BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

OF THE

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

COMMISSIONER KAREN DOUGLAS, in attendance

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE MICHELLE COOKE, presiding

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Application of Southern California Gas Company (U904G) for Authority, Among Other Things, to Update its Gas Revenue Requirement and Base Rates Effective on January 1, 2028.	)	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION HEARING
	)	Application 26-06-014
Application of San Diego Gas & Electric Company (U902M) for Authority, Among Other Things, to Update its Electric and Gas Revenue Requirement and Base Rates Effective on January 1, 2028.	)	Application 26-06-015 (Consolidated)

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EL MONTE, CALIFORNIA

NOVEMBER 9, 2026 - 2:01 P.M.

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CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE COOKE: The Commission will come to order. This is the time and place set for one of the public participation hearings in the general rate case applications of Southern California Gas Company, which is Application 26-06-014, and San Diego Gas & Electric Company, Application 26-05-015.

These two applications are being considered together; and throughout this hearing, I will most likely refer to Southern California Gas Company as SoCalGas and San Diego Gas & Electric company as SDG&E.

My name is Michelle Cooke, and I am the chief administrative law judge of the California Public Utilities Commission. The administrative law judges assigned to the proceeding are Sarah Thomas and Elizabeth Fox, who will be reviewing the transcript of today's hearing.

I am also joined by Commissioner Karen Douglas, who is the assigned commissioner for this case.

Commissioner Douglas, would you like to make any opening remarks?

COMMISSIONER DOUGLAS: Yes. Thank you.

Good afternoon, everybody, and thank you for being here today. I'd like to start by thanking Chief ALJ Cooke for presiding over today's public participation hearing, as well as thanking Judges Thomas and Fox for their work on this proceeding.

I'm the commissioner assigned to oversee this proceeding, where we will be reviewing the SoCalGas's test year 2028 general rate case, or GRC. And I appreciate everybody taking time out of their busy day to participate in today's hearing; and in particular, the members of the public who are here to share your perspectives with us.

This in-person public participation hearing will be followed by two virtual public participation hearings on December 9th and December 10th.

These hearings are an important way for the Commission to hear directly from individuals in communities who are impacted by the results of this proceeding; and your comments today will give us valuable insights into your concerns, priorities, and experiences, and will help us make informed decisions as we get deeper into the proceeding and the evidence that will be presented in it.

For this general rate case, we will be determining the total amount of revenue that SoCalGas is

authorized to collect to cover various utility costs from 2028 through 2031, as well as the allocation of those costs; and as we do this, we have to bear in mind, first of all, that there are a number of very important priorities that will need to be considered and addressed that are fundamental to maintaining affordable, safe, reliable, and clean energy service.

Among those are infrastructure maintenance, system upgrades to support operations, pipeline modernization, and more; and in addition, that these investments and others have costs, and there is a very real and important affordability challenge that faces ratepayers that also has to be considered.

And to that end, the Commission will be scrutinizing the necessity of SoCalGas's requested funding authorization and taking action, where appropriate, to contain costs and minimize any resulting rate increases.

With that said, I want to say once again that I appreciate the opportunity to hear from the public today. We are also joined by an advisor from Commissioner Harada's office, David Fermino. Commissioner Harada and I will be working together and looking at this application together throughout the process; and so I'd like to thank her, her advisor, and

the many people who've worked to make today's hearing possible, including, again, Judge Cooke, Judge Fox, the Public Advisor's Office, our -- our court reporters, and our staff. Thank you very much.

And back to you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you, Commissioner Douglas.

One other note. Could I ask a favor of everybody, to make sure you silence your cellphones so that the folks that are speaking today don't get interrupted by noises? That also helps our court reporters record things accurately.

So as Commissioner Douglas mentioned, this is the first in a series of in-person public participation hearings that we're going to be holding regarding these applications.

There are additional virtual public participation hearings that will take place on December 9th and 10th; and if you got a copy of the agenda, it has the information about that on it.

The overall purpose of today's hearing is to obtain public feedback and comments from SoCalGas and SDG&E customers and the general public about these particular applications. Your input and comments are extremely helpful as the parties and the Commission

continue to consider all aspects of SoCalGas and SDG&E's requests prior to rendering a decision.

Before receiving the public comments, I just want to give a brief overview of the California Public Utilities Commission and the SoCalGas and SDG&E applications.

So the California Public Utilities Commission is the agency that regulates the privately owned utilities throughout the state, like SoCalGas and SDG&E. Among other things, the Commission decides how much money SoCalGas and SDG&E should be authorized to collect from customers and the actual rates that will be included on customer bills for gas and electric service.

The Commission has five commissioners who are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the state senate. Administrative Law Judges Thomas and Fox, they will be managing the day-to-day activities of this case; however, the five commissioners are ultimately the ones who will decide and vote on whether or not to approve the SoCalGas and SDG&E requests for some other amount.

The job of the administrative law judges will be to evaluate all of the evidence in the proceeding and to write a proposed decision for the commissioners to consider. The five commissioners will then decide whether to adopt the proposed decision from the

administrative law judges or adopt their own alternate decision based on the evidence in the proceeding. It's estimated that the Commission will vote on this decision at the end of 2027.

So to briefly summarize the applications, in June of 2026, SoCalGas and SDG&E submitted their general rate case requests asking the Commission for approval of the expected costs to own and operate the companies for the years 2028 to 2031.

The expenses that are included in rate case applications generally cover poles, wires, pipelines, meters, employees, and all other activities that are needed to deliver gas and electricity to homes and businesses.

The application also includes capital expenditures to upgrade the gas and electric systems, replace infrastructure, increase gas safety, address other safety risks, such as wildfire, and improve cybersecurity, among many other things that are covered.

So right now we are here to receive comments from the public regarding both applications. The SoCalGas application requests to increase the revenues that it collects from customers in 2028 by 10.4 percent over the 2027 rates. SDG&E's request is to increase their electric rates by 5.5 -- oh, 8.7 percent.

So the impact that such a revenue increase would have on customer bills will vary, and it will depend on many factors, such as how much energy a customer uses.

However, if the request is approved, we would expect the impact on a typical non-CARE customer to be 7.6 percent compared to 2027 rates for SoCalGas, and 7.7 percent compared to 2027 rates for a CARE customer.

We want to hear from you what you think about the SoCalGas and SDG&E requests. Comments from the public will help the Commission reach an informed decision.

As I mentioned several times before we went on the record, we have court reporters that are transcribing today's hearings. They'll be taking down everything that is being said.

The commissioner and I will be paying close attention to the opinions expressed during today's public hearing. If you do speak, we ask that you speak slowly and clearly so that the reporters are able to capture everything that is said. The written transcript of today's hearings will be posted publicly on the docket card for this proceeding.

If you or anyone else that you know are not able to make comments today, there are several other

ways to provide input or become involved. The Commission considers written public comments regarding the applications, which can be submitted on the docket card. There are also representatives here from the Commission's Public Advisor Office, and they're located at the table outside of the room if you would like additional information on how to submit written public comments, how to become involved in the proceeding, or otherwise stay abreast of the proceeding developments.

We also have a couple of customer service representatives from SoCalGas here if you have any customer billing or service requests that are not directly related to the application, but perhaps are related to your own billing situation. You're welcome to see them. They're out in the lobby.

All right. So we will now hear from members of the public who have signed up to speak. When I call your name, please come up to the podium. If you have any written remarks, I'm going to ask that you hand those to Eric Sawyer, who is one of our public advisors. He's up here on the left. He will also be doing a -- a time for you at two minutes.

I'm going to call three people so that we can have people stand up and have less turnover in the -- the waiting time for people to get up there as well. We

want to make sure there's an accurate record of today's hearing; and so please do be quiet when people are speaking because if there is crosstalk, it makes it very difficult to make an accurate record.

Okay. So I'm going to call four people up first. First will be Steve Tye, followed by Newton Vieng Khou -- apologies if I mispronounce names -- then Alberto Ruiz and Ruth Low. First will be Steve Tye. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER TYE

Thank you very much. My name is Steve Tye, and I'm the mayor of Diamond Bar. I represent all of Diamond Bar when I tell you that our residents rely on the Southern California Gas Company to provide necessary, safe, reliable service for our community.

It is critical that the gas company maintains the safety and integrity of the natural gas system, a system all users depend on. Southern California Gas supports reliable service for the homes, the businesses, and the critical facilities in Diamond Bar.

Speaking as a resident of Diamond Bar, I'm here to support a modest rate increase. And I heard just a few minutes ago 10 percent, 8.7 percent, 7 percent. I'm just saying a modest rate increase for SoCalGas over three years, an amount of 5 to $7 per month. It costs

more than that for lunch at In-N-Out. No other utility has lower rates.

Please give this request your greatest attention. Thank you very much for your time.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you, Mr. Tye.

Next, Newton Vieng Khou.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER KHOU

Hi. Good afternoon. Good afternoon, commissioners and members of the California Public Utilities Commission. My name is Newton Vieng Khou, and I'm here today on behalf of the California state assembly member Phillip Chen, who represents the 59th assembly district in Orange County.

Assemblyman Chen recognizes the importance of maintaining safe, reliable, and affordable natural gas services for the millions of Californians who depend on it every day. As the Commission reviews Southern California -- Southern California Gas Company's general rate case, we encourage a balanced approach that prioritizes public safety, infrastructure maintenance, and operational efficiency and long-term reliability.

Natural gas infrastructure plays an important role in serving our homes, businesses, hospitals, and other essential facilities throughout Southern California. Maintaining this infrastructure requires

ongoing inspections, modernization, and a highly skilled workforce capable of meeting public safety and regulatory standards.

We also recognize the importance of continued workforce development, apprenticeship programs, and technical training to ensure that qualified professionals are available to safely maintain and operate these critical systems.

At the same time, affordability remains a significant concern for California families and businesses. We encourage the Commission and SoCalGas to continue identifying operational efficiencies, exercising fiscal responsibility, and ensuring that necessary investments deliver meaningful benefits to ratepayers.

Assemblyman Chen believes that public safety, reliable energy service, workforce readiness, and affordability should remain central considerations throughout the regulatory process. We appreciate the Commission's commitment to a thorough and transparent review of the encouraged continued collaboration among regulators, utilities, skilled workers, and the communities they serve.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to provide these comments on behalf of Assemblyman Phillip

Chen.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you very much, and apologies for mispronouncing your name.

Next we have Alberto Ruiz.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER RUIZ

Good afternoon. My name is Alberto Ruiz; and I'm here on behalf of State Assembly Member Lisa Calderon, representing the 56th assembly district.

When you turn on your stove or your heater, you trust that the system is safe, right? So we're here today to ask that you consider a balanced approach; that we understand we need strong infrastructure, that our workers are well paid, but that our communities are protected and can afford the utility rates.

Cutting corners on safety is never a savings option; but we don't want to pose a risk to our workers in our neighborhood, so we respectfully ask the Commission support these safety investments, but be mindful of two things: Safety and affordability aren't opposing ideas, and that we consider a balanced approach.

Thank you so much for your time.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

Next we have Ruth Low.

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STATEMENT OF SPEAKER LOW

Good afternoon, Judge Cooke and Commissioner Douglas. Thank you for the opportunity to speak this afternoon. You're going to get a double dose from Diamond Bar today.

As mayor pro tem of the City of Diamond Bar, I represent over 55,000 residents, and they all rely on natural gas every day to warm their homes, cook their meals, especially all Chinese food, and all the -- all the heating that they require at this time of the year.

As the California Public Utilities begins its review of the rate case, it's -- our community wants to make one thing clear: We support safety, we support reliability, and, of course, security, and every dollar -- but every dollar added to our monthly bill must be rigorously scrutinized.

We do recognize the necessity of the essential work outlined in this request, and we believe that it's necessary to protect the physical integrity of the pipelines, meeting the safety standards set by state and local regulators, being mindful of cybersecurity, and, of course, being -- keeping service dependable for homes, businesses, and critical facilities.

Indeed, no one in our city wants a compromised system or be subject to interrupted services. However,

affordability is not just a concern for residents, it's a daily balancing act. With the estimated increases that your Honor quoted earlier between 567, it might sound modest on paper, but please be mindful that for working families living day to day, paycheck to paycheck, or even seniors on a fixed income, every single hike means a hit to the budget, however great or however small.

That's why this public review is so important. We're grateful for the diligence of your review today. We ask the CPUC hold Southern California Gas to the highest standard of fiscal accountability. We ask that you ensure that every proposed investment is truly essential and necessary, and that all operational facilities are fully realized.

Of course, we're mindful that having these things costs money; and for that, I think everyone in our community agrees.

Thank you so much for your diligent consideration of this request and for my comments. Thank you and good afternoon.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

All right. Our next four speakers are Maya Douglas, Rory Folsom, Ben Clayton, and Pete W.]

All right. Our first speaker is Maya Douglas.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER DOUGLAS

Yes. Thank you. Good afternoon, everyone. Maya Douglas, district director for Assemblymember Mike Gipson; I am here on his behalf.

I want to emphasize the importance of maintaining a natural gas system that is safe, reliable, and resilient for more than 21 million people and thousands of businesses and critical facilities that depend on SoCalGas service throughout Southern California.

The proposed investments for 2028 through 2031 are focused on essential needs. These include maintaining and inspecting pipelines, meeting state and federal safety requirements, strengthening infrastructure, addressing operational and cybersecurity risks, and ensuring reliable service for residents, businesses, and critical facilities. These are important investments in the continued safety and integrity of a system that communities rely on everyday.

At the same time, I recognize that affordability is a significant concern for households and businesses, and any proposed rate increase deserves careful consideration, particularly given the financial pressures many families and small businesses are already experiencing. While individual impacts will vary, it is

important that the CPUC carefully evaluate these costs, and ensure customers are receiving measurable value from the proposed investments.

I also encourage continued efforts by SoCalGas to identify operational defic- -- efficiencies, manage expenses, and minimize the impact on customers while maintaining safety and rely -- reliability. Ultimately, we need a balanced approach, one that prioritizes public safety, system reliability, infrastructure, resilience, and affordability.

Thank you to the CPUC for providing this opportunity for public comment and for carefully considering the needs and concerns of the community served by SoCalGas. Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. All right. Rory Folsom.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER FOLSOM

Good afternoon, commissioners and your Honor. I'm Rory Folsom, director of Meruelo Enterprises Safety, a company directly involved in building and maintaining all aspects of this state's critical infrastructure.

While this state's aging infrastructure -- as you review this application, I encourage careful consideration of the document safety needs systems reliability with the upcoming massive high demand.

Delaying essential maintenance can make risks more difficult and costly to address, raising public safety concerns. Our goal should be safer operations for the employees, customers, surrounding communities with appropriate accountability for everyone. Thank you, commissioners.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. Our next speaker is Ben Clayton.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER CLAYTON

Good afternoon. My name is Ben Clayton. I'm the business manager of Local 250, Los Angeles. What we do is we supply skilled and trained welders, fitters, helpers to work through our contractors for Southern California Gas.

Reliability, integrity, all -- we do every aspect of all the work, and since the last rate case, our numbers have started dwindling, and our hours are -- are very poor, and it's not because we've got everything fixed. So there's still a lot of rebuilding that needs to be done, and nobody's talking about the rate case, and all that. Yeah, does something need to come up a little bit to cover this? Yes. We're all willing to pay a little bit more to make sure that we don't make the next news event with more than one camera, like we have in here today. So please consider the -- the new

rate case. Thanks.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. Our next speaker is Pete W.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER WOHLGEZOGEN

Good afternoon. My name is Pete Wohlgezogen, and I'm a representative for UA Local 250, steamfitters refrigeration Los Angeles.

I'm here to speak on behalf of the 6800 members that work here locally with companies like SoCalGas. I'm speaking in support of SoCalGas regarding the general rate request. SoCalGas has been a great partner of UA Local 250. We invest heavily in our training, which is right down the street here in El Monte; in turn, the apprentices and our skilled and trained workforce at Local 250 have the privilege to work for companies like SoCalGas.

These projected costs in this rate request are primarily comprised of required safety and compliance work, ongoing systems operations, and targeted investments designed to maintain safe and reliable service.

Our members work many hours on jobs like these. Our members are comprised of men, women, people that are granted a second chance, and veterans. These jobs help our members earn a livable wage in California so they

can provide for their families. Our members' jobs depend on companies such as SoCalGas, and SoCalGas' safety depends on proper maintenance of these facilities by skilled workers like ours. Thank you for your time.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. All right. Our next four speakers are Matthew Gains, Bruce Munoz, Willy Kunz and Julia Emerson.

Go ahead, Matthew Gains.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER GAINS

All right. Thank you. My name is Matthew Gains. I'm a resident of Littlerock, California, up in the Antelope Valley.

As a 30-year-plus customer of the Southern California Gas Company, I couldn't be happier. My service is never interrupted by winds, my water is always hot, my heater always works, unless it's windy and a less reliable utility is involved, and my bill is always very affordable. As a person who works in construction with a focus on infrastructure, I appreciate the idea of not just maintaining, but strengthening this energy infrastructure system.

On September 1st, 2026 Governor Gavin Newsom requested that the CPUC report on the impacts of inaction to provide structural reforms to stabilize the utility sector, and address the customer affordability

crisis stemming from the increased risks of catastrophic wildfires. The 58-page report was released to the public on November 1st, 2026; two months, pretty impressive for a government agency. Can you guess which utility is not mentioned in any of the 58 pages of this report? Southern California Gas Company.

The highlights of the conclusions are as follows: Wildfire costs will continue to increase electric bills and make electricity increasingly unaffordable, particularly for lower-income households in the hotter parts of the state; and second, despite continued progress on reducing wildfire ignitions, wildfire liability risks will continue to pressure utility credit ratings and constrain investments needed to maintain the safe, reliable, and clean electric grid.

I mention these two conclusions for two reasons. Nobody is suing the Southern California Gas Company to do the right thing. The second thing, this increase is pretty manageable for most customers. Speaking for myself, I prefer the ability to make my own choices on which energy options work best for me and my family. Clearly, some of our fellow Californians will need some sort of relief, and should continue to receive it under the available programs offered by the Southern California Gas Company. I ask you to support this

general rate case request. Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. Our next speaker is Bruce Munoz.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER MUNOZ

Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Bruce Munoz. I am a proud member of UA Local 250, and I currently work for The Apprentice and Journeyman Training Trust Fund as a pipeline supervisor. Part of my job is helping train and prepare the next generation of pipeline welders and gas distribution workers. When you're working on a natural gas pipeline, there's no room for shortcuts. There has -- it has to be -- the work has to be done right, and most important, it has to be done safely. Safety is -- isn't just something that we talk about in the classroom; it's something that we teach, we practice, and we expect our workers to carry with them every day on the job. Through our training program, I get to see firsthand the time and the effort that goes into preparing these men and women, whether it is a pipeline being built or gas distribution installations, oper's (phonetic) qualifications, or hands-on evaluations. Our goal is to make sure that they're ready for the responsibilities they'll face out in the field, and that takes resources. It takes updated appointment, proper training facilities,

experienced instructors, and opportunities for apprentice and journeyman to continue to improve their skills. We can't expect -- we can't expect to maintain a safe and reliable natural gas systems without continuing to invest in the people responsible for doing this work.

I understand that affordability is a concern. Families and businesses are dealing with high rising costs, and any proposed rate increase needs to be looked at carefully. At the same time, maintaining our infrastructure, meeting safety requirements, and preventing -- and preventing problems before they happen are things that we take -- we take (sic) afford to overlook. When we talk about investing in pipeline safety, we're talking about protecting the communities that we live and work. As the Commission reviews this request, I hope you consider not only the infrastructure improvements being prop -- proposed, but also the importance of having a well-trained qualified workforce to perform that work.

At the UA Local 250 in the A&J training center, we -- we take pride on what we do or just -- we're not just teaching someone how to weld or work on a pipeline; we're helping people build careers, support their families, and develop their skills needed to keep our

community safe. At the end of the day, the quality of our work and the training that we provide have a direct impact on public safety. That's a responsibility we take seriously. I believe that continuing to invest in safety, training, and our workforce is the right thing to do, but for the years -- not just for today, but for the years ahead. Thank you for your time and allowing me to share my perspective.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Munoz.

SPEAKER MUNOZ: Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Also, just so everybody knows, that's the timer that you heard. So that -- when you do hear a timer, please do wrap up at that point. Thank you.

Our next speaker is Willy Kunz.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER KUNZ

Hi. Good afternoon. My name is William Kunz, and I'm a SoCalGas ratepayer, a proud member of Local 250, and I represent over 18,000 members for the Southern California Pipe Trades.

As a ratepayer, I believe that investment in our natural gas infrastructure is necessary, and must come with a commitment to a hundred percent skilled and trained workforce.

Public safety must come first, and safety requires investment. Workers installing, maintaining, and repairing our natural gas infrastructure must have the training, qualifications, and experience to do the job right. Ratepayers deserve nothing less, and we support this. Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. The next speaker is Julia Emerson.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER EMERSON

Thank you. I am Julia Emerson. I'm an independent retired individual. I live in the Santa Ana 927 -- 92705 area. I'm not resent -- representing any organization or company, or anybody else, but I'm -- I'm interested in energy issues.

I've looked at how this proposal would affect residents like me, and I find the proposal reasonable. I found information in multiple spots that it would affect my personal gas bill maybe $6 a month. But, with the ongoing cumulative inflate -- inflation that we've all faced -- and I -- and I'm sure The Gas Company faces the exact same inflation, if not more -- this proposal makes sense to me.

It's important that I get to keep my natural gas service and my -- my gas stove. And -- and in my entire lifetime, I have never had an unplanned outage at

my house. So whatever the gas company is doing, they're doing it right, I would say. I don't have the equivalent of blackouts. I -- I have dependable service. I like that. I like being able to use it, and I thank you for making it possible. And this is reasonable, and I think you've helped make it reasonable. Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. All right. Our next four speakers are Ty Maze, Larry Bustos, Nat Williams, and Daniel Mora.

Our first -- first speaker is Ty Maze.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER MAZE

Hello. My name is Ty Maze. I'm a Local 250 member, pipefitter, welder, spent 17 years working on SoCalGas lines, and I can tell you that my first and foremost concern is always public safety.

We're held up to a certain degree of craftsmanship by SoCal for the reason of public safety. To not allow them to have the funds that would further repair any sort of damage to our lines that are feeding the public that's the biggest concern that I ever have. I care about my family, and everything else, and I'm sure everybody else does.

So I'm in support of SoCalGas and their raising money that they're trying to get approved from -- from

this board. Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. Our next speaker is Larry Bustos.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER BUSTOS

Thank you. Good afternoon, everybody. My name is Larry Bustos. I'm a member of the Laborers' Union, and I'm here to speak in support of the rate increase.

The work that would be generated from this increase is extremely important and essential to our current and our future union members, as well as all of the communities involved. This type of work does require a skilled and trained workforce, and that is exactly what LiUNA provides through our state certified journeyman and our apprenticeship program. Our apprenticeship program is open to everybody, including -- and I -- what I think is one of the most important -- our veterans coming home after service looking for an amazing career.

Infrastructure, safety, modernization, reliability, and efficiency are essential to everyone -- everybody's lives in the communities, and it will also provide great jobs and amazing opportunities for those that need it. For those reasons, and many more, we are in support of the increase, and look forward to seeing it pass. Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. Our next speaker is Nat Williams.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER WILLIAMS

Good afternoon, everybody. My name's Nat Williams. I'm a retired business agent from Local 250. I was in charge of all the pipeline work for SoCalGas and San Diego Gas where is -- without Southern California; also, the training for the pipeline school and for transmission and distribution, and did a lot of work with SoCalGas.

And the rates that they're asking for is probably the price of doing business in California right now. And I must say, they do a great job on the infrastructure, taking care of it, because I also have dealt with PG&E, and you know what happened in San Bruno. People died because of it, the explosion and stuff like that there. Well, SoCalGas has never had that.

And we, at our local, and the building trades will ask that you please push forward, and make sure that SoCalGas continues to do the great job that they've been doing. Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. Our next speaker is Daniel Mora.

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STATEMENT OF SPEAKER MORA

Hi. Good afternoon. My name is Daniel Mora. I'm with the Laborers' Union Local 585. We are in Ventura County. I'm also a ratepayer with SoCalGas.

I understand if some folks are going to be concerned about any kind of raise, even if it's a dollar. We live in the most expensive county in the state, essentially, and so I -- I get, in Ventura County, you know, we can be concerned about these kind of things; but, what we do is we look at it as an investment. These are -- I wouldn't even just say the, you know, skilled and trained; I would say the most highly skilled in the country, considering all the training that we do that is state certified. So this is an investment into our communities. This is an investment into our workers. It's an investment, and for the future. And what we don't want to do is defer any kind of payments, because at the end of the day, we're not -- we're not stopping a raise, we're actually deferring it, and kicking the can down the road to a later generation that might have to pay an astronomical amount to do a recovery or to -- to fix a -- a catastrophic issue.

So this is not only an investment in the workers, but it's also investment in the infrastructure

to maintain everything and to keep us -- and to keep the community at a good level to where we have really good maintenance and gas. Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. All right. Our next four speakers are Jose Garcia, Jason Walls, Roosevelt Ruben, and Ron Mukai.

All right. Jose Garcia.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER GARCIA

Thank you. Good afternoon, everybody. Thank you for the opportunity to speak. My name's Jose Garcia. I'm a 39-year member of the Laborers' International Union of North America, aka LiUNA.

I thought of this a little different way. I can't say what everybody else said to not be repetitive, but I'm retiring in four months, and I will be going on a fixed income, and I have to really watch what I'm going to invest in, and I feel that this is a great self investment for the whole community due to the fact it will create jobs, it supports apprenticeships, skilled and trained jobs, it supports the trades, it's going to increase and -- and -- safety for the community.

I -- I was in -- I'm also from Ventura County. The Thomas Fire came right behind my house, and we were evacuated. And I know that ailing infrastructure is -- is a part of the big problem. So for that, and many

other reasons that have already been said, we are in full support of this rate increase. Thank you so much.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. Congratulations on your upcoming retirement.

Next, we have Jason Wall.]

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER WALL

I won't be retiring in four months, but that's okay.

Good afternoon, Commissioners and your Honor. My name is Jason Wall. I own Doty Bros. Construction Company. I'm speaking from the perspective of a business involved in the critical infrastructure in support of the GRC.

Safe and reliable natural gas service depends on ongoing maintenance, trained personnel, preventative inspections, and responsible long-term planning. These investments help protect workers, customers, businesses, and the communities that rely on this infrastructure every single day.

Infrastructure projects also support skilled trades, as you see here in the room today, local contractors, suppliers, and, more importantly, the working families throughout Southern California.

As the Commission reviews this application, I encourage a balanced, evidence-based approach that

carefully evaluates needs, system reliability, workforce impact, and the economic consequences of investment decision-making.

Approved spending should be transparent, cost-effective, and tied to measurable outcomes that provide long-lasting value to customers and the communities.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to speak today.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

Our next speaker is Roosevelt Ruben.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER RUBEN

Good afternoon, everybody. My name is Roosevelt Ruben. I'm here representing UAW 250 welders, fitters, and apprentices here in Los Angeles. I'm here today on behalf of our local union members' support of SoCalGas and its general rate case request.

SoCalGas has been a strong partner to our union. We invest heavily in training skilled workers at our facilities in El Monte and Gardena. SoCalGas provides opportunities for our members to put these skills to work.

The investment outlined in this request supports critical safety maintenance and infrastructure improvements. The work directly impacts our workforce

by creating sustainable, good-paying, skilled jobs throughout our Southern -- throughout Southern California.

Our members include men, women, and individuals looking for a second chance. These jobs provide liveable wages, support families, and help build stronger communities. Our members depend on companies like SoCalGas for work, and the public depends on skilled workers to help maintain safe and reliable facilities.

Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

Our next speaker is Ron Mukai.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER MUKAI

Good afternoon. My name is Ron Mukai. I'm a residential customer of SoCalGas. I'm also a business customer of SoCalGas. I've also done some property development, so I've dealt with them in the capacity of being a developer with a utility. I also run a nonprofit jujitsu school in East L.A., so I'm a customer on that level.

I never had a bad experience with SoCalGas. They're great people and they treat you like you matter. I think that all these -- these moderate rate increases are necessary for public safety, so I support the rate

increase.

Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

Let's be off the record for a moment.

(Off the record.)

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: The next set of speakers will be Charlie Wilson, Christine Keith, Scott Merry, and Andres Dorado.

All right. Charlie Wilson?

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER WILSON

Good afternoon, Commissioner Douglas. Nice to see you again. Charlie Wilson. I am executive director of the Southern California Water Coalition. We represent water agencies, business, labor, agriculture, local governments, both cities and counties, and community-based organizations from Kern County to the Mexican border and out to the state line.

None of us like rate increases. The real question is whether or not customers receive value for what they are being asked to pay. As described earlier, this rate case before you would increase the average residential customer bill by roughly 8 percent. That's significant for families in this environment and businesses that are already facing raising costs.

In the California water industry, we are

experiencing many of those same pressures; aging infrastructure, increasing regulatory requirements, and the need to modernize while keeping essential services affordable. We're also increasingly sensitive to energy costs.

New water treatment, purification, and desalination systems require substantial energy. While much of that demand is electrical, natural gas costs affect a broader energy economy, industrial operations, and ultimately, the cost of providing water.

Every additional cost matters when water agencies are investing billions to secure future supplies while trying to keep rates affordable. We've learned, like you have, Ms. Douglas, over years that postponing necessary investments does not eliminate their costs; but spending more doesn't necessarily mean delivering more, and as we have seen, the question before the Commission is one of value.

What demonstrated and quantified improvements will the proposed investment deliver in safety, reliability, and efficiency? How will they strengthen operations, improve business competitiveness, protect the environment, and benefit customers? And what are the consequences of failing to invest?

We encourage you to apply three tests in making

your final determination. One, necessity. Are investments addressing the documented needs?

Two, value. Are improvements measurable, cost-effective, and adaptable to changing conditions?

And three, accountability. Will --

(Timer notification.)

SPEAKER WILSON: -- customers receive tangible benefits and will the utility deliver them?

SCWC is asking for -- is not asking for a blanket approval. We are asking for a decision that recognizes both the cost of investment and the cost of inaction. Often, the cheapest decision today isn't always the most affordable for tomorrow.

Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

Our next speaker is Christine Keith.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER KEITH

Good afternoon, Commissioners. My name is Christine Keith, CEO of Elite Auto Network, a California-based, minority- and women-owned fleet management company, and proud business partner with SoCalGas for nearly one decade.

Through our partnership, we understand firsthand the importance of reliable infrastructure, operational efficiency, and dependable transportation in

supporting essential utility services. As a California business owner, I recognize the responsible investments in safety, modernizing the technology, reliability are essential to protecting our communities while supporting local businesses and economic opportunities.

I encourage the Commission to support these necessary investments while maintaining affordability and accountability for California consumers. We value our longstanding partnership with SoCalGas and look forward to supporting its mission for years to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

Our next speaker is Scott Merry.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER MERRY

Good afternoon, Commissioners. My name is Scott Merry. I'm the vice president of health and safety for Morello Enterprises, and a ratepayer.

As a safety professional, honestly, I think about public safety daily; and I have to tell you I'm very encouraged to hear that some other people are like-minded. But I'd like to highlight another thing that's been brought up this afternoon, and that's affordability.

Most specifically, the cost of delay and how it relates to our affordability. This general rate case

reflects the funding necessary to maintain essential safeguards, perform preventative maintenance, and complete critical infrastructure improvements.

Delaying these investments can allow today's manageable risks to become serious, complex, and much more costly in both lives and money tomorrow.

For these reasons, I hope that you support the general rate case as a responsible investment in protecting workers, customers, and our communities while maintaining a safe, reliable, and affordable infrastructure.

Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

Our next speaker is Andres Dorado.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER DORADO

Hi. Good afternoon, Commissioner and Administrative Law Judge. My name is Andres Dorado, and I'm a superintendent with Doty Bros. Equipment Company, and I am going on approximately three and a half decades doing this industry.

And something that I found out is that the infrastructure provides pathways to skilled crafts, something that comes through apprenticeships and hands-on job training. This experience with experienced crews is essential to completing complex work as well as

safety and effectiveness throughout the whole state of California on the southern part.

Predictably and justifying knowing the project schedules can help employers retain all these skilled workers and invest in their training, while interruptions can affect workers and their families and the public.

I encourage the Commission to consider workforce implications alongside safety, rehabilitation, and affordability and oversight while reviewing this application.

Thank you very much.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

All right. Our next four speakers are Angie Valenzuela, Sterling Scott, Tammie Arrata, and John Gutierrez.

We'll start with Angie Valenzuela.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER VALENZUELA

Yes. Good afternoon. Again, Angie Valenzuela, and I'm a Chino Hills resident and a SoCalGas customer for many, many years.

I'm here today, as everyone else has come in and said, in support of Southern California Gas and its efforts to provide safe, reliable natural gas service. As a residential customer, I value knowing that the

system serving our homes is properly maintained and that qualified employees are available when we need assistance.

I support the investments necessary to maintain that system and protect our communities. I encourage the Commission to support these essential investments while ensuring costs are reasonable and customers remain a priority.

And I just want to echo what the mayor of Diamond Bar said; that for the price of an In-N-Out hamburger -- made me a little hungry -- it is reasonable, it's modest, and it's best to take care of that now than in the future. I think we're making a huge investment, so we encourage you to support it.

Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

Okay. Our next speaker is Sterling Scott.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER SCOTT

Hello. I'm Sterling Scott. I'm the associate director of Boys Republic. We're a private nonprofit residential treatment facility for adolescent boys and girls that are at risk or troubled. I've been with them for 35 years.

We've always dealt with The Gas Company, as many people have said, on a very amicable way. They've

been very helpful with us, and it's one of -- it is our lowest utility. We have six different sites, and so -- our biggest one is in Chino Hills, which is a 200-acre ranch with an on-ground school, vocational training, and full mental health facilities and addiction treatments.

So being a nonprofit, we do have to watch every -- every penny that we spend; and in the utilities industry, we are so grateful for the gas company because they are our most affordable utility.

So we're here to just basically speak out in favor of this, and it seems like it's a reasonable increase, and we're -- we're in favor of the gas company's increases.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

Our next speaker is Tammie Arrata.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER ARRATA

Good afternoon, everyone. I'm Tammie Arrata, and I promise you I won't keep you long. The timer won't even go off.

I'm with Farwest Corrosion Control Company. We work with utility companies to protect natural gas infrastructures. I know corrosion and cathodic protection might not sound like the most exciting topics in the room today; but trust me, when something goes wrong underground, it will get everyone's attention

pretty quickly.

The reality is that some of the most important investments a utility can make are the ones customers never actually see. Preventative maintenance, corrosion control, and new technologies are just -- are not just expenses, they are investments in safety, reliability, and long-term affordability.

I echo what most everybody here has said today. I also think there's a huge opportunity to work smarter through innovation and embrace new technology and build stronger partnerships and qualified contractors and local business.

Without the support from the rate increases, those innovations may not happen; and let's spend some -- a little bit more time preventing problems and a lot less time reacting to them because nobody wants a pipeline problem to become tomorrow's headline.

Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

The next speaker is John Gutierrez.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER GUTIERREZ

Good evening. My name's John Gutierrez. I'm the senior vice president for the Orange County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. We help advocate for over 30,000 Hispanic-owned businesses in Orange County.

I recognize SoCalGas for providing reliable energy and supporting local organizations and communities. The proposed monthly increase is an investment in safe infrastructure, reliable service, and the needs of growing communities.

I support the increase, and we believe a reasonable investment is important to maintaining dependable services.

Thank you for your time.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

All right. Our next four speakers are Dinh Thai, Mrs. Villegas, Jared Sanchez, and Lilly Rocha.

All right. Go ahead, Dinh Thai.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER THAI

Good afternoon. My name is Dinh Thai. I am the director of development at Vocational Visions. We are a nonprofit working with adults with disability -- developmental and intellectual disability, and we are a customer of SoCalGas as well.

I want to express my support for SoCalGas and recognize the role that the companies play in not only providing reliable energy, but also supporting local communities and local nonprofit.

I understand that the increase can be concerning, especially when families are already dealing

with, every day, higher costs for electricity, water, and all the necessities. However, when you look at the proposed increase, I believe that it is important to consider that this investment here support and maintain the infrastructures, providing reliabilities and meeting the needs of our growing communities.

I believe this is a reasonable investment that are necessary to maintain dependable service, and I totally support the increase.

Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

Let's be off the record for a moment.

(Off the record.)

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Okay. Let's be back on the record. Thank you.

Mrs. Villegas?

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER VILLEGAS

Good afternoon. My name is Mrs. Villegas, and I appreciate the opportunity to come and speak.

I am retired. I'm a senior citizen. I have lived in Southern California all my life. I don't think that we've ever had any other opportunities to have a different company provide gas for us. It's always been Southern California Gas Company.

And as I pay my bills every month, my husband

and I, we see these requests to the CPUC in almost every bill for a raise. And sure, it doesn't seem like a lot; but it adds up, and when you're a senior citizen and you're on a fixed income, it doesn't help.

We've never had problems with the gas company. They provide good service; and yes, I agree it's an investment, but I noticed on the paperwork that we received that the most amount of this request is going to administration and general. I question that. What is that?

You know, everybody has come forth and said "Oh, we're the workers and we provide safety and we provide, you know, the instruction on how to do all these things," but what is administration and general? Why is it being given $710 million out of this request? That doesn't make a lot of sense to me.

I'm not saying that we shouldn't have a request for a raise for people, but maybe you should look at that more closely. Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

All right. Our next speaker is Jared Sanchez.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER SANCHEZ

Good afternoon, everybody. I'm Jared Sanchez from San Pedro, California. We're a supplier for SoCalGas and SDG&E, and we definitely support this

application. It's an investment into our future.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

Our next speaker is Lilly Rocha.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER ROCHA

Good afternoon, Judge Cooke and Commissioners. My name is Lilly Rocha, and I'm the executive director of the Latino Restaurant Association, a nonprofit serving more than 1,400 restaurant owners, about 800 of them here in Southern California.

Restaurants run on gas. Our kitchens, our ovens, our livelihood depend on reliable, safe service every single day; and SoCalGas has delivered that for our members.

I'm here today because SoCalGas has been far more than a utility to our community. They have been a true partner to the LRA. SoCalGas has been always helping bring our customers' issues -- we rely on them for lots of help when there's a problem with restaurants.

Their team presents directly to -- sorry. Sorry. Their team presents directly to our members at our business boot camp for restaurants with efficiency issues, with lots of information on how to help with their bills and things like that.

I appreciate what the woman just said; but we

are very, very appreciative of everything that SoCalGas does. SoCalGas shows up for our community not just with service, but with investment, education, and partnership.

We ask the Commission to recognize SoCalGas's commitment to small business and to support continued investment in safe, reliable service for restaurants that feed California.

Thank you so much.]

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. All right. Our next four speakers are Tanya Drawer, Andrew Aragon, Taran Schindler, and Terry Bertagna.

Tanya Drawer is first. Okay.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER DRAWER

Thank you. Good afternoon. My name is Tanya Drawer, and I am the development director for Friends of Cabrillo Marine Aquarium in San Pedro. Friends provides program funding for Cabrillo Marine Aquarium, which is operated by the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks, and Southern California Gas Company has been a consistent supporter and community partner of Friends and its mission since 1982.

Each year, 300,000 people visit the aquarium, which is donation-based only -- there is no admission fee -- for a hands-on experience that makes science fun

and accessible to all. About 125,000 of those visitors are students who come on field trips from Los Angeles Unified School District and other surrounding areas, many seeing the ocean and the beach for the first time.

Thanks to support from SoCalGas, Cabrillo Marine Aquarium features a climate change exhibit in its aquatic nursery. While many zoos and aquariums have great exhibits about climate change, this one is unique, because it doubles as a research station. The new exhibit helps the aquarium's young scientists conduct research projects, exploring how climate change is impacting the ocean and marine animals. The exhibit helped us raise highly endangered white abalone -- over 2000 were released this year -- and is prepped and ready for the next cohort of young scientists to start their specialized projects. This exhibit would not have been possible without the support of SoCalGas.

Friends supports the rate increase by SoCalGas, and also, as an individual customer who has always been impressed with the service and quality provided by SoCalGas as a homeowner, my family and I support the rate increase, as well. It's a small pie -- price to pay for continued excellent customer service, support, and safety. Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. All right. The

next speaker is Andrew Aragon.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER ARAGON

Good afternoon. My name is Andrew Aragon. I live and work in Los Angeles in the neighborhood of San Pedro, California. I've been a SoCalGas customer for my entire life. I've seen SoCalGas' dollars go to work in my community, also for the extent of my entire life.

Though I feel the burden every day of increasing costs, I do believe that it would be a little short-sighted to sacrifice safety, and especially in terms of maintenance of the infrastructure that SoCalGas maintains, you know, for lower monthly rate. Specifically, I -- I support the rate increase because it recognizes the responsibility to manage physical and technical risks for workers, as well as customers, ongoing maintenance being the primary one I'm concerned with, and lastly, it secures against cyber vulnerabilities, which is an ever-growing problem to be concerned about.

Please do look with scrutiny on every dollar increase to our monthly bills, but as always, I would personally put safety and common sense first. Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. Our next speaker is Taran Schindler.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER SCHINDLER

Good afternoon. My name is Taran Schindler. I'm the deputy director of Grand Vision Foundation, an arts nonprofit in San Pedro, California.

SoCalGas supports the work we do with entertainment and youth music education, and we see how important a safe and reliable system -- energy -- a safe and reliable energy system is for the families and individuals we both serve. We support this rate adjustment because it funds important structural and safety management efforts, and at a time when the cost of living is going up astronomically, this increase that SoCalGas asks is -- is reasonable and fair.

We ask the Commission to approve their request and allow SoCalGas to maintain their high standards. Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. Our next speaker is Terry Bertagna.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER BERTAGNA

Good afternoon, commissioners. My name is Terry Bertagna. I'm a retiree living in Riverside, California. I'm here today to support Southern California Gas application proceeding A.26-06-014.

When we talk about upgrading our natural gas infrastructure, we aren't just talking about the gas

that heats our homes; we are talking about the foundation of our entire energy grid. Many people don't realize how deeply connected our gas system is to electric -- electric production. Natural gas is the critical backbone that fuels the power plants generating the massive share of Southern California's electricity. As we integrate more renewable energy, we absolutely rely on a modernized resilient natural gas system to act as -- as the immediate fallback whenever the sun isn't shining or the wind isn't blowing. If the underlying gas infrastructure is allowed to age or fall behind compliance, a regional electrical -- electric reliability faces a direct threat.

As a retiree, I understand the cost increases matter; however, paying an estimated $5.67 a month is a necessary and practical investment. It directly funds critical safety upgrades, system modernization, and tech -- technological improvements, and ensures we protect our community, and prevent costly emergency failures down the road. Securing our gas infrastructure is fundamentally about securing the electrical grid and keeping our power reliable.

I strongly urge the Commission to approve the request to ensure communities' energy future remains stable and safe. Thank you for your time.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. All right. Our next four speakers are Roger Jackson, Henry Lomeli, Veletta Crawford, and Lacey Sherman.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER JACKSON

Good afternoon, Commission and your Honor. My name is Roger Jackson. I'm the president and COO for Meruelo Enterprises. I represent roughly 2000 employees that work and live in Southern California. We're a Southern California-based, bred, raised company. Many of our co-workers are here today.

Prior to this, I spent roughly 20 years working at PG&E. Seven of those years, I started working in the field. And the one thing I can say, if I just listen to the -- the difference in the room, is the overwhelming support for what is a relatively modest rate increase for Southern California Gas. If you look at the cost of goods and fuel from when the last rate case was approved and today, those are substantial numbers, and what SoCalGas is asking for today is extremely reasonable. Like many of you, I -- I've sat in these hearings before, and I can tell you these are not the comments I heard from my previous employer's constituent base, and this just goes to show that a term that we are familiar, which is SoCalGas has proven for a very long time to be a prudent operator, and that's something I think starts

with a strong rate base, and that's something that you have full authority and control over, based on their request.

So I strongly recommend that you approve SoCalGas's request, not only based on the comments you've heard today, but the history that we know about up north and the history we see within the community with SoCalGas's responses. I'm extremely fortunate to speak today on behalf of all of our employees, and thank you for your time.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. Our next speaker is Henry Lomeli.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER LOMELI

Good afternoon, commissioner and administrative judge. My name is Henry Lomeli.

For 37 years of experience working for a major California utility, I understand firsthand the importance of main -- maintaining safe and reliable natural gas infrastructure. Effective infrastructure maintenance requires careful planning, skilled and well-trained crews, rigorous inspections, and coordination across multiple teams. Consistent maintenance programs are essential to ensuring work is performed responsibly and that system needs are addressed practically.

As the Commission evaluates these pro -- proposals, I respectfully encourage consideration of which investments are necessary to maintain safe and reliable service, as well as how their effectiveness and performance will be measured over time. Long-term infrastructure planning is critical, but it's equally important to ensure that costs remain reasonable and justified for customers. Thank you for your time and consideration.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. Our next speaker is Veletta Crawford.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER CRAWFORD

Thank you, commissioners, for your time. My name is Veletta Crawford. I'm here from Hawthorne Chamber. I'm representing Patricia Donaldson, who's the president and CEO of the chamber.

Hawthorne citizens have only one message. They want no rate hikes, and they want their gas and everything to stay the same. That's the only message they wanted to relay. Thank you for your time.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. Our next speaker is Lacey Sherman.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER SHERMAN

Hi. Good afternoon. My name is Lacey Sherman. I'm a local SoCalGas customer and a local business owner

of EDM Services. We're a women-owned engineering service firm in Simi Valley. We provide engineering, design, and integrity management services for SoCalGas.

I have two requests: Consider the importance to the proposed capital investments necessary to maintain safety and reliability of our critical natural gas system, and in -- and issue a decision on the rate case without delay. Our firm work -- our firm's work supports investments proposed in this GRC, including maintenance and capital improvements. Our firm has helped SoCalGas -- gas's comprehensive slope and pipeline monitoring and reporting systems, pipeline replacement, and renewable natural gas facilities needed for future and innovation. One project specifically provided an optical pipeline monitoring system which helps protect and monitor the natural gas pipelines threatened by land- and mudslides during heavy rainfall events, which may be more than usual in an El Nino year. These types of investments in engineering and monitoring is especially important to maintain reliable service during the winter season when communities and are not -- when communities and customers depend on their natural gas the most. Proactive engineering, design, monitoring, and maintenance address risks before failures, and -- before failures require unnecessary and

costly emergency repairs.

I encourage the Commission to carefully consider the funding proposed in the GRC for pipeline replacements and repairs, corrosion protection, pressure regulation station upgrades, pipeline and compressor modernizations, and natural gas storage facility improvements. These investments protect our essential infrastructure, and require funding to implement proactive high-quality engineering, planning, and construction. I ask the Commission consider the reasonable increase proposed by SoCalGas and their local business partners, so we can plan responsibly, retain local talent, and address risks before emergencies occur. Thank you very much.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. Our next four speakers are Derek Allen, Brandon Itzel, Francella Aguilar, and Tito Waldo.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER ALLEN

Hi. Good afternoon. My name is Derek Allen. I believe I'm the first actual resident to step up here and speak. You opened your statement with you want input and feedback and thoughts and whatever from residents. Here I am; but yet, I'm in the back of the queue. All of these people with uniforms and everything else, and the guy out there says, "Oh, well, they were

here first, and they've been waiting an hour, and, you know, everyone needs --" yeah, they can speak. That's not -- a non-issue. But, when we, the homeowners, who live in El Monte pay rates and taxes -- and I've written many letters to the CPUC, only to be petulantly replied to by their -- especially the -- the -- the outreach department for, you know, ordinary folk like me.

I would be a definite no, because you all look at just one bill, the gas bill; and we, the homeowners, have to pay electricity, gas, water, and all -- everything else, and that all amounts up into one big amount. It's not just $5. And I told the judge that downtown a few years ago at the CP -- about the water hikes. It's like no. Enough already. Was last week's election not about prices? I mean how tone deaf are -- is all of this? I know they got the paperwork in before the -- last week's election, but this is just ridiculous. You should put a moratorium on these things for us ordinary folk. These people get paid a salary, paid for holidays, and everything else. I don't. We don't. And in my household, I -- between the two of us, we have four jobs, and we're still not making ends meet. We have four jobs. I have two, and he has two. So you need to look at the people like me, the smaller lower-end people, who are really really hurting and

struggling before you make any decision, and you need more people like me to come up and speak first before all these -- you got my point.

Oh, my last point, you should make the -- what does he make? $21 million. You should make him take a pay cut and cover the costs, instead of us ordinary people.

(Applause.)

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you for your comment. Our next speaker is Brandon Itzel.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER ITZEL

Good afternoon, commissioners. My name's Brandon Itzel. I'm the vice president of operations --

(Reporter clarification.)

SPEAKER ITZEL: My name's Brandon Itzel, and I'm the vice president of operations for Meruelo Enterprises, where I oversee seven different contractors that build and maintain critical infrastructure across Southern California. I've spent my 22-year career in utility construction, and have a pretty unique perspective of what it takes to maintain the infrastructure that we all use every day.

Not approving the proposed rate wait -- rate request will result in deferring necessary work that may reduce costs today, but will ultimately increase costs

and risks down the road, which will be absorbed by the ratepayer. I recognize the impact that higher utility costs can have on families and businesses, but protecting affordability long-term also means making investments that are necessary to keep our infrastructure safe and reliable today.

For those reasons, I strongly support responsible investment in our natural gas system and the proposed rate request. Thank you, all.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. Our next speaker is Francella -- or I know I'm mispronouncing it -- Aguilar. But --

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER AGUILAR

Thank you. Good afternoon, Commissioners Douglas and Judge Cookes (sic). My name is Francella Aguilar. I am the director of government relations at Meruelo Enterprises, and also a red -- ratepayer.

I'm here today to support SoCalGas' proposed rate request for 2028, 2031 period. As a business leader who works closely with communities, industries, and local governments throughout California, I understand the importance of maintaining a safe, reliable, and resilient energy system. The investments included in this request are focused on critical priorities: Maintaining the safety and integrity of the

natural gas system, meeting state and federal safety requirements, and supporting reliable services for homes, businesses, and essential facilities. These are not optional investments. They are necessary to help ensure that our energy infrastructure continues to operate safely and reliably, while meeting evolving regulatory and security requirements. Reliable energy service is essential to economic growth and the daily operations of businesses and communities across the nation.

I respectedly (sic) urge the Commission to support this rate request so that these critical investments can move forward and continue serving Californians safely and effectively. Thank you for your time and consideration.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you very much. The next speaker is Tito Waldo.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER WALDO

Good afternoon. My name is Tito Waldo, VP of operations for Herman Weissker.

Business depends on reliable infrastructure to serve customers, manage operations, and make long-term plans. Service disruptions can create costs, especially for smaller firms with limited resources; however, higher utility bills can also put pressure on operating

budgets.

As you consider the rate case, I encourage an evidence-based balanced investment that demonstrates improved safety and reliability, improved implementation plans, and scrutiny of costs that will ultimately be paid by the customers. Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

Let's be off the record for a moment.

(Off the record.)

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Let's be back on the record.

The next four speakers are Belinda Funches, Robert Hall, Ani Boyadjian, and Gaby Villanueva.

Go ahead, Belinda Bunches.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER BUNCHES

Good afternoon. I wanted to let you know that I do support the general rate case that SoCalGas is requesting. Their service has always been excellent and very reliable. I'm not only a senior citizen on a fixed income, but I've also been a ratepayer for the last 48 years.

I do understand how cost increases affect us all. That being said, overall, the price increase projected is minimal, considering the enormous price increases we have been experiencing from, let's just say, for example, DWP lately that's been in the news

quite a bit. We need to keep the system safe and maintained so we can keep our natural gas appliances. I don't want our summer DWP bills to be year-round, should we be forced to switch to all electric because SoCalGas can't maintain the system as needed.

So I think it's very important, because it costs a lot more to fix it after the fact than it does to make sure you maintain it in advance. So I think it's just very important that we consider that, yes, it's going to cost five or $10 for us now, but considering if we had to go all electric, it's going to cost us considerably more. Thank you for listening.]

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Our next speaker is Robert Hall.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER HALL

Good afternoon. My name is Robert Hall, and I am president and CEO of Pacific Auto Recycling Center, or PARC, in Lancaster in Antelope Valley. Thank you for the chance to speak.

PARC is a scrap metal recycler. We're approaching ten years of operation in Lancaster, and we have a staff of more than 20 people. This matters in Antelope Valley, where good jobs are harder to come by.

We rely on natural gas to run our recycling equipment cleanly. Because of that, about two megawatts

of power that we don't draw stays on the electrical grid for the homes around us, so reliable gas service doesn't just keep my business running, it also takes pressure off the grid for our neighbors.

I'm here to support SoCalGas's request. I'm a ratepayer too, and nobody likes a higher bill. But this request is mainly about the required inspection, testing, and maintenance to keep the system safe and reliable.

We must invest in the support of natural gas because it's an important part to the support of our infrastructure. We must fully support it.

SoCalGas has been a great partner to us, communicative and supportive, fair and equitable. There are many examples of energy costs being out of control. In my experience, SoCalGas stands alone in affordability. Half measures are what lead us to downtime, inflated costs, and lack of affordability.

I ask the Commission to make sure SoCalGas can keep the system safe and reliable, and to keep holding them to managing costs carefully.

Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

Our next speaker is Ani Boyadjian.

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STATEMENT OF SPEAKER BOYADJIAN

Good afternoon. Ani Boyadjian with the Central City Association here in support of SoCalGas's general rate case application.

SoCalGas plays an important role in supporting Los Angeles's business community, providing essential utility services that businesses across our region depend on every day.

For businesses operating in an already high-cost, complex regulatory environment, SoCalGas's ability to provide reliable, affordable energy is vital to keeping businesses operational and ultimately supporting their continued economic activity and growth.

We also recognize the importance of continued investment in maintaining and modernizing critical utility infrastructure. These investments help ensure a safe and dependable natural gas system that can continue meeting the energy needs of businesses and communities across our region.

Having strong, dependable utility partners that prioritize affordability, reliability, and long-term infrastructure investments is important to supporting the business and industries that drive our regional economy. For these reasons, CCA urges your support for SoCalGas's application.

Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

The next speaker is Gaby Villanueva.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER VILLANUEVA

Good afternoon. My name is Gaby Villanueva, and I'm the CEO of the Wilmington Chamber. I'm here today in support of SoCalGas and the rate increases.

I speak not only on behalf of our business community but also as a longtime SoCalGas customer. Throughout the years, I have experienced reliable service, responsive customer support, and no significant concerns with my service.

SoCalGas is also more than just a utility provider. They are a valued community partner. Their local representatives are accessible and responsive; and the company has consistently supported our local businesses, nonprofits, and community organizations.

I recognize that rate increases are never easy; however, maintaining safe, reliable service requires ongoing investment in infrastructure, operations, and public safety.

Just as the cost of labor, materials, and every -- everyday operations continue to rise, so do the costs of maintaining essential service. I believe these investments are necessary to preserve the reliable

service our community depends on.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

Our next four speakers are Mitchell Vanbekkum, Anthony Agama, Lauren Johnson, and Victoria Hernandez.

Go ahead, Mitchell --

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER VANBEKKUM

Good afternoon, and thank you for the opportunity to communicate. My name is Mitchell Vanbekkum, and I'm representing the Santa Clarita Valley Chamber of Commerce.

Our chamber supports the essential safety, maintenance, and reliability investments proposed in the SoCalGas 2028 general rate case. Across the Santa Clarita Valley, dependable energy helps businesses serve customers, support employees, and plan for growth.

For our restaurants, natural gas can be essential to prepare meals for local manufacturers that rely on it. Dependable service keeps production moving and orders on schedule.

The proposed investments support pipeline inspections, maintenance, safety compliance, and cybersecurity protections. This essential work helps maintain the infrastructure our businesses and communities depend on every day.

Proactive maintenance can help prevent disruptions and reduce the risk of costly emergency repairs. For businesses, that means protecting operations, revenue, and local jobs.

Affordability also matters, of course, to our members. Every dollar counts, particularly for small businesses. Responsible infrastructure investment, together with continued efforts to improve efficiency and manage costs, supports affordability over the long term.

As California's energy mix evolves, the natural gas system must remain safe and reliable for those who depend on it. We urge the Commission to approve the reasonable and necessary investments proposed in this rate case to protect public safety and support the economic vitality of the Santa Clarita Valley.

Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

Our next speaker is Anthony Agama.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER AGAMA

Good afternoon, Commissioners. I'm Anthony Agama, an Orange County resident. I'm here to oppose any rate increases for working families, small business, and people on fixed incomes.

I come from a mixed-status family. For two

years, fear has kept my father, a construction worker, from taking on the jobs he used to. My mother lost several of her jobs as well. Now we're behind on every bill, and SoCalGas wants 485 million in 2028, and over 300 million more every year through 2031.

This is about $6 more a month for the average home. $6 may seem like nothing; but for us, $6 is everything when we live net negative on all of our bills. Tell the people in line at the food drives every day that $6 is nothing.

The lines at the food banks are getting longer every day, yet SoCalGas is asking for more. Tell a single mom that $6 is nothing but a small sacrifice. Our kids watch their parents choose between heat, food, and rent.

For everyone saying SoCalGas brings good service to community members, I just want to remind the Commissioners that this company is behind Aliso Canyon, the largest methane leak in U.S. history.

Thousands of families in Porter Ranch were forced from their homes, sick with headaches and nosebleeds. Where is the safety that people keep bringing up? Please tell families of Porter Ranch SoCalGas is safe and gives reliable service. A decade later, it's still open with no closure date. Nothing

has changed except our bills.

Please don't just listen to special interests. How many people here have special contracts with SoCalGas? How many people were paid by SoCalGas that are present?

Please find a solution that benefits the 21 million people that couldn't make it to this general rate case under SoCalGas and not paid interest.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

Our next speaker is Lauren Johnson.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER JOHNSON

Good afternoon, Commissioners. My name is Lauren Johnson; and I'm here representing Jerico Development, a family-owned business based in the South Bay.

We've had a very positive experience working with SoCalGas over the years. We really appreciate their responsiveness and reliability, responsiveness being key. It's not that common in the utilities space to be able to -- for someone to pick up the phone and you actually get a response, so that's great.

I also want to note their immense support and commitment to the communities through which they operate, through supporting small businesses through the chamber and meaningful investments in our local

nonprofits as well.

While I recognize the importance of affordability, I do support continued investment in modern, reliable infrastructure so that we can keep it affordable into the future.

And I also want to note on a personal level, the response from SoCalGas during the landslides in Palos Verdes, the boots on the ground, and having people there to respond to a really emotional and horrible situation was really important for us as a community as well, so thank you for your support.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

Our next speaker is Victoria Hernandez.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER HERNANDEZ

Good afternoon, Commissioners. My name is Victoria Hernandez, and I represent the South Orange County Economic Coalition. Since 1969, it has been the leading voice of business in South Orange County.

Our organization supports the essential infrastructure investments proposed, and we support SoCalGas's 2028 general rate case because reliable energy is fundamental to -- to South Orange County, and all of California, and economic competitiveness.

Businesses make long-term investment decisions based on infrastructure reliability, operating costs,

and regulatory certainty. Whether a company is expanding manufacturing operations, opening a restaurant, or investing in a new facility, dependable energy service is a basic requirement.

The updates requested in this rate case directly support the safety and stability of a system serving millions in Southern California and thousands of businesses right here in my region, South Orange County.

While we strongly urge the Commission to ensure ratepayer funds are allocated efficiently, we also emphasize that proactive infrastructure investment is indispensable for safeguarding jobs, encouraging business growth -- as a business owner myself, this is very important -- and sustaining our local economy.

We urge the Commission to approve reasonable investments that maintain safe and reliable natural gas service while supporting Southern California's economic competitiveness.

Thank you very much.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

Our next four speakers are Tim Gramling, Araceli Sandoval, Greg Kelley, and Alberto Tene.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER GRAMLING

Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Tim Gramling. I'm the president and CEO of Corona Chamber

of Commerce; and I bring you greetings from Corona and our many members who are also ratepayers with SoCalGas, a wonderful actor and partner in our area.

There's a saying that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. And that saying was coined in my hometown of Philadelphia 300 years ago, as the writer urged Philadelphians to invest in preventing house fires.

It's interesting because we find ourselves in a similar circumstance today. I lived in the Valley when Porter Ranch happened, and I have friends and family in my church in Altadena. I'm all too familiar with what deferred maintenance looks like; and though I understand and am very concerned about any increase in costs, as any chamber would be, I think it is vitally important to ensure we invest; that infrastructure is safe, reliable, and ultimately serves its purpose.

So I understand and am sensitive to the need to balance costs; and, of course, that's the role of the Commission; and I appreciate your role in ensuring that this increase is modest and spread out appropriately, and focused on safety, yet I think it is vital and I urge, as my former Philadelphian did 300 years ago, all of us, to ensure we invest in the safety of our infrastructure.

Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

Our next speaker is Araceli Sandoval.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER SANDOVAL

Good afternoon, Commissioners. My name is Araceli Sandoval. I am here today as a SoCal ratepayer and small business owner to express my strong opposition to the proposed rate increase.

California families and small businesses are already facing significant financial pressures. Rising costs for housing, groceries, insurance, transportation, and utilities continue to stretch household and business budgets.

While an additional about $68 annually may seem modest, we cannot overlook the cumulative impact of repeated rate increases, particularly for working families, seniors on fixed incomes, and small business operating on limited margins.

As a small business owner, I understand firsthand the challenges of managing rising operating costs while maintaining financial stability. While we all recognize the importance of safe and reliable utility service, however, affordability must remain a priority.

I urge the Commission to reject the proposed

increase and require greater transparency and accountability from SoCalGas.

Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

Our next speaker is Greg Kelley.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER KELLEY

Good afternoon, Commissioner Douglas. My name is Greg Kelley; and I'm the vice president of Johnson-Peltier, a Native-American-owned IBEW union electrical contractor. We proudly partner with SoCalGas performing critical infrastructure and electrical projects, representing approximately 100 electricians in the Southern California area.

I'm here to emphasize the direct connection between utility infrastructure investments and the success of small, diverse businesses. For companies like ours, these investments mean more than revenue. They provide increased safety in the community, support local families, strengthen apprenticeship programs, and develop California's next generation of skilled trade people.

As the CPUC considers SoCalGas's infrastructure investments, we encourage continued support for safety, diversity, project opportunities, and GO 156 commitments. These investments don't just strengthen

California's general -- California's energy infrastructure, they truly strengthen the skilled workforce, small businesses, and communities that build to maintain them.

Thank you for your time today.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

Our next speaker is Alberto Tene.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER TENE

Good afternoon, Commissioners. My name is Albert Tene; and I'm vice president of Access General Contracting, a small minority- and woman-owned family business.

We're here in support of SoCalGas and its general rate case, with a particular focus on safety. As a contractor working on utility infrastructure, we've seen firsthand the planning, training, and care that this work requires.

Maintaining infrastructure and addressing problems before they become emergencies helps protect residents, workers, and the surrounding communities. Many of our employees come from this community and others just like it. These are their neighborhoods and families too. They take pride in doing this work safely because they understand who depends on it.

We understand that affordability matters. We

also believe responsible investment and inspections, maintenance, and necessary upgrades is essential for keeping things safe, and consistently.

Thank you for the opportunity to let us share our perspective.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

All right. The next four speakers are Ruben Gonzalez, Alexander Hessi, Ross Pendergraft, and Debra Alexander.

Ruben Gonzalez.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER GONZALEZ

Thank you very much for your time. Thank you very much for taking this public comment. My name is Ruben Gonzalez. I'm the president of the Valley Industry and Commerce Association.

I've held that job for about six years; but I've been a customer of SoCalGas for almost 51 years, and I have had the honor of working with them in various roles within government, running my own business, and as a customer.

And the simple fact is they're doing this right. They took a look at themselves, they looked for ways to find cost-effectiveness and efficiency, they looked at ways to make sure they wouldn't put a -- a burden for maintenance and improvement of the system

onto the ratepayers, and they came back with a responsible and a reasonable request, and we support it because it's the right thing to do.

$5 and change is too much for a fancy cup of coffee, it's too much for a bottle of water, it's too much for a slice of pizza. It's not too much for the peace of mind of knowing that we have reliable and stable natural gas provision from a reliable, stable, and safe system. That is why we should support this rate case and let them get to work.

Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

Are Alexander Hessi, Ross Pendergraft, or Debra Alexander still present?

(No response.)

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Okay. Then we will move on to the next four speakers, Lucia Diaz, Paulina Alvarez, Jorge Lazaro, and Nicholas Lara.

Is Lucia Diaz here still?

(No response.)

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Okay. Then we will go to Paulina Alvarez.

Please go ahead.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER ALVAREZ

Good afternoon, Commissioners. My name is

Paulina Alvarez, and I'm the government affairs manager for the Orange County Business Council.

OCBC represents the interests of Orange County's business community and advocates for policies that support economic growth and regional competitiveness. OCBC supports reasonable investments in SoCalGas's 2028/2031 general rate case because reliable energy infrastructure is essential to businesses, jobs, and our regional economy.

The investment proposed in this rate case would support the continued safety and reliability of a system that serves millions and supports employers across our region. Responsible infrastructure investment is necessary to protect jobs, attract private investment, and support long-term economic growth.

We urge the Commission to approve reasonable investments that maintain safe and reliable natural gas service while supporting Southern California's economic competitiveness.

Thank you for your time and your consideration.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

All right. And I'll just do a reminder to everybody to speak slowly.

The next speaker is Jorge Lazaro.

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STATEMENT OF SPEAKER LAZARO

Good afternoon, everybody. Thank you for what you do, all you do. I know it's a long day ahead of you.

I represent Maryvale. I'm their director of community engagement. And I'm here today to express support for the SoCalGas general rate case request.

As someone who works closely with families and community throughout the San Gabriel Valley, I understand how important affordability is. At the same time, safe and reliable utility service is essential for homes, nonprofit organizations like mine, schools, healthcare provider, and other critical services.

I appreciate the request -- that this request focuses on maintaining system safety, meaning regulatory requirements, improving grid reliability, and addressing emerging risks such as cyber threats. The investments being proposed, I believe, are aimed at maintaining existing service infrastructure and not beyond essential obligations.

So thank you for the opportunity to be heard. Have a wonderful rest of your day.]

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. Our next speaker is Nicholas Lara.

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STATEMENT OF SPEAKER LARA

Good afternoon. My name is Nicholas Lara, and I'm the program manager for the Alhambra Chamber of Commerce and staff liaison for the Government Affairs Committee. I'm speaking on behalf of the chamber, which represents local businesses in Alhambra and the San Gabriel Valley. Thank you for your time today.

Our members from restaurants to retailers to service providers depend on natural gas every day. The chamber supports the investment in safe reliable service that this fund -- that this request funds. The investment protects reliability from day-to-day maintenance and upkeep to modernization against evolving threats. For a business, an outage or a safety failure costs far more than a rate adjustment. This comes at a measured cost. Reliable service at a measured cost is the balance our members need.

We ask the Commission to keep the final outcome modest for all customer classes, small businesses included, and hold SoCalGas to the efficiency measures it cites in its filing; workforce optimization, procurement savings, and process modern -- modernization. The chamber will keep following this proceeding and stay engaged as it moves forward. Thank you for your time.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

Let's be off the record for a moment.

(Off the record.)

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: All right. Let's be back on the record.

The next speaker is Jessica Yasukochi, Yoko Coleman, Karen Jackson, and Eddie Forquart.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER YASUKOCHI

Good afternoon, everyone. Jessica Yasukochi. As the CEO of a business org -- association, I work with businesses representing a wide range of industry sizes and economic circumstances. One concern we consistently hear is the difficulty of operating in California's increasingly expensive business environment. Businesses need afford -- affordable energy, but they also need confidence that the natural gas system will remain safe and reliable. A major service disruption can affect employers, employees, customers, and the broader regional economy. Those costs must also be considered when evaluating infrastructure investments.

We encourage the CPUC to undertake a careful review, authorize the reasonable investment necessary to main (sic) reliability, while holding down costs wherever possible. Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. Our next speaker

is Yoko Coleman.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER COLEMAN

Good afternoon. I support the general rate increase by SoCalGas. I am a resident of Woodland Hills. My work focuses on bringing businesses and organizations together to create partnerships that strengthen our communities. One thing I have learned is that economic success is interconnected. When one business struggles, the effects can reach its employees, suppliers, customers, and community partners. Reliable energy is part of the foundation that allows these partnerships to thrive. Businesses cannot work together effectively if essential infrastructure is unreliable. The same is true during emergencies, when strong community partnerships and resident infrastructure become especially important.

I encourage the CPUC to consider the broader community benefits of maintaining a dependable natural gas system, while ensuring that investment -- investments are responsible. Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. Our next speaker is Karen Jackson.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER JACKSON

Good afternoon. I am a university administrator and resident of Simi Valley, California.

Universities do more than educate students. We prepare -- we prepare California's future workforce to support research and contribute significantly to our regional economy. Educational institutions require dependable energy for classrooms, laboratories, campus facilities, and daily activities of students and employees. University is -- also understand the importance of planning for the future. Investments in critical infrastructure must be made before problems become emergencies.

We encourage the CPUC to recognize the long-term value of safe and reliable natural gas infrastructure, while ensuring that costs remain reasonable for institutions, students, and the communities we serve. We support the rate request. Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. Is Eddie Farquart here?

Okay. We'll go on to the next four speakers, Steven Lucero, Michael Stewart, Kris Murray, and Ana Gromis.

Steven Lucero.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER LUCERO

Yeah. I'm Steven Lucero. I'm actually a business agent for Utility Workers of America Local 132

who represent about 3000 to 4000 workers that actually work for SoCalGas. And for those employees that we lost over the last general rate case is about 500 between represented and non- -- non-represented employees. So infrastructure is very important, and safety and reliability.

I'm also an ETR, which is an energy tech residential, that actually service customers for leaks, aerial mapping, and stuff like that. So we want to make sure that they actually do have the funds necessary to provide safe and reliable service through the network. Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. Our next speaker is Michael Stewart. Is Michael Stewart here?

Okay. Then our next speaker is Kris Murray. Go ahead.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER MURRAY

Thank you. Good afternoon, your Honor, and members of the Commission. Thank you for your time today.

My name is Kris Murray. I'm the executive director of the Association of California Cities, Orange County. Our member cities and public agencies serve more than 3 million residents in Orange County and regionally.

ACCOC supports SoCalGas' requested rate increase to sustain safe, reliable energy services to fund -- and to fund cost-effective investments in our communities that are communities depend upon every day.

We urge the Commission to approve this request. For Orange County cities, dependable energy is essential to public safety, economic vitality, and quality of life. Our residents, businesses, hospitals, and critical facilities rely on infrastructure that is properly maintained, secure, and capable of meeting their needs. The work outlined in this request includes maintaining system integrity, meeting state and federal safety requirements, addressing infrastructure and cybersecurity risks, and improving operational efficiency. Our cities understand the importance of responsible infrastructure stewardship. Timely maintenance and targeted investments help prevent failures, reduce service disruptions, and avoid more costly repairs in the future. Supporting this work today is an investment in our long-term reliability.

Affordability is also a priority for ACCOC and the communities we represent. Families, businesses, and local governments are managing significant cost pressures.

We support SoCalGas' continued efforts to

identify efficiencies, manage operating expenses, and help customers reduce energy costs. We believe this is a responsible investment, and affordability must advance together. A well-maintained and efficiently operated system helps protect customers while preserving the dependable service our region needs.

For these reasons, ACCOC supports this rate request increase, and I thank you for your time. I do have my written remarks I can hand over, as well.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. If you can hand them to Mr. Sawyer, that would be great. Thank you.

Our next speaker is Ana Gromis.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER GROMIS

Good afternoon, your Honor and commissioners. My name is Ana Gromis. I'm here representing The Building Industry Association of Southern California. We are a nonprofit trade association with about 900 members. We're representing trades, as well as homebuilders that build the homes in the communities that you all represent.

I am here today in support of SoCalGas' 2028 general rate case and the core safety and reliability investments that are outlined in this proposal. Maintaining and modernizing natural gas infrastructure is essential to providing safe, reliable, and affordable

energy to the homeowners, businesses, and communities we represent. Housing affordability must also remain a priority. California continues to face a significant housing shortage, and building more homes requires reliable utility infrastructure to support this new development. Energy infrastructure is a critical component to housing production, and for homebuilders, reliable and timely utility service is essential to delivering housing. Delays in infrastructure improvements and service connections can create additional costs, slow construction timelines, and ultimately make homes more expensive for California families.

We recognize that maintaining reliable service requires investment, and we support reasonable measured rate increases tied to necessary infrastructure improvements and long-term system reliability. As California works to address its housing shortage, we must ensure our energy infrastructure keeps pace with the communities that we are building. Responsible investment, cost discipline, and regulatory oversight are essential to supporting housing growth, while protecting affordability for consumers. We encourage the Commission to authorize reasonable and necessary investments, while keeping affordability at the

forefront. Thank you for your consideration.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. All right. Our next speaker is Maria Hernandez. Okay. And Mike Cormode.

All right. We'll let you go -- go on, Mike Cormode.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER CORMODE

So good afternoon. My name is Mike Cormode. I'm the secretary-treasurer of UWA Local 132. We represent 3000 of the over 4000 union employees of SoCalGas. I'm here to support of SoCalGas' general rate case filing.

Prior to my time in working for the union, I spent over 15 years of so -- working for SoCalGas as an ETR, an energy technician residential, in the customer service department.

As an ETR, I responded to customers' homes --

(Reporter clarification.)

SPEAKER CORMODE: As an ETR, I responded to customers' homes for orders ranging from turning on the service to appliance repair and service, and finding and repairing gas leaks.

This GRC filing provides the necessary funding for my department, as well as call center employees, distribution crews, office staff to file permits and

plans, and transmission and storage employees, just to name a few, all good union paying jobs. The work we perform can be in weather ranging from over 100 degrees in the summer to below freezing in the winter. Proper funding allows not just for the employees to do the work, but for the tools and materials necessary for my union brothers and sisters to perform the work necessary to keep the gas flowing in the pipes and into homes, restaurants, and factories. It allows SoCal Edison, the largest customer of SoCalGas, to run its generators to produce electricity that's also needed to fuel our economy and society.

Natural gas is the most reliable and affordable utility we have. Recently, high winds in Southern California caused multiple electric grids to be shut down, as a precaution to prevent another disaster like -- like the Thomas or Eaton Fires. During these major wind events, SoCalGas customers like myself were still able to have hot water and cook hot food. When was the last time you heard of a gas line being shut down because of the wind?

Allowing the funding sought in this filing will provide for the materials and equipment needed to maintain our gas lines and keep our customers safe, allows for staff and new materials to make repairs

before a hazardous situation can occur. You may notice that this filing is the lowest percentage increase requested in over a decade. This is part of the commitment of SoCalGas to be proper stewards of the ratepayers monies. UWA Local 132 is committed to working with SoCalGas to ensure we do -- we do right by our customers.

In addition to ruling in favor of the requested funding, I'm also asking for a timely decision on the rate case to allow for SoCalGas' partners to make proper business plans.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. All right. I'm going to do a final call for some of the folks that were not here when I called their name.

Alexander Hessy, Ross Pendergraft, Debra Alexander, Lucia Diaz, Eddie Farquart, Michael Stewart, Maria Hernandez.

All right. That is the end of the list of people that have signed up. If there is anyone in the audience that would like to make a comment that did not sign up, now is your opportunity.

Please come up to the podium and let us know your name.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER VILLEGAS

My name is Teo Villegas, and I'm having hard

time understanding what actual distribution entitles. If you add distribution, as I can see it, and you add support services and administration service, that is too much money to be approve in the present proposal.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. Is there anyone else that would like to make a comment?

All right. You spoke once, but we'll let you take a few more minutes.

SPEAKER VILLEGAS: Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Please state your name for the record.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER VILLEGAS

My name is Michelle Villegas, and I just wanted to know, has the CPUC ever refused a request from the gas company for a rate raise?

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: So each time that the rate increase is requested, we evaluate all of the elements of it, and there are very frequently reductions to the amounts that are requested. It varies based on the facts of the particular case, but there is -- there are many case -- situations where the Commission has not adopted the specific request of the utility.

SPEAKER VILLEGAS: Do they ever put out a publication to the public to say that -- that they refused the request or they requested it to be lowered?

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: The Commission adopts decisions, and those decisions are public, and they describe all of the decision-making that happened in every single case. They are also usually press releases that are released at the time that the decisions are made that go over some of the information about what was adopted versus what was requested.

SPEAKER VILLEGAS: And where do you find that information?

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: That would be on the Commission's website.

SPEAKER VILLEGAS: Okay.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Yes.

SPEAKER VILLEGAS: I was just curious.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Yeah. You can also speak to the Public Advisor staff at the table outside, and they can refer you to where you can find more of that information.

SPEAKER VILLEGAS: Okay. Thank you so much.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: All right. You're welcome.

Well, I want to thank everybody that stuck around this whole time, and also for everybody's courtesy for each other as people spoke. It's really -- this is the kind of thing that makes me happy to see, and see everybody expressing their opinions respectfully

towards one another.

So I want to conclude by just thanking everybody that showed up today to speak. I also want to thank our court reporters who are taking everything down diligently, our Public Advisor's Office, who helped staff the table and take down everybody's name, and Commissioner Douglas for her participation today.

Your input and comments today are really important for us in our decision-making process, and I want to thank everybody for making the time to attend the public participation today.

If anybody would like to make additional comments, you can do that on our docket card, and the folks at the Public Advisor's table can tell you how to do that.

With that, this public participation hearing is adjourned. Thank you. Off the record.

(At the hour of 3:58 p.m., this matter having been continued to 6:00 p.m., November 9, 2026, the Commission then adjourned.)]

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EVENING SESSION - 6:00 P.M.

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CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Let's be on the record.

The Commission will come to order. This is the time and place set for one of the public participation hearings in the general rate case applications of Southern California Gas Company, which is Application 26-06-014, and San Diego Gas & Electric Company, Application 26-06-015. These two applications are being considered together. Throughout this hearing, I will refer to Southern California Gas Company as SoCalGas and San Diego Gas & Electric Company as SDG&E.

My name is Michelle Cooke, and I'm the Chief Administrative Law Judge at the California Public Utilities Commission. The administrative law judges assigned to this proceeding are Sarah Thomas and Elizabeth Fox, who will be reviewing the transcript of today's hearing. I'm also joined by Commissioner Karen Douglas, who is the assigned commissioner for this case.

Commissioner Douglas, would you like to make any opening remarks?

COMMISSIONER DOUGLAS: Yes. Thank you. And I'd like to welcome everyone for being here today, and I'd like to thank Chief ALJ Cooke for presiding over today's in-person public participation hearing, as well

as Judges Thomas and Fox for their work on this proceeding. As ALJ Cooke noted, I'm the commissioner assigned to this proceeding where we will be reviewing SoCalGas' test year 2028 general rate case, or GRC.

I'd like to thank everyone who took the time out of their day to come here and participate in today's hearing, especially members of the public, who are here to share their perspectives. This in-person public participation hearing will be followed by two virtual PPH days on December 9th and December 10th.

These hearings are an important way for the Commission to hear directly from individuals and communities who are impacted from the results of this proceeding, and the comments that we get today give us valuable insights into your priorities and your concerns, and that helps us make informed decisions as we get deeper into the proceeding and the evidence as presented in the proceeding.

For this general rate case, we will be determining the total amount of revenue that SoCalGas is authorized to collect to cover various utility costs from 2028 through 2031, as well as the allocation of those costs. Right now, across the state, we are looking at a number of very important priorities that need to be addressed for the provision of affordable,

safe, reliable, and clean energy service, and among these are infrastructure maintenance, system upgrades to support operations, pipeline modernization, and more. These investments have costs, and we have to look closely at those costs, especially in light of the affordability challenges on ratepayers that are very much front of mind; and so that will be the work in front of us, to look carefully at the importance of the work that is proposed to be done while also considering its impact on customers and their ability to afford their utility bills. To this end, we will be scrutinizing the necessity of SoCalGas' requested funding authorization, and taking action, where appropriate, to contain costs and minimize rate increases.

Again, I want to thank everyone for being here to comment today, and I also want to thank the many people who worked to make today's hearing possible, including the judges, also the Public Advisor's Office, our court reporters, and our staff, and I also want to acknowledge David Fermino, who's here. He is an advisor to Commissioner Harada, who I am working with through the course of this proceeding. Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you, Commissioner Douglas.

So this is the second in-person public participation hearing we are holding regarding this application. As Commissioner Douglas mentioned, there are additional virtual public participation hearings that will take place on December 9th and 10th. If you picked up an agenda from our Public Advisor table, it includes information about the December public participation hearing.

The overall purpose of today's hearing is to obtain public feedback and comments from SoCalGas and SDG&E customers and the general public about these particular applications. Your input and comments are extremely helpful as parties and the Commission continue to consider all aspects of SoCalGas and SDG&E requests prior to rendering a decision.

Before receiving public comment, I would like to begin with a brief overview of the California Public Utilities Commission and the SoCalGas and SDG&E applications.

The California Public Utilities Commission is the agency that regulates privately-owned utilities throughout the state, such as SoCalGas and SDG&E. Among other things, the Commission decides how much money SoCalGas and SDG&E should be authorized to collect from customers and the actual rates that will be included on

customer bills for gas and electric service. The Commission has five commissioners who are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the State Senate. Administrative Law Judges Thomas and Fox manage the day-to-day activities of this case. However, the five commissioners are ultimately the ones who will decide and vote on whether or not to approve this -- SoCalGas and SDG&E requests, or some other amount. The job of the administrative law judges will be to evaluate all of the evidence in the proceeding, and to write a proposed decision for the commissioners to consider. The five commissioners will then decide whether to adopt the proposed decision from the administrative law judges or adopt their own alternate decision based on the evidence in the proceeding. It is estimated that the Commission will vote on this decision at the end of 2027.

To briefly summarize the applications, in June of 2026, SoCalGas and SDG&E submitted their general rate case requests asking the Commission for approval of expected costs for owning and operating the companies for the years 2028 through 2031. The expenses included in rate case applications generally cover poles, wires, and pipelines, meters, employees, and all other activities needed to deliver gas and electricity to homes and businesses. The application also includes

capital expenditures to upgrade the gas and electric systems, replace infrastructure, increase gas safety, and address other safety risks, such as wildfires and improving cybersecurity, among many other issues. Right now, we are here to receive comments from the public regarding both applications.

SoCalGas' current request is to increase revenues it collects from customers by about 10.4 percent over 2027 rates. SDG&E's request is to increase rates by about 7.7 percent over 2027 rates. The impact that such a revenue increase would have on customer bills will vary, and depends on many factors; things like how much energy a customer uses. However, if the request is approved, we would expect the impact on a typical non-CARE customer to be about 7.6 percent compared to 2027 rates, and 7.7 percent compared to 2027 rates for CARE residential customers. Those are for SoCalGas. We want to hear what you think about the SoCalGas and SDG&E requests. Comments from the public will help the Commission reach an informed decision.

We have court reporters transcribing today's hearing, and they will be taking down everything that is being said. The commissioner and I will be paying close attention to the opinions expressed today during the hearing. If you do speak, we ask that you speak slowly

and clearly so that the reporters are able to capture everything that is said. The written transcript of today's hearing will be posted publicly on the docket card for this proceeding. If you or anyone you know are not able to make comments today, there are several other ways to provide input or become involved. The Commission considers written comments regarding the application -- and those can be submitted at any time on the docket card for this proceeding. There are also representatives from the Commission's Public Advisor's Office present today. They're located at the table where people were signing in. If you would like additional information on how to submit written public comments or become involved in the proceeding or stay updated in other ways, please see someone from the Public Advisor's Office.

And lastly, we have two customer service representatives from SoCalGas here at one of the tables outside. If you have a customer billing or service issue that is not directly related to the application, please see one of the SoCalGas representatives, and they might be able to help out with your issue.

We will now hear from members of the public who have signed up to speak. I'm going to call multiple names at one time so that we have minimal transition

time between speakers. When I call your name, please come up to the podium or in line behind the first speaker. If you have written remarks, you can hand those to Eric Sawyer, who's one of our Public Advisor staff right here, and they will assist in getting your comments into the record appropriately.

When you speak, I ask again that you speak clearly and at -- and slowly so that the court reporter can make an accurate record. Please be quiet in the room, so that we don't have crosstalk, so that we can have the court reporters make an accurate record today.

It looks like, right now, we have about close to 20 people signed up to speak, so I'm just going to ask if you would limit your comments to no more than three minutes. At three minutes, you'll hear a bell, buzzer, sound from Eric over here, and -- and that -- at that point, we ask you to wrap up your comments.

All right. With that, we're going to turn to the first three speakers. All right. First, we will have Emilio Sosa, Ernie Shaw, and Alicia Berhow.

All right. We'll start with Emilio Sosa.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER SOSA

Good evening, your Honor, commissioners, and the staff. My name's Emilio Sosa. I'm the CEO of Arc Los Angeles and Orange County. We're a nonprofit based

in Downey that serves adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. I'm here tonight to share my support of the general rate request being made by SoCalGas.

SoCalGas offers critical support services for businesses and nonprofits like ourselves. At The Arc, we've -- we've called on SoCalGas when we've had gas smells in our facilities. Their staff are quick to respond, always coming at a moment's notice, and they ensure the health and safety -- the health and safety are of the utmost highest priorities for them.

In addition, through a culinary program that we offer to adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, SoCalGas also offers support in kitchen equipment, by allowing us to try some of the equipment at their facility at no cost. As a nonprofit, this is huge for us, as we invest in different equipment in our -- in our kitchens that can be in tens of thousands of dollars. Being able to try that before making a purchase is really really important to us. As -- as a nonprofit, every dollar counts, and this support helps us tremendously. These supports allow us to serve the IDD community by prioritizing health and safety and having a trustworthy partner in the work we do.

Therefore, we support the general rate increase

being submitted by SoCalGas. Their focus on health and safety is unmatched. Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. Ernie Shaw.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER SHAW

All right. Well, good evening, everybody. Thank you for having me. My name's Ernie Shaw, president of the Utility Workers of America, Local 483, transmissions and storage. We are also a party to the proceeding, as well.

Since 1970, Local 483 has represented a highly skilled workforce responsible for the operation, maintenance, and safety of SoCalGas' natural gas transmission/storage infrastructure throughout Southern California. Today, we represent about 350 members who perform critical work across a huge geographical area, roughly about 3300 miles, from the Nevada border to the Arizona border, south to the Mexican border, and as far north as the Fresno border, and everything in between. Our jurisdictions extends into portions of the service territories of SDG&E, PG&E, Southwest Gas, Long Beach Gas & Oil, and City of Whittier's Public Utility. We operate and maintain critical infrastructure at underground storage facilities such as Aliso Canyon, Honor Rancho, Playa del Rey, and Goleta, as well as transmission pipelines, compressor stations in various

facilities through the regions. Our responsibilities include pipeline patrol, leak and survey, damage prevention, pipeline locate and mark, cathodic protection, instrumentation, preventative maintenance, and emergency response. This is highly special -- specialized work requiring extensive training, technical knowledge, qualifications, and experience. These responsibilities are not optional. They're essential to maintaining a safe and reliable natural gas system, serving more than 21 million consumers throughout Southern California.

As the Commission evaluates SoCalGas' 2028 general rate case, I want to emphasize several areas directly relevant to the work we perform.

The company's request includes investments in its transmission integrity management program, storage integrity management program, pipeline safety assessments, and specialized transmission and storage training. Funding these programs is only part of the equation. They depend on qualified employees, like myself, with the knowledge, experience, and resources to perform the work safely. As technology advances, the company pursues operational and -- efficiencies. It's important that the workforce impacts, staffing, training are all considered. Local 483 recognizes the need for

adequate funding to safely operate and maintain California's natural gas infrastructure. We also believe these investments must support the skilled workforce. Me and my members aren't just an expense. We are an essential part of maintaining a safe, reliable natural gas system.

(Chime sounds.)

SPEAKER SHAW: Was that my time, or no? Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. Our next speaker is Alicia Berhow.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER BERHOW

Thank you very much. Thank you to the Commission and to Commission -- Commissioner Douglas. My name is Alicia Berhow, and I am a resident of the City of Irvine in Orange County, and I'm here this evening to speak on the general rate case in support of the proposed increase.

If approved by the CPUC, the average residential bill rises approximately $5.67 per month in 2028. This is lower than the previous 7.7 percent increase estimated for 2027. Additionally, this is the lowest percentage increase in more than a decade, and for families and seniors focusing on affordability, every bit of savings helps in uncertain times. This is

essential, as the average annual residential bills are among the lowest nationwide in the past 30 years. And much of the cost is driven by factors outside of the gas company's control; insurance, employee health care, and safety compliance being the primary factors.

The increase covers essential work, maintaining the grid, meeting federal and state safety requirements, and mitigating known risks to public and worker safety, system reliability, and cybersecurity. The rate request considers the baseline costs of continuing safe reliable service, not expansion beyond essential obligations. And as a regulate -- regulated utility, SoCalGas does not profit from customers' natural gas consumption; instead, it works to secure the best gas price, and helps customers conserve energy.

Thank you to the CPUC and for this meeting today and for your consideration of this decision. Thank you very much.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. All right. Our next three speakers will be Irineo Domingo Duran, Bill Gilbertson, and Mitchell Vieyra. Sorry.

So Irineo.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER DURAN

Good evening. Good evening, Commissioner Douglas. Nice to see you again. My name is Irineo

Duran, and I am a resident of Arcadia and a -- and a customer of SoCal Edison.

Last month, my bill was $420 for a household of three. I am a commuter, and I'm a small business owner. I am a renter. I speak on behalf of the senior citizen community of the Holy Angels Church, and I am also a policy advisor at the Public Policy Exchange. I have studied this request, and have concluded that this is untimely. We could ill afford these increases at this time. Everything is going up, and I believe that this increase right now is not sustainable for the residents of El Monte and for the residents of my community. Thank you very much.]

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Our next speaker is Bill Gilbertson.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER GILBERTSON

Hello. My name is Bill Gilbertson, president of UWA Local 132. We represent just over 3,000 members employed with SoCalGas.

Previous to my position as president, I've held various jobs in SoCalGas, including lead construction technician and energy technician, residential, over the last 15 years. In my capacity in those positions, I've witnessed the responsiveness to emergencies, safety-driven priorities, and the proof that being

properly funded means everything.

Our members are the frontline employees from the call center dealing with emergency calls and normal services and field operations like distribution and customer services, reporting to emergencies, and making much-needed repairs and replacement of SoCalGas's facilities.

The proper and timely funding has great importance to ensure that ever-aging pipelines will be properly addressed. Funding for frequent leak survey and meter inspections, along with requirements set in place by PHMSA and the CPUC ensure that leaks and abnormal operating conditions are properly addressed and timely repairs are made on the 400,000 miles of pipeline.

Proper staffing is equally as important. Untimely funding could result in job losses and deferred timelines of programs targeting vintage and ever-aging pipe, which could put the safety of the public at risk.

Just because California wants to go all electric doesn't mean that there's still not an infrastructure that needs to be maintained. I'm in full support of SoCalGas's 2028 rate case to allow for full funding of the much-needed programs and workforce to maintain safe and reliable service to its millions of

customers throughout SoCal.

Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

Our next speaker is Mitchell Vieyra.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER VIEYRA

Thank you. Good evening. My name is Mitchell Vieyra. I'm the executive vice president of the Los Angeles County Business Federation. We're also known as BizFed. We're a grassroots alliance of 240 business organizations that represent 420,000 companies and 5 million employees in Southern California.

BizFed supports energy policies that prioritize affordability, reliability, and sustainability, while protecting jobs and economic growth. These priorities underpin our strong support for SoCalGas and its commitment to safely serve more than 21 million people and thousands of businesses across our region.

For these -- for these customers, reliable energy is essential to everyday life and business operations. From families that are heating their homes and preparing meals to restaurants that serve customers and manufacturers that produce essential goods, businesses and households depend on dependable and affordable service.

SoCalGas also plays an important role in

supporting Southern California's supply chain. The businesses that produce, process, store, and distribute goods depend on reliable energy to maintain operations, meet delivery schedules, and control costs. Energy disruptions can ripple across this network, affecting workers, suppliers, and customers.

We urge you to recognize SoCalGas's essential role in serving customers, sustaining businesses, and keeping our regional economy moving. California's progress towards its ambitious energy goals must include safe, reliable, and affordable service for the people and businesses that depend on it.

Thank you so much for your consideration.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

Our next three speakers are Katherine Victorian, Clint Olivier, and Chad Maender.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER VICTORIAN

Good evening. My name is Katherine Victorian. I am a ratepayer, but I am also an employee of SoCalGas, and my views and opinions do not reflect those of SoCalGas.

I just -- as a ratepayer and as a mom, I've had four different homes in my -- in the course of my adult life. Well, including my childhood. All three but one had an electric appliance only, so my -- I think I was

only there for one year.

I absolutely hated my electric appliances. My electric bills were extremely high and I was burning everything. So I prefer to cook with natural gas, I prefer my current home has all gas appliances.

I have an old furnace that's from the 1960s that runs solely on a thermostat, no electrical at all, and my bills in the wintertime are extremely low, versus my high air-conditioning rates from my electric bill. My electric bill was as high as $900.

Yes, I have a large family, a family of eight. But you want to talk about affordability? Natural gas is extremely affordable; and my children, as they're aging out into adulthood, each of them are looking for homes that have natural gas because they prefer cooking and using -- and they understand the value in affordable energy.

In California, we really need to have these services safe for our community because of the high weather risk that we've had. We've had the erosion of the -- the beaches, the coastal flooding. We need these safety services that SoCalGas provides to their infrastructure for everyone's homes and safety. And the gas company is very good at responding to emergencies, versus the other utilities not so much so. I've had

that in my own personal experience.

With COVID, people have lost their sense of smell, so it's very important to have SoCalGas fully employed with their safety personnel that if -- if things are -- they're -- they have a lot of good infrastructure that notices when there's higher bills or, you know, releases of gas. Their smart meters can pick that up and their employees can go and make everything safe.

Again, having dual energy in SoCal is very important. I love California. My six children plan to stay in California, and we need a dual system. The grid just cannot operate only on electric. It's just a -- we've seen it time and time again; and unfortunately, when we have outages due to weather, fire risk, our elderlies or our people that don't have natural gas, they're going to be cold, so -- we still have a very large infrastructure of people on wall furnaces, floor furnaces, and electrical -- I'm sorry -- gas stoves that they can utilize.

I want to point out Christmas 2024, over 40 to 50,000 residents of the Whittier area, Downey area, Norwalk area had no electricity. We had to cook in the dark, and thank God I have natural gas. I was able to use matches and my stove and cook my food, so we had a

wonderful -- still had a meal for our Christmas.

And I just --

(Timer notification.)

SPEAKER VICTORIAN: -- wanted to put that into perspective. We -- it is very important to have dual sources of energy.

Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

Our next speaker is Clint -- Clint Olivier.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER OLIVIER

Good evening, Commissioners. I'm Clint Olivier from the Central Valley Business Federation. Thank you so much for the opportunity to speak.

As we heard from my colleague Mitchell Vieyra, BizFed brings together business organizations across the Central Valley, in my case. We hear from employers of all sizes; and when it comes to energy, their priorities are very straightforward. They want it to be affordable, clean, and reliable.

So, for example, for a small restaurant, the gas bill is one of those costs that has to be planned for every month; and when it's time to open for lunch or dinner, you have to know that your equipment will work.

Families are making those same kinds of decisions as well at home, trying to keep up with

monthly bills and counting on dependable service when they need it. Our board of directors wants to see practical steps taken to reduce emissions, and finding and fixing leaks is an excellent example. It reduces emissions while helping keep the system in good working order.

So after carefully reviewing all the information and listening to all the public comment, we respectfully ask that the Commission support the SoCalGas rate case request. Please support essential work like pipeline inspection and repair while looking closely at what each investment would cost consumers.

We want the work that keeps service dependable and reduces emissions to move forward at a cost that families and small businesses can afford. Our board of directors believes it's not an either/or proposition, but one that's both/and.

Thank you for listening and for giving the public a chance to weigh in.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

Our next speaker is Chad Maender.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER MAENDER

Good evening. My name is Chad Maender, and I serve as the president and CEO at the LAX Coastal Chamber of Commerce, and we're here tonight in support

of SoCalGas.

As an organization representing hundreds of businesses throughout the LAX and coastal communities, we recognize that a utility's responsibility extends beyond just delivering energy. It also means being an active, engaged, and accessible partner in the communities it serves.

We appreciate SoCalGas's effort to build relationships through partnerships with local nonprofits, community organizations, chambers of commerce, local governments. Outreach, education, small business engagement, and neighborhood partnerships help ensure that information and resources reach the people where they are.

Equally important is ensuring residents and businesses have meaningful opportunities to be heard. I've seen the value of this firsthand through my personal involvement with the Community Advisory Council in Playa del Rey.

Being a part of those conversations reinforces transparency, safety, and how important it is for community members to have a seat at the table, ask questions, raise concerns, and know that their perspectives are being heard.

Tonight we support SoCalGas as an invaluable

resource and partner across the countless communities in our region, and that is why we are here, and we fully support them on this initiative with the CPUC.

Thank you so much.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

All right. Our next three speakers are Leticia Ramirez, Lucia Velos, and Lydia Chavez.

Leticia Ramirez.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER RAMIREZ

Hi. Good evening. Thank you to the Commissioners for being here and for the opportunity to speak.

My name is Leticia Ramirez. I live in Los Angeles County. I've been a daycare provider there for 25 years, and I also serve as -- on the board of a nonprofit organization that we do different things for the community, so I work closely within that community.

I'm here as a client, because I'm also a client for SoCalGas, and I'm really concerned with this increase and what it does because the cost of living and just everything in general has -- the raising cost of living and what it -- it does, and this will affect many of the families that I serve.

As a single mom myself, I hold two jobs. I work as an ABA therapist and I work doing daycare; and I

can tell you like it's -- it's overwhelming with just how high costs -- the cost of living is.

I would ask and urge you to reject the gas company's proposed rate increase for families in my community that are already stretched thin by the rising cost of living and they can no longer afford any -- any more expenses, and I would really plead and ask that you reconsider and think of the many people that are being affected by something like this.

Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

All right. Our next speaker is Lucia Velos. And I understand there is an interpreter.

All right. So for this -- you'll have six minutes, so don't -- no need to rush; and if you'll speak and then have the interpretation. Don't talk over each other.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER VELOS

(Through the Interpreter): My name is Lucia Velos, and I come from the community of Bell Gardens. I am a customer of SoCalGas, and I am here because I don't agree with any increases.

The first thing that I want to say is that I'm here for -- because the inflation, it's costing us dearly. The second is because the money that I make

monthly, as well as many members of my community, is minimum wage, and I have over two years working in the same company and they haven't increased the money that I make yearly.

But what -- what increased is my phone bill, my internet, my insurance, gas, food, et cetera. And rent. As a member of my community and as an activist leader, women leaders in our communities, I hear these women complaining about the cost of living daily.

All of these people are just thinking what are they going to do with all these increases in gas? Or I pay my bills or I don't eat. This is why this is something that is affecting families right now, is affecting us all.

For a lot of you, and for many people that are here saying that they agree with these general rate case -- with the increases in -- in gas, maybe they -- these increases don't affect you the way it affect us, because I don't have money to spare. I'm lacking that money.

$50 more in my bill is meat that I can buy for my family; but for -- but for people that have highly -- high incomes, an increase like this is nothing. There are ways in which these companies should do this. Why they have to pass all these expenses on to consumers?

I agree with some costs to pass to the consumers; but all the time, it is not fair. I don't agree with the increases.

THE INTERPRETER: She's paying bills month to month, and she prefers to pay the bills before paying anything else, so she wants -- she wants you to know that she doesn't agree with any rate increases.

Thank you.]

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. Okay. Our next speaker will be Lilia Chavez; again, you'll have six minutes.

And just a reminder, translate in the first person. Thank you. Go ahead.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER CHAVEZ

(Through the Interpreter): Good evening, commissioners. My name is Lila Chavez, and I come from the City of Bell Gardens.

THE INTERPRETER: She's also a --

SPEAKER CHAVEZ: (Through the Interpreter): I am also a customer of SoCalGas, and I'm realizing that these increases will affect me, and I want to ask you to take conscience on what you got -- what you want to do.

In -- in my particular case, I pay $2600 for rent, $75 for water, and it also includes -- I also have to pay aside for electricity, insurance, and food.

THE INTERPRETER: She doesn't understand if you're taking into consideration that there's people that are making minimum wage like them.

SPEAKER CHAVEZ: They are making 16 to $17 an hour. That is 2600 a month, in a good month. If I am paying 200 -- $2600 for rent, where am I going to get the money to pay for the rest of my bills? What do I have to do to pay all the bills? I have to ask for loans to pay the bills, and I do that month after month after month. I am also here in representation of my family and my community for people that don't even know that this hearing is taking place tonight, and please take conscience of what they want to do, because a lot of families are going to be affected by these increases.

I thank you very much, and I leave this, what I'm thinking, in your hearts, in your minds, and in your souls. Thank you very much.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you very much.

I do want to remind people that we also have representatives from SoCalGas here. If they are -- are programs that assist customers on a limited income, make sure you check in with the SoCalGas representatives to learn more about that, if that would be of assistance to you.

All right. Our next three speakers are Van Do,

Cesar Motts, and Matthew Lyons.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER DO

Hello, everyone. My name is Van Do. Thank you for your time today.

I am here speaking on behalf of Asians In Energy in support of SoCalGas' proposed rate increase. We recognize the importance of maintaining a safe, reliable, and efficient natural gas system. We support SoCalGas' continued investment in the safety and integrity of its infrastructure, as well as improvements in operational efficiencies that strengthen public safety and long-term system reliability.

We also recognize that affordability is essential. We support the continuation of the discount program and assist program that serve income constrained households, particularly the low-income Asian American and Pacific Islander communities who may be disproportionately impacted by rising utility costs.

Overall, we believe maintaining critical infrastructure, protecting public safety, and ensuring access to affordability programs are all important aspects to the long-term and well-being of the communities that SoCalGas serves. Thank you for your time and consideration.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. Our next speaker

is Cesar Motts.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER MOTTS

Good afternoon. My name is Cesar Zaldivar-Motts. I'm the executive director of NewStart Housing Corporation. We're a low-income housing organization, nonprofit organization, based in Huntington Park. We have 19 low-income property -- housing properties in Los Angeles and San Bernardino.

All of our tenants are low-income and struggling, and we're here to support this case, the rate -- general rate case, as long as it focuses on improving the infrastructure of the southeast area. We -- we -- you know, many times, we're neglected in the southeast for many things, and -- and we just want to make sure that we get our fair share of infrastructure improvements in the southeast area of Los Angeles County. You know, we, you know -- our tenants struggle day by day to pay bills and to -- you know, they struggle trying to deal with immigration issues and land contaminations and overcrowding, and so we want to make sure that we get our fair share of infrastructure repairs and make sure that our neighborhoods are safe, and we -- and that our organization, and many other nonprofits in the southeast area, continue to promote programs like the CARE program, the Energy Saving

Assistance Program that many of our tenants desperately need in order to survive their day-to-day, you know, living in the southeast.

So again, we do support this, but we want to make sure that we get our fair share. So thank you very much.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. Our next speaker is Matthew Lyons.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER LYONS

Thank you so much. Not related to this -- this rate hearing, I just wanted to recognize my -- my wife, Elizabeth Lyons, who is a phenomenal public education teacher. Sometimes she is a human tissue paper, and she blessed me with a -- a cold this week, so I'm -- I'm here fighting through that. But, I -- I -- I felt that since there's a -- a public record, I can thank her publicly for that gift that she gave me this week.

But, good evening. My name is Matthew Lyons, and I'm here on behalf of the San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership. We support 31 cities and nearly two million residents in the San Gabriel Valley. The Partnership represents businesses, cities, education institutions, and other organizations committed to strengthening the economic vitality and quality of life of the San Gabriel Valley. I'm here to express our

support of the SoCalGas 2028 general rate case application.

Reliable energy infrastructure is fundamental to our regional economy. Businesses of all sizes depend on safe, dependable energy to operate, serve customers, employ workers, and make long-term investment decisions. This is particularly important to our manufacturers, healthcare facilities, and other essential institutions that depend on consistent energy service in the San Gabriel Valley. We recognize that maintaining a safe and reliable natural gas system requires ongoing investment in pipeline inspection, maintenance, infrastructure integrity, regulatory compliance, and operational capabilities. These are essential responsibilities that help protect public safety, support business continuity and ensure reliable service for the communities SoCalGas serves.

We also appreciate SoCalGas' stated emphasis on affordability, operational efficiency, and cost management. The application before you reflects a focus on essential systems, operations, and safety-related investments, while seeking cost controls through workforce optimization, process improvements, technology, and procurement efficiencies. From The Partnership's perspective, safe, reliable, affordable

energy is an important component of economic development, job creation and community well-being.

Accordingly, the San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership supports the SoCalGas rate case application, and respectfully encourages the Commission to approve the application, recognizing the importance of the proposed investments in maintaining essential infrastructure, safety, and reliability for the region. Thank you so much.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. All right. Our next three speakers are Jonah Henry, Elizabeth Martinez, and Mihran Toumajan.

Okay. Jonah Henry.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER HENRY

Hi. Good evening. My name's Jonah Henry. I'm a volunteer organizer with Sunrise Movement Los Angeles. We're a youth led advocacy organization fighting to stop the climate crisis and develop a more equitable economy. We represent hundreds of young people throughout the SoCalGas territory, and we're here to voice our strong opposition to this requested rate increase.

While working class families throughout Southern California are struggling to afford to heat their homes and their water, SoCalGas is earning windfall profits, and it is using its economic power to

hijack our political system, resulting in candidates and in policies that delay the renewable energy transition and keep SoCalGas' industrial and residential customers in our electric grid reliant on hazardous, expensive, climate-warming methane gas. Just last summer, the summer of 2025, SoCalGas defeated rule amendments at the South Coast Air Quality Management District that would have phased out residential gas-fired boilers over the long-term future, and phased in heat pumps. This was a widely popular policy, arguably one of the most consequential environmental and public health policies in my generation in Southern California, and SoCalGas defeated it through their lobbying tactics and in some investigations that revealed potentially artificial intelligence and fake -- fake public comments submitted to South Coast Air Quality Management District.

I am 22 years old. I remember very vividly when I was in middle school, and we were learning in like our science class about how energy works, and I remember my teacher very vividly -- like we were talking about home appliances, and my teacher said very vividly like "You all are the last generation that will grow up with like gas-fired stoves, because the way that the markets work, it's just cheaper, more efficient, and healthier for homes to be using electric stoves rather

than gas-fired stoves. That's just how the -- you know, the future is going to go."

And we are dealing with a corporation right now whose sole purpose is to keep gas-fired appliances in homes for centuries in the future to eliminate all of their competition from renewable energy companies, and allowing them to continue to earn more revenue and profits is like directly -- directly fueling that policy advocacy. SoCalGas -- the business model for SoCalGas is to privatize the revenue of their products and socialize the cost, the public health and environmental cost. This is how fossil fuel companies have operated for decades, and it's how they'll continue to operate literally until the death of our planet, unless regulatory bodies like the CPUC have the courage to stand up for what is best for the long-term health of our economy and our society, rather than what's best for the short-term quarterly profits of multi-billion-dollar monopoly corporations like SoCalGas.

This proposed rate increase is unacceptable. We strongly urge the CPUC to reject it. Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. Our next speaker is Elizabeth Martinez.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER MARTINEZ

Good afternoon, Commissioner Douglas and Judge

Cookes (sic). First, I would like to welcome everyone to the City of El Monte. This is where I grew up and I was born, so I'm so happy to see you guys all here where I grew up and where my roots remain very very strong. I now live in the neighboring city, which is Temple City, so it's specially meaning for me -- for me to be here today.

My name is Elizabeth Martinez, senior vice president, strategic partnerships, for Meruelo Enterprises, the parent company of Doty Brothers and Herman Weissker and Tidwell. These companies are minority California native companies owned by a Latino enterprise, and so we're very proud to be partners of SoCalGas.

Through our work in the utility and infrastructure industry, we understand firsthands (sic) the importance of maintaining a safe and reliable natural gas system. Natural gas remains an essential energy source for many Southern California families and businesses. As many have mentioned, keeping rates affordable is key, especially for working families, my mother who still continues to have her gas stove and her gas dryer. She said please -- she wanted to come with me, because she couldn't really make it today. So, you know, in the raising of all these costs, it's obviously

something that is -- is -- is very special to her, so she wanted me to make sure to -- to say that.

I also want to recognize SoCalGas' commitment to the community engagement and its investment in creating good-paying jobs, supporting local businesses, and providing opportunities for divest workforce. These investments help strength (sic) our local economy and provide career opportunities for families and communities like the City of El Monte. Community engagement is about building trust, creating opportunities, ensuring our communities have a voice. As someone who grew up in this community, I understand the importance of balancing infrastructure investment and affordability.

So today, I am here in support of SoCalGas' year for 2028 for the rate case and its application and the necessary investment in safety, reliability, and infrastructure, while encouraging responsible cost management and continued efficiencies to keep rates affordable. Thank you again for your consideration, and again, have a good evening. Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. Our next speaker is Mihran Toumajan -- sorry, Toumajan.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER TOUMAJAN

Good evening, commissioners. My name is Mihran

Toumajan, and I serve as government relations manager for the Commercial Real Estate Development Association of Southern California, CREDA SoCal, formerly NAIOP SoCal. We are the leading commercial real estate trade association representing the broad spectrum of Southern California's commercial real estate industry. Our over 1200 annual dues paying members encompass the broad commercial real estate ecosystem, including property owners, investors, and developers, in addition to architects, engineers, general contractors, commercial brokers, finance professionals, and other industry service providers. Our members build office, industrial, mixed use, multi-family -- mixed use and multi-family residential, retail, hospitality, and other commercial-oriented properties.

CREDA SoCal's enjoyed a longstanding and productive partnership with SoCalGas, and we appreciate the opportunity to provide comments in support of SoCalGas' 2028 general rate case request. For CREDA SoCal members, safe, reliable, and affordable natural gas service is not simply a convenience; rather, it is essential to business operations, economic competitiveness, and the continued vitality of Southern California's regional economy and supply chain. We recognize that man -- maintaining an extensive natural

gas system requires ongoing investments in infrastructure, safety, regulatory compliance, cybersecurity, and operational efficiencies. These investments are particularly important to the thousands of commercial and industrial businesses that depend upon uninterrupted energy service.

At the same time, we recognize the financial pressures facing California businesses and consumers. Affordability must remain a priority; however, efforts to contain costs must be carefully balanced against the need to maintain the safety, reliability, and long-term integrity of our region's energy infrastructure.

CREDA SoCal respectfully urges the Commission to give full and fair consideration to SoCalGas' proposed investments, and to authorize the requested expenditures demonstrated to be necessary to stain -- to sustain safe, reliable, and efficient service. Thank you, commissioners, for your time and consideration.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you. All right. Our next three speakers are Corrie Lontoc, Teresa Carlos, and Ben Carlos.

Corrie Lontoc.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER LONTOC

Hello. Thank you so much for this. First of all, I am not prepared for this. I am attending the

meeting as a consumer. And I kind of listened to what everyone is saying.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Step forward closer to the microphone.

SPEAKER LONTOC: Okay. I listened to what everybody said, and I feel that a lot of the people that were saying we shouldn't increase the rate, they're saying that everything went up, all the prices have gone up.

So my position is why wouldn't we -- why are we not allowing the gas company to increase their rates? I think that, based on what they want increase the rate for, I think that's very important. So I am in support of increasing the rate.

I was kind of invited to come, and I didn't know exactly what this is, so I'm not prepared. And actually, my voice is a little bit shaky, because I'm -- I'm not very used to public speaking. But, what I am is I own a mobile home park, and I'm a part of the -- the conversion program. So what happened was when I took over the park in 2023, I -- it was a trailer park, and it was in a really bad condition. A lot of the people there, they were living in makeshift homes. And this is when I purchased it, and obviously, I've made a lot of improvements on it. And most of the people were senior

citizens. They did not have gas. They were using propane. And oftentimes, they were going without heat, they were going without hot water, because they were too frail to -- you know, to -- to get propane tanks for their heating. And so this is one of the programs that California gas gave us. They gave those senior citizens gas, and now they have hot water, they have heating, and they are so grateful. And they're a part of the CARE program. And these are the most -- when -- it's -- they're poverty level. These people are -- when I came over the park, they were paying $600 for a space. And their -- their home started dilapidated and tarps and -- and everything. So I've made improvements on the park, and I -- you know, and through the help of SoCalGas -- and this is one of the programs they have -- they were able to improve the lives of the people there.

So I am definitely in support of rate increase, and I think that those people who did mention that, you know, they're struggling, they're having a hard time making -- making utility payments, and just the overall cost of living is going up, I think they could take advantage of the programs that SoCalGas is offering. And at the same time, for those people that can afford, they can -- they can help communities like mine to up -- uplift those people who cannot do it for themselves. So

that's my part. Thank you.]

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

All right. Our next speaker is Teresa Carlos. And you'll be using an interpreter, so we'll have six minutes.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER CARLOS

(Through the Interpreter): My name is Teresa Carlos. I am a resident of Los Angeles, and I am a customer of SoCalGas. I am a member of Angeles Migrantes, an organization not only here but in all the country; and I am a member of Ratepayers United, the organizing arm of TURN.

The point that I have to make and what I have to explain to you is that I've been walking around the streets as a canvasser and I've been speaking with a lot of community members, and what these people have in common is that they are struggling -- that they are struggling in this economy and that they cannot pay all their bills, and that sometimes they say "Or I buy food or I fill my gas."

I have also worked in this city, in the City of El Monte; and I have realized that a lot of people have the same problems. But what they have in common is that they don't want to speak out. They are afraid. And when I -- when I see these kind of people, I start

thinking what is going to happen?

And you, commissioners, and all the authorities here in city council in El Monte, please don't allow another increase in bills. It's just not going to be beneficial for a lot of people that are having problems paying their bills, but especially for all of those who have lost their jobs. A lot of people have lost their jobs now because ICE is in the communities, so they are afraid to speak.

Thank you for listening, and I hope that you are going to help the community. Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

All right. Our next speaker is Ben Carlos.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER CARLOS

Good afternoon, California utilities commissioners. Thank you for your time, for your presence.

I'm also affected by the increase that's going on right now because rent is going up high, cost of living is going up high. If you've got children and you've got to feed them and provide food on the table and clothing on their backs, you know, with this extra increase, it's deterring from other costs that we should be making for their education.

The tuition fees are going up. All this stuff

that's going on, people are losing their jobs because of everything that's going around with this administration. I see people that are in the streets now living in motor homes or the street, living with someone else; and, yeah, sometimes there's faulty gas thermal heaters that are causing the bills to even go even -- go even higher.

For one month, it's 100, for the next month, it's 300, so the rates go up and down, and it's -- and you call the gas company -- I've always been a lifetime member of the gas company.

I've always respected you because they have all these programs to help us, and I'm really grateful to the gas company for -- for keeping, you know, Thanksgiving going and the heat in the house and everything.

And being a caregiver for my mom and my -- my wife, it's -- every -- every penny counts, so any -- I know you guys are a big, giant company, and is it possible any way you guys can maybe make a rate increase in the future when things get better? But right now, things are not better, they're really bad for a lot of people.

I hope you can take that into consideration, and thank you for your time.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

All right. Our next three speakers are Michael Learakos, Ralph Gaovan, Dipo Olatunji.

Michael Learakos?

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER LEARAKOS

Good evening. Mike Learakos. Thank you, Commissioners, for allowing me to speak.

I run a nonprofit agency that works regionally in Southern California with other nonprofits that reduce food insecurity, which is a symptom of poverty. In our work, we represent businesses, small businesses and families. Affordability is absolutely an issue right now. It's critically important.

But also what's critically important is the safe delivery of natural gas. Gas is a -- a real resource to families that are struggling. It's cost-effective.

On the service side of it, if you have a gas appliance, the gas company will provide service, and only at the cost of parts, which is a huge benefit. But most importantly, to continue that safe delivery of gas, we need infrastructure investment.

My observation and opinion is that this is a modest increase that allows for that infrastructure improvement. It is an affordability issue, but there's also the CARE program that provides assistance and

relief, so I would urge the Commissioners to support this rate increase; and I would also remind that while we struggle with affordability, we have to look at -- and, again, the importance of safe delivery.

Look no further than Palisades Fire and Eaton Fire. Those that had financial means found themselves in dire straits. So in other words, that safe delivery -- we all know how volatile natural gas can be and the critical importance of safe infrastructure.

Thank you very much.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

Our next speaker is Ralph Gaovan.

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER GAOVAN

Good evening, Commissioner Douglas and Judge. My name is Ralph Gaovan. As a local resident customer, board member of a business association and food pantry --

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Slow down.

SPEAKER GAOVAN: Okay. Let me breathe.

-- affordability is especially important to me. Families are stretching their budgets, small businesses are managing higher operating costs, and community organizations are working hard to meet growing needs.

Natural gas continues to provide an essential and affordable energy option for many customers when our

lights go out. The gas is there. Natural gas continues -- I support the necessary safety -- wait. Gas -- natural gas continues to provide an essential and affordable energy option for many in our community.

I support the necessary safety and reliability investments in the SoCalGas general rate case 2028. I urge the CPUC to support this rate case.

Thank you.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

Our next speaker is Dipo Olatunji.

Did I get that close?

STATEMENT OF SPEAKER OLATUNJI

Yes. You did very well.

Good evening, everyone. My name is Dipo Olatunji. I live in Echo Park with my wife and two kids.

I started at SoCalGas as an intern in 2004, as an engineering intern, and stayed as an engineer until -- for about ten years. But today I run Over J Consulting, a small minority-owned engineering firm here in Los Angeles, and SoCalGas is one of our clients.

I want to state this clearly. I support the rate request. Let me give you one reason for -- from the work I know.

So I'm an engineer. I've seen this in an

intimate perspective. The work that has to be carried out to keep the system safe is a lot more intricate than it sounds, or more intricate than it actually sounds. You can have a piece of paper in front of you that states that this pipeline has been inspected, but there is no assurance in that.

And as I see a couple of people before me have alluded to, natural gas is very volatile, so as technology is improving, as things are becoming more technological, the same thing SoCalGas has to do to ensure that its system is keeping up with today's risks and ensuring that you don't even have things like cyber security challenges -- so there are a lot of things here which I think people have to kind of think about.

I do understand and I do know that affordability is a huge challenge. We all know that. We're all experiencing that in any way, shape, form, or sense.

And like the gentleman before me said, the Palisades Fire is what we all need to think about. You can be able to afford anything you want, but still these are -- these -- this system is what we all use to kind of ensure that our day-to-day -- we can run our day to day successfully.

So I want, again, to just close out by saying

it's an intricate process. A record that shows a pipeline has been inspected doesn't necessarily mean that pipeline has been inspected. There's a lot of layers that has to go in place to actually validate that, verify that, and that takes numerous updating of the paper records, which they still have until now.

So there are a lot of things that need to happen to actually ensure that natural gas is safer, and I strongly support the Commission to -- to move forward with SoCalGas with the rate increase they're asking for.

Thank you very much.

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Thank you.

All right. That concludes all of the speakers that signed up. Are there any other people in the audience that wish to speak?

(No response.)

CHIEF ALJ COOKE: Okay. Hearing none, I want to thank everybody for their comments tonight; and I want to thank our court reporters, the Public Advisor's Office, and Commissioner Douglas for everybody's participation today; and mostly, I want to thank all of you, our public speakers, for your input and comments, and for taking the time out of your busy schedules to appear before us today.

If anybody would like to provide additional

input or comments after this hearing, you can submit written comments on the docket card for this proceeding; and if you need assistance with how to do that, you can talk to our Public Advisor staff in the lobby for information about how to do that.

And with that, that concludes this evening's public participation hearing. This public participation hearing is adjourned. Off the record.

(At the hour of 7:16 p.m., this matter having been continued to 2:00 p.m., November 10, 2026, the Commission then adjourned.)]

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BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

OF THE

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

CERTIFICATION OF TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

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EXECUTED THIS 16TH DAY OF NOVEMBER, 2026.



REBEKAH L. DE ROSA
CSR NO. 8708

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

OF THE

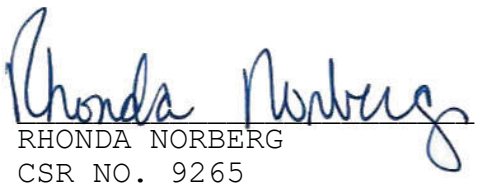
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CSR NO. 9265

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