

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE
STATE OF CALIFORNIA



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ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE VALERIE KAO, presiding

Application of Pacific Gas and
Electric Company for Authority,
Among Other Things, to Increase
Rates and Charges for Electric and
Gas Service Effective on January 1,
2020. (U39M)

) PUBLIC
) PARTICIPATION
) HEARING
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)
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) Application
) 18-12-009
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San Luis Obispo, California
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SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA

JULY 26, 2019 - 1:00 P.M.

* * * * *

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE KAO: Please
come to order. We will be on the record.

This is the time and place set for
the public participation hearing for the
general rate case application of Pacific Gas
and Electric Company, or PG&E, Application
A.18-12-009.

Good afternoon. My name is Valerie
Kao. I am an administrative law judge at the
California Public Utilities Commission, or
CPUC. I'm conducting this public
participation hearing on behalf of Judge
Elaine Lau and Judge Rafael Lirag, assigned
administrative law judges, or ALJs, in this
case.

Commissioner Liane Randolph is the
assigned commissioner in this case.
Unfortunately, she could not join us today,
but we will coordinate with her throughout
the proceeding. She will also have a copy of
the transcript for today's meeting.

Before we start, I'll allow a few
minutes to give you a brief overview of what
the CPUC is and what we do. The CPUC is a
state agency that regulates privately owned

1 utilities, like PG&E, that provide essential
2 services, such as electricity and natural
3 gas. There are five commissioners at the
4 CPUC. These five commissioners will be the
5 people who vote and decide whether to approve
6 PG&E's request or some other dollar amount in
7 this application.

8 The role of the assigned judges in
9 this case is to review PG&E's application.
10 Based on the evidence that is presented, they
11 will write a proposed decision for the
12 commissioners to consider. The commissioners
13 will vote to adopt the assigned ALJs'
14 decision or an alternate decision put forth
15 by the commissioner.

16 The purpose of the public
17 participation hearing is to listen to your
18 comments on PG&E's application. We want to
19 hear about PG&E's application -- how PG&E's
20 application affects you, your family, your
21 community as a PG&E customer. Your comments
22 will help the Commission gather information
23 to determine whether PG&E's proposed
24 increases are reasonable. Judge Lau and
25 Judge Lirag have already received a lot of
26 comments that the public had sent to the
27 Commission's Public Advisor's office.

28 So I'll take a quick moment to talk

1 about what PG&E requested in its application.
2 In this application, PG&E requests authority
3 to increase its revenues by \$1.058 billion in
4 2020, \$454 million in 2021 and \$486 million
5 in 2022. Every three years PG&E files a
6 general rate case, or GRC, application like
7 this one to request funding for its gas and
8 electric operations. The impact of this
9 application, if granted without modification,
10 would increase an average residential
11 customer's monthly bill by 7 to 8 percent, or
12 approximately \$10.50.

13 According to PG&E, the major reasons
14 for the requested increase are to fund PG&E's
15 wildfire mitigations and liability insurance.
16 If you want more information about the
17 application, there is a fact sheet at the
18 Public Advisor's table outside.

19 Currently there are many active
20 parties in this proceeding, including many
21 consumer groups, community-based
22 organizations, city and county governments,
23 unions and large user groups. Many of these
24 groups oppose what PG&E is requesting. Their
25 participation in this proceeding can affect
26 the amount of money the Commission would
27 authorize PG&E to collect.

28 So at this time, it is my

1 understanding that PG&E would like to make a
2 brief presentation, followed by Alliance for
3 Nuclear Responsibility. So first we will
4 have PG&E.

5 STATEMENT OF MR. MULLEN

6 Thank you, ALJ Kao, welcome. And
7 thank you, everyone, for attending today's
8 public participation hearing on PG&E's 2020
9 general rate case.

10 My name is Pat Mullen, and I've
11 been an employee at PG&E for over 25 years.
12 And as PG&E's local division director for San
13 Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties, I'm
14 responsible for our local services for -- to
15 the roughly 450,000 customers that PG&E
16 serves in these two counties.

17 This is one of the 17 hearings
18 hosted by the CPUC throughout the 70,000
19 square-mile service territory that PG&E
20 serves. At each of these locations,
21 representatives from PG&E will be available
22 to assist customers if they have any specific
23 questions on their bills or questions related
24 to the company. We have representatives here
25 today at a table just outside the hearing
26 room.

27 In addition, PG&E representatives
28 that are here tonight. We also have our 24

1 by 7 customer information phone line. And so
2 if customers have questions outside of
3 today's hearing, they are always welcome to
4 call PG&E at 1-800-PGE-5000.

5 Our customers' feedback in this
6 process is crucial for us to hear, because
7 the application includes a series of critical
8 electrical and safety investments that help
9 us address the State's growing wildfire
10 threat and further protect the 60 million
11 people that we serve.

12 Thank you to the Commission and ALJ
13 Kao for the opportunity to learn from our
14 customers here this afternoon. I would like
15 to introduce Jim Welsh, PG&E's Senior Vice
16 President and Chief Nuclear Officer, and also
17 a local residence here in San Luis Obispo,
18 and would like to say a few words. Thank
19 you. Jim.

20 STATEMENT OF MR. WELSCH

21 Good afternoon, ALJ Kao. Thank you
22 for giving us this opportunity to contribute
23 to and learn from the public participation
24 hearings on our 2020 general rate case
25 proposal. These hearings provide a
26 transparent and respectful way for us to
27 interact and communicate with our customers.

28 My name is Jim Welsh. I'm PG&E's

1 Senior Vice President of Generation and Chief
2 Nuclear Officer. As Pat mentioned, I've been
3 at PG&E for 35 years, most of my career at
4 Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant. I'm
5 responsible for the safe and reliable
6 operation of all of our electric generation
7 power plants, including our local Diablo
8 Canyon.

9 My duties include supporting PG&E's
10 most important responsibility, which is the
11 safety of the communities we serve. One of
12 the ways we achieve that is through our GRC
13 proposal, which outlines our plans to upgrade
14 technology and infrastructure. This supports
15 enhancing our ability to provide safe and
16 reliable gas and electric service. Our
17 proposal will also help bolster wildfire
18 prevention, risk monitoring and emergency
19 response; and adds new and enhanced safety
20 measures, increase vegetation management and
21 hardening our electric system to increase
22 resiliency to help further reduce wildfire
23 risk.

24 Under the proposal we are
25 requesting about a \$1.1 billion increase over
26 currently adopted revenues in the first year.
27 More than half of the proposed increase would
28 be directly related to wildfire prevention,

1 risk reduction and additional safety
2 measures. If approved by the CPUC, it would
3 increase a typical residential customers'
4 bill by about 6.4 percent.

5 While it is important to share with
6 you where our customer's money is going, it
7 is also important to share what will not be
8 spent. While the GRC proposal will help fund
9 a series of important safety enhancements, it
10 doesn't request funding for PG&E corporation
11 or utility officer compensation. That means
12 it doesn't go towards my pay or any of my
13 colleagues'. The proposal also doesn't
14 request funding for potential wildfire claims
15 involved in our Chapter 11 bankruptcy
16 proceeding.

17 The GRC proposal is a significant
18 request and comes at a very difficult time.
19 As always, our commitment is to keep our
20 customers' cost as low as possible while
21 meeting the responsibilities we have to
22 safely serve our customers, even as a
23 changing climate presents significant new
24 challenges and risks.

25 This proposal is subject to your
26 thorough, open and transparent review and
27 approval process. We encourage our customers
28 to provide feedback and participate in this

1 important public process that will help shape
2 customer rates in California's energy future.

3 Thank you for your time. I
4 appreciate the opportunity to speak with you
5 today.

6 ALJ KAO: Thank you, PG&E.

7 My understanding is that a
8 representative of another party, the Alliance
9 for Nuclear Responsibility, has a
10 presentation.

11 STATEMENT OF MR. WEISMAN

12 Good afternoon. My name is David
13 Weisman, and I am the Outreach Coordinator of
14 the Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility. We
15 would like to thank the administrative law
16 judge for the opportunity to address the
17 community here, which plays host to Diablo
18 Canyon Nuclear Power Plant and all PG&E
19 ratepayers regarding issues of significant
20 financial impact in this general rate case.

21 PG&E has the burden of proving by a
22 preponderance of the evidence that the
23 revenue requirement it is requesting in this
24 current application is reasonable, and that
25 the resulting rates will be both just and
26 reasonable. The revenue requirements for
27 operating the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power
28 Plant may not meet that test.

1 In the three years since PG&E, the
2 Alliance and others executed the joint
3 proposal to retire Diablo Canyon. Conditions
4 have changed greatly in PG&E's service
5 territory. Per PG&E: Our primary reason for
6 retiring the plant was the projected loss of
7 bundled customers to community choice and
8 direct access. The loss of customers PG&E
9 had anticipated would not occur until 2025,
10 has already been exceeded. At the same time,
11 ongoing reductions in the cost of solar, wind
12 and gas generation, coupled with
13 inflexibility as an integrator or renewable
14 generation, renders Diablo Canyon
15 economically uncompetitive.

16 Computed via the Commission's own
17 Power Charge Indifference Adjustment
18 Methodology, Diablo Canyon has above-market
19 cost for this period of the GRC for
20 approximately half a billion dollars per
21 year. Continuing to incur Diablo Canyon O&M
22 and capital expenditures that are avoidable
23 would be unreasonable and inconsistent with
24 the mandate for just and reasonable rates,
25 and increased cost to the remaining bundled
26 customers and unnecessary penalty to those
27 now served by CCAs that do not include
28 nuclear generation in their portfolio. While

1 the Commission itself anticipated this
2 scenario in its own Decision 18-01-022 that
3 approved the 2016 joint proposal to retire
4 the plant, I quote from the decision:

5 As we gain a clearer
6 picture of future
7 developments, such as the
8 relative cost of operating
9 Diablo Canyon, this balance
10 could change. Because
11 there is a possibility that
12 Diablo Canyon may cease
13 operations earlier than
14 2024 and 2025, PG&E should
15 prepare for that
16 contingency.

17 The decision then continues a
18 paragraph later:

19 Accordingly, PG&E's
20 proposed retirement
21 schedule for Diablo Canyon
22 is approved. If in the
23 interim period the facts
24 change in a manner that
25 indicates Diablo Canyon
26 should be retired earlier,
27 the Commission may
28 reconsider this

1 determination.

2 The Alliance submits that the facts
3 have indeed changed. And the Commission, in
4 light of its own earlier conclusion, should
5 indeed investigate and reconsider that
6 determination. Thank you.

7 ALJ KAO: Thank you. Before we return
8 to public speakers, I would like to provide a
9 few ground rules. First, if you would like
10 to speak today, please sign up at the Public
11 Advisor's table. We would like to hear from
12 everyone that wishes to speak. As a courtesy
13 to others, please refrain from calling out or
14 interrupting any speaker. Please address any
15 comments to us, and not PG&E.

16 At this moment, I would like to ask
17 the audience to please check that their cell
18 phone is on silence.

19 We have a court reporter with us
20 today. She is here to document your comments
21 into the record. So please speak slowly,
22 facing us, so that the court reporter can
23 fully capture the comments. Our court
24 reporter will prepare a written transcript of
25 today's hearing. That transcript will be
26 available to all the commissioners, as well
27 as the public.

28 So we are ready to invite speakers

1 to come up. I'm going to read the names that
2 I have of people who have signed up to speak.
3 When you hear your name, please feel free to
4 come up and approach the podiums that are
5 available.

6 First I have -- and please accept my
7 apologies if I do mispronounce your name, and
8 please correct me if I mispronounce your
9 name. I have Peg Pinard.

10 STATEMENT OF MS. PINARD

11 Thank you very much for this
12 opportunity to speak before you. My name is
13 Peg Pinard. I'm a ratepayer here in San Luis
14 Obispo County, served in prior years as a
15 supervisor in this county and dealt with
16 PG&E, since Diablo Nuclear Power Plant was in
17 my district.

18 In this case, I would like to speak
19 about their request for a rate increase. In
20 reading the public participation hearing
21 information, it talks about the increases
22 being needed because of a combination of
23 increase in rates and expected sales. What
24 is missing is the ability of PG&E to keep the
25 costs down. We've seen this over and over
26 again in both -- all of their actions in
27 the -- up in the fire area where the lack of
28 maintenance and putting the money that we

1 ratepayers paid into it, lack of putting that
2 into hardening their utility lines. We saw
3 the same thing with the gas.

4 This is ongoing for years. There
5 is this history now of having -- asking for
6 rate increases to do what they say,
7 investments. Well, you had that money, and
8 you didn't do it. It is nice if they would
9 say that now it is not going to be going
10 to -- for his pay or anyone else's pay. That
11 is fine, because you already got that. Now
12 that you didn't spend the money on
13 reinvesting in these structures that we
14 depend on, the primary item is for safety, it
15 didn't happen. It didn't happen in both of
16 those. We can only hope that it doesn't
17 happen at the nuclear level. Their track
18 record is severely lacking.

19 Now, they can come to you coming
20 and asking for more increases and sectioning
21 things off. Well, this is what we want for
22 this now, having taken all the money in the
23 past. We ratepayers don't have that option.
24 We are told what we will pay. No matter what
25 is happening in our individual level, we have
26 to make sure that we have responsibilities to
27 our own families and our own communities.
28 They have the same responsibility. They

1 haven't done it. Please don't reward them
2 for that kind of consistent -- it is not just
3 one off, this is consistent -- behavior on
4 their part.

5 You know, the CPUC was created --
6 I'm not telling you anything you don't know,
7 but certainly it is a reminder for me and
8 ratepayers -- to protect us ratepayers. That
9 is what you are there for. That is what I'm
10 asking you to please do. Look at the history
11 of what they've done. Look at the history of
12 increase that they've already asked for.
13 Look at the lack of performance that they
14 have done with that in the past increases.

15 There is a tone now amongst the
16 public at large that the agency that was
17 originally set up to help protect and be the
18 buffer between companies of any sort, that
19 they are not doing their job. There is a
20 cynicism that is permeating this country that
21 where are the people looking out for us, who
22 we believed that is what they are committed
23 to do?

24 So please, in conclusion, do not
25 reward them with more additional rate
26 increases. The only people going to benefit
27 here now are the money people, the Wall
28 Street people. The losers are going to be

1 us, the ratepayers. Thank you.

2 ALJ KAO: Thank you very much.

3 The next speaker I have who signed
4 up is Nattalia Merzoyan.

5 STATEMENT OF MS. MERZOYAN

6 Good job with a difficult name.

7 I'm so in agreement with everything
8 Peg Pinard said. I've been to probably half
9 a dozen of these meetings, and have kind of
10 lost faith that anything is ever listened to
11 as far as the average ratepayer coming and
12 speaking. And most of them don't bother to
13 do it, but I still have some kind of faith
14 that I should at least try. And so here I
15 am, again.

16 I just think, as Peg said, that
17 PG&E has had so many chances to get it right,
18 and they don't do that. And they seem to do
19 it at their -- they do whatever they are
20 doing, their own agenda, at their own
21 discretion without concern for their public,
22 customers. Because they are never held
23 accountable for anything they do whenever
24 they burn down a community or blow up a
25 community and get fined, they somehow manage
26 to also get rate increases that settle all
27 that.

28 And I think the whole history of

1 PG&E is such that we need a different
2 company. Years ago we had deregulation,
3 which gave me this great hope that we were
4 going to have, finally, some choice and some
5 ability to determine how much our rates were
6 going to be. But it was probably lobbied by
7 PG&E, because it just turned out that they
8 went hog wild with the rate increases after
9 deregulation, and costs of electricity have
10 gone up exponentially since deregulation. It
11 doesn't seem like that, because each month
12 they will have an application which raises
13 the rate 1 percent or 2 percent. But if they
14 do that five or six times a year, which they
15 seem to do, you know, I get those leaflets
16 every bill that I get. At the end of the
17 year it is much more than you would have
18 thought that it would be.

19 It has just got to stop. We need
20 to reorganize. We need a not-for-profit
21 utility that isn't out to just make a profit,
22 but really serve the community.

23 And another thing about the
24 weather, I think they no longer have to
25 create their so-called rolling blackouts that
26 they have had back in the 90s, that they
27 colluded with Enron which costs California
28 billions of dollars, and ruined our economy,

1 and caused us to have to try and find a
2 governor that would get us out of debt, which
3 we finally did. And I just think that PG&E
4 has been a bad boy in all of this. And, you
5 know, doesn't need to be rewarded, as
6 Mrs. Pinard said. So I'm hoping that won't
7 happen.

8 As far as the weather issue goes,
9 you may remember that when China had the
10 Olympics they were asked what they would do
11 if it rains; and they said don't worry about
12 that, we can take care of the weather. I
13 think most large states now can control the
14 weather. And PG&E demonstrated that -- the
15 last time I went to a large meeting about the
16 nuclear energy plant closing, they managed in
17 the middle of a heat spell to have two or
18 three days of complete overcast and frigid
19 weather in August. And I just don't believe
20 that that was some strange coincidence that
21 made -- their whole argument was trying to
22 prove that they couldn't rely on the solar
23 energy. So miraculously, as I said, in the
24 middle of a heat wave, they managed to
25 produce overcast weather.

26 I don't want to ramble on, but I
27 think we need to have more protection of the
28 ratepayer, and let PG&E flail around like

1 every other business that has done a bad job
2 of management, managing themselves. If they
3 can't, let the people take over with whoever
4 can fill in the void that they create, and
5 have some kind of better outcome that isn't
6 so expensive. Thank you.

7 ALJ KAO: Thank you very much.

8 The third speaker I have signed up
9 is Betty Winholtz.

10 STATEMENT OF MS. WINHOLTZ

11 Betty Winholtz. Thank you for
12 coming to SLO County. It is helpful. I'm
13 also a ratepayer in Morro Bay.

14 I heard the gentleman speak earlier
15 and say that these monies won't go for
16 salaries and benefits for others. But when
17 that happens, having been in on the City
18 Council of Morro Bay, I notice that sometimes
19 we rearrange our budget, the new money that
20 you get to go for repairing things, maybe
21 replace what is already in the budget that
22 should go for repairing things, saying this
23 money won't go there, is not costing to me.
24 Because I know things can be rearranged and
25 have been rearranged.

26 I too would ask that you protect
27 the ratepayers. We barley get a
28 cost-of-living increase as a retired person

1 on Social Security, and I don't know that
2 PG&E should get more than a CPI either. So
3 please don't give them everything that they
4 want, and keep it manageable for us
5 ratepayers.

6 ALJ KAO: Thank you very much.

7 The fourth person I have who signed
8 up to speak is Dora Johnson.

9 STATEMENT OF MS. JOHNSON

10 Good afternoon. I'm not a loud
11 speaker. This is difficult.

12 My name is Dora Johnson. And I
13 lived in Paradise until November 8th of last
14 year. I lost everything. I lost all my
15 mother's things. My dad, who has been gone
16 for almost 30 years, I don't even have a
17 picture of him. I don't. I'm sorry. I
18 can't hold back the tears.

19 I don't understand why the CPUC
20 keeps giving PG&E money year after year after
21 year. They blew up San Bruno in 2010,
22 18 years later they burn down a whole town.
23 And they burned, I don't know how many cities
24 and homes and businesses, and whatnot, in the
25 intervening eight years. And you all keep
26 giving them money for fire prevention and
27 mitigation.

28 They keep raising our rates and

1 burning down our communities. I don't
2 understand how you can even consider giving
3 them -- you just gave them one in April, the
4 Commission, what is it, all five unanimous
5 consent?

6 The gentleman said earlier that
7 this money is not going towards pay for
8 executive pay. I just read an article a
9 couple of days ago that they are asking for
10 tens of millions of dollars in a separate
11 request for money to pay their executives.
12 Why does the State, why does this Commission
13 keep rewarding them for their conduct? It is
14 unbelievable. Who gets away with this?

15 What other state has a problem we
16 have? I looked. I don't know. I looked, I
17 looked, and I looked and I didn't find
18 another state that is being burned down on a
19 constant basis, regular basis, like
20 California, like PG&E is doing to California.
21 They are not even doing it -- it doesn't
22 appear to be happening in Southern
23 California. They have a lot of flooded areas
24 and homes that blow up. It doesn't happen
25 down there. Is that because they are not
26 down there? I don't know.

27 Anyway, I just want to implore you
28 not to give them -- when do their

1 stockholders, their shareholders, their
2 creditors, when do they pay for this? They
3 keep coming to the trough and getting more
4 money from me. And now the State, of course,
5 is giving them money, or going to in the
6 future. When does it stop? When are you
7 going to look out for us, the public, the
8 ratepayers. They keep burning these homes
9 and towns that are destroyed. Thank you.
10 Thank you.

11 ALJ KA0: Thank you very much. That is
12 all the speakers who signed up to speak. Is
13 there anyone else in the audience who would
14 like to speak? If you do, please come to the
15 microphone and form a line.

16 When you come to the microphone,
17 please first state your name and spell your
18 last name. This is important so that we can
19 document your name accurately for the record.

20 STATEMENT OF MS. SWANSON

21 Thank you. I'm Jane Swanson,
22 another ratepayer from this area,
23 S-w-a-n-s-o-n.

24 I am moved to speak by all the
25 previous speakers, and I agree with
26 everything they said. Just put that on the
27 record.

28 And if I'm not mistaken, the two

1 representatives from Pacific Gas and Electric
2 Company have left the room. Maybe they just
3 moved their seats, but are they here?

4 (Audience member raises hand.)

5 MS. SWANSON: Thank you. I feel
6 better. I was worried that they had left the
7 room, lacking the courtesy of listening to
8 the commenters. That is not an issue then.

9 I would like to make the rather
10 obvious observation that the ratepayers of
11 this State are not -- do not have an
12 obligation to support this private
13 corporation, quite the other way around.
14 This utility that has a monopoly and sort of
15 a stranglehold on all of this has an
16 obligation to serve the ratepayers.

17 They are not doing that good of a
18 job. I won't back that statement up, because
19 the previous speakers have done a very
20 excellent job of it, especially this speaker
21 whose house was damaged. She has my total
22 sympathy. Thank you.

23 ALJ KA0: Thank you very much.

24 Would anyone else like to make a
25 public comment?

26 (No response.)

27 ALJ KA0: I would like to say for the
28 record, right outside this meeting room is a

1 table where you can find the Commission's
2 information from the Commission's Public
3 Advisor's Office. If you have any questions
4 regarding the request or our process, please
5 do not hesitate to find them after the
6 meetings.

7 Also, outside the meeting room is a
8 table where you can find PG&E's customer
9 representatives. They are here to help you
10 answer any specific questions you may have
11 regarding your gas or electric service.

12 So if there are no more speakers
13 today, we will conclude the meeting. Thank
14 you for taking the time to come to today's
15 hearing and sharing your comments with us.
16 If you have any further comments you may
17 email them to the Public Advisor's Office at
18 public.advisors.cpuc.ca.gov. We will have
19 another participation meeting at 6:00 p.m.
20 today. We are now adjourned.

21 Off the record.

22 (Whereupon, at the hour of 1:36
23 p.m., a recess was taken until 6:00
p.m.)

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1 EVENING SESSION - 6:00 P.M.

2 * * * * *

3 ALJ KAO: We will be on the record.

4 This is time and place set for
5 public participation hearing for the general
6 rate case application of Pacific Gas and
7 Electric Company, or PG&E, Application
8 18-12-009.

9 Good evening. My name is Valerie
10 Kao. I am an administrative law judge with
11 the California Public Utilities Commission,
12 or CPUC, and conducting this public
13 participation hearing on behalf of Judge
14 Elaine Lau and Judge Rafael Lirag, who are
15 the assigned administrative law judges, or
16 ALJs, in this case. I want to clarify, I am
17 not assigned to this case, but I intend to be
18 communicating back with the assigned ALJs.

19 Commissioner Liane Randolph is the
20 assigned commissioner in this case.
21 Unfortunately, she could not join us today,
22 but the assigned ALJs will coordinate with
23 her throughout the proceeding. She will also
24 have a copy of today's -- of the transcript
25 of today's meeting.

26 So before we start, I'm going to
27 give a brief overview of what the California
28 Public Utilities Commission, or CPUC, is and

1 what we do. The CPUC is a state agency that
2 regulates privately owned utilities by PG&E
3 that provide essential services, such as
4 electricity and natural gas. There are five
5 commissioners at the CPUC. These five
6 commissioners will be the people who vote on,
7 decide whether to approve PG&E's request or
8 some other dollar amount in this application.

9 The role of the assigned judges in
10 this case is to review PG&E's application
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15 proposed decision or an alternative decision
16 put forth by a commissioner.

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18 participation hearing is to listen to your
19 comments on PG&E's application. We want to
20 hear about PG&E's -- about how PG&E's
21 application will affect you, your family,
22 your community as a PG&E customer. Your
23 comments will help the Commission gather
24 information to determine whether PG&E's
25 proposed increases are reasonable. Judge Lau
26 and Judge Lirag have already received a lot
27 of comments that the public has sent to the
28 Public Advisor's Office.

1 Now I'll give a brief overview of
2 what PG&E requested in this application.
3 PG&E requests authority to increase its
4 revenues by \$1.058 billion in 2020, \$454
5 million in 2021, and \$486 million in 2022.
6 Every three years PG&E files a general rate
7 case, or GRC, like this one to request
8 funding for its gas and electric operation.
9 The impact of this GRC application, if
10 granted without modification, would increase
11 an average residential customer's monthly
12 bill by approximately 7 to 8 percent, or
13 approximately \$10.50.

14 According to PG&E, the major reasons
15 for the requested increase are to fund PG&E's
16 wildfire safety mitigation and liability
17 insurance. If you want more information
18 about the application, there is a fact sheet
19 at the Public Advisor's table.

20 Currently there are many active
21 parties in this proceeding, including several
22 consumer groups, community-based
23 organizations, city and county governments,
24 unions and large user groups. Many of these
25 groups oppose what PG&E is requesting. Their
26 participation in this proceeding can affect
27 the amount of money the Commission would
28 authorize PG&E to collect.

1 So at this time I understand that
2 PG&E would like to give a brief presentation,
3 so we will have PG&E do that.

4 STATEMENT OF MR. MULLEN

5 Thank you, Judge Kao, and welcome.
6 And thank you everyone for attending today's
7 public participation hearing on PG&E's 2020
8 general rate case. My name is Pat Mullen.
9 I've been employed at PG&E for 25 years.

10 As the local Division Director for
11 Pacific Gas and Electric's San Luis Obispo
12 and Santa Barbara areas, I'm responsible for
13 our local service and support to the roughly
14 450,000 customers that we serve in these two
15 counties. This is one of the 17 hearings
16 being hosted by the CPUC throughout 70,000
17 square-mile service area. At each location
18 we have representatives from PG&E that are
19 able to assist customers with specific
20 questions on their bills or any other matter
21 related to the company. They are located
22 outside the hearing room.

23 We also have PG&E representatives
24 available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in
25 our contact centers. For any customers that
26 weren't able to come tonight but do have
27 questions about the rate case are able to
28 call that number which is 1-800-PGE-5000.

1 Our customers' feedback in this
2 process is crucial for us to hear, because
3 the application includes a series of critical
4 safety enhancements to help address the
5 State's growing wildfire threat and further
6 protect the 60 million customers that we
7 serve.

8 Thank you to the Commission and to
9 ALJ Kao for the opportunity for us to learn
10 from our customers here tonight.

11 Now I would like to introduce Jim
12 Welsch, PG&E's Senior Vice President and
13 Chief Nuclear Officer, who is also a local
14 resident here in this county, who would like
15 to say a few words. Thank you. Jim.

16 STATEMENT OF MR. WELSCH

17 Thank you, Pat. Judge Kao, thank
18 you for giving us the opportunity to continue
19 to learn from the public participation
20 hearing on our 2020 general rate case
21 proposal. These hearings provide transparent
22 and respectful way for us to interact and
23 communicate with our customers.

24 As Pat mentioned, my name is Jim
25 Welsch. I'm the PG&E Senior Vice President
26 of Generation and Chief Nuclear Officer. In
27 my role I'm responsible for the safe and
28 reliable operation of all our electricity

1 generating power plants, including our local
2 Diablo Canyon Power Plant.

3 My duties include supporting one of
4 PG&E's most important responsibility, which
5 is the safety of the communities we serve.
6 One of the ways we achieve this is through
7 our GRC proposal which outlines our plans to
8 upgrade technology and infrastructure. This
9 supports enhancing our ability to provide
10 safe and reliable gas and electric service.
11 Our proposal will also help bolster wildfire
12 prevention, risk monitoring and emergency
13 response. It adds new and enhanced safety
14 measures, increases vegetation management and
15 hardens our electric system to increase the
16 resiliency and help further reduce wildfire
17 risk.

18 Under the proposal, we are
19 requesting about \$1.1 billion increase over
20 the currently adopted revenues in the first
21 year. More than half the proposed increase
22 would be directly related to wildfire
23 prevention, risk reduction and additional
24 safety enhancements. If approved by the
25 CPUC, it would increase a typical residential
26 customer's bill about 6.4 percent.

27 While it is important to share with
28 you where our customers' moneys would be

1 going, it is also important to share where
2 the money will not be spent. While the GRC
3 proposal will help fund a series of important
4 safety investments, it doesn't request
5 funding for PG&E Corporation or utility
6 officer compensation. That means it doesn't
7 go towards my pay or any of my colleagues.
8 The proposal also doesn't request funding for
9 the potential wildfire claims currently
10 involved in the Chapter 11 bankruptcy
11 proceeding.

12 The GRC proposal is a significant
13 request and it comes at a difficult time. As
14 always, our commitment is to keep customer
15 cost as low as possible while meeting our
16 responsibilities to safely serve our
17 customers, even as our changing climate
18 presents significant new challenges and
19 risks.

20 This funding proposal is subject to
21 CPUC's thorough open and transparent review
22 and approval process. We encourage our
23 customers to provide feedback and participate
24 in this important public process that will
25 help shape customers' rates in California's
26 energy future.

27 Thank you for your time, and I
28 appreciate the opportunity to speak today.

1 ALJ KA0: Thank you. Now I believe a
2 party to this proceeding, the Alliance for
3 Nuclear Responsibility, would also like to
4 make a presentation.

5 STATEMENT OF MR. WEISMAN

6 Good evening. My name is David
7 Weisman. I'm the Outreach Coordinator for
8 the Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility. We
9 would like to thank the administrative law
10 judge for the opportunity to address our
11 community, plays host to Diablo Canyon
12 Nuclear Power Plant and all PG&E ratepayers
13 regarding issues of significant financial
14 impact in this general rate case.

15 PG&E has the burden of proving by a
16 preponderance of evidence that the revenue
17 requirement it is requesting in this current
18 application is reasonable, and that the
19 resulting rates will be both just and
20 reasonable. The revenue requirements for
21 operating Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant
22 may not meet that test.

23 In the three years since PG&E, the
24 Alliance and others executed the joint
25 proposal to retire Diablo Canyon, conditions
26 have changed greatly in PG&E's service
27 territory. Per PG&E, a primary reason for
28 retiring the plant was the projected loss of

1 bundled customers to community choice and
2 direct access. The loss of customers PG&E
3 had anticipated would not occur until 2025
4 has already been exceeded. At the same time,
5 ongoing productions and the cost of solar,
6 wind and gas generation, coupled with its
7 inflexibility as an integrator of renewable
8 generation, renders Diablo Canyon plant
9 economically uncompetitive. Computed via the
10 Commission's own Power Charge Indifference
11 Adjustment methodology, Diablo Canyon has
12 above-market costs for the period of this GRC
13 of approximately plus or minus half a billion
14 dollars per year.

15 Continuing to incur Diablo Canyon
16 O&M and capital expenditures that are
17 avoidable would be unreasonable and
18 inconsistent with just and reasonable rates,
19 and increased cost to the remaining bundled
20 customers and unnecessary penalty to those
21 now served by CCAs that do not include
22 nuclear generation in their portfolio.

23 This Commission itself anticipated
24 such a scenario in its Decision 18-01-022
25 that approved the 2016 joint proposal to
26 retire the plant, and I'll quote from the
27 decision:

28 As we gain a clearer

1 picture of future
2 developments, such as the
3 relative cost of operating
4 Diablo Canyon, this balance
5 could change. Because
6 there is a possibility that
7 Diablo Canyon may cease
8 operations earlier than
9 2024 and 2025, PG&E should
10 prepare for that
11 contingency.

12 But the decision continues in a
13 subsequent paragraph:

14 Accordingly; PG&E's
15 proposed retirement
16 schedule for Diablo Canyon
17 is approved. If in the
18 interim period the facts
19 change in a manner that
20 indicates Diablo Canyon
21 should be retired earlier,
22 the Commission may
23 reconsider this
24 determination.

25 The Alliance submits that the facts
26 have indeed changed. And the Commission, in
27 light of its own earlier conclusion, should
28 indeed investigate and reconsider that very

1 determination. Thank you very much.

2 ALJ KAO: Thank you. So we are ready
3 to invite people to come speak. I thought
4 that I heard that there was one person who
5 signed up to speak, but I don't think that is
6 the case. Is there anyone currently who
7 would like to speak? If there is not, we are
8 going to in a moment go off the record, but
9 we will wait until 6:30 to see if some people
10 are running late.

11 So we will be off the record.

12 (Off the record.)

13 ALJ KAO: Let's go back on the record.

14 We took a quick break to see if
15 anyone would show up to make a comment. Is
16 there anyone else now that would like to make
17 a public comment?

18 Seeing none, we are going to
19 conclude the meeting in a moment. I want to
20 thank everyone who is in the audience for
21 taking the time to come to today's hearing.
22 We will be adjourned. Off the record.

23 (Whereupon, at the hour of 6:30
24 p.m., this matter having been continued
25 to 1:00 p.m., July 31, 2019, at Santa
Rosa, California, the Commission then
adjourned.)

26 * * * * *

27

28

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

CERTIFICATION OF TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDING

I, ANA M. GONZALEZ, CERTIFIED SHORTHAND REPORTER
NO. 11320, IN AND FOR THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, DO
HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE PAGES OF THIS TRANSCRIPT
PREPARED BY ME COMPRISE A FULL, TRUE, AND CORRECT
TRANSCRIPT OF THE TESTIMONY AND PROCEEDINGS HELD IN
THIS MATTER ON JULY 26, 2019.

I FURTHER CERTIFY THAT I HAVE NO INTEREST IN THE
EVENTS OF THE MATTER OR THE OUTCOME OF THE PROCEEDING.

EXECUTED THIS AUGUST 05, 2019.


ANA M. GONZALEZ
CSR NO. 11320

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