

ILLINOIS COMMERCE COMMISSION DOCKET 12-0298
THE CITY OF CHICAGO'S RESPONSES TO
THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS'
FIRST SET OF DATA REQUESTS

AG 1.01

Ms. Weigert quotes Mayor Rahm Emmanuel to have stated: [B]ecause of the outdated system , today ComEd has to rely on customers to call in and complain before they knew where a power outage has occurred. Installing smart meters in homes and linking them to the Smart Grid will allow ComEd to immediately pinpoint any problem spot and reroute power around it while they repair the damage. Smart meters also provide home and business owners with the information they need to track their energy consumption in order to take control of their use and save money."

Mayor Emanuel and ComEd Announce 2,400 Jobs will be created through \$1.1 Billion Infrastructure Investment, Press Release, Jan 14, 2012.

Given the capability of AMI meters to notify ComEd of the location of customer outages immediately, does Ms. Weigert believe that ComEd should coordinate its schedule for AMI deployment with its schedule for reliability-focused distribution automation investments in order to reduce operating costs and improve service reliability in an optimal manner, both within the City of Chicago and ComEd's entire operating region?

RESPONSE

Ms. Weigert lacks the necessary technical expertise to answer this question.

OFFICIAL FILE

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AG CX Exhibit No. 10

Witness Hornby

Date 5-21-12 Reporter CC

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AG 1.02 With respect to her recommendations regarding Disconnection Assistance, Ms. Weigert states that ComEd should:

Acknowledge and provide for foreseeable effects of instituting the new billing and remote disconnection capabilities of AMI meters. Because of Chicago's significant population of lower income customers and the scheduled early application of new collection processes in ComEd's Chicago South operating center, more City residents are likely to be adversely affected by the impacts of remote disconnection than residents of many other communities served by ComEd. The AMI Plan's provisions for effective, focused education and assistance programs are especially important for the customers who will be the first to experience those effects and low-income customers who may be affected in ways more affluent customers will not. It is also likely that the time between notice of disconnection and actual disconnection will be compressed as compared to current practice. Thus, any assistance ComEd provides to customers at risk of disconnection must be provided on an efficient and proactive basis. **In addition, governmental bodies (like the City) that provide human services in the wake of a loss of essential utility services will also be affected.**

Direct Testimony, p. 4 (emphasis added). Please explain the ways "governmental bodies (like the City) that provide human services in the wake of a loss of essential utility services will also be affected."

RESPONSE

Electricity is a necessary part of modern life. Increased disconnections will very likely lead to increased reliance on support and emergency services provided by the City, other governmental entities, and social service agencies.

Examples of where disconnected customers may need access to such services include the following. When people do not have electricity, they will sometimes engage in risky behaviors such as using candles for light, and gas stoves or ovens for heat. Such behaviors can lead to emergencies to which the City responds. During the winter, heating systems (electric heating and forced air non-electric) require electricity, and the loss of electric utility service result in a need for assistance from City agencies. On hot days, people who do not have air conditioning or fans may have to rely on cooling centers, libraries, and other public facilities to relieve heat-related stress.

The City operates six designated warming and cooling centers, and the City uses other public and community facilities as needed. Although some of these other "as needed" facilities are City facilities that would otherwise be open, designating them as warming or cooling centers would

likely require extra staffing, extra outreach, and potentially keeping these facilities open for extra hours.

In addition, the City encourages residents to call the City's 311 system for many reasons, including: locating a cooling or warming center; requesting a well-being check for at-risk neighbors or relatives; reporting inadequate heat in a residence; learning about home heating assistance programs; or connecting to shelter or supportive services. Presumably the need for such services would increase if more people are disconnected.

The increase in demand for such services would likely affect the City's Police, Fire, and Family and Support Services Departments.

Given the short time frame for this case and because the City can not yet determine the full impact of increased disconnections, the City can not project or quantify the additional strain on City resources.

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Ms. Weigert states that "to mitigate the problems associated with increased disconnections, ComEd's Plan should be modified in at least the following ways:

- targeting customer outreach and education programs to at-risk customers' regarding the use of AMI meter data and other means to enable energy efficiency and conservation;
- requiring enhanced communications through the ComEd call center, proactive collection calls, disconnection notices, and the Internet to facilitate enrollment in state-sponsored customer assistance programs, including the PIPP and LIHEAP programs;
- requiring enhanced communications about the availability of ComEd customer assistance programs through the ComEd call center, proactive collection calls, disconnection notices and the Internet;
- using the energy low-income and support program established pursuant to Section 16-108.5(b-10) of the Public Utilities Act to aid customers in paying past due arrearages;
- requiring ComEd to coordinate with other sources of customer education and assistance through work with stakeholders, such as the Chicago Housing Authority, local administering agencies, social service agencies and others to increase awareness of ComEd and state-sponsored assistance programs and to explore new approaches to customer assistance program planning and design;
- devote a portion of section 16-108.5(b-10) funds to assistance to customers (possibly through local government human services departments) **who are unable to avoid disconnection**; and
- requiring ComEd to notify the City of Chicago and other municipalities regarding impending disconnections on a zip code (or some more specific basis). (Such notifications must be made in compliance with State laws governing the privacy of utility customer information).

Direct Testimony, pp. 15-16 (emphasis added).

What is specifically meant by devoting funds to persons "who are unable to avoid disconnection"? Is Ms. Weigert proposing that the Section 16-108.5(b-10) funds should be provided, at least in part, to customers who have already been disconnected due to inability to pay in order to assist them in retiring past due balances and getting reconnected? Or is she asserting that those funds only be offered to customers who have not yet been disconnected?

RESPONSE

Ms. Weigert's testimony is that the funds ComEd must pay pursuant to section 16-108.5(b-10) should be provided to both categories of customers; those who have been disconnected and those who are at risk of disconnection.