BEFORE
THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO

In the Matter of the Application of The East Ohio Gas Company d/b/a Dominion Energy Ohio for Approval of Tariff Revisions	**)**	**Case No. 22-0179-GA-ATA**
In the Matter of the Application of The East Ohio Gas Company d/b/a Dominion Energy Ohio for Approval of Carbon Offset Program	**)**	**Case No. 22-0180-GA-UNC**

DIRECT TESTIMONY OF MATTHEW HUTCHINSON

ON BEHALF OF

DIRECT ENERGY BUSINESS LLC
DIRECT ENERGY SERVICES LLC
DIRECT ENERGY BUSINESS MARKETING LLC
ENERGY PLUS NATURAL GAS LLC
RELIANT ENERGY NORTHEAST LLC
STREAM OHIO GAS & ELECTRIC, LLC
AND
XOOM ENERGY OHIO, LLC
(collectively, "NRG Retail Companies")

May 24, 2023

Q.1. Please state your name, title, and business address.

A.1. My name is Matthew Hutchinson. I am currently employed by NRG Energy, Inc. I work at NRG's Green Mountain Energy Company subsidiary as a Senior Manager, Cross Serve & Core Product Development. My business address is 910 Louisiana St, Houston, TX 77002.

Q.2. What are your job responsibilities?

A.2. I am responsible for creating new energy products and programs for residential customers across the NRG Retail Companies, with a specific focus on renewable electricity and green gas offerings for residential customers.

Q.3. What is your business experience and educational background?

A.3. I have worked in the energy industry for over 12 years with a focus on renewable energy and sustainability. I have worked for NRG for over 7 years, with over 4 years working for the Product Development team and over 3 years working for the Portfolio Management team. Prior to working at NRG, I worked for EDP Renewables North America (a wind energy developer), Booz Allen Hamilton (a consulting firm), and three different start-up companies. I received a B.S. in Electrical Engineering from Rice University in Houston, Texas.

Q.4. Have you previously testified before the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio?

A.4. No.

Q.5. On whose behalf are you testifying?

A.5. I am testifying on behalf of the NRG Retail Companies.

Q.6. What is the purpose of your testimony?

A.6. I am testifying in support of the new non-tariffed program entitled "Decarbon Ohio Program", as recommended to the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio in the Stipulation and Recommendation ("Stipulation") filed on March 28, 2023, in these proceedings.

Q.7. Have you reviewed the Application and the Stipulation in these proceedings?

A.7. Yes, I have reviewed both the Application (filed on March 11, 2022) and the Stipulation.

Q.8. Please summarize the NRG Retail Companies' position in these proceedings.

A.8. The NRG Retail Companies are active competitive retail energy suppliers in Ohio who offer competitive retail natural gas services ("CRNGS") to residential customers, commercial customers, industrial customers and governmental entities. The NRG Retail Companies support the Decarbon Ohio Program as proposed in the Stipulation. Indeed, the NRG Retail Companies are among the signatory parties recommending that this unique program be approved and implemented in The East Ohio Gas Company d/b/a Dominion Energy Ohio ("Dominion Energy Ohio") service territory. NRG supports the Decarbon Ohio Program first and foremost because it will give Ohio natural gas customers in the Dominion Energy Ohio service territory additional options for lessening their carbon footprint. NRG also supports this type of partnership between the local distribution utility company and certified retail natural gas providers as an effective way to educate consumers and raise awareness for carbon gas products that will in turn

increase customer understanding and participation in the competitive retail natural gas market.

Q.9. Please discuss the NRG Retail Companies' commitment to environmentally sustainable products in Ohio and elsewhere.

A.9. NRG Energy, Inc. has set goals to reduce its U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions by 50 percent by 2025 and has a net-zero carbon emissions goal by 2050. The NRG Retail Companies support this goal through the sale of sustainable electricity and gas products that bundle Renewable Energy Certificates ("RECs") or carbon offsets, as well as standalone REC or carbon offset products that customers purchase separately from their electricity or gas service. Since 1997, NRG's subsidiary Green Mountain Energy Company has offered clean energy products to consumers. Green Mountain's current products include 100% renewable electricity plans, carbon neutral gas products, and standalone carbon offset products. Since 2002, Green Mountain customers have avoided over 98 billion pounds of CO2 emissions through their purchase of products.

Q.10. Does Green Mountain Energy Company serve customers in Dominion Energy Ohio's service territory?

A.10 No, Green Mountain Energy Company is not currently active in the Dominion Energy Ohio retail natural gas market.

Q.11. Does Green Mountain Energy Company offer carbon-neutral natural gas products such as those proposed in the Decarbon Ohio Program?

A.11. Yes.

Q.12. In which states does Green Mountain Energy Company offer carbon-neutral gas products to residential customers?

A.12. Pennsylvania, Illinois, and Maryland.

Q.13. Please describe Green Mountain Energy Company's carbon-neutral gas product.

A.13. Green Mountain Energy Company's "Carbon Conscious" gas product bundles carbon offsets with the customer's natural gas usage (1 metric ton per 188.6 therms of gas usage). Green Mountain Energy Company buys carbon offsets from U.S. projects that capture and use landfill gas (methane) to generate clean electricity. These projects are registered with Climate Action Reserve or Verified Carbon Standard. The natural gas delivered to customers' home is still exactly the same, but Green Mountain Energy Company's purchases carbon offsets on behalf of our customers to reduce the environmental impact of consuming natural gas.

Q.14. Are you familiar with the competitive retail natural gas market in Dominion Energy Ohio's service territory?

A.14. Yes, in general.

Q.15. What does the Stipulation propose to implement for the Dominion Energy Ohio service territory?

A.15. Dominion Energy Ohio proposes to implement the Decarbon Ohio Program. Under the Program, certified competitive retail natural gas providers would be responsible for the purchase and sale of carbon offsets and marketing carbon-offsetting rate offers to interested customers. Dominion Energy Ohio would facilitate the Program by fulfilling three roles: (a) educating customers on the importance of sustainability and

the general availability of carbon-offsetting rate offerings; (b) administering the Program, including initial and ongoing review of supplier eligibility and Program compliance, customer enrollment, and the creation and maintenance of customer portals; and (c) validating that suppliers obtained sufficient certified carbon offsets to fully offset emissions associated with enrolled customers. The Program would be a voluntary, opt-in program for both customers and suppliers.

Q.16. Will the stipulated Decarbon Ohio Program further develop the competitive retail natural gas market in Dominion Energy Ohio's service territory?

A.16. Yes. The Decarbon Ohio Program represents a unique partnership between a local distribution utility and competitive retail natural gas providers to raise awareness among customers about the availability and benefits of carbon neutral natural gas products. Increased interest in carbon-neutral gas products by educated and informed customers will spur competition and innovation among competitive retail natural suppliers to win the business of those customers.

Q.17. Will the stipulated Decarbon Ohio Program benefit the public?

A.17. Yes. Matching carbon offsets with natural gas usage reduces the environmental impact of the consumers' gas usage. Specifically, the CO2 equivalent emissions of the gas usage are offset through the purchase and retirement of carbon offset credits from U.S. based projects. This allows the consumer to reduce their carbon footprint, and to support projects that prevent greenhouse gas emissions from entering the atmosphere.

Q.18. Will the stipulated Decarbon Ohio Program promote the diversity of natural gas supplies and suppliers in Ohio?

A.18. Yes.

Q.19. Will the stipulated Decarbon Ohio Program encourage innovation and market access for natural gas services and goods?

A.19. Yes.

Q.20. Will the stipulated Decarbon Ohio Program create a program that corresponds with consumer interest in cleaner energy and the environment?

A.20. Yes. Consumers are interested in cleaner energy and the environment. For example, a Deloitte Resources 2020 study of residential energy consumers reported that 68% of consumers were very concerned about climate change and their personal carbon footprint, while 81% of millennials were very concerned.[1] Understanding that consumers need natural gas, it is important to provide retail natural gas offerings that enable the consumer to reduce the environmental impact of their gas usage. The Decarbon Ohio Program will allow consumers to reduce the impact of their natural gas usage through the purchase and retirement of carbon offsets, while still allowing for the consumer to use natural gas in the home.

[1] *See* https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/insights/us/articles/6655_Resources-study-2020/DI_Resources-study-2020.pdf.

Q.21. What is your recommendation to the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio regarding the Stipulation?

A.21. The Commission has a unique opportunity to establish a new program – a first of its kind in the Eastern United States to my knowledge. I recommend the Commission approve the Decarbon Ohio Program.

Q.22. Does this conclude your direct testimony?

A.22. Yes, but I reserve the right to supplement my testimony.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio's e-filing system will electronically serve notice of the filing of this document on the parties referenced on the service list of the docket card who have electronically subscribed to the case. In addition, the undersigned certifies that a courtesy copy of the foregoing document is also being served (via electronic mail) on this 24th day of May 2023 upon all persons listed below:

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Summary: Testimony -- Direct Testimony of Matthew Hutchinson electronically filed by Mrs. Gretchen L. Petrucci on behalf of Direct Energy Business LLC and Direct Energy Services, LLC and Direct Energy Business Marketing LLC and Energy Plus Natural Gas LLC and Reliant Energy Northeast LLC and Stream Ohio Gas & Electric, LLC and XOOM Energy Ohio, LLC.