



**KCEOC Community Action Partnership**  
PO Box 490, Barbourville, KY 40906

RECEIVED

DEC 23 2024

PUBLIC SERVICE  
COMMISSION

December 6, 2024

Public Service Commission  
PO Box 615  
Frankfort, KY 40602

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing on behalf of KCEOC Community Action Partnership in regard to Delta Gas' proposed rate increase, Case No. 2024-00346. Of particular concern is the 40% increase of residential properties. KCEOC Community Action Partnership has been a part of the Knox County, Kentucky community for sixty years. During this time, it has been our mission to target and alleviate the causes and conditions of poverty. We have seen people thrive and become self-sufficient; and, we have seen others who have many barriers, such as being elderly or disabled, that keep them from being as fortunate in meeting their long term goals. This is why seeing a 40% rate increase has KCEOC greatly concerned.

Not only are we currently working with families trying to make it from day to day, but we are also dealing with another great issue. We are dealing with a nationwide housing crisis. This is seen greatly here in Knox County. People are losing their housing and others are limited on the resources to even acquire housing. KCEOC currently has 70 individuals enrolled in our homeless outreach program; this means we have 70 people that we are working with from the streets. Our homeless shelter is not only full, it is overflowing. We recently took in a family living in an abandoned building, two parents with 5 children. To accommodate them, we purchased air mattress so that they would have somewhere to sleep. We have never in the history of operating a homeless shelter had to take such measures.

We anticipate that if rates increase, more families will be on the streets and there will be no where for them to go. There are no shelter facilities and the family that people have available, for the most part, are living in rental housing where they are prohibited from allowing others to stay in their home thus they risk losing their housing.

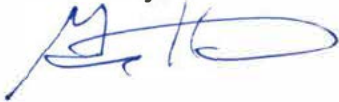
An increase in utility costs also forces low-income families to allocate a larger portion of their limited income towards paying energy bills, often leading to difficult choices between covering essential needs like food and healthcare, and maintaining adequate heating or cooling in their homes, potentially causing energy insecurity and further economic

hardship; this is often referred to as an "energy burden" where a household spends a disproportionate amount of their income on utilities. With Knox County the number three county in Kentucky with the highest rate of food insecurity, it may become even higher if more families become oppressed by excessive utility costs, especially during the winter months.

Another issue is that Delta Gas provides a primary heating source. We consider heat during the winter months to be a critical, basic human need. KCEOC operates the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) which provides funding for individuals toward heating costs. If rates increase, this does not mean benefits increase. Benefits are based on a number of factors, the least is the cost of the utility bill. There is a limit to what KCEOC can pay, regardless of how high the bill.

Thank you for allowing KCEOC Community Action Partnership to voice our concerns about how the proposed increase by Delta Gas can and will affect the over 200 customers KCEOC serves on an annual basis. If you need any additional information or would like to discuss anything further, please feel free to contact Paul D. Dole, KCEOC President/CEO, at 606-546-3152 extension [REDACTED] or via email at [REDACTED]

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "G. Helton", written over a white background.

Greg Helton  
KCEOC Board Chair