



May 3, 2024

Via Electronic Mail

Ms. Lora Johnson, CMC
Clerk of Council
Room 1E09, City Hall
1300 Perdido Street
New Orleans, LA 70112

In Re: RESOLUTION AND ORDER ESTABLISHING A DOCKET TO ASSESS AND AMEND
SERVICE REGULATIONS AND CODE PROVISIONS RELATED TO CUSTOMER PROTECTIONS
(Docket No. UD-23-02)

Dear Ms. Johnson:

Please find the enclosed Petition for Intervention and Inclusion on Service List of the Alliance for Affordable Energy in the above mentioned docket. Please file the attached communication and this letter in the record of the proceeding. We will submit physical copies at your instruction. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Jesse S. George
New Orleans Policy Director
Alliance for Affordable Energy

**Before
The Council of the City of New Orleans**

**In Re: RESOLUTION AND ORDER
ESTABLISHING A DOCKET TO ASSESS
AND AMEND SERVICE REGULATIONS
AND CODE PROVISIONS RELATED TO
CUSTOMER PROTECTIONS**

DOCKET NO. UD-23-02

MAY 3, 2024

REPLY COMMENTS OF THE ALLIANCE FOR AFFORDABLE ENERGY

I. INTRODUCTION

On December 14, 2023 the New Orleans City Council (“the Council”) adopted Resolution R-23-552 establishing the instant docket and procedural deadlines around utility service regulations and code provisions related to customer protections in the City of New Orleans. The parties filed initial comments on February 23, 2024, and held a technical conference on March 12, 2024. Per the procedural schedule, the Alliance for Affordable Energy (“Alliance”) now submits the following reply comments:

**II. ENTERGY NEW ORLEANS RATEPAYERS ARE EXPERIENCING A
CUSTOMER SERVICE CRISIS**

In its response dated February 26, 2024 to the Alliance’s data requests under this docket, Entergy New Orleans, LLC (“ENO”) reported a figure of 35,540 disconnections for nonpayment for the year 2023. At the March 12, 2024 technical conference under this docket, ENO reported a figure of over 36,000 disconnections for the same year. This is equivalent to approximately 19% of ENO’s residential customers, a staggering figure. By comparison, as the Council’s advisors indicated in their data requests to ENO, according to U.S. Energy Information Administration data for 2020, the national average for residential disconnections is approximately 9%, or

roughly half the rate for ENO customers.¹ While ENO has claimed repeatedly that it uses disconnection only as a “last resort”, this disparity represents a crisis of affordability and customer service for ENO ratepayers, and the Council must take bold action under this docket to address it.

III. THE ALLIANCE RE-URGES THE MEASURES ADVOCATED IN ITS PRELIMINARY COMMENTS

Given the urgency of the situation in which ENO ratepayers find themselves, the Alliance re-urges the following measures:

- 1) Prohibiting residential disconnections for nonpayment, **at least so long as ENO’s disconnection rates remain above the national average**
- 2) Adopting an arrearage management program that pairs debt forgiveness over time with enrollment in Energy Smart
- 3) Streamlining the bill dispute process by, among other measures, eliminating the requirement of a written disposition from Entergy before being able to file a formal complaint with the Council Utilities Regulatory Office (“CURO”)
- 4) Classifying refrigerators as medical equipment for the sake of medical needs certification

IV. THE COUNCIL SHOULD REQUIRE ENO TO REPORT ON DISCONNECTIONS AND BILL DISPUTES

Given the magnitude of the affordability and customer service crisis facing ENO ratepayers, the Council should institute a requirement that ENO submit monthly public reports to the Council on:

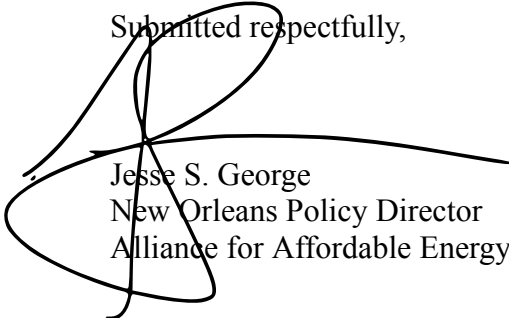
¹ <https://www.eia.gov/consumption/residential/data/2020/hc/pdf/HC%2011.1.pdf>

- 1) The number of residential disconnections during the previous month, by ZIP code
- 2) The number of residential disconnection notices issued during the previous month, by ZIP code
- 3) The number of residential bill disputes lodged with the company during the previous month, by ZIP code
- 4) Any other data the Council finds relevant to ENO's customer service

V. CONCLUSION

The Alliance prays that the Council recognizes the urgency of the situation that ENO ratepayers are in with regard to affordability and customer service. As the regulatory authority of a city uniquely threatened by the ongoing climate crisis, the Council must be willing to act boldly on behalf of ENO customers to protect them during the increasing periods of extreme heat and cold that we are experiencing. We cannot wait to follow the lead of others.

Submitted respectfully,



Jesse S. George
New Orleans Policy Director
Alliance for Affordable Energy

**Before
The Council of the City of New Orleans**

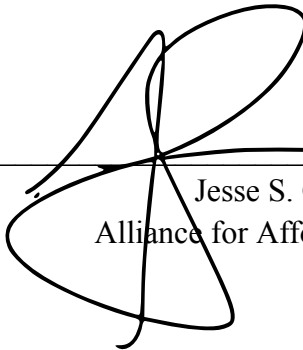
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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I do hereby certify that I have, this 3rd day of May 2024, served the foregoing correspondence upon all other known parties of this proceeding by electronic mail.



Jesse S. George
Alliance for Affordable Energy

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