

STATE OF MICHIGAN
MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
STAFF INVESTIGATION

U-12269

PUBLIC HEARING

REGARDING

POWER OUTAGES

A public hearing held on Monday, November 29, 1999
at 6:00 p.m. at Williams Costick Activity Center,
28600 11 Mile Road, Farmington Hills, Michigan.

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MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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1 Detroit, Michigan

2 Monday, November 29, 1999

3 At 6:00 p.m.

4 R E C O R D

5 MR. STRAND: Thank you all very much for your
6 attendance this evening. This is a hearing which
7 the Commission does occasionally, maybe all too
8 frequent in Farmington Hills, but all through --
9 when we have matters of storm outages and outages
10 maybe not even related to storms.

11 Just by way of introduction, I am John
12 Strand, Chair of the Public Service Commission.
13 Dave Svanda, Commissioner and Bob Nelson,
14 Commissioner are here with me. We are all three
15 members of the Commission. We also have a number
16 of people from our Staff here. And Dorothy has the
17 sign-up sheet so if -- Dorothy Wideman, who is the
18 Executive Secretary of the Commission has the sign-
19 up sheet so if anybody wants to speak, please see
20 Dorothy because she will get your name and we
21 will -- she will give it to me and you'll get a
22 chance to speak at this meeting.

23 Like I said, these are a series of hearings
24 regarding a variety of problems primarily with
25 storm damage but also some of them are unrelated to

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1 storm damage or exacerbated by storm damage in the
2 Detroit Edison territory. This afternoon, we were
3 in Dearborn. We are here, in Farmington Hills,
4 tonight. We will be in Rochester on Thursday
5 evening. And we did not pick those communities at
6 random. The reason why those three areas were
7 picked is that essentially the number of complaints
8 we got tended to cluster around those three
9 specific areas. Now that doesn't mean there
10 weren't complaints from other areas but we tried to
11 pick the areas that were the center of the area of
12 complaints.

13 There has been a staff report issued by our
14 Staff. Rich has the blue box there with copies of
15 the synopsis of the Staff report regarding problems
16 with the Detroit Edison Distribution System and a
17 number of recommendations to be made. If anyone
18 wants to see the full Staff report, you can get it
19 on our web site. I'll give a little plug for the
20 web site. You can find out just about anything and
21 everything happening at the Public Service
22 Commission by checking with our web site. And it's
23 fairly easy to get to. I can give you the specific
24 address but it would be about 50 different letters
25 and stuff and you wouldn't want to do that. But

1 you go to the State of Michigan site. You click
2 then to CIS, which is Consumer and Industry
3 Services. And from there, you will click to the
4 Michigan Public Service Commission. So basically
5 it's three clicks and once you to get to ours, you
6 can have a choice of which area you want to go to
7 and there's a lot of links even from that but I
8 would put a plug into the web site because it's
9 very, very valuable, Most of the major Commission
10 orders are on that web site along with a full copy
11 of the Staff report. We think it's very, very,
12 very informative.

13 As I indicated, this is not the first time
14 we've been to Farmington Hills and somebody can
15 correct me if I'm wrong but I think it's probably
16 about the third time we've been here over the last
17 maybe three or four years. And I may be off
18 slightly but I think I'm pretty close, primarily
19 because this has been an area where there have been
20 a lot of problems with the distribution system and
21 some of those problems may have been taken care of.
22 Obviously, not all of them were and maybe some new
23 problems have arose. So in making comments, we
24 would like you to be as specific and pro-active as
25 possible as far as indicating specifically, you

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1 know, indicate where you live, indicate where the
2 particular problem is, when it has occurred, any
3 dealings with the company, any suggestions,
4 certainly, you know, we'll see, obviously, what we
5 can do, When you're called, you should talk from
6 over there and when you begin your presentation,
7 you should indicate your name and please spell your
8 last name for the Court Reporter, so she at least
9 has the spelling correctly and doesn't mangle your
10 last name.

11 Other than that, I don't think I have
12 anything else to say. We primarily came to listen.
13 Dave or Bob anything?

14 MR. NELSON: No.

15 MR. SVANDA: Okay. With that, I think we'll
16 begin. The first person wanting to speak -- well,
17 actually before that, too, I would like to
18 introduce Sue Ann Douglas, who is an Oakland
19 County Commissioner who is present here, in the
20 back. I think she just came to listen. And we'd
21 like to get now to our first witness who is
22 Nancy Bates who is the Mayor of Farmington
23 Hills.

24 (At 6:05 p.m., Nancy Bates addressed the
25 attendees)

MAYOR NANCY BATES

Good afternoon and welcome to Farmington Hills. I am Mayor Nancy Bates, and I thank you for having one of your Public Service Committee Meetings here so that our community can share their concerns and their distress with the reliability of our electric service.

I feel confident that the role of Detroit Edison is to provide excellent service for all the communities for which they're responsible. I believe the Public Service Commission works to encourage Detroit Edison to reach their goals. The problem we have, though, is that the goals are not being met. It's no longer helpful to have meetings with information being presented on the number of tree trimmings being done, the size of wire and equipment that's being used, or the number of service requests that are being answered in a specific time frame.

Our private citizens quality of life is being challenged. Our corporate citizens have stated that they may have to find another community that has reliable service for their business. This is not acceptable and it cannot continue.

You will hear from many of our citizens

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1 tonight regarding their experiences. I'm not
2 certain that our corporate citizens are here but as
3 Mayor of this community, I've heard them loud and
4 clear.

5 I'm really not interested in any more plans
6 that have wording that starts out with, "We will
7 work with..." or "We will try..." or "We are
8 planning...." That time in our history is passed.
9 We have tried for 10 years to work with Detroit
10 Edison. We have followed the chain of command
11 directly to you for help. The Public Service
12 Commission ordered an investigation and conducted
13 hearings in 1995 to review Detroit Edison's
14 response to the severe storms of 1991 and whether
15 improvements were necessary. The City hosted a
16 Public Service Commission hearing last year.
17 Obviously whatever measures were taken were
18 inadequate in light of our experience.

19 Power outages are very costly in terms of
20 hardship and inconvenience to the residents, damage
21 to equipment, spoilage of food, revenue for
22 business, and actually the reputation of our
23 community. I've talked with our State Senator and
24 State Representative and asked them to consider
25 introducing legislation that will somehow assist us

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1 in our dealings with Detroit Edison. It has been
2 proposed that Detroit Edison be made financially
3 responsible for the losses experienced by our
4 private and corporate citizens. The City has also
5 requested improvement in the 800 phone line
6 response. We are really past public relations and
7 feel-good talk. It's time this issue is resolved.
8 I am asking for your cooperation in seeing that
9 this unacceptable situation be resolved. I would
10 like for it to be resolved at your level.

11 Thank you very much.

12 (At 6:10 p.m., Nancy Bates concluded her
13 address)

14 **MR. STRAND:** Thank you very much for your
15 testimony. The next speaker is Aldo Vagnozzi, who
16 is, for the first time, going to testify as a
17 private citizen in front of us.

18 **MR. VAGNOZZI:** That's right.

19 (At 6:11 p.m., Aldo Vagnozzi addressed the
20 attendees)

21 **ALDO VAGNOZZI**

22 That's V as in Victor, A, G as in George, N
23 as in Nellie, O, Z as in zebra, Z as in zebra, I.
24 I've done that a number of times.

25 As you can see, even though there's been a

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1 change in the mayorship, there's no change in the
2 intensity that the City feels on this issue and I
3 applaud Mrs. Bates for her remarks. I think, and I
4 commend the Public Service Commission, but I think
5 we need some citizen input into the Commission.
6 Years ago there was a Commissioner named James Lee
7 who was a consumer person. He did not represent
8 any of the utility interests. He didn't -- you
9 know, he wasn't an attorney, he wasn't -- but he
10 just was there as a public representative and I
11 hope some way can be found -- I know Commission
12 representatives are appointed by the Governor. if
13 we can't get a public member through that route, I
14 would suggest this Commission set up a citizens'
15 advisory committee that you could turn to and get
16 the input from the average resident, the one whose
17 electricity goes out at one o'clock on Thanksgiving
18 Day, with the turkey just going in the oven.

19 The -- Mrs. Bates mentioned, we have been
20 pressing here in the City -- and as you know, we
21 were the first City to set up a citizens' committee
22 and we appreciate the Commission coming here twice,
23 I think, and the Edison coming to our periodic
24 meetings. But we -- the impression I got -- I
25 think it's been nine years, that they came but they

1 didn't listen. You know, and they were more
2 interested in public relations. In fact, after the
3 last big outage, I said, you know, we needed repair
4 crews and they sent out their PR crews who tried to
5 convince all of us that there was no problem at
6 all.

7 We've got to get this question of reimbursing
8 these people for losses and in many instances,
9 you're talking about hundreds and maybe even
10 thousands of dollars in food that spoils. And
11 also, there's hotel bills in a number of cases,
12 especially in the winter time black out. And so
13 we've got to assure people that -- in any other
14 business, if the business causes a loss, they
15 will -- you know, most of them will reimburse you,
16 but not in this field. And I hope the Commission
17 would make that their number one recommendation,
18 that any loss has to be reimbursed. And I can
19 understand. I think we can make some exceptions
20 for major storms. But we've got -- as one of the
21 residents said at one of our meetings, he lives in
22 the gentle breeze subdivision. Every time there's
23 a gentle breeze, he -- his electricity goes off.

24 Secondly, we've got the -- Mrs. Bates
25 mentioned the phone system. Now following our

1 first few meetings with Edison, they instituted an
2 improvement and it was working pretty good for
3 several years. Now we're back to the old system
4 where you can't get through, and you can't report
5 an outage. So I noticed that they are increasing
6 the number of staff people from about 280 to 350.
7 That should help some but people have got to be
8 able to phone and talk to a live person and tell
9 them what the problem is.

10 And thirdly, you know, the dry ice. Somebody
11 has to make it available. And I think Edison is in
12 the best position to do that. I know I was told,
13 well, that would take time away, you know, from
14 repairs. Well, we don't have dry ice now, and
15 we're not getting the repairs done as quickly as we
16 should.

17 And fourthly, I think the City is considering
18 opening up some of our buildings for shelter,
19 especially in the winter time and that's not an
20 Edison problem.

21 But the -- we've got to make those steps and
22 I hope the Commission would recommend it, you know,
23 because all we can do is tell you what our problems
24 are. And that's why I would also suggest that you
25 look in this idea in getting some citizen input

1 into your decision-making.

2 Thank you very much.

3 (At 6:15 p.m., Aldo Vagnozzi concluded his
4 address)

5 **MR. STRAND:** Thank you. One comment -- Mr.
6 Vagnozzi, just one comment before you leave, just
7 to let you know that I have talked -- actually this
8 conversation was a couple of weeks ago with Senator
9 Denascus, who is the Chair of the Energy and
10 Technology Committee in the Senate -- and both he
11 and I agreed that under existing State law, the
12 Commission did not have authority, basically, to
13 award damages for these types of things, but he
14 also indicated that he would be introducing soon --
15 and I don't think he's introduced it yet -- but
16 that he would be introducing, soon, legislation on
17 this matter. Now what exactly the legislation,
18 what form it would take, how much it would permit,
19 and those types of things, I am not entirely sure
20 whether those particular items have been worked
21 out, but I think you, at least, will see something
22 introduced soon, and we'll see how far it does or
23 doesn't go in the Legislature.

24 **MR. VAGNOZZI:** Finally, a bill we can support
25 in Lansing.

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1 **MR. STRAND:** Well, let's see what it says.
2 Next, we have Pat Daniels.

3 (At 6:16 p.m., Pat Daniels addressed the
4 attendees)

5 **PAT DANIELS**

6 Daniels, D-a-n-i-e-l-s. I live in the
7 Farmington-Ridge subdivision in Farmington Hills.
8 It's between 13 and 14 Mile off of Haggerty Road.
9 And I've lived there for over 13 years and never
10 gone a year without a power outage. Most of these
11 occur not when there are storms around but before a
12 storm.

13 The latest one was the July 23rd storm where
14 power went out around Farmington Hills around four
15 o'clock, but in our subdivision at 3:30, 3:20, the
16 power went out. And what our problems have been,
17 we've had also in June of this year, the same
18 thing. We had power outages not related to storms.
19 It was due to a distribution cable that was too
20 close to the other electrical lines and it kept
21 dipping onto the huge power lines that go down
22 Haggerty Road. And this is one of the proactive
23 ways I want to talk to the Commissioners and bring
24 to your attention, that it's not just -- that
25 Edison needs to catch up with repairs that need to

1 be done in Farmington Hills.

2 This area, where I live, is a growing area.
3 The M-5 corridor, they're already cutting between
4 12 and 13 Mile. There are a whole bunch of
5 businesses that are going in there. And there's a
6 fix that needs to come sooner than later. I have
7 brought this to Edison's attention. I've gone to
a the task force meetings. I went to the last one on
9 the 23rd just specifically since I had brought to
10 their attention on July 23rd, and called in and
11 said, we had a power outage before the storm
12 occurred. And we're working on this. We
13 understand your frustration, Mrs. Daniels.

14 I get these letters. I just got one in the
15 mail, too, from George. They are the sweetest
16 people in the world, Detroit Edison, but they're
17 not -- I have asthma. My children have asthma.
la I'm representing my neighbors. There's about 400
19 of us in Farmington Ridge Subdivision. You know,
20 this is a health concern.

21 We are a very busy intersection, a growing
22 area from here to West Bloomfield. There's more
23 and more homes, computers, businesses, Target,
24 Meiers, all of those things. There's a grocery
25 store at the corner. There's an Arbor or a CVS. I

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1 mean, that's a very hot area. And the one -- I
2 talked to the engineer after the September 23rd
3 meeting, the man who's in charge of my little piece
4 of cable that is not working, and I said to him,
5 point blank, I said, will this be fixed before the
6 weather turns bad. And he said, well, given bad
7 weather and problems that there are, it probably
8 should. I said, well give me a bottom line. I
9 said, will it be done before Y2K? Well, Edison has
10 30 days and they're not going to do any
11 preventative stuff, they said, the week -- so what
12 do I have? Three weeks, they're going to try to
13 get -- this is a letter I just got from George, and
14 again, it's wonderful. It says:

15 "Your concerns on outages when there
16 are not storms.

17 Following our investigation into your
18 concerns [which I told them about a long time
19 ago in July] I would like to report to you
20 that there is a job in progress to replace
21 underground cable that feeds your home. This
22 should help to improve the reliability of
23 service to you."

24 I'm done. I'm frustrated. I've gone your
25 way. I've been patient. I've been helpful. I've

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1 sat in these stupid meetings forever. They don't
2 follow through. What I want you to tell them to do
3 is each person that has frequent outages should
4 have a reliable time table. It's not asking too
5 much to say to us, your repairs will be done in the
6 month of November, Mrs. Daniels. That's all they
7 needed to do is put them in a -- when we had the
8 power outages back in July, they fixed the cable
9 the evening of July 23rd. Then they turned it off
10 because there was another break in the cable in our
11 subdivision the next day. I went to the store that
12 morning because the power was restored, I had a
13 full grocery, everything, and you know, the whole
14 thing shut down. They could have had a little
15 service on the news that said, you know, Edison is
16 still experiencing power outages in the area. Take
17 appropriate precautions, and I wouldn't have gone
18 to the grocery store. There's not any
19 communication. There's just feel good, touch and
20 feel, but nothing concrete. I want to know dates.
21 I want to know when my cable is going to be fixed.
22 Is that too hard to ask for?

23 Thank you.

24 (At 6:20 p.m., Pat Daniels concluded her
25 address)

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1 **MR. STRAND:** Next we have Ray Randel.

2 (At 6:21 p.m., Ray Randel addressed the
3 attendees)

4 **RAY RANDEL**

5 Hi. I'm Ray Randel. It's spelled R-a-n-d-e-
6 1. I live in Farmington Hills north of 13 Mile and
7 between Drake and Farmington.

8 John, you really wanted data. In my home
9 computer connected to a UPS, I have -- every time
10 the power goes out, I have data, I have eight
11 pages of data. You want that? Here it is. I
12 presented this same data to the Farmington Hills
13 Commission or Farmington Hills meeting in
14 September, end of September. At that time, we had
15 67 failures. As of yesterday, we have 73.

16 Now let me tell you what these failures are.

17 **MR. STRAND:** What's the time period?

18 **MR. RANDEL:** This is from -- I'll give you
19 the copy.

20 **MR. STRAND:** Okay.

21 **MR. RANDEL:** Let's make it easy for you.

22 **MR. STRAND:** Okay.

23 **MR. RANDEL:** Do you want a couple of copies?

24 **MR. STRAND:** Sure. As many as you can.

25 **MR. RANDEL:** I only have five.

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1 **MR. STRAND:** Okay. Thank you.

2 **MR. SVANDA:** Thank you.

3 **MR. NELSON:** Thank you.

4 **MR. RANDEL:** Now at that meeting, Edison was
5 there and there were 15 people there. And, of
6 course, I gave the same kind of speech I'm giving
7 here. But after the meeting, oddly enough, I
a talked to two people from Detroit Edison and they
9 said, we're going to monitor your house. And I
10 said, don't monitor my house, monitor the pole. He
11 said, it's your house. And I said, it's not my
12 house. It's got to be my house because we don't
13 have any complaints from your neighbors.

14 Well, if you look at -- I don't have a lot of
15 copies here, but if you look at one of these, for
16 example, item number seven, the power went off at
17 12:04 and it went out for less than a minute. Now,
1a how many people are going to take the phone, call
19 up Detroit Edison, hey, my power went out for a
20 minute. But they call in the morning, of course,
21 because they don't know, they're asleep by then.
22 The coffee maker goes out, the VCRs are going out,
23 and they feel that I have to monitor their process.
24 Apparently, they don't know when the power goes
25 out.

1 Can you imagine Detroit Edison supplying
2 mega-watts of power and the power goes out and they
3 have no clue it went out? Isn't that interesting?
4 They have no clue. They have old equipment. They
5 have switching problems. They have no idea.

6 Anyway, they came out to my house. I said
7 put it on the pole. They didn't want to put it on
8 the pole, but they put it on my house. They put it
9 on for one week, okay. And I have the dates on
10 there, if you look at page eight, the dates are on
11 there. They put it on for one week. I did not
12 have a power failure. Now, if you notice, I marked
13 out the three minutes of cutting out the power to
14 put their box on and three minutes to put it off.
15 Okay. But I had no power failure.

16 And their argument is, well nobody calls us.
17 How many people will call if the power goes off for
18 several minutes at midnight? How many people, who
19 are working during the day, you're working during
20 the day and power goes out for maybe five minutes.
21 You don't know that. You come in. Oh my God, my
22 VCR is disconnected. I don't know what to do. I
23 got to hook up everything.

24 Now I feel quite qualified that this data is
25 correct. I'm going to give you a little background

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1 and get a little boring here, okay, but I am well
2 qualified to know that it's Detroit Edison and not
3 my house. They just don't know. They don't get
4 it. Okay?

5 I'll go back. High school, I went to Cass
6 Tech High School. I had electrical over there.
7 After high school, I went into -- I went to Radio
8 Electronic TV schools for two years. Okay? After
9 that, I was a communications chief at Korea in the
10 United State army. After that, I got an
11 engineering degree from Wayne State University. I
12 also have an FCC license from the Federal
13 Government for operator license so I know that.
14 I've been a Chrysler Engineer in electrical since
15 1962 until I retired in 1998. I know what I'm
16 talking about.

17 Edison doesn't know this. How can this power
18 go out and they have no clue? And I've talked to
19 several people, hi Jim over there, and they just
20 have no idea what's going on. I think we need to
21 do something about it.

22 Anyway, they did not find anything wrong with
23 my power. They were supposed to contact me back in
24 30 days and they have not.

25 Okay, thank you very much.

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1 (At 6:25 p.m., Ray Randel concluded his
2 address)

3 MR. STRAND: Thank you. There are some folks
4 from Edison here and they might be very interested
5 in --

6 MR. RANDEL: I have a copy. I'll give it to
7 them.

8 MR. STRAND: All right. Next we have -- oh,
9 by the way, there are some folks, I'm assuming,
10 from Edison here; are there not? Will you please
11 raise your hands? Okay. Just so everybody knows,
12 at the end, or even now, or whatever, if you have
13 particular problems, I mean, let us see if we can,
14 at least, try to get some of these resolved either
15 during or after the meeting tonight. Obviously no
16 guarantees but they do have a number of folks here.
17 We have some Staff here and, you know, if we could
18 get some individual problems solved, then we're
19 that much more ahead. We may not be able to. I
20 don't know, but let's, at least, give it a try.

21 Next we have Cal Oppershauser.

22 MR. OPPERTHAUSER: Oppershauser.

23 MR. STRAND: I'm sorry.

24 MR. OPPERTHAUSER: That's all right, long 0.

25 (At 6:27 p.m., Calvin Oppershauser addressed

1 the attendees)

2 CALVIN OPPERTHAUSER

3 Cal Oppert hauser, O-p-p-e-r-t-h-a-u-s-e-r,
4 first name Calvin. I live on Springhill Road in
5 the Heritage Hills Subdivision, in the 14 Mile-
6 Drake area.

7 I moved in there in 1972 and shortly after I
8 moved in, I served on the Board of the local
9 homeowners association. And at that time, we were
10 having trouble with Edison. So after a number of
11 outages, we finally contacted them and they said,
12 well, we're going to put a second feed into your
13 subdivision and you'll never have any trouble.

14 Well, things have just gone from bad to
15 worse. The longest outage I ever had was some 30
16 hours. We met with a group of Edison people last
17 -- on March the 1st and they told us, things are
18 going to get much better. So we met with them
19 again on -- this is a group of people from
20 Farmington Hills, we met with them again on
21 September 23rd, and in that period of time, when I
22 was not supposed to have any outages, I had 14
23 outages. I had seven in one day. They varied in
24 time from -- in period from two seconds to several
25 minutes and in that time, I had one that was about

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1 15 hours and it was a bright, beautiful day.

2 We cannot understand why we have so many
3 power outages when we have such beautiful weather.
4 The greatest damage I've had is a flooded basement
5 and by gosh, I tell you, that's a terrible mess.
6 When I don't have any power, I have nothing to keep
7 my basement dry.

a Following our March 23rd or our September
9 23rd meeting, I talked to the Edison people and
10 they said, we got a project all lined up that's
11 going to fix you up, next September. Now who's
12 going to wait until September to get reliable power
13 service?

14 Thank you.

15 (At 6:29 p.m., Calvin Opperthausen concluded
16 his address)

17 **MR. STRAND:** Thank you. Next we have James
1a Meredith.

19 (At 6:30 p.m., James Meredith addressed the
20 attendees)

21 JAMES MEREDITH

22 Good evening. My name is Jim Meredith. It's
23 M-e-r-e-d-i-t-h. I live in the Woodcreek
24 Subdivision of Farmington Hills.

25 I find that one of the -- with some amusement

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1 that probably one of the great indicators of the
2 unreliability, or excuse me, the reliability of the
3 unreliability of power in our neighborhood, was
4 when Sears earlier this year, as the storm season
5 was beginning to approach, took out most of the
6 material in its central aisle and lined its aisles
7 with a double bank of generators, clearly
8 indicating that they were well aware of what people
9 were concerned about in the neighborhood.

10 Basically what we have, now, of course, is
11 the boom of thunder is now replaced by the roar of
12 generators around the neighborhood every time the
13 power goes out.

14 We are in a pretty good area, to speak of
15 some specifics of the kinds of things that we
16 suffer from. We are in the Woodcreek area. We're
17 at the end of a line, apparently, served by only
18 that single feed. That single feed comes from a
19 transformer, I believe, over on Greening Street
20 that seems to be vulnerable. So consequently --
21 and Greening Street, of course, is on the other
22 side of Middlebelt Road, well outside of our
23 neighborhood, so every time there's any kind of a
24 breath in the air, basically, either leading into
25 that transformer or coming out of that transformer,

1 we suffer as a result. So it would be delightful
2 to get a double feed, basically, into the area.

3 One of the things I do notice, however, of
4 course, is that right across the street from us,
5 our neighbors who apparently are on the commercial
6 feed, I see much less problems that they have than
7 do we have. So apparently there's a greater
8 durability apparently in the commercial system than
9 there is in the residential system serving us, both
10 in terms of the frequency of outages as well as in
11 terms of the time that people suffer the outage
12 when it does occur.

13 Maybe I won't be redundant. I think a lot of
14 people here will talk about some of the experiences
15 that they've had. I'd like to -- maybe a couple of
16 other observations about the character and quality
17 of Edison work. There are -- there have been maybe
18 three incidents recently that I've noticed that
19 Edison does not follow up on the work that they
20 have been doing in the neighborhood.

21 Basically at the corner of Valley and
22 Northwestern earlier this year, there was storm
23 damage and I -- one of the lines from that storm
24 damage fell from a pole at that corner there. And
25 I believe it probably was just simply a guideline

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1 or some kind of a support hole for the other
2 electrical wires. I don't think it was a power
3 line. But when I first saw it, I gave Edison a
4 call and waited for probably well over a week and
5 then called once again because there was, in fact,
6 no response to this line being down. After the
7 second time of calling Edison and getting no
8 response, I called the Farmington Hills Fire
9 Department, concerned basically that there might be
10 somebody -- somebody might pull on this wire and,
11 therefore, be exposed to electrical shock and they
12 came out and wrapped their yellow tape, basically,
13 around the area and I assumed that that's what they
14 were doing in the meantime while contacting Edison
15 themselves.

16 Well, I saw another couple of weeks go by and
17 nothing happened. I finally called the city
18 Manager's office and advised them of the problem
19 and it was probably then still a couple weeks later
20 on, probably a fully elapsed time of somewhere
21 between six and eight weeks that that line was down
22 on the ground and there was, in fact, no response
23 to it.

24 A couple of years ago we, at our house, had
25 directly lightning strike on a tree in the back

1 yard and, of course, took out the power at that
2 point in time. Edison did respond, of course, to
3 replace that line and maybe it was a couple or
4 three weeks later that my wife, in the back yard,
5 cleaning up from the brush damage and so on that
6 was there while -- when Edison replaced the line,
7 saw a wire down. And she assumed that basically it
8 was just simply a left behind wire, called Edison.
9 Edison came out basically to clean up their work
10 and said, gee whiz, it's a good thing you didn't
11 touch it, that was a life wire. Very surprising.

12 In one of the more recent events, also, there
13 was a transformer that went out at the corner of
14 our property servicing our house and a couple of
15 others in the area, and it was finally -- after
16 that work was done, we headed out there, basically
17 and had to clean up afterwards from a lot of the
18 left over wire clippings and things like that that
19 Edison left behind.

20 I can accept certain kinds of things
21 certainly that are being done during an emergency
22 situation, but, of course, one would expect also
23 some follow up and some respect for property and
24 so on as well as respect for safety in these
25 conditions. I was quite surprised by

1 their response.

2 Also, maybe to speak of responsiveness, I'm
3 sure that everybody has talked about and will
4 continue to talk about communications with Edison.
5 In this July, late July storm that took place that
6 affected so many of us in Farmington Hills, I think
7 it may be have been the second or third day of that
8 event when I was trying to call Edison and got a
9 response from their automated line telling me that
10 there would be a 76 minute wait. I mean, imagine,
11 a 76 minute wait. You know, there's certain kinds
12 of things that are simply absurd and probably a
13 message that says, sorry, we won't talk to you for
14 the next three months might be better than
15 something that says, hang on the line for another
16 76 minutes.

17 I had -- I applied a couple of other contacts
18 along the way and was able finally to get in and
19 talk to an Edison service person and she was
20 somebody, apparently, who -- it was at a call
21 center sitting at a computer and was taking
22 information from me and I tried to get from her the
23 name of somebody that I might be able to contact at
24 Edison to discuss these problems, the very frequent
25 outages that we were suffering in the Woodcreek

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1 area. And she would not give me the name of
2 anybody. And I said, well, can you give me an
3 address of a Department that I might be able to
4 write at Edison who is responsible for power
5 quality. Sorry, I can't give that to you. I went
6 through maybe about a half a dozen questions like
7 this trying to get some kind of an indication from
8 this person of what she might be able to do. I
9 said, look, even if I don't contact them directly,
10 can you put a message into your system, at least so
11 I can get some kind of a response out of this kind
12 of thing, and she continued to tell me that no, she
13 could not.

14 Somewhat embarrassedly, I then moved to just
15 simply -- I mentioned the name of the City attorney
16 and the name of the City Manager which I'm
17 embarrassed to because I really wasn't going to do
18 anything, but I said, gee whiz, perhaps if I
19 contacted these people, would there be a different
20 response from Edison. Seventeen minutes later,
21 they were out repairing the line that was servicing
22 our house. I was very surprised by that. I feel
23 -- like I said, I feel embarrassed by invoking the
24 names of the City -- but I was pleased we got that
25 kind of response in potentially doing that kind

1 of thing.

2 So it's refusal to communicate, basically, by
3 the only means that we have of communicating with
4 Edison. I find it to be very distressing in the
5 way that Edison works with us and finds surprising
6 they're willing to respond only when one begins to
7 invoke a higher power.

8 Basic requests and recommendations that I
9 might make, I see that basically in the report
10 here, there are a number of charts relating to the
11 overall wide system service. It would be very
12 interesting to see, although hearing this gentleman
13 earlier talk about how Edison doesn't know what
14 their own power reliability is, it would certainly
15 be interesting to see that when one has 76
16 different power outages over a year's period of
17 time, if Edison is, in fact, charting that kind of
18 thing, if they're aware of the kind of quality
19 issues they have, and if they're aware of the
20 origins of the power problems that they have. It
21 would be very interesting, also, to see similarly a
22 communicates conduit that we might be able to
23 utilize when these things do happen.

24 It's very delightful to have you gentlemen
25 here this evening. I'm happy that we've had,

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1 through the sponsorship of Farmington Hills, other
2 hearings along the way, but it would be very nice
3 to be able to have somebody -- some telephone line,
4 some address, something that basically we might be
5 able to respond to so that we might be able to
6 communicate with Edison a little bit more
7 effectively.

8 This is a day where I suppose we've all
9 become quite comfortable with the idea of that when
10 we get a bad product or bad service, we have the
11 ability to negotiate the price of that service or
12 seek some kind of redress, usually from the person
13 who provides that. With Edison, we don't seem to
14 have that. And it would be rather interesting to
15 begin to talk about concepts by which we pay for
16 the quality of power that we get or that we do not
17 pay for the service that we don't get.

18 I suppose maybe there are also some things
19 ultimately that the City and Edison, in some ways,
20 share. As Mayor Bates pointed out earlier, the
21 businesses in the area are beginning to get
22 concerned about things, about the service
23 infrastructure. I think that there is growth in
24 our area that is absolutely inevitable. But
25 certainly if this growth is taking place without

1 the infrastructure there to support it, I think
2 that Edison and the City should be working very,
3 very carefully to keep that all in balance.

4 We are, indeed, living in a modern society.
5 We all do have important communications in computer
6 equipment that we're all utilizing these days. I
7 go back in my mind and try to remember days from
8 many years past, long in childhood of where I had
9 experienced the kinds of problems we've experienced
10 here in Farmington Hills, and I cannot find that.
11 And I find it very surprising, indeed, in this
12 modern day of modern needs that Edison cannot
13 provide modern reliable power to meet that.

14 It would be delightful if Edison and the
15 Public Service Commission could, indeed, get
16 creative and find better solutions to our problems
17 overall.

18 I appreciate your attention and I thank you
19 very much.

20 (At 6:35 p.m., James Meredith concluded his
21 address)

22 MR. NELSON: We should mention our toll free
23 number. If you can invoke the name of the City,
24 you can invoke the Commission, too. And that is 1-
25 800-292-9555.

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1 **MR. STRAND:** The only problem is, it won't
2 help you very much after business hours. It's
3 basically for when we have people there to answer
4 the call.

5 Okay. Could people speak into the microphone
6 so we can get every word, if possible. Vivian
7 Jurosek.

8 **MS .JUROSEK:** Yes.

9 **MR. STRAND:** Okay.

10 (At 6:37 p.m., Vivian Jurosek addressed the
11 attendees)

12 **VIVIAN JUROSEK**

13 It's Jurosek, J-u-r-o-s-e-k. I live in the
14 subdivision of Biddystone Woods, which basically is
15 south of OCC College between 11 Mile and Power.
16 We're an older neighborhood. We are well and
17 septic so I'm sure you understand our problems
18 there.

19 About some 30 years ago, we were the Village
20 of Quackertown. At that time, Edison requested
21 extended right-of-ways because force all growth in
22 our area and we were told our quality of life would
23 improve along with the addition to our now City of
24 Farmington Hills. Well, our quality of life has
25 not improved over the years as far as Edison is

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1 concerned. We have many outages and it's due,
2 basically, I think, not only to the growth, to the
3 wooded areas, to the animals. I understand all
4 this, this is nature. But it's also to the older
5 equipment that is not maintained, kept up and
6 replaced. This has caused wires to come down,
7 animals to chew through them. We have a box on 11
8 Mile Road, a transformer box. When I could speak
9 to someone at Edison, I would say, an animal has
10 tripped the switch, send someone out with a pole
11 and put it on. And it would just take a couple of
12 hours to get us back on. Of course, that's not
13 possible now so I can go five days, six days, seven
14 days, eight days without water and necessities_ I
15 do think given today's great benefits and
16 everything we have learned that Edison should be
17 able to keep us in at least satisfactory condition
18 with our outages and take a little more time
19 looking at the areas that were here long ago that
20 do need improving and updating. I would appreciate
21 that.

22 MR. NELSON: Ma'am, when you say five to
23 seven days, have you tried to contact the company
24 during that five to seven days --

25 MS. J-UROSEK: Oh, sure.

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1 **MR. NELSON:** -- and not got through?

2 **MS. JUROSEK:** I'm told three hours, and then
3 I'm told two days. You know, you punch in and then
4 three more days and you punch in --

5 **MR. NELSON:** All right. so they do call you
6 back but --

7 **MS. JUROSEK:** Oh, no. This is all recorded
8 now.

9 **MR. NELSON:** Okay.

10 **MS. JUROSEK:** You don't reach --

11 **MR. NELSON:** Well, I appreciate --

12 **MS. JUROSEK:** -- a human voice.

13 **MR. STRAND:** When was the last time that
14 happened that you were without power?

15 **MS. JUROSEK:** Oh, we had -- this Summer, the
16 outage.

17 **MR. STRAND:** For seven days this Summer?

18 **MS. JUROSEK:** Huh-huh. There's just me, at
19 home now, so the problem isn't as great for me but
20 it is for those with families.

21 **MR. STRAND:** And what do you do?

22 **MS. JUROSEK:** I just go live with my friends.

23 **MR. STRAND:** Okay. Well, you physically have
24 to leave the home because --

25 **MS. JUROSEK:** Oh, sure. I have to take

1 everything out of the refrigerator and toss it.
2 It's not an unusual problem in that area but I do
3 think you could look into that situation there with
4 some of the older equipment.

5 MR. STRAND: Thank you.

6 MS. JUROSEK: Thank you.

7 MR. SVANDA: How many people are affected by
8 the outages that you're describing?

9 MS. JUROSEK: Well, in my subdivision, I know
10 there are 22 homes but also on Power Road and south
11 Pillsbury area. That whole area, isn't it, Nancy?

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: M'hmm.

13 MR. STRAND: I mean, is your home an isolated
14 example or are all the homes basically --

15 MS. JUROSEK: No, no, I'm not an isolated
16 example. I mean, this is the whole --

17 MR.STRAND: Okay. So in other words, the
18 whole area was basically without a week this
19 Summer?

20 MS. JUROSEK: Yes. I know they were over on
21 Power Road, too, which is the street directly
22 behind me.

23 MR. STRAND: Thank you.

24 MS. JUROSEK: Thank you.

25 (At 6:40 p.m., Vivian Jurosek concluded

1 her address)
2

3 MR. STRAND: Next we have William Toth.

4 (At 6:41 p.m., William Toth addressed the
5 attendeesj

6 WILLIAM TOTH

7 My name is William Toth, T-o-t-h. I think
8 we're living in a state of high anxiety in our
9 neighborhood. And I'm getting awfully tired of
10 resetting my clocks,

11 MR. STRAND: Where is your neighborhood?

12 MR. TOTH: It is Stone Lake.

13 MR. STRAND: Okay.

14 MR. TOTH: In fact, I'm worried about wearing
15 out the bearings in my clock and when I lose power,
16 I don't have any water and I have to go down to our
17 nearby creek to get water to flush my toilets. And
18 not only that, what's worst of all is my sump pump
19 doesn't work, and I have to bail out the sump by
20 hand, so that my basement doesn't flood.

21 I think that the delivery of power from
22 Detroit Edison is bordering on just incompetency,
23 really. I mean, we're living in a very
24 technological area or era and I can't imagine why
25 we can't have better service.

Thank you.

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1 (At 6:43 p.m., William Toth concluded his
2 address)

3 **MR. STRAND:** Thank you. Next we have Douglas
4 Faillace.

5 (At 6:43 p.m., Douglas Faillace addressed the
6 attendees)

7 **DOUGLAS FAILLACE**

8 The last name is Faillace, F as in Frank, a-
9 i-l-l-a-c-e_

10 Thank you very much for coming down here this
11 evening. One -- I guess the first question I
12 should ask is, is this just a time for us to blow
13 off wind here or is this -- or are we going to try
14 to get some things done?

15 **MR. STRAND:** Both.

16 **MR. FAILLACE:** Okay. And another question is
17 people --

18 **MR. STRAND:** We prefer to try to get some
19 things done but I also understand you've had a
20 situation where you need to blow off and that's
21 just the way it goes. But obviously, if you're
22 asking, is this just a blow off thing where we're
23 not going to get anything done, the answer to that
24 is, no.

25 **MR. FAILLACE:** Okay. Because I had a good

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1 blow off time over on Saturday. Also, the people
2 from Edison, I hope that some of them are residents
3 of Farmington Hills and they have experienced these
4 problems and are -- you know, hopefully there are
5 not all just residents that are down here to
6 complain about the service that the company gives.

7 But a couple of things that people have
8 talked about already. Of customer service, there
9 is the automated system and under the storm
10 conditions, it does adequately keep us at bay from
11 going down to Detroit Edison Headquarters and
12 leading a revolt. It does give us a little bit of
13 a chance to report that our power is out and we
14 don't have to take up a live person to do that. I
15 appreciate that.

16 II This Friday, I had an opportunity to call
17 them since our power went out at about five minutes
18 after 12. I live in the Kimberly subdivision which
19 is the Northwest corner of 11 Mile and Middlebelt,
20 which is just a stone's throw from here, along with
21 our ex-mayor. We're -- I'm in an area that drops
22 power a little bit more than I think all those
23 areas drop. But I called them and asked why the --
24 we had a power outage and they told us that -- they
25 told me that they had two trucks in the area at

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1 the time.

2 I did go out at that time, in my van, even
3 though it was raining, to go take a look. There
4 was one truck parked at 11 Mile, on 11 Mile between
5 our two subdivisions, Springwell and Lamiere and
6 Kimberly, and there were two trucks parked on the
7 street and I can't remember the name of it which is
8 the next street over from our subdivision which
9 runs parallel to West Meeth and there were two
10 trucks that were working on a downed power line.

11 When I went back to the one that was over at
12 11 Mile, I noticed that he was just sitting in his
13 truck. And I asked the gentleman if there was --
14 you know, why we had a power outage there, and he
15 said, well, we're fixing a line, and I said, fixing
16 a line, how could you be fixing it just two minutes
17 or five minutes after -- are you guys now parking
18 your vehicles in our neighborhood because we drop
19 power all the time? And he said, no, we took down
20 the power so we could repair a line. I said, you
21 took down the power. I said, don't you notify
22 anybody if -- I can understand when a line goes
23 down, you've got to notify them. But at the same
24 time, if they're going to disconnect the power to a
25 subdivision, aren't they going to notify anybody.

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1 And he said, well, I'm not going to talk to you any
2 more. And I said, oh, you're not? And he said,
3 no, I just repair lines. I'm just here. That's
4 all. I'm not going to talk to you anymore. And I
5 said, can I ask your name. And he said, no. And I
6 said, well, I got your truck number anyway. Thank
7 you very much.

8 So I did call back over to the Edison
9 customer service and I know of a trick to get
10 through their automated system. Anybody wants to
11 know, you can call -- you can talk to me later.
12 And I talked to a human being and I asked them, you
13 know, could I speak to a supervisor. I didn't want
14 to speak to a front line person. I know that
15 they're there just to try to take down the
16 information and get it passed on. I want to talk
17 to a supervisor. And they said, their supervisor
18 was not available. I asked when they would be able
19 to call me back and they said, five -- today, we'll
20 probably be able to get somebody back by the end of
21 the day.

22 Twenty-four hours later, I called back and I
23 spoke to a supervisor and I asked why I didn't get
24 a return call. And she said, well, I don't know.
25 I said, oh, that's a good tracking system. You

1 know, a company that makes millions and millions of
2 dollars can't track phone calls. That's just
3 uncalled for. So that was -- number one, that was
4 the problem that I had, not necessarily with the
5 repairmen. I understand that repairmen probably
6 had a hundred people drive by. We've got 300
7 houses in our subdivision and we're going down all
8 the time, and all of us -- I know that there are
9 some people that go out and check the trucks and
10 I'm sure that he's been hassled before.

11 But we do have a lot of frequent outages and
12 most of them are due to power lines that are on
13 West Meeth coming off the main, off 11 Mile, they
14 go down. When that happens, we lose our power. I
15 live on Pipers Lane. There's an area on the
16 ravine, on the stream, and we're all out. We just
17 drop the power completely.

18 They've come through and cut trees. But that
19 doesn't seem to work. They've either got to cut
20 the trees or bury the lines. And I don't know
21 which is costing them more, coming back to our
22 subdivision all the time, or fixing the lines when
23 they go down. You know, they could spend a little
24 bit of money, and bury the lines in the areas that
25 are the most troublesome. There's a lot of -- it's

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1 a very good area. It's a good neighborhood.
2 There's a lot of old growth trees that do drop on
3 the lines. Fine. Either cut them back or bury the
4 lines.

5 One of the things I would like to also talk
6 about is how our subdivision takes care of each
7 other. During the power outages, especially during
8 the one on July 31st, it's really interesting to
9 drive through our neighborhood and see all the
10 orange electrical lines that are draped across the
11 roads from people that do have power. I'd like to
12 thank all the residents of Kimberly that do help
13 out their neighbors.

14 But we do have people -- as a matter of fact,
15 on Saturday, we were down for a half an hour and
16 there was a line strung across the street already.
17 This also causes other people to buy generators. A
18 gentleman talked about the roar of thunder is going
19 to be replaced by the roar of generators. I bought
20 one. I don't want to be out for three days like I
21 was on July 31st. That hit me bad because that was
22 the first day of my vacation. We were supposed to
23 leave that evening. We couldn't because the power
24 was out. When the power goes out, all your timers
25 go out. All your timers then kick on whenever the

1 power gets turned on, so all the timers that I had
2 for all my lights and stuff, were useless. I had
3 to disconnect all of those. I couldn't even walk
4 around my house. It was 90 degrees. And then we
5 had to empty our refrigerator for the food that we
6 had for our vacation. So, of course, when we came
7 back, everything was spoiled.

8 We had a power outage approximately three
9 weeks ago, which was just a short one, five minute
10 outage but when they disconnected -- well, I'm
11 assuming that they disconnected a wire, too. They
12 must have jiggled it a little bit because you have
13 that little spark where the lights jiggle. It blew
14 my VCR and I did go over there and request a
15 reimbursement form and they said, they'll look into
16 that once they get that.

17 One of the problems that I see is that there
18 is no advance warning. When they know that they're
19 going to have to take down an area, like they did
20 on Friday for us, they knew that there was a power
21 line down, they could have come through with a
22 truck with a loud speaker on there saying, ladies
23 and gentleman, your power is going to be going out
24 at noon for approximately a half hour. Please turn
25 off your computers. Do not use your cordless

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1 phones because they're going to be useless.

2 I just can imagine what our whole subdivision
3 went through when the power was shut off. People
4 were in the middle of phone calls. We had the TV
5 on, that went out. I can just imagine the people
6 that were administering medical aid to some of the
7 elderly people that live inside of our subdivision
8 or some children. When that power goes out,
9 unexpectedly, when they know it's going to go out
10 and they disconnect the power, that's uncalled for.
11 People that were on their computers, you can easily
12 blow your computer if you don't have a UPS, not
13 just a surge protector. That will blow your
14 computer. You'll lose **your** hard **drive** on that.
15 And they could easily go through the neighborhood
16 telling us.

17 The PCs go bad. Phones are useless. Medical
18 equipment that people are using, like somebody
19 referred to earlier, they're useless. The damage
20 to the electronics. And the other thing is, you
21 spend a half hour running through your house
22 resetting all the clocks, your microwave, your VCR,
23 your -- we've even lost power in the middle of the
24 night. Luckily my wife has a battery clock. That
25 one always wakes us up. I've woken up many

1 mornings to see my lights flashing on mine and
2 **completely** useless.

3 I'm just wondering who we're supposed to rely
4 on. We can't rely on Detroit Edison. It's obvious
5 by the people that have come up here. This is my
6 first time in front of a Commission and I know that
7 they've just been going on before. But we can't
8 rely on Detroit Edison. I hoping! Mr. Chairman and
9 Mr, Commissioners that you can do something,
10 You've got power. Go over there and use it to help
11 -- let Detroit Edison understand that they've got
12 to do something now, not next September, not three
13 months from now, not well we'll get to it some day,
14 but we need to have something done now.

15 And I guess the last thing is that depending
16 what happens with power deregulation in this State,
17 I understand that power is going to be coming
18 through the same lines but unless things change
19 dramatically inside of our subdivision, I'm going
20 to lead the crusade to jump over to the next power
21 company, We've got to do that because this one is
22 not responding at all.

23 Thank you.

24 (At 6:50 p.m., Douglas Faillace concluded his
25 address)

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1 **MR. STRAND:** Next, we have -- I think this is
2 someone **who signed in.** I'm **not** entirely sure, it
3 looks like there's three different capital letters
4 and it looks like an E or an A or a C or a G, I'm
5 not sure. Does this ring a bell with somebody?
6 Okay, they're from Farmington Hills. We'll go on
7 to the next one and if you're not called, we'll get
8 you at the end, I guess. Bob Bruckner.

9 **MR. BRUCKNER:** No.

10 **MR. STRAND:** Okay. Sandy Brozovich.

11 (At 6:51 p.m., Sandy Brozovich addressed the
12 attendees)

13 **SANDY BROZOVICH**

14 My name is Sandy Brozovich, that's B as in
15 Boy, r-o-z-o, V as in Victor, i-c-h.

16 I have basically the same complaints as
17 everyone else here but my -- I've been in -- I live
18 at Stone Creek subdivision which is at 10 Mile and
19 Middlebelt.

20 I used to brag about the service I have.
21 I've lived there 13 years and my first 10 were
22 great. I never had a power outage. This last
23 year, it's been a disaster. The last one was July
24 31st. It went out for quite some time as everyone
25 else in the area knows. You try to get in. You

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1 try to talk to somebody. You're told, no one to
2 talk to, 90 minutes on hold would be the soonest
3 that you could get in. Not only that, but when you
4 do get to somebody, as the gentleman said before,
5 you won't -- you're not given a name, you can't get
6 a supervisor, you can't -- I don't know how these
7 people got letters from Edison. I can't get
8 through to anybody to have anybody even contact me
9 or write.

10 The other thing is, the tree trimming service
11 came by. You know, ~~they~~ left notes that they were
12 coming by. They did come by but what they do is
13 they trim the trees from pole to pole. The wires
14 that go from the house to the pole, they won't
15 touch. The only thing is, a gentleman said, oh,
16 yes, ma'am, we'll do it if the tree falls on the
17 wire, then we're responsible. But until then, we
18 don't do anything. They're right there. I've
19 got -- if you want to come and visit my home, I
20 have seven trees in the back yard and they trim --
21 I live -- I back up to Atlantic and School; They
22 trimmed a bunch of trees and I've ~~not~~ -- the one
23 branch is falling in between the wires. Now my
24 husband certainly doesn't need to go out there and
25 get electrocuted. Those guys are there. It's from

1 pole to house. Why can't they trim those? They
2 said they're not allowed to, only from pole to pole
3 only. I mean -- and this is the kind of service
4 we're getting.

5 I work for a major airline. I won't mention
6 the name. And we've been in the news every other
7 week. We're in the news all the time. I mean,
8 when we do things, we take -- we have to take
9 responsibility for our actions. And we have to
10 give -- pay people for some things we do at times.
11 Edison, there's no accountability. And until that
12 changes, I don't think anything is going to happen
13 because people don't care. And until somebody
14 starts caring and until -- you know, what can we
15 do? Our hands are tied. And because Edison
16 doesn't care, obviously, because you can't get
17 through to talk to anybody. And if they want to
18 start a citizen person, I'll be the first one in
19 line. I'd love to be on that task.

20 Thank you very much.

21 (At 6:55 p.m., Sandy Brozovich concluded her
22 address)

23 MR.STRAND: Thank you. The next person is
24 Sy Kernicky.

25 (At 6:56 p.m., Sy Kernicky addressed

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1 the attendees)

2 SY KERNICKY

3 It's a pleasure to meet somebody that knows
4 how to pronounce the name, it's Kernicky, K-e-r-n-
5 i-c-k-y. And the first name isn't spelled S-i-g-h,
6 it's S-y. Thank you.

7 I'm a resident of Farmington Hills. I've
8 been here over 30 some years. I live, I think, on
9 the oldest road in Farmington. It's called Power
10 Road and it's named after the Observer family, I
11 guess, and they didn't come over on the Mayflower
12 but pretty close. It's roughly two miles from here
13 along 11 Mile Road and I'm right behind the Orchard
14 Ridge Campus of OCC. OCC is where an article was
15 written about me, recently. If anybody read the
16 Detroit News, they had an intro which had my name
17 on it. And the intro said, in effect, that a 69
18 year old man had to carry buckets of water from the
19 college to his house in order to flush his toilets
20 and have drinking water. Well, that's true and
21 that's what I have to resort to. And as Mrs.
22 Jurosek just mentioned, I live right behind
23 Biddystone and so we have common problems.

24 The area is well treed. It is the last
25 vestige of what we call animal life in Farmington

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1 Hills and the college has the last beach forest on
2 the southeastern portion of the metropolitan area.
3 What I think is not being told to you here is that
4 it's really important to us, and what Mrs. Jurosek
5 was trying to tell you was, that from Farmington
6 Road to Orchard Lake Road, from 10 Mile Road to the
7 Expressway, or 12 Mile Road, we're all relying on
8 our own systems of septic fields and wells. So
9 when we don't have power, we have nothing.
10 Absolutely nothing.

11 On July 23rd, which was mentioned here
12 repeatedly, we were down for, as Mrs. Jurosek
13 mentioned, almost a week. We had a tree across a
14 line that we told Edison about. Edison did not
15 remove that tree and it took a week, exactly from
16 Friday to Friday, for that tree, then, to break
17 through the lines and give us another outage the
18 following Friday. It caused a fire. There was a
19 fire on the ground. We had the area somewhat roped
20 off. Unfortunately the property that is owned
21 currently is by a woman who is debilitated and
22 probably mentally deficient and didn't understand
23 what was going on. And it took Power Road, North
24 Power Road Homeowners Association, which I'm part
25 of, to call up Dana Whinnery, who is the -- as you

1 probably know, the Assistant City Manager. He came
2 out personally to see this job being done and it
3 was completed without any problems.

4 Now I'd be remiss to tell you -- and I've
5 heard everybody complain about Edison not doing
6 anything. That's not true. I'd be the first one
7 to complain and I'll be the first one to tell you
8 that they are doing something, especially Edison's
9 ombudsman who I feel I ought to be on his payroll
10 because he does a terrific job in coming out here.
11 George Thompson is who I'm speaking of. George and
12 his staff, as small as it is, probably has a half a
13 dozen people that go from somewhere down in
14 Melvindale all the way up to somewhere near Pontiac
15 and from Southfield all the way out to somewhere
16 beyond Novi. With six people, he is trying to
17 maintain this area. And I'm one of his chief
18 complainers because we have a real problem
19 happening in our area.

20 Not only are we the oldest road, we also have
21 the oldest lines. And not only do we have the
22 oldest lines, but we're going to double our size in
23 a short period of time. There's going to be a
24 development coming in. We now have 30 homes on our
25 block and there's going to be another 27 added to

1 it. We now have brown outs, spikes. I think
2 you've heard this before, people complaining about
3 having short duration problems. It's occurring to
4 us out there. Edison knows about it and I think
5 they're trying to work with us. I'm being used as
6 an example with the ombudsman's repair staff and
7 they've been doing some real research. They put
8 monitors onto my system for a week, and I think
9 they've improved it. But it's not there yet and I
10 think the lines are going to have to be replaced.
11 And I think that's one of the trouble areas that
12 they're looking into right now.

13 I have one other little problem and then I'll
14 let somebody else get up here and complain. And
15 that is, I'm a senior citizen and I'm on the highly
16 touted Edison senior plan. And as most of you
17 know, our bills in the last six months or longer,
18 have been estimated. I don't mind the estimate but
19 I do feel it's an injustice to the seniors who are
20 required to use something like an average of 10
21 kilowatts per day during the reporting period.
22 During 30 days, it would be 300 kilowatts. I have
23 been charged over that amount. In other words,
24 what I'm saying is if I go over the amount, the
25 rate doubles. In fact, a little more than doubles.

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1 And they have charged me the premium rate on
2 estimated beginning and ending dates.

3 Now I think I've mentioned this to Edison
4 before and I haven't received a reply on it. But I
5 can tell you from first-hand knowledge, and I don't
6 think you people are aware of it, but the City of
7 Farmington Hills has been getting complaints from a
8 lot of people.

9 COHA which is an organization made up of
10 Homeowners Associations, and some 55 organizations
11 belong to it in Farmington Hills, have been hearing
12 these complaints.

13 MR. STRAND: What's that organization again?

14 MR. KERNICKY: COHA, that's an acronym for
15 the Council of Homeowners Association, which we
16 have several representatives in this group right
17 here today.

18 I think this is a problem that has been here
19 for quite a while. As I mentioned, I've been here
20 for 30 years and I think it's gotten worse. And I
21 think that somebody is going to have to do
22 something about it.

23 Now I asked the question to Edison in
24 September as to how much they did pay out during
25 the July 23rd outage, how much did they pay for

1 spoilage or damage. I have not received a reply.
2 My suspicions are it isn't very much.

3 Thank you.

4 (At 7:05 p.m., Sy Kernicky concluded his
5 address)

6 **MR. STRAND:** Next Torkild Nielsen.

7 (At 7:06 p.m., Torkild Nielsen addressed the
8 attendees)

9 **TORKILD NIELSEN**

10 Good evening. My name is Torkild Nielsen.
11 That's spelled T-o-r-k-i-l-d N-i-e-l-s-e-n. I'm a
12 resident of Farmington Hills for -- not 30 years
13 because it was a Township when I first came here
14 but since Farmington Hills has been incorporated.

15 I would just like to mention a couple of
16 things regarding to things that I have concerns
17 that Edison takes very poor care of. I'm not going
18 to go into specific outages and so forth. I hope
19 it was a coincidence. I have been on the Edison
20 Committee, appointed by our former City Manager --
21 one of our former City Managers and this is my find
22 on all the meetings I have attended on these
23 meetings and I was at the September 23rd meeting
24 this year and some of the things that I mentioned,
25 we heard nothing back about and I hope it's only a

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1 coincidence because I did hear back -- I received
2 from our City Manager's office the news release
3 dated the 19th from you people about this meeting
4 and a meeting in Dearborn. And I received that on
5 the 20th in my mail. It was mailed out on the 19th
6 and I got immediate same day notice from the City
7 Manager. I hope it's a coincidence that I got a
8 letter with a couple of answers to my questions
9 from the September 23rd, that was dated on the 18th
10 but not mailed until the 22nd. I hope it's only a
11 coincidence.

12 I am part of national association called
13 Bendamere Subdivision National Association and we
14 have a separate power into our association
15 buildings. Therefore, we have a special meter
16 that's being charged us a commercial rate. We have
17 the same problem as the lady mentioned about the
18 animals, the squirrels coming up and trip the
19 fuses. I call every year in the Spring time
20 because it happens every year.

21 What happened this past year was just beyond
22 what could happen. I called at three o'clock in
23 the afternoon, I think it was, and reported and
24 told everybody what happened, you had to have a guy
25 out, he has to be out here, he has to have a long

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1 pole, he has to go up and do this, because it has
2 been done now for the last 30 years. Call every
3 year and it's being done. So at five o'clock,
4 nobody had been there, So -- and I was promised
5 because there was not a power outage all over the
6 City, it was just one. So I called back, maybe
7 three hours later and I was told that it was taken
8 care of. Now I stand there and look up at this
9 thing and that's still hanging down. So I said,
10 how could it be taken care of. It's not working.
11 It's still hanging down. Well, the man has been
12 out there. So I said, why don't you do it again.
13 He said, well, I will try to contact the person and
14 find him. Now it's dark again and it became ten
15 o'clock in the evening. So I said, I'll meet him
16 if he can't find this pole. Now bear in mind, this
17 is Edison's equipment, it's Edison's meter on the
18 pole, Edison's pole, they know the building
19 address, they know the service address, and they
20 can't find the place. So I waited until ten
21 o'clock, and here sits a man down the road, now
22 this is a natural dirt road, a lot of woods and not
23 very much light, and here sits an Edison man and I
24 go up to him and I said, oh, he said, I can't find
25 this place. I thought it was here and there's

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1 nobody to answer the door. Oh, yes, they answered
2 the door, but they had not called in about any
3 problems.

4 So in other words, Edison don't know anything
5 about these things and then I said to him, it's
6 night. Why don't you come back in the morning
7 because it wasn't a matter of life or death. It
8 was just for the association's equipment and so on
9 and I could take care of that. So the next
10 morning, I met with the same person. He came back.
11 And it took that long time to figure out their
12 equipment and I had to go out and show him where
13 it's at.

14 Tree trimming, that's another problem. A
15 year ago or more than a year ago, maybe it was
16 about a year ago, I got a little note from somebody
17 that they were going to come and trim my trees in
18 the beginning of 1999. It had not happened by the
19 July storm that has been mentioned so many times.
20 Whenever it settled down, I called the City
21 Manager's office and told them that I felt that for
22 preventative measure, Edison ought to come out and
23 trim some trees in our neighborhood. We are very
24 wooded and I could see with my own eyes that it's
25 very close to the lines. So I was told that they

1 -- from the City Manager -- the office called me
2 back and said, Edison will send a person out to see
3 if it should be done or not. I will be happy if
4 Edison tells me it's okay. I don't want to say
5 it's okay.

6 So as of today, I have not seen any person.
7 I brought it to the attention of the September 23rd
8 meeting, to the person in charge at the meeting,
9 and to the person in charge of the tree trimming
10 with a note that I was going to be out of town for
11 the month of October so she said, I'll have someone
12 come over and check on it. Now today is what, the
13 29th of November. I've been back for a month and
14 nobody has been here yet.

15 So this is the kind of service that people
16 cannot accept. I'm doing it for the protection of
17 the neighborhood. I'm not doing it because I have
18 a problem. And they could just send a guy out and
19 it couldn't be that complicated. Now in this very
20 interesting letter from the ombudsman dated
21 November 18th, where my concerns are -- first of
22 all, it's not receiving priority because of your
23 well and septic service. Down the line he says,

24 "Our first priority at Edison is to
25 restore power to health and public

1 safety facilities."

2 And then he says:

3 "Line clearance is scheduled for next
4 year in your neighborhood."

5 Now what kind of an answer is this? So I still
6 hope that this letter was coincidence, the dates,
7 and that he was not just trying to please me with
8 this.

9 So there is -- now the phone is another
10 thing. Last year, a year ago when we had a power
11 outage, someone has mentioned that they were on
12 hold for 76 minutes. I called Edison about a power
13 outage and because we have well and septic tanks
14 and we have the same problems as the other people,
15 I mentioned I called regarding the storm on Monday,
16 May 1999, so it was this year. And the storm hit
17 at 7:20 and I called Edison and reported the
18 outage. There was no power in the house. I called
19 Edison back to talk to a person as per instructions
20 from these famous meetings we go, that you can --
21 that in order to report the area that the -- the
22 areas of well and septic, you have to mention that.
23 So as being part of a Homeowners Association, I
24 have brought this to everybody's attention to make
25 sure you mention that, then we get some kind of

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1 priority, of course. Public health and these
2 things are more important so we needed to mention
3 that and I did.

4 Then I got another message, it was a phone
5 message that indicated to hold and that service
6 would be to talk to me in 15 minutes. Now some
7 people say 76 minutes. I was told 15 minutes. So
8 I put my phone next to the telephone, put it on
9 speaker phone, and two hours after I decided to
10 hang up. Okay? Now then I called back 10:00 p.m.
11 later and they couldn't give me an update for
12 whatever reason. Some reason they couldn't give me
13 an update.

14 And then finally I decided to call it a night
15 and the next morning at 7:39 a.m. I called back for
16 an update and they told me that the power would be
17 restored in 12 hours. And then I decided to wait
18 for a person and I got through to a person and I
19 said, I can't believe I waited two hours. Oh, she
20 said, I know that. It shows that here on the
21 computer that you were on hold for two hours. So
22 they know all of these things and they don't really
23 care about us.

24 So basically that is all I like to say and I
25 just hope that you people, with whatever power and

1 things you have, can help us in the City of
2 Farmington Hills and other communities as well to
3 get much better service out of Detroit Edison and
4 not just this lip service. Because I mention also
5 at September 23 meeting that Edison listens to us
6 and then they tell us what we like to hear, like
7 this answer that I got in my letter, and they think
8 it goes away by itself. So please put a little
9 emphasis on them that they should take care of
10 their paying customers. It's very important.

11 (At 7:15 p.m., Torkild Nielsen concluded his
12 address)

13 **MR. STRAND:** Next we have Terry Siever,
14 County Commissioner.

15 (At 7:16 p.m., Terry Siever addressed the
16 attendees)

17 **TERRY SIEVER**

18 Good evening and welcome to Farmington Hills.
19 I certainly appreciate the fact that you plan to
20 have a location here. I would just like to comment
21 that you've heard from the Mayor, you've seen
22 County Commissioners here, State Representatives
23 here, Council members are here, and they've all
24 been in your shoes at one time or another. And so
25 as I sat in the back of the room and watched each

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1 of you listening and taking notes, I couldn't help
2 but think of some of the meetings that I've been
3 through that are similar to this.

4 I think what you're hearing from this
5 community is a frustration level that has not been
6 addressed. And I'd like to just maybe get to some
7 of the issues that are of concern for a number of
8 people who have talked about the services and the
9 particular -- whether or not the equipment is
10 adequate.

11 There seems to be some concerns whether or
12 not the equipment is -- new equipment is compatible
13 with the existing equipment, equipment that has not
14 been replaced for 10, 15 or 20 years. We've not
15 seen that in any reports. We don't know if anybody
16 has really investigated that. And I've read your
17 report and I appreciate that.

18 There's concern and I don't think anyone is
19 here tonight that's spoke of it but someone eluded
20 to it, but we're beginning to wonder whether or not
21 Detroit Edison as a service is addressing the
22 concerns that might be related to the growing
23 number of people who are at home in need of health
24 care and relying heavily on some of this equipment
25 and power equipment.

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1 And certainly there has been a lack of
2 accountability. And I think that's the major
3 frustration in our community and throughout the
4 county. There seems to be meetings. There seems
5 to be a lot of listening. There seems to be very
6 little accountability. Our former mayor, who spoke
7 earlier, Mr. Vagnozzi, formed a citizens' committee
8 years ago and there has been nothing but
9 frustration and the same type of rhetoric brought
10 forward. Edison does a great job coming to
11 meetings and listening and trying to do their best,
12 but frankly, there seems to be a lot of technical
13 questions that have not been answered.

14 I'm -- I was newly elected to the Commission,
15 the task force, along with the chairman, Susan
16 Douglas, and our intent is to try to get some of
17 the answers that seem to be lacking in terms of the
18 technical questions. And the big concern here and
19 the report really didn't elude to it that much, but
20 it's non-storm related outages. It seems like
21 those outages ought to be reduced to 10 percent or
22 five percent or non-existent. Sometimes it's
23 simply a squirrel getting into an area they
24 shouldn't be getting into. And most of the people
25 here can tell you they've never had a squirrel get

1 into their house in 50 years. There ought to be
2 some ways to stop it and prevent it, non-storm
3 related outages.

4 I had one personally happen a couple of
5 months ago and it was eight hours and it was a
6 beautiful day because when it happened, I thought
7 to myself, God, I should be golfing and it took
8 eight hours to be addressed on a Sunday.

9 Our task force, the county task force, is
10 having its first meeting on Wednesday and we would
11 like to work with maybe your staff or we'd like to
12 find ways to actually get some nitty-gritty answers
13 and not just keep printing what the problem and
14 solutions are, what the percentages are and where
15 they didn't happen. There's talk of uninsulated
16 wires that are hitting and causing outages. Well,
17 we ought to be looking at insulated wiring.
18 There's talk of the Hendrix and some other new
19 equipment that may be on the horizon.

20 But I think the message that should be clear
21 here is that the community, the residents have
22 tolerated the inconvenience and the shortages long
23 enough -- or the outages long enough and our
24 committee is looking forward to finding these
25 solutions. We're talking about maybe hiring a

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1 consultant and going a little further and maybe
2 getting a third party to answer some of these
3 issues and actually examine some of the equipment.
4 So we come with open arms and we would hope that
5 you would be able to find a way to work with us and
6 try to get the answers to a lot of these concerns
7 that the residents are bringing forward tonight.

8 **MR. STRAND:** When and where on Wednesday?

9 **MR. SIEVER:** We're meeting Wednesday at 1:00
10 out at the Oakland County Auditorium there. Are we
11 going to be in Room A?

12 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** We're in the
13 conference room, the smaller room.

14 **MR. SIEVER:** We'll be in a conference room
15 but it's Oakland -- it's in the auditorium; right?

16 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Our staff can direct
17 you.

18 **MR. SIEVER:** If you come out there looking
19 for the Commissioner Auditorium, they'll find you
20 the room. But, you know, Commissioner Douglas has
21 taken this on. She's had some concerns with
22 residents in her area and we're very determined to
23 try to find some of the answers that seem to be not
24 coming forward.

25 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** What's the address

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1 for that?

2 MR. SIEVER: And certainly we invite the
3 public. I think it's 1200 North Telegraph but if
4 you've ever been out to the County offices, the
5 Court House or any of the facilities, you'll see it
6 as you get out past Elizabeth Lake Road. Okay?
7 Thank you very much.

8 MR. NELSON: Commissioner Siever --

9 MR. SIEVER: Yes.

10 MR. NELSON: -- while you're at the
11 microphone, could you help me just a little bit
12 with geography here? A number of subdivisions have
13 been named as being problematic.

14 MR. SIEVER: Yes.

15 MR. NELSON: Are they clustered or are they
16 randomly scattered around the area --

17 MR. SIEVER: I think --

18 MR. NELSON: -- or how would you characterize
19 it?

20 MR. SIEVER: -- the staff would have
21 information for you and show that it's area wide.
22 There's a lot of problems in the north. You've
23 heard from a lot of residents in the north, not
24 quite so many in the south. Sherry is here from
25 the south. But it seems to have -- you know,

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1 originally there was a lot of talk when I was the
2 mayor, there was talk about the trees creating the
3 problem and there was a lot of trimming going on.
4 We, as a City, when they incorporated, required
5 underground wiring in all the new subdivisions. So
6 there's still some overhead wiring but I think when
7 you start getting into a lot of these issues of
8 what is preventable, there are a lot of incidents
9 that easily could have been prevented.

10 You have a transformer, and in my case, a
11 subdivision that may have been serviced three or
12 four times and on the fourth time, they come back
13 and said, oh, it was a tree limb. Well, someone
14 should be trained and have the expertise that when
15 they go there the first time, they know that tree
16 limb is going to be a problem. It's not going to
17 grow that fast in four months. So it seems like
18 there are a lot of things that can be done, haven't
19 been done, they're on the training and they're on
20 the technical end and I think it may be necessary
21 to get a third party consultant that the people
22 feel confident they can hear, listen, and
23 understand, and have some credibility with them.

24 Thank you very much.

25 (At 7:19 p.m., Terry Siever concluded

1 his address)

2 MR. STRAND: Thank you. Next we have
3 Winifred Lentner.

4 (At 7:20 p.m., Winifred Lentner addressed the
5 attendees)

6 WINIFRED LENTNER

7 Hi. My name is Winifred Lentner, L-e-n-t-n-
8 e-r. I am not a resident of Farmington Hills,
9 although with this dynamic mayor, I might change my
10 mind.

11 I live in Bloomfield Township and we have the
12 very same problems that you people in Farmington
13 Hills have. Last Wednesday, I thought I might be
14 eating my Thanksgiving dinner at the Townsend Hotel
15 or the Holiday Inn because we had a brown out and
16 it lasted so long that I almost didn't want to pick
17 up my turkey on Wednesday. Now luckily the
18 electricity went back on. But I'm tired of having
19 to go -- I have, like this former lady, have
20 asthma. I'm tired when my air conditioning goes
21 out and have to go to the movies or the malls to be
22 in air conditioning. I don't mind eating out but I
23 like to choose when I want to eat out.

24 The bit of getting hold of somebody at Edison
25 is a terrible problem. They now are asking for

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1 your Social Security Number in order to access your
2 account, which is illegal. I am told by the Social
3 Security Commission not to do that. The last time
4 that I got hold of somebody they finally -- they
5 asked -- I received an estimated bill before the
6 big storm so they can't use that for an excuse. It
7 was over \$400. Now part of this was my fault
8 because I didn't notice that the previous ones, six
9 months, had been estimated. But six months? I
10 don't estimate how much money I'm going to send in.
11 Why do they estimate my bill?

12 Finally, I -- she would not give me to a
13 supervisor because there was no one available, as
14 someone else had said. When I finally -- they put
15 me into the meter department and I got a phone
16 message and the phone message was this:

17 "This is [so-and-so]. I'm out in the
18 field right now. I can't take your call.

19 When I get around to it, I will answer your
20 call."

21 Now how many people would be allowed to have that
22 type of message on their answering machine? Well,
23 I screamed into the answering machine and a
24 supervisor called me the next day and I just wanted
25 to know why it took them six months before they

1 read my meter, because I have no obstruction to the
2 meter at all. He said he would get back to me. I
3 had to call him four times before I got an answer
4 and the answer was, we don't have enough people to
5 read them in your area. I'm sure they don't have
6 enough all over.

7 They were supposed to send me a post card.
8 They don't do that any more, they said. I used to
9 have that trouble when I lived in West Bloomfield
10 with a locked gate with a pool. I would send in my
11 card and they never -- they wouldn't even read the
12 card. And I would call them up and say, why did
13 you estimate. Well -- or they would say it was
14 actual. I said, if it's actual, then somebody has
15 to have telescopic lens because this is 40 feet
16 from the gate to the meter.

17 Now one thing also, that one day I called in
18 a prescription to the drug store and I called it in
19 to the Crosswinds Mall which is in West Bloomfield
20 because it was on my way to church. When I got to
21 the drug store, they had a power outage and all the
22 stores were closed. Now, had this been a real
23 emergency, if I had waited to the last minute, I
24 would have been in a lot of trouble.

25 I think Edison better get their act in order

1 or maybe we should all get our own generators and
2 forget about Edison's.

3 Thank you.

4 **MR. STRAND:** Mrs. Lentner, whereabouts in
5 Bloomfield Township do you live?

6 **MS. LENTNER:** Near Telegraph and Long Lake.
7 And my subdivision is Brookfield Highlands.

8 **MR. STRAND:** Thank you.

9 **MS. LENTNER:** You're welcome. And it's Miss.

10 **MR. STRAND:** Sorry.

11 (At 7:25 p.m., Winifred Lentner concluded her
12 address)

13 **MR. STRAND:** Oakland County Commissioner
14 David Moffatt.

15 (At 7:26 p.m., David Moffatt addressed the
16 attendees)

17 **DAVID MOFFATT**

18 Good evening members of the Public Service
19 Commission and thank you for bringing your body to
20 our community for this hearing.

21 My name is David Moffatt. I represent
22 Farmington Hills, the north part of it. I'm also a
23 member of the Oakland County Board of Commissioners
24 Electrical Energy Evaluation Task Force. Mr.
25 Siever and Mrs. Douglas, Commissioners, are also

1 here from that task force this evening. I **also see**
2 -- saw Mrs. Dingleday, County Commissioner here
3 this evening. I'm grateful for the attendance of
4 all of you in our community.

5 But I'm also here as a homeowner in
6 Farmington Hills. I live in Canterbury Common
7 Subdivision which is on the north side of 13 Mile
8 between Orchard Lake and Farmington Road. My
9 subdivision experienced outages this Summer, one
10 with the duration of a little over three days, a
11 utility worker was electrocuted in our neighborhood
12 during the power restoration efforts.

13 I had just moved into the neighborhood two
14 weeks before when the outage occurred. And what
15 particularly struck me about this outage was the
16 comment of my next door neighbor who is a long time
17 resident of the subdivision. When the outage
18 occurred, I, not having been very experienced in
19 these, expressed confidence that it would be very
20 brief, as the storm seemed to be relatively minor.
21 My neighbor, who is an engineer, said oh, no. When
22 it's out for a half hour, it'll be days before it's
23 restored. I couldn't believe this. But
24 unfortunately, it proved prophetically true, and
25 it's indicative of my neighborhood's previous

1 experiences with outages.

2 A little less serious note, in Monday's
3 Detroit News, they published a story about the
4 establishment of an electrical energy task force at
5 the Board of Commissioners and I was asked to
6 comment and I said that we would be examining the
7 utilities response to outages, that we would
8 evaluate the viability of the power distribution
9 infrastructure and noted that I had 20 years of
10 experience in litigating cases against major
11 utilities and energy companies.

12 Well, not two days later, I came home to
13 discover a new power outage in the neighborhood and
14 it was only at my house. I said, this is not the
15 kind of response we had in mind and my son
16 commented, Dad, the empire strikes back. Well, as
17 it turned out, despite the fact that the lawn
18 service was cutting the lawn at the time to the
19 great excitement of our dog, Edison determined that
20 the home was vacant and cut the power off. To
21 their credit, they did restore it relatively
22 quickly however.

23 More seriously, my personal concerns center
24 on recommendation four of the Michigan Public
25 Service Commission Staff's report.

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1 "Staff recommends that Detroit Edison
2 review its programs for distribution system
3 strengthening, pole top and line maintenance,
4 downed wire reduction, secondary rewiring and
5 others to demonstrate that activities are
6 adequately funded and implemented in a manner
7 which reduces outages due to equipment
8 failures."

9 I find that the notion that a power company can
10 string -- that anybody can string high voltage
11 wires, uninsulated high voltage wires on aged
12 wooden poles vulnerable to trees to mild storms and
13 to just plain falling down because they're old,
14 amazing in this day and age of high technology.
15 This seems to be nineteenth century technology. No
16 homeowner would be permitted to erect such
17 hazardous contraptions in their own yard on their
18 own property let alone over someone else's property
19 and in highly populated areas. I sincerely think
20 that Detroit Edison has to be encouraged to
21 implement a really reliable and safe means of power
22 delivery, including for example, buried lines. And
23 over time, I would like to see buried lines or a
24 more reliable means that are not so vulnerable and
25 are not so hazardous mandated by law.

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1 My own experience involved one case with a
2 downed line. I litigated a case on behalf of a
3 truck driver who almost a week after a storm pulled
4 into a grocery store to deliver groceries from his
5 truck. Unbeknownst to him, there was a drooping
6 wire in the alley and his high bed truck contacted
7 that wire. When he exited his vehicle and pulled
8 open the delivery door, he received a tremendous
9 charge. It set his thumb on fire and exited on his
10 body to a ground leaving a large hole in him and
11 severely neurologically damaging him for life.
12 Edison denied responsibility for that accident and
13 it was only after months and months of litigation
14 and endless court orders attempting to require them
15 to produce pertinent documents that did we discover
16 that there was a report of a rotted cross arm which
17 caused this particular line to fall during that
18 storm.

19 I believe that we need to encourage Edison to
20 increase its capital expenditure to improve its
21 distribution infrastructure and particularly to
22 encourage the expansion of its expenditures for
23 capital improvement, to keep pace with the number
24 of customers that they're gaining every day. I
25 don't think these expenditures are keeping pace. I

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1 think they are increasingly falling behind and I
2 think that there is some support for that in the
3 staff report.

4 Basically, Oakland County is this State's
5 economic engine. And the residents of Oakland
6 County generally, and Farmington Hills
7 particularly, need to be assured that we're going
8 to have a reliable and safe means of power
9 distribution in this county both now, and I mean
10 immediately, and into the next millennium. All of
11 us here need to know that Edison is listening and
12 that they are, in fact, going to do something about
13 the complaints that we've been hearing here this
14 evening.

15 Thank you.

16 (At 7:30 p.m., David Moffatt concluded his
17 address)

18 **MR. STRAND:** Next we have Charles Statton.

19 (At 7:31 p.m., Charles Statton addressed the
20 attendees)

21 **CHARLES STATTON**

22 I'd like to thank you for being here tonight,
23 Commissioners, but the fact that you're here
24 tonight, and nothing has happened over the last 20
25 years, shows that you've really failed. The system

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1 has failed at what we're trying to do here.

2 First of all, I'm kind of offended, the fact
3 that Consumers Power is taking a lot of the money
4 that should be being spent for repairs as buying
5 Consumers Power, the gas company. I shutter to
6 think what kind of a liability we're going to have
7 when we have no electricity or no heat.

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: They're buying another
9 energy company.

10 MR. STATTON: Another energy company.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: MGM or something.

12 MR. STATTON: M -- yeah. I'm frightened at
13 the standpoint of what would happen at that point.
14 I am offended by the amount of money that I hear
15 spent on the radio for the ads saying, "Energy
16 equals DTE" in their charming little jingle all the
17 time, when that money should be better spent fixing
18 our problems here.

19 I live two and a half miles from here,
20 straight down the road, in one of these sections
21 where we had -- I had at least six outages this
22 year. Since 1982 when I moved in, I have had to
23 have stayed up all night long bailing my sump pump
24 three times. I have lost a refrigerator which cost
25 me a thousand dollars. I -- it burned out the

1 motor. I have lost over a thousand dollars in
2 food, and I have now finally given up and I went
3 out and bought a Honda generator.

4 I'm tired. This is ridiculous. We -- how
5 many meetings have we had here to try to talk about
6 what's being done? You, in the Public Service
7 Commission, and the State Legislature, are the only
8 people that can make these people respond, and we
9 look to you for finally taking some action and
10 doing something.

11 Thank you.

12 (At 7:34 p.m., Charles Statton concluded his
13 address)

14 **CHAIRMAN STRAND:** Next we have Norene
15 Yuskowatz.

16 (At 7:34 p.m., Norene Yuskowatz addressed the
17 attendees)

18 **NORENE YUSKOWATZ**

19 Hi, it's Norene Yuskowatz, N-o-r-e-n-e Y-u-s-
20 k-o-w-a-t-z. It's not that difficult. It just
21 looks weird.

22 I'm from the Farmington Green Subdivision. I
23 am on the Board of the Council of Homeowners
24 Association and I have a lot of contact with a lot
25 of different people in the City because I also work

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1 parttime for the Y and I'm a dental hygienist.

2 My subdivision -- when we first moved in '78,
3 and I think the sub started being built up in '75.
4 It takes up a good portion of the 12 Mile and Drake
5 area. Our lines are all under ground. We hardly
6 had any outages for the first, maybe, four years.
7 And then as the recession finished and people
8 started building up again, we started experiencing
9 a lot of outages. In fact, one Winter, and I can't
10 remember what year it was, we had an outage for a
11 whole day the day after Christmas and a whole day
12 the day of New Year's Eve. And, in fact, I
13 actually woke up about four o'clock that morning,
14 realized that I had no clock, radio, nothing, and
15 called. And the woman -- this is back when they
16 had people that actually answered the phone even in
17 the middle of the night -- the woman that answered
18 the phone was very pleasant. I reported the
19 outage. I said, I don't know how far it extends
20 because it's obviously the middle of the night,
21 people have lights off, and she said, well, she
22 said -- I said, we just had this last week -- and
23 she said, well, you know, you can make a formal
24 complaint. And I said, really. And she said, yes.
25 And so she took my name, phone number, and address,

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1 and everything, and I didn't hear anything for a
2 while.

3 And then about three or four months later, I
4 did get an engineer, a young man that called and he
5 had a report, and he said, yeah, you know what Mrs.
6 Yuskowatz, you are right, you've had a lot of
7 outages. In the last nine months, you've had 13
8 outages and for all different lengths of time, and
9 you had a different reason for every single outage.
10 One was a raccoon in the power station down at
11 Middlebelt and whatever - 8 Mile. One was a
12 squirrel that committed suicide. The one on New
13 Year's Eve day was the salt got into the wires
14 along Drake Road and corroded the lines.

15 But this past Summer, after several outages
16 again, and the one in particular was on the 23rd, I
17 came home from doing a volunteer event up at -- for
18 Hospice in Bloomfield Hills and, of course, there
19 were a lot of downed trees up there, all the way
20 down. The lights were on at all the intersections
21 except maybe two, I think, at Telegraph, but I
22 avoided it. All the way home I was calling my
23 sister who just moved into Kendalwood Subdivision
24 which is just east of Farmington Green. And they
25 have tons of trees. They have overhead lines. She

1 had power. I had no power. My sub is all under
2 ground. She is less than -- probably about a third
3 of a mile from my house. They had two huge trees
4 down in their sub and it only affected a very few
5 people on each of those blocks and yet, almost my
6 entire sub was affected, and we have no above
7 ground lines. And she has five trees on her yard,
8 and her property -- I mean, just herself. It's a
9 very old sub with lots of trees.

10 Well, the next morning, I took off with my
11 daughter and my husband was playing in the '50's
12 festival in Novi, and as he was leaving to play his
13 softball game, out of the sub he ran into an Edison
14 truck parked down the street. So he stopped the
15 gentleman and said, oh, are you here to turn the
16 power back on. And his answer to my husband, which
17 I cannot believe this, he said -- he said to him,
18 no, I'm here to check to see if any of the lines
19 pulled away from the homes. These are all under
20 ground lines, all of them, boxes in the back. He
21 just laughed. Now my son-in-law's comment was, he
22 must be on hourly But I don't know.

23 But anyway, you know, being a dental
24 hygienist, I deal a lot with insurance companies.
25 And I would like to know how much money is spent on

1 overtime and bringing in other states' employees in
2 order to help correct problems when our power goes
3 out in all these different areas, because this is
4 not an insurance company. You guys are utility,
5 you know. It's a service that you're supposed to
6 be providing and insurance companies do that all
7 the time. They bet that with fluoride in the
8 water, the big percentage of children today are not
9 going to have cavities. So they'll pay for a
10 filling, maybe three or four fillings in a mouth
11 over a period of 20 years as opposed to sealants as
12 soon as those kids' teeth come through and they
13 could use them, and not have any decay, ever, in
14 their lives.

15 But this is a utility. This is supposed to
16 be something that services constantly and this is
17 supposed to be something that we're supposed to be
18 able to use, not an insurance situation. You're
19 not insuring for the future.

20 I also have friends that used to live next
21 door to us and they were with us on the 31st. We
22 were supposed to have had dinner. We had to cook
23 everything on the gas grill. Our power was out,
24 again, a week after the first one that was out for
25 a couple of days. And they went home to Livingston

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1 County and they had power in Brighton and they live
2 in a very heavily wooded area. Now they have
3 underground lines, but she said they had no problem
4 getting home. All the lights were on all the way
5 home, off the expressway and everything else. And
6 I just don't understand why our area is getting hit
7 so very badly all the time.

8 Thank you.

9 (At 7:40 p.m., Norene Yuskowatz concluded her
10 address)

11 **CHAIRMAN STRAND:** Next we have Bryan
12 Hochberg.

13 (At 7:40 p.m., Bryan Hochberg addressed the
14 attendees)

15 **BRYAN HOCHBERG**

16 Good evening, Chairman Strand and
17 Commissioners. My name is Bryan Hochberg, B-r-y-a-
18 n H-o-c-h-b-e-r-g.

19 This evening, we heard many complaints from
20 residents of our area. I'm not here to offer you
21 more complaints. I'm sure you've heard enough and
22 there will be more people after me to speak of the
23 same.

24 What I'm here to offer you is some concepts,
25 some ideas, some new thoughts in the way of doing

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1 business. We're not talking about a reactive
2 measure anymore. We've identified the need that we
3 need to be proactive in maintaining a reliable
4 power supply.

5 This past Summer, my wife and I purchased a
6 home new to us in a relatively new subdivision. It
7 was constructed approximately 22 years ago. One of
8 the things that really attracted me to this
9 subdivision was the fact that, unlike some of the
10 people in the older subdivisions, we have running
11 water, sewage without power, we have buried,
12 underground lines. I'm thinking, wow, this is
13 wonderful. We have reliable service here. We're
14 going to get hit with storms galore, ice storms,
15 thunderstorms, and our power should be okay.

16 This past Summer, just barely weeks after we
17 moved in, we learned the harsh reality that this,
18 in fact, is not the **case**. At the storm that took
19 place at the end of the month of July, we found
20 centered approximately at the corner of 13 Mile
21 Road and Farmington Road, a circle, if you would,
22 say of one mile diameter, of which that square -- I
23 shouldn't say square, but the diameter or Mile Road
24 -- I should clarify myself and say that this was
25 II actually a radius of one mile from that

1 intersection, was without power for an extended
2 period of time, in excess of 30 hours.

3 Now I can recognize that a little further
4 back where Mr. Walker's part of the subdivision
5 was, there were some older homes and there was
6 overhead lines. I can see localized lines there
7 being down. I can't foresee what would affect such
8 a large area of properties or residences to be
9 down, that number of people, and we're talking
10 literally hundreds and hundreds of homes here that
11 were down without power and no clear explanation of
12 why. I expected that, oh, gees, we'd see a downed
13 power line sitting on 13 Mile Road and Farmington
14 Road, that, you know, this would be repaired in a
15 couple of hours and the next thing you know, you
16 light up 800 homes. And this was, in fact, not the
17 case.

18 What we found is three things that it really
19 boils down to. A need for communication, a need
20 for cooperation, and for identification. We need
21 to establish a system of identifying substations,
22 transformers and poles, so that the customers of
23 the utilities, such as Detroit Edison, can be
24 proactive and assist in recovery efforts which
25 power outages extend beyond simply, my house

1 doesn't have power. We need to be able to report,
2 hey, there's a downed wire line on pole number
3 123872. There's a transformer that just blew up
4 and it's on fire right now. This is the number.
5 We need to be able to call into the voice response
6 unit. We have the ability to take advantage of the
7 technology that's available to us today to call in
8 and say, hey, my power is out. And a voice
9 response unit comes back and says, well, we've
10 identified that your power is out because of this
11 problem. We need to know that feedback -- not
12 just, well, your power may be back in 39 hours. We
13 need to be able to say, we believe your power is
14 out because of this. And if we say, well, gee, no
15 it's more than just that. We know that line is
16 down there but we know there's another line down,
17 there's a transformer down, or that you think it's
18 only localized to one area because somebody can't
19 call. We need to be able to explain to somebody at
20 Edison, whether it's by voice or not, to identify
21 that this is a much larger scope of the problem and
22 here are the things that we can do to help identify
23 it. We could be the eyes and ears of Detroit
24 Edison in catastrophe situations.

25 We should also be providing to the public a

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1 list available, both on internet sites and through
2 city halls, of outages, multiple customer outages,
3 if you would, that are not affecting single homes
4 but, perhaps, clusters of homes, businesses. You
5 know, here is the problem. This is how long people
6 were without power. This was what the power was
7 and this should be open to public scrutiny, and
8 public opinion, and input into how to improve the
9 power supply over the years to come.

10 We should also be able to identify the life
11 span of equipment. When we know that a particular
12 model of a transformer has a life expectancy of 22
13 years, that when 22 years rolls around, that thing
14 should be replaced. The same thing should be
15 applied to poles or other equipment that needs to
16 be replaced on an occasional basis, or has shown a
17 history of trouble.

18 Having some of these technical details
19 available for public scrutiny or -- you know, who
20 knows, we may find that actually this data is not
21 actually being compiled at all. It'll assist both
22 Edison and its customers in building a more
23 reliable power supply to our area.

24 We often hear rumors of this pending
25 competition, how wonderful it's going to be that

1 you're going to be able to choose your power
2 supplier, and that we're going to be able to
3 compete with price. I'll tell you, Commissioners,
4 this is not an issue for me, for my wife, for other
5 families how much we pay, whether -- you know, an
6 electricity bill from one month is going to be \$98
7 versus \$96. What's going to be the issue for us is
8 reliability, and I understand it's very expensive
9 to duplicate infrastructure, but we need to look at
10 competing on the service basis levels. We need to
11 be able to identify -- say, well hey, here's how
12 reliable the lady of this particular vendor is
13 versus reliability of other vendors. And so we can
14 get competition at the local level, at the
15 neighborhood level.

16 Our problems are not going to go away. And
17 really, competition in the energy business is
18 meaningless for our little consumers unless you are
19 the nature of the Ford Motor Company where it's
20 really hitting the bottom line. What hits my
21 bottom line is when my power is out for a long
22 period of time and we can't do anything about it,
23 and there's no incentive for resources to be added
24 into that, because you have a captive audience.
25 You really do.

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1 To further address cooperation among the
2 utilities, the Public Service Commission and its
3 customers, we must include also the local
4 governments. And there must be a better dialogue
5 between the local governments and the utilities and
6 its residents. We found, during this power outage
7 at the end of July, some very large threats to
8 public safety. We found where a lack of
9 communication most likely was the result or was the
10 cause of an electrocution at the back of our
11 subdivision where a line repair worker thought a
12 line was de-energized when, in fact, it wasn't. We
13 found people running traffic lights that were out
14 of service for days, had no stop signs, had no
15 traffic enforcement in place and was a great threat
16 to public safety. I witnessed on the corner of --
17 you know, our house sits on a corner property,
18 where many a near-accident nearly occurred because
19 people can't obey the basic traffic laws that when
20 there's a dead or -- you know, there's a power
21 outage or malfunctioning traffic signal, that's to
22 be treated as a four-way stop. And we need to
23 realize that these are areas that -- which it's
24 very important to retrieve power as soon as
25 possible and, if not, we need to have proper

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1 enforcement so that we don't cause any greater
2 threats to public safety than simply those that
3 were caused by the absence of electricity.

4 Furthermore, there should be some more
5 cooperative efforts in this community in terms of
6 shelters and the availability of dry ice and, you
7 know, accommodations for those people who have
8 asthma or for the elderly who are more informed, or
9 for the people who would be affected by extended
10 power outages during the winter months in which the
11 absence of heat would cause an undue hardship.

12 I thank you very much for your time and
13 appreciate speaking with you.

14 MR. NELSON: Mr. Hochberg, this concept you
15 have about having public input into equipment
16 replacement and things like that, would this task
17 force that the County has created be one source for
18 that information to flow?

19 MR. HOCHBERG: That certainly could be a
20 start. I don't know the details of this task
21 force. I mean, you know, I certainly would like to
22 hear some more information about these things that
23 are coming about. I think the input of the
24 citizens, just in terms of -- not just proactive
25 measures but the reactive ones as well, being able

1 to identify where we've had some problems, or at
2 the time that we had the problems, and being able
3 to collect that data and present it back to us or
4 have Edison present it to us. I'd expect to,
5 actually quite frankly, to walk in here this
6 evening, and see a big map of our city and with
7 little pins saying, well, this is where we've had
8 the outages and, you know, here's where we've had
9 problems with this substation or here's where we've
10 had problems with these transformers or these
11 lines, and you know, be able to have an open
12 dialogue that, you know, in response to my
13 suggestions here that I have somebody back from
14 Detroit Edison saying, well, hey, I think you're
15 right. We've had these problems here and we need
16 to do something about that. And not just the lip
17 service but the follow up and the full cooperation
18 among the various parties involved.

19 MR. NELSON: Okay. Well I think our staff
20 can lend support to that effort as well, the
21 technical report, and if you read the report, it
22 has some of that evidence in there. Thank you.

23 MR. HOCHBERG: Thank you.

24 (At 7:50 p.m., Bryan Hochberg concluded his
25 address)

1 **MR. STRAND:** Next is Barry Brickner.

2 (At 7:50 p.m., Barry Brickner addressed the
3 attendees)

4 **BARRY BRICKNER**

5 I wasn't here at the very beginning. I'm
6 sorry I missed the Mayor's speech. My name is
7 Barry, B-a-r-r-y, and the last name is B-r-i-c-k-n-
8 e-r, Brickner.

9 I heard one comment from behind, no one is
10 saying to Edison tonight -- I wanted to thank
11 Edison. I want to thank them for making all my
12 clocks blink 12:00 o'clock at the same time.
13 That's probably the only time that they're always
14 at the same time at any time of the year. And this
15 happens quite often. I know. I like to go around
16 changing the times back to something close to what
17 it's supposed to be.

18 I would like to thank Edison for extending my
19 interruptable service from 15 minutes to 22 hours.
20 I'd like to thank Edison for returning me to the
21 pioneer ways. I get to hang around the fireplace
22 in the Winter so I don't freeze to death. My food
23 does stay frozen, though. And I get to -- in the
24 Summer, I get to cook over an open fire on the
25 gas barbecue. But then, again, my food doesn't

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1 stay frozen.

2 I don't mean to be facetious. I was recently
3 elected to City Council in Farmington Hills, and
4 one of the major questions that was asked of the
5 people that were running this is, what are we going
6 to do about Detroit Edison. How can you get rid of
7 these problems. And everyone has been telling me
8 what's wrong with it.

9 I live in a neighborhood, I live at 11 Mile
10 and Drake area, that's another area you haven't
11 heard from yet. We are also a neighborhood that
12 has underground power lines, and it's one of those
13 wind blowing neighborhoods, when the wind blows in
14 another part of the City, we lose our power. We
15 haven't quite figured it out yet. We don't have
16 the squirrel eating at the wires. They'd have to
17 dig several feet down to find them. But for some
18 strange reason, we lose our power and sometimes for
19 several hours. It's not unusual to see little
20 brown outs now and then. I guess we get kind of
21 used to that. I don't complain too much.

22 But I know that my neighbors, they're not
23 very happy with the service that we're getting and
24 my question to you is, what are you going to do
25 about it? Obviously we haven't been able to do

1 anything about it and I'd like to have some answers
2 because people ask me all the time, what can the
3 citizens of Farmington Hills do? And so I'm asking
4 you because you've been listening. You can talk.
5 What are you going to do?

6 **MR. STRAND:** Well, to put it bluntly, if I
7 were to tell you here tonight, I would definitely
8 be wrong. We're going to conduct hearings yet in
9 Rochester. And then we're going to see where the
10 outages are and we're going to have our staff sit
11 down with Edison and usually when these things have
12 occurred in the past, we'd either be in a contested
13 case proceeding or the staff and Edison reach
14 certain conclusions regarding what is going to be
15 done as far as spending dollars and these types of
16 things. And so for me to tell you right now what
17 specifically we're going to do, would be way too
18 premature because if we have a contested case --
19 and if I tell you tonight what we're going to do,
20 is the first thing that will happen is somebody
21 will ask for me to be disqualified in that case
22 because I've already told you what the answer is.

23 So basically, we've got to wait for the staff
24 to figure out basically where a lot of these
25 outages are. I think you've been very helpful,

1 everybody here tonight. Then we get to the next
2 stage, is where we see if we can reach some type of
3 settlement. And if we can't do that, then we have
4 to go through a contested case. That may take,
5 probably, at least a matter of at least a few
6 weeks. Now the question is, of course, if we get
7 to a settlement, that will take quicker than a
8 contested case because a contested case may take a
9 couple of months. But we'll see if we reach that
10 stage.

11 **MR. BRICKNER:** May I make one suggestion?
12 It's something that you might -- well, Edison is
13 out here and they've pooh, pooh'd this idea in the
14 past, is for emergency preparedness, because they
15 know that they're going to have areas that are
16 going to be out for at least 10 hours or more, most
17 refrigerators will last at least a good 12 hours
18 without having any problems, that they should make
19 available as an emergency -- predesignated
20 emergency sites within our City -- it could be the
21 fire department sites, we have five of them in the
22 City, and I don't want to overstep my bounds -- but
23 I think that would be a good spot where they could
24 have dry ice available for the residents. You
25 know, I'm not saying that they could give it away,

1 but they could have it available, because I can
2 tell you it's next to impossible for an average
3 citizen to go out and buy dry ice. There's nowhere
4 anywhere near Farmington Hills that sells dry ice.
5 I know that -- I've found that there's strange
6 things you can do to get the power to go back on if
7 the power has been off for 12 or 14 hours. If you
8 go out and buy ice to put it in your refrigerator,
9 then the power will go on. But that is not a
10 solution to the problem.

11 I think that there are other cities, I think
12 Philadelphia, I was told, that does this. They
13 will have dry ice available if, in fact, power is
14 going to be out for an extended period of time.
15 And that's not asking for too much. And I think
16 that's something that should be easily worked out
17 and they could have it available for the citizens
18 that need it. But if you could point me to a staff
19 person, I will give them my card, this gentleman
20 here, so he can tell me what's going on.

21 Thank you very much.

22 MR. STRAND: Thank you.

23 (At 7:57 p.m., Barry Brickner concluded his
24 address)

25 MR. STRAND: We do not have anyone else on

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1 the list. I'm not saying we didn't miss anybody.
2 If there's -- is there anyone else who wishes to
3 testify or talk tonight? Come up here, please.

4 (At 7:58 p.m., Eldon Funk addressed the
5 attendees)

6 **ELDON FUNK**

7 I'm an Edison retiree. I sat here and I
a listed to a lot of these people talk and --

9 **MR. STRAND:** Do you want to give your name or
10 no?

11 **MR. FUN-K:** Eldon Funk, F-u-n-k.

12 I live over in the vicinity of 11 Mile and
13 Drake Road and I have for 13 years and I have had
14 one power outage. And by the time I got an
15 extension cord across the street, the power was
16 back on. So I've been very lucky when listening to
17 some of these people.

1a But the only thing is, I listen to these
19 people talk about their underground subdivisions
20 and stuff but they've got to remember, their feed
21 is overheard. And it doesn't mean a damn thing.
22 If your overhead goes out, it means the whole
23 section goes out.

24 And I also hear them talk about bare wires.
25 Well, to my understanding, we never did put

1 insulation on the wires to -- for electrical
2 reasons. It was only keeping the weather, and the
3 corrosion, and stuff away. They will not take the
4 high powering 13-6 or whatever the line happens to
5 be, I don't believe, under normal conditions.

6 But the one suggestion I would like to make,
7 I'd like to see every City, every community or
8 every county, whatever jurisdiction is necessary,
9 to pass an ordinance that if there's any tree under
10 any Edison line, or anybody's line, Consumers Power
11 or what have you, that person be responsible for
12 getting that tree down, rather than complaining
13 about having it trimmed unbalanced. When they go
14 out to trim trees, most people won't let you trim
15 the damn tree because they don't want to have it
16 ruin the shape of it.

17 Did you ever drive around here and look at
18 some of the lousy looking trees that we have? why
19 in the hell do we keep trimming them? Take them
20 down. Don't put them up under lines. I'm a
21 stockholder for God sake. I'm sick and tired of
22 spending all this money over and over and over
23 again because people gripe about their power
24 outage.

25 I grew up without running water, without

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1 electricity or anything else. I feel damn lucky
2 just to have it most of the time. I mean, my wife
3 complains about a dishwasher. I'd like to throw it
4 out. I don't mind washing dishes. It's nice just
5 to have water in the house. I mean, after all, I
6 think Edison is doing the best they can under the
7 circumstances and I cannot believe that they don't
8 call people back. I worked there for 38 years and
9 by God, when anybody called me, I called back.

10 I realize, affirmative action and a few
11 things that have changed things around Edison. I
12 mean, you know, we've done a lot for the minorities
13 and the woman and so on. And in some cases, before
14 I retired, we promoted people that were not
15 competent for the job they were getting. When we
16 make secretaries the Superintendent of underground
17 lines, that's wrong. But I still think the
18 majority of the people at the Edison Company are
19 competent people. They're doing their job and I'm
20 damn glad to be a retiree from the Company.

21 Thank you very much.

22 (At 8:00 p.m., Eldon Funk concluded his
23 address)

24 **MR. STRAND:** We have two people back here --
25 no, three people. Why don't you come

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1 forward first?

2 (At 8:01 p.m., Dana Whinnery addressed the
3 attendees)

4 **DANA WHINNERY**

5 I'm Dana Whinnery, W-h-i-n-n-e-r-y, and I'm
6 the Assistant City Manager for Farmington Hills. I
7 just wanted to respond for the record to the
8 question posed to County Commissioner Terry Siever
9 on where we are experiencing our problems in the
10 city. And you've heard specific examples in the
11 community tonight. I can tell you from my first-
12 hand conversations throughout this community that
13 the problems are community-wide. I would have to
14 say that we probably have more hot spots north of
15 11 Mile, but we have a long history of problems
16 south of 11 Mile as well. And an example would be
17 the Meadowbrook Hills Homeowners Association. That
18 neighborhood is on 8 Mile between Halstead and
19 Haggerty, and that's at the far southwest end of
20 the community. They have had problems that go back
21 many, many years. In fact, I used to be the
22 president of that Association and had experienced
23 those problems firsthand when I lived there.

24 So they are community wide, and while we may
25 not have people from each neighborhood, I do want

1 to make that statement for your record.

2 **MR. STRAND:** Thank you.

3 **MR. WHINNERY:** Thank you.

4 (At 8:03 p.m., Dana Whinnery concluded his
5 address)

6 **MR. STRAND:** This gentleman right here.

7 (At 8:03 p.m., Irwin Knox addressed the
8 attendees)

9 **IRWIN KNOX**

10 Good evening and thank you. My name is Irwin
11 Knox, K-n-o-x. I live in the Lincolnshire Estates
12 Subdivision, south of 11 Mile, east of Middlebelt
13 behind the Kroger shopping center_

14 I'm not really here to complain. I do have a
15 couple of questions and I also have a warning for
16 **you**. A warning that I shared with Edison at our
17 September meeting, a warning you should be aware of
18 because somebody is going to get hurt.

19 The first question is, our subdivision, when
20 the power goes off, it's almost invariably the same
21 section. It's a section that's in the middle of
22 our subdivision, and the boundaries are Raleigh
23 Road, Castle Ray, and Glen Castle. Those orange
24 cords that someone was talking about before,
25 they're always from the outside perimeter into

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1 the center.

2 I haven't been here for a long time. I've
3 only lived here for four years so I don't have a
4 lot of excess baggage and long time stories and
5 axes to grind. But I do want to know why just that
6 part of our sub always seems to go out. The July
7 storm, we were out three days. We had another
8 lovely storm in August, and we were out for four
9 days. It's unacceptable.

10 The warning I have for you, I won't go into
11 as much detail as I did at our September meeting,
12 but I learned through experience in the hard way,
13 and I'm sorry if the old timer back there thinks
14 that we're so harsh on Detroit Edison, but the
15 truth is the light and the light shall shine, so to
16 speak.

17 Some of these houses, like the houses in my
18 sub, they're 30 some years old. Any of those --
19 any house, but particularly houses in our sub, if
20 your electric service has southern exposure, you're
21 going to have a problem. The reason you're going
22 to have a problem is because the sun and the wind
23 and everything else from that southern exposure
24 deteriorates the covering from some of the service
25 lines into your home. I know this because it

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1 deteriorated on mine and I was getting water. It
2 was flowing down the line through the electrical
3 meter box, down into my circuit breaker box in my
4 basement.

5 I found that out only by accident because
6 after one of our storms, I called Detroit Edison.
7 We had been experiencing many power surges. The
8 lights would get bright, dim down, bright. Two
9 crews came out. They're the ones that told me
10 about, well, you've got some wire that's leaking in
11 here and so on and so forth. That wasn't a
12 problem.

13 I had to call an electrical contractor and
14 he's the one that found the problem. My neutral
15 line was broken. It was broken. Two crews came
16 out and they couldn't even find it. The first
17 thing the electrical contractor told me was that my
18 line was drooping and it's not even within code.
19 He said, I can't work on it until Edison fixes it.
20 So I explained to him, well, they've had two crews
21 out here. His solution was, you call up Detroit
22 Edison and tell them you've got a downed line. I
23 did. They showed up in 20 minutes. I showed them
24 where the broken line was. By golly, you've got a
25 broken line. I mean, how do you send out two crews

1 and they can't find it. It didn't move. It was in
2 the same place.

3 I don't know if it's training or whatever it
4 is, but you have a lot of houses that are going to
5 have similar type problems. Those lines that have
6 this old fabric wrapped tape that's breaking down,
7 you're going to have water coming into your houses
8 into your electrical services. Somebody is going
9 to get shocked, hurt, something.

10 The break in my neutral, because of the way
11 we ground electrical service to the water pipes in
12 your house, the electrical contractor told me that
13 if someone had to go and work on one of those
14 pipes, they could have gotten electrocuted until
15 that thing was fixed. There's a monster waiting
16 out there with equipment that needs to be upgraded.
17 And that's my warning to you.

18 The second question is, I'm still confused
19 because I don't know where Edison's responsibility
20 ends and mine begins. Edison explained to me that
21 the power line from the pole to my house, it's
22 Edison's responsibility. They told me that the
23 line from that connection to the meter box is my
24 responsibility. And that the meter, and that stuff
25 is theirs. I'm not an electrician_ I'm not an

1 electrical contractor. If that middle section
2 goes, which I don't understand why it's my
3 responsibility, somebody is going to pay dearly.
4 And as I recall, and maybe it varies from state to
5 state -- I've lived in a couple of different states
6 -- Mother Bell is responsible from the pole until
7 it gets inside your house. As far as I'm
8 concerned, that's the way the electric utility
9 company should be, too. As our properties get
10 older, if they don't upgrade, we're going to have
11 bigger problems.

12 Thank you.

13 **MR. STRAND:** Thank you.

14 (At 8:07 p.m., Irwin Knox concluded his
15 address)

16 **MR. STRAND:** We have one gentleman in the
17 back there that wanted to speak. Oh, okay,
18 whatever, okay. I don't care which order you go
19 in.

20 (At 8:08 p.m., Kathleen Keen-McCarthy
21 addressed the attendees)

22 KATHLEEN KEEN-MCCARTHY

23 Thank you. My name is Kathleen Keen-
24 McCarthy, K-e-e-n hyphen M-c-C-a-r-t-h-y. I'm not
25 from the Farmington Hills area. I am from Plymouth

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1 Township. I am the Township Supervisor there, and
2 I'd like to thank the Mayor for hosting this
3 meeting. I'm also vice chairman of the Conference
4 of Western Wayne, which is a group made up of 18
5 communities in Western Wayne, representing over
6 600,000 people. We have just recently been getting
7 more and more into investigating for our
8 communities' power outages throughout our area.
9 And I've listened to the complaints tonight. I've
10 attended meetings in individual communities where a
11 lot of the same concerns have been expressed. I
12 just wanted to add a couple of things because this
13 is a long evening.

14 Number one, when -- as I read through your
15 report and I looked at the average number of years
16 for tree trimming, saying that they're meeting 5.8
17 and they should be meeting 4.3 years. Well, I've
18 lived in my current house eight years and they came
19 last year for the first time, and my house is 52
20 years old and I have 200 -- or I have 10 story high
21 trees all over my property, and all overhead lines.

22 In my old neighborhood before this one, where
23 my house was also over 50 years old and had old
24 trees, they came once in 15 years to trim in
25 Plymouth Township.

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1 As the Township Supervisor and talking with
2 the leaders of the other Conference of Western
3 Wayne, one of the things that is of great concern
4 to me, and I was pleased to hear that when someone
5 mentioned the Mayor's name, that they got some
6 action. We seem to be experiencing when we call
7 Edison representatives, playing one community
8 against the other, saying to my community, well,
9 we're sorry we can't respond in your community,
10 because we have a worse problem in this community,
11 but they tell that community that they have a worse
12 problem in my community. And when we start all
13 talking together and comparing notes, we're very
14 concerned about that.

15 Our franchise in our community is a 30 year
16 old franchise. Our equipment in our community,
17 overhead equipment, is in the 30 year plus range.
18 You know, as extensions have gone in underground,
19 the newer equipment, but the old equipment is
20 getting very worn out. When I went to a meeting in
21 Livonia, I heard for the first time, this Hendrix
22 spacer cable. I'd never heard of that before.
23 Since then -- that was about three months ago, I've
24 been driving all around our communities, looking
25 overhead because they brought one to show what it

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1 looked like, and there are none. And all of our
2 communities are old and heavily treed.

3 At the Livonia meeting, they said, this is
4 working well in other parts of the State. Well, if
5 it's working, we should have it in all of the
6 heavily treed areas which, I think, is what a lot
7 of people here are saying. I understand that
8 undergrounding isn't the answer because you do have
9 a lot of equipment that is overhead and when it
10 goes -- I had a transformer blow up 50 feet from my
11 bedroom window when I was in -- a car hit it -- hit
12 a pole and it blew up. So, I mean, those things
13 happen no matter what you have under the ground,
14 and I understand that. But we should have the best
15 technology that there is out there to take care of
16 the problems in areas where we know we have
17 problems.

18 The only other thing I would like to say is,
19 you know, I've heard the electrical deregulation
20 conversation. We've read about it. But that's the
21 generation side and I know a lot of the discussion
22 is over the stranded costs and over paying for the
23 distribution system. And how is that -- and that
24 part is going to stay regulated and so I'm asking
25 you, as I review a lot of these recommendations, I

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1 think they're very good recommendations. I'm a
2 little nervous about when I hear you talk about
3 staff will discuss with, because I'd like to think
4 that as the Public Service Commission, you can
5 order many of these things to occur. And I'm naive
6 about what powers you have and don't have. But if
7 we don't have a reliable distribution system into
8 our homes, deregulation is going to be meaningless,
9 because if the power can't get there and get there
10 reliably, what it costs doesn't mean anything.

11 So thank you very much.

12 **MR. STRAND:** Just one -- thank you.

13 (At 8:12 p.m., Kathleen Keen-McCarthy
14 concluded her address)

15 **MR. STRAND:** The question about what
16 authority we do and don't have is always being
17 raised and, of course, the courts are always
18 telling us all the time when they think we exceeded
19 our authority such as this Summer when the Supreme
20 Court said we couldn't, on our own, order Consumers
21 Energy and Detroit Edison to basically participate
22 in the -- a deregulatory/competition type program,
23 which the companies then offered to do on a
24 voluntary basis afterwards.

25 But there are also cases and we could

1 probably spend a couple of hours as to what we do
2 and what we don't have. But probably the most
3 famous Michigan Supreme Court case goes back about
4 1988 where we basically ordered Consumers Power, at
5 that time, to purchase a certain type of coal. And
6 basically the Supreme Court told us, no, you can't
7 do that, that's an internal management problem with
8 the company, and you can do things that set rates,
9 but you cannot manage the company.

10 And so, since then, the Courts of Appeals,
11 and the Michigan Supreme Court and us and everybody
12 who participates in us, is trying to figure out
13 where, exactly, our authority ends and where it
14 begins, and it's a very interesting question.

15 The Court at that time, 11 years ago, called
16 the -- see we're operating under utility statutes
17 that were basically enacted in 1939 and they
18 basically called -- looking at the Michigan Utility
19 Law, I think the quote was, a journey into the
20 heart of darkness, and basically asked the
21 legislature to do something, to update it. I mean,
22 in 1939, no one even knew what nuclear power was,
23 for example.

24 And so there's no doubt that some update of
25 our statutes is necessary and helpful. We would

1 like to know, and I think the utilities probably
2 would like to know, too, where exactly our power
3 and authority ends, and where exactly, you know, it
4 begins, and it would be nice to know, because until
5 then, we can order them to do something, and if
6 they don't like our order, they then go appeal, and
7 then we wait a year or two for the Courts to figure
8 it out. And not just in this area, too, it's also
9 in gas and telephone.

10 But if I were to tell you exactly where I
11 thought our authority began and ended, I could
12 maybe get three different opinions here among the
13 Commissioners. So we'll see what happens.
14 Unfortunately, we have to operate within State --
15 well fortunately or unfortunately, I don't want to
16 disparage that there, but we are, as the Michigan
17 Supreme Court told us last Summer, creatures of the
18 legislature, at being that. Unless the legislature
19 specifically says, we have authority and power to
20 do something, we don't.

21 And so, that's basically the type of
22 statutory framework and I said this goes back --
23 actually about 1909 Act, a 1919 Act, and a 1939
24 Act, and the previous Acts were not repealed. They
25 were kind of like a house, building on top of each

1 other. So that's basically the statutory framework
2 under which we're operating. And that may not help
3 you, but it may, at least, help you appreciate a
4 little bit of what we're trying to deal with.

5 **MS. KEEN-MCCARTHY:** Well, I do appreciate
6 that, thank you.

7 **MR. STRAND:** Thank you. This gentleman back
a here has been waiting.

9 (At 8:16 p.m., George Rhodes addressed the
10 attendees)

11 **GEORGE RHODES**

12 I'm George Rhodes and I've lived in
13 Farmington Hills for over a quarter of a century
14 and I came out here this evening because I wanted
15 to see what the problems were of my neighbors and
16 people that lived around here were, because I'm
17 glad to say, I'm not in their boat. All I can say
18 is, I've been here a quarter of a century, and I
19 can remember losing power four times, once in a
20 storm and three times because a squirrel got up on
21 the line and chewed the fuse and it snapped. And
22 all three of those times were just out for two or
23 three hours. So other than the storm, which lasted
24 about 12 to 14 hours, I have a total of nine hours,
25 which is 23 hours of power outage in over a quarter

1 of a century, which I look at as that's not such a
2 bad deal. And maybe some of you people -- and I
3 think my house was built in 1924. I'm one of the
4 older subdivisions in the town. We're on the
5 corner of -- the northwest corner of 11 Mile and
6 Orchard Lake, back in there. It's a wonderful
7 subdivision and we have a lot of old growth trees.
8 Edison is in there. They do a good job trimming
9 the trees and we even trim the trees ourselves.
10 And we don't have that problem. And I just
11 thought you wanted to end on a good note. And
12 as far as I'm concerned, they're doing a good
13 job.

14 **MR. STRAND:** Thank you.

15 (At 8:18 p.m., George Rhodes concluded his
16 address)

17 **MR. STRAND:** Does anyone else wish to
18 testify? This gentleman here. Also understand, as
19 I think I may have mentioned earlier, if you don't
20 feel comfortable talking in front of 50 or 60
21 people, we will be here afterwards in case you want
22 to talk with us privately, and we'll stay here,
23 too. Yes, sir.

24 (At 8:19 p.m., Ryan Gesund addressed the
25 attendees)

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RYAN GESUND

Hi, my name is Ryan Gesund and I've lived in Farmington Hills for 15 years. I grew up in the community.

MR. STRAND: Could you spell your last name, please?

MR. GESUND: G-e-s-u-n-d.

I've heard a lot of these complaints. Some of these people came to the meeting we had a couple of months ago with Detroit Edison. And I was looking over these laws that they give you, or your authority, and the problem that I have is from reading this, and you say you're a creature of the legislature. It doesn't seem as if these laws give you -- the expression is, any teeth, that you really have anything that you can really do as far as interruption of service. You say that you have power over our rates, but it really doesn't -- interruption of service seems like it would be an internal management decision, and I think you're going to have some problems dealing with that.

As far as the County Task Force, it's great that the County is starting to look into this, but I should hope that they're going to have a couple of meetings at night when people who work during

1 the day can come and speak at them. The meeting
2 on Wednesday at 1:00 p.m. is a good start, but I
3 should hope that there are going to be some
4 meetings at night, like this one is. And my
5 personal problems, some -- I own a variety of -- I
6 own five car washes in the Metro Detroit community,
7 in Royal Oak, Bloomfield Hills, East Pointe, Walled
8 Lake, and Warren, and a couple of times I have had
9 to kind of crash at the car wash because the power
10 has been out in Farmington Hills.

11 And one of the reasons my brother moved from
12 Farmington Hills to Novi in the last year was
13 because Novi had less power outages than Farmington
14 Hills. They have more trees but they have less
15 power outages.

16 Thank you.

17 **MR. STRAND:** Thank you.

18 (At 8:21 p.m., Ryan Gesund concluded his
19 address)

20 **MR. STRAND:** Anybody else?

21 (At 8:21 p.m., Mayor Nancy Bates addressed
22 the attendees)

23 **MAYOR NANCY BATES**

24 As you wrap it up, I'd like to thank the
25 citizens for coming out tonight, and again, to

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1 thank you for being here. And in your negotiations
2 with Detroit Edison, I would like you to consider
3 this. I think it's important that they be at least
4 as inconvenienced as our citizens are with power
5 outages. And I'd like you to consider some kind of
6 a system, perhaps, where they pay money to the city
7 for however much -- many outages they had and maybe
8 we could use those funds to buy generators and dry
9 ice and provide services to help the citizens with
10 the inconveniences that they're experiencing. It
11 seems to me like until it hurts Detroit Edison as
12 much as it hurts our citizens, things aren't going
13 to change very much. And it really is time for a
14 change.

15 And if what you need is legislative action or
16 powers to be empowered by the legislature, then I
17 think that this community is ready to work with our
18 legislatures to see that that happens. This just
19 can't go on. It hurts our citizens and very soon,
20 it's going to impact our businesses seriously. We
21 can't have -- we've got to have a reliable power
22 grid. We're entitled to it. And whatever you can
23 do to assist us, I would be grateful. And if you
24 need us to go to the legislature, then we're ready.

25 Thank you very much. I appreciate you

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1 being here.

2 (At 8:22 p.m., Mayor Nancy Bates concluded
3 her address)

4 **MR. STRAND:** On behalf of the Commission, we
5 would like to thank all the folks in Farmington
6 Hills' City Government for being very helpful in
7 setting this up.

8 **MR. SVANDA:** As a final comment from another
9 Commissioner, I guess I'd like to thank all of you
10 as well for coming out and talking tonight. We did
11 get some comments complimentary to efforts being
12 made by the company. By and large, it was a pretty
13 big picture that was painted tonight. I'm trying
14 to thank you all for showing up and to, again,
15 express thanks to Mayor Bates and the City for
16 their -- the hospitality and the facilities.

17 By and large, we did receive some balanced
18 comment tonight. We've received a few compliments
19 for the efforts that people see and for some
20 specific people at Edison. But by and large, it
21 was a pretty ugly picture that was painted. And
22 that is the kind of information, I guess, that we
23 were expecting based on the fact that you've had to
24 create some citizens' councils and other things to
25 address these issues.

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1 In part, I think the comment was very good
2 about all of us, the system, has failed or we
3 wouldn't be here still, that there has been a
4 continuing problem and that all of us need to get
5 on with the solution of that problem.

6 Thank you for the insights that you've shared
7 tonight. It certainly helped in my personal
8 education and we will be working hard to see what
9 solutions can be found. I do note that while
10 people are mentioning state legislation and it's
11 possibility, Representative Nancy Cacesse (ph)
12 says -- has joined us in the back and I'm sure she
13 was listening as well. And thank you for those
14 comments. And we look forward to working them out
15 in the future.

16 **MR. NELSON:** I would like to echo Dave's
17 comments and thank everybody that came out tonight.
18 I think I've been certainly enlightened by the many
19 citizens that took the time to come out here and
20 express their heartfelt views. I do think that the
21 staff report, that you should have a copy, is
22 predicated on what the staff believes is our
23 statutory authority. And I think we, at the
24 Commission, will do our best to make sure that
25 those recommendations are considered. As John

1 said, if it takes a case, we may have to go the
2 contested case route, but I think there are a
3 number of things we can do to address these
4 problems and we would encourage you to give us
5 other thoughts as well.

6 **MR. STRAND:** Thank you for your attendance.

7 (At 8:25 p.m., the public hearing was
8 concluded)
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C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF MICHIGAN)
COUNTY OF WAYNE) ss

I certify that this transcript, consisting of 122 pages, is a complete, true, and correct record of the Public Hearing held on Monday, November 29, 1999.

I also certify that I am not a relative or employee of or an attorney for a party; or a relative or employee of an attorney for a party; or financially interested in the action.

December 7, 1999


DEBORAH L. LAROCHE, CER 6443
Notary Public - Wayne County
Commission Expires: 5/25/00

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