February 26, 2010

Public Service Commission of South Carolina
Attn: Docketing Department
P. O. Drawer 11649
Columbia, South Carolina 29211

Re: Docket No. 2009-489-E

To whom it may concern:

At a time of unprecedented decline of jobs with people losing their homes and their businesses at a rate never seen since the Great Depression, why would SCE&G pick this time to request a rate hike of 9.5 percent? Why would a big company like SCE&G that has already had approval for a 2.5 percent rate increase annually for the next decade, following a 4.4 percent rate hike in 2008 choose to slam the folks now when most people can hardly pay their bills and keep their lights on and their stoves lit right now?

A new rate hike will boost residential power bills for the average SCE&G customer by about $140 a year by July 2011. SCE&G has higher rates than other investor-owned utilities, as well as publicly owned Santee-Cooper. Duke Power customers currently pay $93 for 1000 kilowatt hours following its rate increase. For SCE&G, the same level of power costs $118. The rate boost, if granted, would put it at $130.

I am a business man and know that you have to meet your financial obligations, but I also had to cut back dramatically my expenses just to keep my product priced reasonably at a time when people just can't afford to absorb price increases. It is the irresponsibility and greed of big business and the misused power in politics that has driven our economy where it is today. Why not adjust your own business spending and hold off on any increase over and above what you already have approved until it is clear that the economy, and most importantly the people, will not be significantly hurt by your decision?

I am personally against your request for the 9.5 percent rate increase and believe that SCE&G will make a huge mistake to move forward with this level of rate increase at this time.

Sincerely,

David J. Richardson
1577 Fairway Drive, Charleston, SC 29412
SCE&G Customer

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