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PUBLIC SERVICE
COMMISSION

112 Cooper Drive
Somerset, KY 42501
July 18, 2018

Public Service Commission
PO Box 615
Frankfort, KY 40602

Case: 2018-00005

Dear Sir:

I am writing to express my concern about, and opposition to, LG&E/KU's request to install smart meters in Kentucky homes and businesses. This move is expected to cost \$380 million, an estimate that the Attorney General's office has said is about half of what the cost to ratepayers will actually be. LG&E/KU has produced no in-depth analysis of actual costs. The meters will replace analog meters and will eliminate the jobs of those who currently read those meters. Aside from cost savings to the company, a cost that will undoubtedly be passed on to consumers in the future, LG&E/KU offers little that appears to benefit consumers and omits a host of problems that have already occurred in areas where smart meters have been installed.

The history of smart meters is troubling. Research has overwhelmingly demonstrated adverse health effects resulting after smart meters were installed with only a handful of industry-driven research showing otherwise. LG&E/KU offers no health and safety plan to examine and mitigate these health risks, a plan which should be conducted by an independent research group fully aware of the mounting credible research about the health risks of smart meters, research that has found the meters to be harmful to humans, particularly children. Radiation emission from such units is high and the generation of "dirty electricity" is continual, facts which utility companies in other areas have denied or lied about.

Another troubling aspect of smart meters is that under the guise of providing time-of-use information, the higher aim of utility companies is the infiltration and surveillance of private homes for the collection of data, data which can then be sold and, in worst case scenarios, used to control consumers. Miles Keogh, Director of Grants and Research with the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, has said, "I think the data [harvested by smart meters] is going to be worth a lot more than the commodity that's being consumed to generate the data." The sale of data has already occurred in other areas where smart meters have been installed. Smart meters will allow the tracking of every single movement within a household and will yield a profile of users. One expert has called it a "universal wire tap," and another has referred to it as another step toward "a surveillance society." This violates the Fourth

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Amendment which guarantees citizens the right to retreat into their own homes without undue intrusion.

In addition to exorbitant costs, lost jobs, health and safety risks, and data collection, there are other issues with smart meters. The meters are “buggy” and have required more maintenance than initially anticipated. Several smart meters have caused house fires. Finally, smart meters are far less durable than analog meters, lasting only about one-fourth to one-fifth as long as an analog meter. Smart meters last five-seven years and analog meters last 20-25 years and longer. Further, smart meters installed in other areas have not shown the energy savings promised by the utility company. Generally, energy usage has increased for households with smart meters and has resulted in increased rates. Utility companies have denied this is the result of smart meters but have produced no evidence to support their claim. Additional risks with smart meters are those inherent in any computer technology today, the ability to hack into systems, to engage in cyber-terrorism which could result in widespread outages vast areas.

A lack of transparency and failure to provide the public with detailed, factual information about adverse effects of smart meters by utility companies has raised citizen concerns in other areas where smart meters have been installed. There are grave concerns with smart meters that require intensive and objective evaluation. A decision should not be made on costs alone but on the broader harmful effects already demonstrated from exposure to smart meters. The money spent on smart meters would be more efficiently used in looking for ways to address pollution and on the expansion of other forms of clean energy.

Two sources provide a helpful start to understanding the larger concerns about smart meters from the consumer’s perspective. The 2017 documentary titled *Take Back Your Power* by Josh del Sol provides history and evaluation of the smart meter movement. Dr. Samuel Milham’s book, *Dirty Electricity*, provides an overview of health risks associated with exposure to dirty electricity including smart meters, cell phones, cell phone towers, etc. An epidemiologist, Dr. Milham has devoted his career to diseases of modern civilization. He is recognized as an independent and objective researcher.

The opt-out option for smart meters was offered only after court challenges in other areas where utility companies railroaded consumers into installing smart meters, sometimes installing these without consumer permission. (This happened in the state of Maine and resulted in a Supreme Court ruling favorable to consumers). LG&E/KU wants to charge consumers more if they choose to opt out of the smart meter installation. This hints of extortion. It is not always an option if you have to pay for it. Many people will not opt out because they will believe what they are told by the utility company, which has been a misrepresentation of facts or an outright omission of facts.

I encourage the commission to seriously review the history and all the non-industry research associated with this request. This is a radical change that demands the rigors of solid

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research and an evaluation of all variables, including health and privacy issues. LG&E/KU is clearly focused on cost, which means they are driven primarily by business motives, the bottom line, and not the best interests their consumers.

Thank you, in advance, for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brenda K. White". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Brenda K. White

Cc: Kentuckians for the Commonwealth (KFTC)
Honorable Andy Brashear, Attorney General
Honorable Tom Fitzgerald