: All right. How are
L1	we going to proceed?
L2	MR. FOSSUM: In the Company's
L3	submission, we had two witnesses. We would propose to
L 4	have those two witnesses present their testimony and the
L5	Company's request as part of this motion. So, I would
L6	call Christopher Goulding and Russell Johnson.
L 7	(Whereupon Christopher J. Goulding and
L8	Russell D. Johnson were duly sworn by
L9	the Court Reporter.)
20	CHRISTOPHER J. GOULDING, SWORN
21	RUSSELL D. JOHNSON, SWORN
22	DIRECT EXAMINATION
23	BY MR. FOSSUM:
24	Q. Mr. Goulding, could you state your name and your

- position and your responsibilities for the record please.
- (Goulding) My name is Christopher Goulding. I'm 3 Α. employed by Eversource Energy as the Manager of Revenue 4 5 Requirements for New Hampshire. In my position, I oversee the implementation and coordination of revenue 6 7 requirement calculations and rate filings. In 8 addition, I -- in addition, I coordinate and implement the filings associated with ES, SCRC, and Rate ADE and 9 10 TCAM.
- A. (Johnson) Russell Johnson, with Eversource Energy. My
 responsibilities, I am the Manager of System Planning
 and Strategy. In that role, I'm responsible for
 distribution planning, reliability reporting,
 distribution standards, as well as others.
 - Q. Now, Mr. Goulding, back on June 10th of this year, did you submit prefiled testimony and attachments as part of a motion in this docket?
- 19 A. (Goulding) Yes, I did.

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- Q. And, that testimony and those attachments were prepared by you or under your direction?
- 22 A. (Goulding) Yes, they were.
- Q. And, the information in that testimony and attachments is true and accurate to the best of your knowledge and

 $\{DE\ 09-035\}\ \{06-17-15\}$

[WITNESS PANEL: Goulding~Johnson]

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1 belief today?
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- 2 A. (Goulding) Yes, it is.
- 3 Q. And, Mr. Johnson, did you also submit testimony and
- 4 attachments back on June 10th in this docket?
- 5 A. (Johnson) Yes, I did.
- 6 Q. And, that testimony and those attachments were prepared
- 7 by you or under your direction?
- 8 A. (Johnson) Yes.
- 9 Q. And, the information that's in them is true and
- accurate to the best of your knowledge and belief
- 11 today?
- 12 A. (Johnson) Yes, it is.
- 13 MR. FOSSUM: With that, I would ask to
- mark the Company's June 10th filing as the next exhibit,
- believe "35" for identification?
- 16 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: It's so marked.
- 17 (The document, as described, was
- herewith marked as **Exhibit 35** for
- identification.)
- 20 BY MR. FOSSUM:
- 21 Q. Since this one is somewhat unique and different from
- the other ones we've discussed so far today, would you,
- 23 Mr. Goulding, very briefly describe what this filing is
- and what the Company is requesting in this filing.

A. (Goulding) Okay. So, as part of the 2015 Public
Service Company of New Hampshire Restructuring and Rate
Stabilization Agreement, there was a section in there
that involved the continuation of Reliability
Enhancement Program, and reconciling historic expenses
related to the Reliability Enhancement Program. So,
what this rate filing is is it is a reconciliation of
capital -- capital investments from April 2013 through
June 2015, and forecasted capital investments from
July 2015 to June 2016.

We have a current revenue stream that was extended as part of the global settlement of approximately \$4 million. In addition, there was \$3 million of wind storm amortization that was going to expire -- or, be fully amortized or June 30th, that has been redirected to this REP Program. So, in the end, what happened was this 4 million that was extended, plus the 3 million, was used for funding of REP from July 1st forward, and then we reconciled all capital investments from April 2013 to July 2015. And, that's what the revenue requirement rate increases for reliability is for.

Q. So, for clarity then, if I can take the end of your statement, the Company's request to change the rate,

- that's to -- for purposes of reconciling past capital
 additions, is that correct?
- A. (Goulding) That's correct. Just want to clarify, those are Reliability Enhancement Program capital investments.
- Q. And, is the Company's request for that rate change subject to any future review?
- 8 A. (Goulding) Yes. As constructed, this rate change in forecasted expenses are subject to a reconciliation.
- 10 Q. Has that also -- to the best of your knowledge, is that
 11 also part of the underlying Settlement Agreement that
 12 was referenced in this filing?

13

14

- A. (Goulding) Yes. I recall there was a reconciliation adjustment filing that was necessary as of April or May of next year.
- Q. And, Mr. Johnson, could you very briefly explain the
 Company's projected Reliability Program for the next
 year. I understand it's in your testimony, so just
 very briefly what it is that the Company is intending
 to do.
- A. (Johnson) Well, we are intending to make investments in some key areas of distribution automation, Overhead

 System Reliability Programs, some Direct Buried Cable

 Programs, either through replacement or injection, and

[WITNESS PANEL: Goulding~Johnson] 1 programs to address aging infrastructure in 2 substations, vegetation management, as well as a GIS 3 Connectivity Project, to prepare the GIS to be effective with the OMS system, which is being put in 4 5 place later this year. 6 And, are those proposed programs, those are Q. 7 continuations of the Company's existing REP Program? 8 Α. (Johnson) Many of those programs are consistent with 9 the previous REP programs. There are a few specific 10 programs, such as the GIS Connectivity Project, as well 11 as a specific program for constructing circuit ties to 12 enhance reliability. Those are a couple of examples of

Actually, if I can, also I should add that the Troubleshooter Program is a significant program that's being added.

some that were not in the previous REP program year.

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- Q. Well, then, could you then just for the record explain what that program is?
- A. (Johnson) The Troubleshooter Program is to create a group of employees who provide 24/7 coverage to respond to outages on the system.
 - Q. Thank you. Turning back to Mr. Goulding, could you do you have available there what has been marked in docket 14-236 as "Exhibit 7"?

- 1 A. (Goulding) Yes, I do.
- 2 Q. And, that's what we've been referring to as the "bingo
- 3 sheet"?
- 4 A. (Goulding) Yes.
- 5 Q. Could you please go through the information on that
- exhibit as it relates to the docket that we're
- 7 considering presently.
- 8 A. (Goulding) Okay. So, this rate adjustment would affect
- 9 the "Distribution" column, the "Total Delivery Service"
- 10 column, and "Total Revenue" column. For -- let's look
- at residential customers, they will see an average rate
- change for distribution rates of 2.01 percent. The
- 13 Total Delivery Service increase will be 4.08 percent.
- But, if they're taking service from Energy Service,
- they will see a decrease of total rates of
- 16 6.56 percent.
- 17 Q. Now, that "2 percent" that's shown for the residential
- customer, is that exclusively due to the Company's
- 19 proposed REP change?
- 20 A. (Goulding) No. That includes the removal of the
- 21 Earnings Sharing Mechanism credit.
- 22 Q. And, that was -- that removal was -- that's subject to
- a previous Company submission in this docket?
- 24 A. (Goulding) Yes. We were ordered last June to have that

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          credit in place from July 1st, 2014 to June 30th, 2015.
          And, Mr. Johnson, if the Commission approves the
 2
     Q.
 3
          request that the Company is making today, would that --
          would the Company continue the program immediately or
 4
 5
          would there be some lag to it?
          (Johnson) No. Effective July 1st, we would begin
 6
     Α.
 7
          immediately in order to get the benefits of the
 8
          Program.
                                      Thank you.
 9
                         MR. FOSSUM:
                                                  They're
10
       available for cross.
11
                         CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Before I turn it
12
       over to Ms. Ross, Mr. Fossum, because this is not really
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       an expected docket today, until very recently, I'm going
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       to suggest that we mark the bingo sheet separately in this
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       docket, because I'm not sure people would really think to
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       look in the others, if they didn't already know. So, if
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       we can, --
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                         MR. FOSSUM: Understood.
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                         CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: -- it would be
       "Exhibit 36". So, to the extent other copies need to be
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21
       made, we can do that. But we're going to call this one
22
       "Exhibit 36" in 09-035. Good enough for you?
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MR. FOSSUM: Yes.

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CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: All right.

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                         (The document, as described, was
 2
                         herewith marked as Exhibit 36 for
 3
                         identification.)
                         CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Ms. Ross.
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                         MS. ROSS: Yes. I'm going to -- is this
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       mike working?
                     Is this working now?
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                         CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Yes.
 8
                         MS. ROSS: Tom Frantz is going to ask
       the questions.
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                         CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Mr. Frantz.
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                         MR. FRANTZ: Good morning.
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                           CROSS-EXAMINATION
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     BY MR. FRANTZ:
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          With this funding, do you still expect to fully
15
          implement your Outage Management System by the end of
16
          the year, and could you provide details on the
17
          implementation of the Outage Management System?
18
     Α.
          (Johnson) My understanding is that we're anticipating,
19
          I believe, in September to implement the Outage
20
          Management System, put it in place.
          And, based on the funding, if approved by the
21
     Q.
22
          Commission, will the Outage Management System be
23
          covered by this program or would it be --
24
          (Johnson) It is not included in this Program.
     Α.
                                                          The GIS
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 $\{DE\ 09-035\}\ \{06-17-15\}$

1 Connectivity Program will make the OMS more effective.

- What it does, it effectively ties each customer to a
- 3 transformer, to a protective device, and identifies the
- 4 phase that that customer is on, so that the OMS is
- 5 accurate.
- 6 MR. FRANTZ: Those are the only
- 7 questions I have. Thank you.
- 8 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Ms. Chamberlin.
- 9 MS. CHAMBERLIN: Thank you.
- 10 BY MS. CHAMBERLIN:
- 11 Q. The Company is requesting a distribution rate increase
- of 0.07 cents per kilowatt-hour, correct?
- 13 A. (Goulding) That's correct.
- 14 Q. And, of that amount, how much is for reconciling
- 15 historic expenses?
- 16 A. (Goulding) That would primarily be to reconcile the
- 17 historic expenses.
- 18 Q. Can you quantify it? Is it the entire amount or is
- there some identifiable amount that is for another
- 20 purpose?
- 21 A. (Goulding) I have approximately 5.4 million of the
- 22 total request is to reconcile the prior amounts.
- 23 Q. And, that is translated into the 0.07 cents per
- 24 kilowatt-hour?

- 1 A. (Goulding) 0.068 cents.
- 2 Q. Okay. And, I was asking the question to get at whether
- 3 or not this rate increase is an increase in the
- 4 Reliability Program or a continuation of it. Would you
- 5 characterize the programs that you are proposing as a
- 6 "continuation of the Program"?
- 7 A. (Johnson) Yes.
- 8 Q. And, your characterization is based on, like, how would
- 9 you -- where did you arrive at that?
- 10 A. (Johnson) Go ahead.
- 11 A. (Goulding) All the programs that are being done under
- this Reliability -- or, the extension of Reliability
- are to continue to fund reliability enhancement
- spending or programs. So, they're all reliability
- programs that are being -- the funding is being used
- for, which is consistent with the original REP.
- 17 Q. Now, of this distribution rate increase, it's been
- characterized as a "temporary rate" until the
- 19 Settlement Agreement is approved, is that correct?
- 20 A. (Goulding) That's my understanding.
- 21 Q. And, what would drive any change to this number
- between, say, July 1, 2015 and whenever the Settlement
- 23 Agreement is approved? Let's assume it's approved by
- the end of the year. Are there factors that would make

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1 this number change?
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- 2 A. (Goulding) I don't envision any factors. Because, if
- 3 there was any underspending for this year, versus what
- 4 was forecast, that would get rolled into the
- 5 reconciliation filing next year.
- 6 Q. So, any -- most likely, a change would happen in a
- 7 different filing next year?
- 8 A. (Goulding) Yes.
- 9 MS. CHAMBERLIN: Okay. All right.
- 10 That's all I have.
- 11 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Ms. Amidon.
- MS. AMIDON: Thank you.
- 13 BY MS. AMIDON:
- 14 Q. Mr. Johnson, I just thought for the record it would
- just be helpful just to have a brief description of
- what the Reliability Program is, to get an
- understanding of why it's important to continue this
- program that would otherwise expire June 30th.
- 19 A. (Johnson) The Reliability Enhancement Program provides
- for sustained funding for targeted programs
- 21 specifically to address reliability. And, it allows us
- 22 to, you know, focus dollars on projects that otherwise
- would not be funded. So, are you asking me to go
- through some of the specific programs?

- 1 Q. Well, no. But, as demonstrated in your testimony, you
- 2 have SAIDI --
- 3 A. (Johnson) Yes.
- 4 Q. -- graphs indicating SAIDI and SAIFI?
- 5 A. (Johnson) Sure.
- 6 Q. Has the Company experienced improvement in --
- 7 A. (Johnson) Sure.
- 8 Q. -- reducing customer interruptions as a result of this
- 9 program?
- 10 A. (Johnson) Thank you. Sure. Prior to 2007, our
- reliability metrics were not headed in a good
- direction. And, since the implementation of REP, we
- have consistently been improving our reliability
- metrics. Specifically, SAIDI, which is the average
- interruption duration per customer, but also SAIFI,
- which is the average frequency, interruption frequency
- incidents per customer. So, both of those reliability
- 18 metrics have continued to improve since the adoption of
- 19 the Program.
- 20 Q. Thank you. Now, most recently, I wouldn't say it's
- 21 "recent", but the Company filed in April of this year a
- report on what projects had been undertaken in the past
- 23 12 months, I believe. Is it the Company's intention to
- supply the Staff with a similar report next year, about

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1 the same time?
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- 2 A. (Johnson) Our intention is to provide information relative to the program going forward.
- Q. And, is the Company willing to meet with Staff to review this report that was recently filed and to discuss the reporting going forward?
- 7 A. (Johnson) Yes.
- Q. Okay. Thank you. Just for the record, would you
 briefly describe the GIS capital project as it relates
 to Outage Management by the Company?
- 11 A. (Johnson) Sure.
- 12 Q. Thank you.

20

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A. (Johnson) When our GIS system was put in place, some
assumptions had to be made specifically relative to,
for individual customers, which transformer they were
connected to, and also there was not at that time done
a verification of the protective device that each
customer was beyond, as well as which phase they were
on.

So, the importance of this Project is, once OMS goes in place, in order for the OMS to accurately reflect the location of outages and where customers are impacted, that data needs to be verified.

Q. Now, the Outage Management System, obviously, the title

- indicates what the intention of the system is. But
 what kind of information or technical assistance does
 that give the Company in managing the duration and the
 magnitude of outages?
 - A. (Johnson) Sure. What the Outage Management System does is to take calls that are coming in from customers and very early on determine where you have troubles on the system, what devices you have open on the system, and allows you to respond quicker and more effectively to outages on the system.
 - Q. Thank you. And, am I right that the Company's intention, I think as reflected in the Settlement Agreement, is to continue with the REP Program until its next distribution rate case, at least until, and have it discussed in its next distribution rate case, is that fair to say?
- 17 A. (Johnson) Yes.

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- MS. AMIDON: Thank you. I have no further questions.
- 20 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Thank you.
- 21 BY CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG:
- Q. This may be for Mr. Johnson. In listening to your testimony and reviewing the prefiled testimony, how do we distinguish between stuff that's just getting old

and obsolete and needs to be replaced and things that are essential to or new and that would be appropriate for special treatment in the Reliability Enhancement Program?

A. (Johnson) Previously, the way this was looked upon in the previous REP Program was, if I can give an example, for our Direct Buried Cable, if it was found that the concentric --

(Court reporter interruption.)

CONTINUED BY THE WITNESS:

A. (Johnson) -- neutral, concentric neutral had already degraded, then at that point it was considered an "obsolete" piece of material, and that was being handled under our base budget, as opposed to a proactive program of going out and trying to prevent outages or equipment failure.

And, again, when you look at age of equipment, be it circuit breakers or controls, rarely do they just, on a certain day, become obsolete. So, many of those types of programs are proactive in nature, to recognize where you're beginning to have difficulties with obtaining parts for replacement and those types of things. And, so, those are some of the items that are targeted through this program.

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BY CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG:
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          But, as particular aspects of the project are submitted
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     Q.
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          for review, that's the kind of dialogue you'd engage in
          with Staff or the OCA or other Parties to this docket
 4
          going forward?
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          (Johnson) Yes.
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                         CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: That was my major
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       question. I have nothing further.
                         Mr. Fossum, do you have anything else
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10
       for these witnesses?
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                         MR. FOSSUM: I do not.
12
                         CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: If there's nothing
13
       else, then we can excuse the witnesses.
14
                         We will strike the ID from the two
15
       exhibits we marked, 35 and 36, if there's no objection?
16
                         (No verbal response)
17
                         CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: And, there's none.
18
       So, we will do that. Are we ready to sum up?
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                         (No verbal response)
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                         CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: We are. Ms. Ross
21
       or Mr. Frantz, whoever is going to speak for you.
22
                                          Speaking for Staff
                         MS. ROSS: Yes.
23
       Advocates, we strongly support the Reliability Enhancement
24
       Program.
                 We recognize the benefits that it is bringing to
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1 the reliability and performance of the system. We think it's important to continue the Program. And, we believe, 2 3 because this is a small rate increase, and because it is 4 also a reconciling rate, that it would be appropriate at 5 this time for the Commission to approve it. 6 We also support it as part of our entry 7 into the general Settlement Agreement that's been filed 8 with this Commission. CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Ms. Chamberlin. 9 10 MS. CHAMBERLIN: Thank you. The OCA 11 supports the Company's proposal. The testimony is that 12 0.068 cents of the 0.07 cents per kilowatt-hour increase 13 is related to reconciliation. If there's any question 14 about the origin of these numbers, we can look at them 15 again when the temporary rate is proposed as a permanent 16 rate. So, we believe that it meets the intent of the 17 Settlement Agreement and should be accepted. 18 CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Ms. Amidon. 19 MS. AMIDON: Thank you. Due to the 20 timing of this filing, I will not say that Staff had the 21 time to review it in detail. But we do anticipate having 22 conversations with the Company regarding its April report, 23 and to discuss future plans.

Having said that, we support the

continuation of the Program, and believe that the

Commission should approve the proposed rate on a temporary
basis effective July 1.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Mr. Fossum.

MR. FOSSUM: Thank you. I want to begin by thanking the Staff, the OCA, the Advocate Staff, and especially the Commission, for reviewing this on the relatively tight timeframe in which it was submitted. So, I really do appreciate the time that was given to review this.

I'll note that the Settlement Agreement that's been filed and will ultimately be subject to the Commission's review specifically provides that the Company would make a filing in June of this year to reconcile expenses and revenues relating to the REP, and that any rate change required to reconcile the amounts would be accounted — would be taken into account and put into effect on July 1. And, so, consistent with that provision, that's what the Company did and that's what the Company has provided here.

By this request, the Company is seeking continued funding to support the REP, so that it can continue its programs on July 1st of this year, rather than have some lapse or gaps in the Program, because we do

truly believe that it is an important program and that it has led to meaningful benefits for customers.

With that said, and relative to the rate specifically, I would note that this request is for a "temporary rate". And, the numbers that are provided as part of the filing are based on the Company's books and records consistent with RSA 378:27. And, I would request then that the Commission approve this on a temporary basis, subject to its continuing review as part of the more comprehensive Settlement Agreement, and subject to future reconciliation as called for in that Settlement Agreement.

And, I would ask that any order on this be provided in sufficient time to permit it and all of the other rate changes we've discussed this morning to be implemented on July 1st, as requested. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HONIGBERG: Thank you. We will take this under advisement. As we've noted in the other hearings this morning, Commissioner Scott will be reviewing the expedited transcript and the exhibits from this proceeding. And, we understand the request for the orders in time for rate adjustments effective July 1. And, with that, we will adjourn. Thank you.

(Whereupon the hearing was adjourned at 11:16 a.m.)