

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA



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May 25, 2023

Rosemary Chiavetta, Secretary  
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission  
Commonwealth Keystone Building  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Re: Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission  
v.  
PECO Energy Company – Gas Division  
1307(f) Proceeding  
Docket No. R-2023-3040285

Dear Secretary Chiavetta:

Attached for electronic filing please find the Office of Consumer Advocate's Formal Complaint and Public Statement in the above-referenced proceeding.

Copies have been served on the parties as indicated on the enclosed Certificate of Service.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Gina L. Miller  
Gina L. Miller  
Assistant Consumer Advocate  
PA Attorney I.D. # 313863  
GMiller@paoca.org

Enclosures:

cc: The Honorable Charles E. Rainey, Jr. (**email only:** [crainey@pa.gov](mailto:crainey@pa.gov))  
Paul Diskin, Bureau of Technical Utility Services (**email only:** [pdiskin@pa.gov](mailto:pdiskin@pa.gov))  
Office of Special Assistants (**email only:** [ra-OSA@pa.gov](mailto:ra-OSA@pa.gov))  
Certificate of Service

\*346646

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission :  
v. : Docket No. R-2023-3040285  
PECO Energy Company – Gas Division :  
1307(f) Proceeding :

I hereby certify that I have this day served a true copy of the following document, the Office of Consumer Advocate’s Formal Complaint and Public Statement, upon parties of record in this proceeding in accordance with the requirements of 52 Pa. Code § 1.54 (relating to service by a participant), in the manner and upon the persons listed below:

Dated this 25<sup>th</sup> day of May 2023.

**SERVICE BY E-MAIL ONLY**

Carrie B. Wright, Esquire  
Bureau of Investigation & Enforcement  
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission  
Commonwealth Keystone Building  
400 North Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
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/s/ Gina L. Miller

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Phone: (717) 783-5048  
Dated: May 25, 2023  
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Aron J. Beatty  
Senior Assistant Consumer Advocate  
PA Attorney I.D. # 86625  
[ABeatty@paoca.org](mailto:ABeatty@paoca.org)

**BEFORE THE  
PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION**

**FORMAL COMPLAINT**

**1. COMPLAINANT**

Patrick M. Cicero, Consumer Advocate

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Harrisburg, PA 17101-1923  
Dauphin County

Telephone - (717) 783-5048

Facsimile - (717) 783-7152

**2. UTILITY NAME**

PECO Energy Company, Docket No. R-2023-3040285

**3. TYPE OF UTILITY**

Gas

**4. COMPLAINT**

- A.** On April 28, 2023, pursuant to Sections 53.64 and 53.65 of the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission's (Commission) Rules and Regulations, 52 Pa. Code §§ 53.64, 53.65, PECO Energy Company (PECO or the Company) submitted its pre-filing information in support of its annual reconciliation of purchased gas cost (PGC) rates.
- B.** The Company is scheduled to make its definitive rate filing with the Commission on or before June 1, 2023, pursuant to Section 1307(f) of the Public Utility Code. 66 Pa. C.S. § 1307(f).
- C.** PECO provides natural gas service to residential customers in Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lancaster, and Montgomery Counties.
- D.** The Public Utility Code provides that no rates of a natural gas distribution utility shall be deemed just and reasonable unless the Commission finds that the utility is pursuing a least cost fuel procurement policy, consistent with the utility's obligation to provide safe, adequate and reliable service to customers. 66 Pa. C.S. § 1318. The Commission must find, among other things, that the utility has: (1) fully and vigorously represented ratepayer interests before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission; (2) taken all prudent steps to negotiate favorable gas contracts and to

relieve its obligations under contracts that may be adverse to ratepayer interests; (3) taken all reasonable steps to obtain lower cost gas supplies; and (4) not withheld or caused to be withheld gas supplies that should have been utilized as part of a least cost fuel procurement policy. 66 Pa. C.S. § 1318(a)(1-4).

- E.** The Consumer Advocate is empowered to represent the interests of consumers before the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, pursuant to Act 161 of the Pennsylvania General Assembly, 71 P. S. §§ 309-1 *et seq*, as enacted July 9, 1976.
- F.** The Consumer Advocate will investigate all aspects of PECO's filing, including the Company's findings from the hedging research and analysis that PECO conducted on its Ratable Hedging Program pursuant to the Settlement from PECO's 2022 PGC rate proceeding. Pa. PUC v. PECO Energy Co., Docket No. R-2022-3032250, Settlement ¶ 19(e).
- G.** After initial review of PECO's pre-filing, the Consumer Advocate files this Formal Complaint in order to ensure that the Company's proposed purchased gas cost rates are consistent with a least cost fuel procurement policy and do not result in rates and charges that are excessive, discriminatory or otherwise contrary to Commission regulations or policy.

**5. RELIEF**

The Consumer Advocate respectfully requests that the Commission:

- A.** Hold evidentiary hearings as mandated by Section 1307(f) of the Public Utility Code, 66 Pa. C.S. § 1307(f);
- B.** Hold public input hearings, if consumer interest arises;
- C.** Deny any rate or tariff changes which are not the result of a least cost fuel procurement policy as defined by the standards set forth in Section 1318 of the Public Utility Code, 66 Pa. C.S. § 1318, and as defined by other applicable ratemaking standards;
- D.** Deny any rate or tariff changes which result from costs which should be borne in whole or in part by interruptible sales customers or transportation customers; and
- E.** Grant any other relief deemed necessary.

**6. VERIFICATION AND SIGNATURE**

*Verification:*

*I, Patrick M. Cicero, hereby state that the facts above set forth are true and correct (or are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief) and that I expect to be able to prove the same at a hearing held in this matter. I understand that the statements herein are made subject to the penalties of 18 Pa. C.S. § 4904 (relating to unsworn falsification to authorities).*

/s/Patrick M. Cicero  
**(Signature)**

05/25/2023  
**(Date)**

**7. LEGAL REPRESENTATION**

Aron J. Beatty  
Senior Assistant Consumer Advocate  
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PUBLIC STATEMENT OF THE OFFICE OF CONSUMER ADVOCATE  
PURSUANT TO 71 P.S. SECTION 309-4(e)

Act 161 of the Pennsylvania General Assembly, 71 P.S. § 309-2, as enacted July 9, 1976, authorizes the Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA) to represent the interests of consumers before the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (Commission). In accordance with Act 161, and for the following reasons, the OCA determined to file a Formal Complaint and participate in proceedings before the Commission involving the purchased gas cost (PGC) rate proposed by PECO Energy Company (PECO or Company) at Docket No. R-2023-3040285.

On April 28, 2023, pursuant to Sections 53.64 and 53.65 of the Commission's Rules and Regulations, 52 Pa. Code §§ 53.64, 53.65, PECO submitted its pre-filing information in support of its annual reconciliation of PGC rates. The Company is scheduled to make its definitive rate filing with the Commission on or about June 1, 2023, pursuant to Section 1307(f) of the Public Utility Code. 66 Pa. C.S. § 1307(f).

The OCA has filed this Formal Complaint with the Commission to ensure that each aspect of PECO's 2023 PGC filing is scrutinized and that the proposed PGC rate is consistent with a least cost fuel procurement policy. A thorough analysis and review are appropriate because Section 1318 of the Public Utility Code, 66 Pa. C.S. § 1318, mandates that purchased gas costs cannot be determined to be just and reasonable unless such rates result from a least cost fuel procurement policy. That section of the Public Utility Code also specifies that certain findings must be made before the costs are determined to be lawful. The OCA, therefore, will seek to ensure that only those purchased gas costs which comply with the requirements of the Public Utility Code will be paid by the Company's ratepayers. In addition, the OCA will also seek to ensure that the rates approved by the Commission are not unduly discriminatory or otherwise excessive.