

STATE OF INDIANA

INDIANA UTILITY REGULATORY COMMISSION

PETITION OF INDIANA MICHIGAN POWER)
COMPANY, AN INDIANA CORPORATION, FOR)
AUTHORITY TO INCREASE ITS RATES AND)
CHARGES FOR ELECTRIC UTILITY SERVICE)
THROUGH A PHASE IN RATE ADJUSTMENT; AND)
FOR APPROVAL OF RELATED RELIEF INCLUDING:)
(1) REVISED DEPRECIATION RATES; (2))
ACCOUNTING RELIEF; (3) INCLUSION OF CAPITAL)
INVESTMENT; (4) RATE ADJUSTMENT)
MECHANISM PROPOSALS; (5) CUSTOMER)
PROGRAMS; (6) WAIVER OR DECLINATION OF)
JURISDICTION WITH RESPECT TO CERTAIN)
RULES; AND (7) NEW SCHEDULES OF RATES,)
RULES AND REGULATIONS.)

CAUSE NO. 45576

INDIANA OFFICE OF UTILITY CONSUMER COUNSELOR

PUBLIC'S EXHIBIT NO. 11

TESTIMONY OF OUCC WITNESS WES R. BLAKLEY

OCTOBER 12, 2021

Respectfully submitted,



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TESTIMONY OF OUCC WITNESS WES R. BLAKLEY
CAUSE NO. 45576
INDIANA MICHIGAN POWER COMPANY

I. INTRODUCTION

1 **Q: Please state your name and business address.**

2 A: My name is Wes R. Blakley and my business address is 115 W. Washington St.,
3 Suite 1500 South, Indianapolis, Indiana 46204.

4 **Q: By whom are you employed and in what capacity?**

5 A: I am a Senior Utility Analyst in the Electric Division for the Office of Utility
6 Consumer Counselor ("OUCC"). My educational background is described in
7 Appendix A to my testimony.

8 **Q: What is the purpose of your testimony?**

9 A: The purpose of my testimony is to provide my analysis and make
10 recommendations on several proposals Indiana Michigan Power Company
11 ("I&M") made in its case-in-chief, including the following:

12 (1) I&M proposes ratemaking treatment for changes to bad debt expense.¹ I&M
13 seeks to recover a deferred regulatory asset in the amount of \$3,034,711,
14 which resulted from Governor Holcomb's 2020 utility disconnection
15 moratorium. As I describe below, I&M's regulatory asset should be based
16 upon the timeframe over which the State had a utility disconnection
17 moratorium in place. Adjusting its cost recovery request accordingly reduces
18 amortization expense by \$239,733. I also recommend removal of I&M's
19 \$2,023,141 unamortized balance of incremental bad debt expense from its rate
20 base calculation in this Cause.

21 (2) OUCC witness Anthony Alvarez describes the OUCC's concerns with and
22 ultimate recommendation to deny I&M's proposed Advanced Metering

¹ I&M also seeks to increase its bad debt forecast from \$9,500,000 to \$11,921,155 for purposes of calculating its going-forward expense to be embedded in rates. OUCC witness Mark Garrett addresses I&M's bad debt expense proposal.

1 Infrastructure (“AMI”) Rider. Should the AMI Rider be approved over the
2 OUCC’s objection, I recommend any new AMI Rider recognize the
3 retirement of Automatic Meter Reading (“AMR”) meters as a decrease to
4 depreciation expense and that I&M receive recovery of any tracked AMI plant
5 investment only when construction is either in progress or used and useful at
6 the time of a cutoff date in the AMI tracker.

7 (3) The pending Cause No. 45546 Settlement Agreement states going-forward
8 operating expenses associated with Rockport Unit 2 will be credited to
9 customers. To achieve this, I recommend I&M’s Resource Adequacy Rider
10 (“RAR”) reflect a credit based upon the operating expenses associated with
11 Rockport Unit 2 that should be refunded to customers. This credit should be in
12 addition to I&M’s proposed \$70 million refund of the Rockport Unit 2 lease
13 payment also to be refunded in the RAR. Since Rockport Unit 2 will become a
14 below-the-line investment that will provide electricity to the wholesale market
15 when the lease terminates in December 2022, I recommend I&M’s investment
16 in the Rockport Unit 2 pollution control equipment be removed from its rate
17 base and be included in its Environmental Compliance Rider (“ECR”) tracker
18 through which I&M should receive only a return “of” its investment, and no
19 return on the investment.

20 (4) I&M proposes to modify its Tax Rider to include deferral accounting
21 associated with a potential future increase to the corporate federal income tax
22 rate. I recommend denial of this proposal because no such corporate federal
23 tax change has taken place and the implications of any future tax rate change
24 are unknown. I&M’s request for deferral authority is premature and should be
25 rejected.

26 **Q: To the extent you do not address a specific item or adjustment, should that**
27 **be construed to mean you agree with I&M’s proposal?**

28 A: No. Excluding any specific adjustments or amounts proposed by I&M from my
29 testimony does not indicate my approval of those adjustments or amounts, but
30 rather that the scope of my testimony is limited to the specific items addressed
31 herein.

II. REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

32 **Q: Please describe the review and analysis you conducted in order to prepare**
33 **your testimony.**

1 A: I read I&M's prefiled testimony and reviewed its exhibits, schedules, workpapers
2 and responses to certain data requests ("DR"). I reviewed testimony and exhibits
3 filed in I&M's last base rate case, Cause No. 45235, and the Indiana Utility
4 Regulatory Commission's ("Commission") Order dated March 11, 2020, and
5 reviewed Commission Orders issued in Cause No. 45380.

6 **Q: Does I&M propose a phase-in rate adjustment ("PRA") similar to the**
7 **methodology approved in I&M's last base rate case, Cause No. 45235?**

8 A: Yes. I&M proposes a PRA, which I&M witness Dona Segar-Lawson explains.²
9 I&M proposes a \$73 million (4.55%) Phase I revenue requirement increase to be
10 implemented in April 2022. I&M proposes implementing Phase II rates in
11 January 2023 through a compliance filing which will increase rates by only the
12 amount of actual net plant I&M has placed in service by December 31, 2022.
13 I&M expects its overall Phase II increase to be approximately 6.5% or \$104
14 million. I&M's proposed PRA methodology is consistent with that approved in
15 I&M's Cause Nos. 44967 and 45235, which used future test years with forecasted
16 expenses, revenues, and load. The OUCC does not object to using this
17 methodology in this Cause.

III. BAD DEBT EXPENSE

18 **Q: Please discuss the special circumstances surrounding I&M's proposed bad**
19 **debt expense.**

20 A: As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, in May 2020 the Commission opened
21 Cause No. 45380, an investigation to review the impacts of COVID-19 on Indiana

² Cause No. 45576, Direct Testimony of Dona Segar-Lawson p. 44, l. 20.

1 rates and provision of utility service by all Indiana jurisdictional utilities and on
2 ratepayers. Based upon Governor Holcomb's Executive Order 20-25, the
3 Commission ordered a utility disconnection moratorium through August 14, 2020,
4 and ordered utilities to waive late fees, deposits, and reconnection fees through
5 October 12, 2020.³ The waiver of fees after August 14, 2020 applied only to
6 residential utility customers.⁴ The Commission also authorized Indiana utilities to
7 use regulatory accounting for the impacts related to the utility disconnection
8 moratorium, temporary waiver of late fees, convenience fees, deposits, and
9 reconnection fees and to account for the use of expanded payment arrangements,
10 as well as COVID-19-related uncollectable and incremental bad debt expense.⁵

11 **Q: What are I&M's bad debt expense proposals?**

12 A: Ms. Segar-Lawson discusses I&M's proposed bad debt expense treatment for
13 both forecasted bad debt expense and recovery of incremental bad debt expense
14 associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. I&M proposes increasing its forecasted
15 bad debt expense using an average of its 2019 factored actual bad debt expense
16 and 2020 factored actual bad debt expense, which results in an \$11.5 million two-
17 year average. OUCC witness Mark Garrett discusses the OUCC's
18 recommendations regarding I&M's forecasted factored bad debt expense.

³ The Commission's June 29, 2020 Phase 1 and Interim Emergency Order also required utilities to temporarily cease collecting convenience fees. However, its August 12, 2020 Second Interim Emergency Order allowed utilities to "resume charging convenience fees per the rates and charges established in their tariffs as previously approved by the Commission." *In re COVID Investigation*, Cause No. 45380, Second Interim Emergency Order at 4 (Ind. Util. Regul. Comm'n Aug. 12, 2020) ("Cause No. 45380, Second Order").

⁴ *Cause No. 45380*, Second Order at 4.

⁵ *In re COVID Investigation*, Cause No. 45380, First Interim Emergency Order at 9 (Ind. Util. Regul. Comm'n June 29, 2020) ("Cause No. 45380, First Order").

1 Regarding I&M's deferred incremental 2020 bad debt expense, I&M
2 states "[s]ince the Commission authorized regulatory accounting treatment for all
3 incremental bad debt associated with COVID in Cause No. 45380, I&M deferred
4 the amount of 2020 bad debt that exceeded the amount in base rates."⁶ Therefore,
5 I&M deferred incremental 2020 bad debt expense for the March 2020 through
6 December 31, 2020 period. OUCC Data Request ("DR") 15-1 requested monthly
7 information regarding how I&M calculated its 2020 incremental bad debt
8 expense.⁷ I&M's response to OUCC DR 15-1 confirms I&M's 2020 incremental
9 bad debt expense was calculated using incremental bad debt from March 2020
10 through December 2020. Based on that calculation, I&M's 2020 incremental bad
11 debt expense is \$3,034,711, which it requests to amortize over two years,
12 resulting in a \$1,517,356 annual O&M expense, as seen on I&M's Exhibit A-5,
13 O&M-4.

14 I&M also requests to include deferred COVID-19 incremental bad debt
15 expense in rate base. It calculated a regulatory asset using the \$3,034,711
16 incremental bad debt expense and, as a result of the proposed Phase 1 rate
17 increase in April 2022, subtracted eight months amortization of the bad debt
18 deferral in the amount of \$1,011,570 to produce the \$2,034,141 regulatory asset
19 amount that can be seen on Exhibit A-6, RB-5.

20 **Q: Do you agree with I&M's calculation of incremental bad debt expense?**

⁶ Cause No. 45576, Direct Testimony of Dona Segar-Lawson page 17, line 6.

⁷ OUCC Data Request 15-1, Attachment WRB-1.

1 A: No. The Commission's June 29, 2020, Phase I and Interim Emergency Order
2 provided I&M and other Indiana jurisdictional utilities with the following
3 authority:

4 All jurisdictional Indiana utilities are authorized to use regulatory
5 accounting for COVID-19 related impacts directly associated with
6 any prohibition on utility disconnections, collection of certain
7 utility fees (i.e., late fees, convenience fees, deposits, and
8 reconnection fees) and the use of expanded payment arrangement,
9 as well as COVID-19 related uncollectable and incremental bad
10 debt expense.⁸

11 The utility disconnection moratorium, which was not renewed by the
12 Commission's August 12, 2020 Second Interim Emergency Order, lapsed on
13 August 14, 2020. The Commission's August 12, 2020 Order extended the waiver
14 of certain utility fees and charges for another 60 days while also permitting
15 continued regulatory accounting treatment of these deferred costs "consistent with
16 our findings in the Emergency Order."⁹

17 Based on a 60-day extension from the date of the Commission's Second
18 Interim Emergency Order on August 12, 2020, Indiana's jurisdictional utilities
19 were granted regulatory accounting treatment for eligible COVID-19 related costs
20 until October 12, 2020.

21 **Q: Did I&M cease deferring incremental bad debt expense on October 12, 2020?**

22 A: No. Even though the regulatory accounting authority the Commission provided
23 expired on October 12, 2020, I&M continued deferring bad debt expense through
24 December 31, 2020. In response to OUCG discovery 15-1, I&M confirmed its

⁸ Cause No. 45380 First Order, pp. 9-10.

⁹ Cause No. 45380 Second Order, p. 4.

1 \$3,034,711 deferred incremental bad debt expense for which it proposes to
2 receive regulatory accounting treatment is calculated using bad debt from March
3 2020 through December 2020.¹⁰

4 **Q: How should I&M's incremental bad debt expense be calculated for purposes**
5 **of recovery in rates?**

6 A: I&M's deferred incremental bad debt expense calculation should conform with
7 the precise period of the Commission's accounting authority from Cause No.
8 45380. This period began on March 19, 2020, when Governor Holcomb issued
9 Executive Order 20-05 declaring utility service an essential service that cannot be
10 disconnected during the COVID-19 public health emergency, until 60 days from
11 the date of the Commission's August 12, 2020 Second Interim Emergency Order,
12 which is October 12, 2020. I calculated bad debt expense for the months of March
13 and October on a pro rata basis. My calculation results in \$2,555,166 incremental
14 bad debt expense for the moratorium period.¹¹ Amortizing this amount over two
15 years will result in \$1,277,583 in annual recovery of incremental bad debt
16 expense versus the \$1,517,356 amortization expense I&M calculated, a \$239,773
17 decrease.¹²

18 **Q: Do you have concerns with I&M's request for a return on the unamortized**
19 **balance on the deferred bad debt request?**

20 A: Yes. While the OUCC does not dispute I&M can receive a return "of" the
21 incremental bad debt expense through two-year amortization, I&M should not

¹⁰ See OUCC Attachment WRB-1.

¹¹ OUCC Attachment WRB-2.

¹² While not explicitly stated by I&M, it is the OUCC's expectation that I&M took all steps, including seeking any eligible federal assistance in order to reduce its incremental bad debt expense, before seeking recovery of its proposed regulatory asset from customers.

1 receive a return “on” the unamortized balance of incremental bad debt expense as
2 shown on I&M’s Exhibit A-6, RB-5 in the amount \$2,023,141. I&M’s deferred
3 incremental bad debt expense balance is not an investment in capital nor a direct
4 expense. It is made up of billed revenue that has not been converted to cash
5 through a customer’s payment. The billed revenue is generated by multiplying the
6 electricity consumption in kWh by the Commission-approved tariffed rate. Within
7 this tariffed rate is an earnings component that includes return on equity. The
8 earnings component of this deferred bad debt expense is being recovered through
9 the two-year amortization shown on Exhibit A-5, O&M-4 in the amount of
10 \$1,517,356. To calculate a return on equity on the unamortized portion of this
11 deferred amount, which already includes return on equity plus additional finance
12 charges added during the factoring process, is improper and excessive recovery.

13 Moreover, based on how I&M has forecasted its test year (2022) bad debt
14 expense, it will recover an increased amount of bad debt expense going-forward,
15 which should provide the Company with ample funding for any increase in bad
16 debts as its customers continue to navigate the challenges of the COVID-19
17 pandemic. Before the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic were taken into
18 consideration, I&M’s forecast of 2022 bad debt expense was \$9.5 million.¹³
19 However, I&M is requesting to adjust the 2022 bad debt forecast by using a two-
20 year (2019 and 2020) average of \$11.5 million, which I&M then proposes to

¹³ Cause No. 45576, Direct Testimony of Dona Segar-Lawson p. 16, l. 20.

1 “factor” to arrive at \$11,921,155¹⁴ of bad debt expense in the forecasted test
2 year.¹⁵ OUCC witness Mark Garrett adjusts I&M's bad debt expense to \$10.7
3 million, which is still an adequate increase that takes both I&M's historical bad
4 debt experience and the uncertainty of future bad debt expense into consideration.

5 Finally, I&M will be made whole by the special regulatory authority
6 provided by the Commission in its Cause No. 45380 Orders, which allowed
7 jurisdictional Indiana utilities to defer incremental bad debt expense for a portion
8 of 2020 for future recovery. It does not need rate base treatment of the
9 unamortized portion of its incremental bad debt expense in order to be fully
10 compensated for unpaid customer bills. I&M will receive recovery of its March 6,
11 2020 to October 12, 2020 incremental bad debt expense over a two-year period,¹⁶
12 consistent with the Commission's Cause No. 45380 Orders.

13 Therefore, I recommend the Commission deny the inclusion of the
14 unamortized deferred bad debt expense in rate base for recovery of a return “on.”
15 I&M should receive only a return “of” its unamortized deferred bad debt expense
16 through a two-year amortization period as shown on I&M's Exhibit A-5, O&M-4.

IV. ADVANCED METERING INFRASTRUCTURE

17 **Q: Does the OUCC recommend approval of I&M's proposed AMI Rider in this**
18 **Cause?**

19 A: No. Mr. Alvarez testifies about why he recommends denial of I&M's proposed
20 AMI deployment in an AMI Rider. My testimony below addresses how, if I&M's

¹⁴ Cause No. 45576, WP-A-O&M-1.

¹⁵ The adjustment for the forecasted year can be seen on Exhibit A-5, O&M-1 for the total company amount of \$2,372,227 with the Indiana jurisdictional amount being \$1,919,369.

¹⁶ I&M's WP-A-RB-5, p. 2.

1 AMI Rider is approved over the OUCC's objection, any new AMI Rider should
2 recognize retirement of I&M's current AMR meters and include only actual AMI
3 investment under construction or actual AMI investment in service for the
4 calculation of a return on.

5 **Q: How does I&M propose recovering the costs of its new AMI meters?**

6 A: I&M plans to install AMI meters over three years. I&M includes the first year of
7 AMI costs in its 2022 forecasted test year to be included in base rates in this
8 Cause. I&M also requests the Commission approve an AMI Rider to track AMI
9 deployment costs over the remaining two-year period (2023 through 2024). I&M
10 proposes including the following in its Rider along with AMI deployment costs:

- 11 1. Post-in-service debt and equity carrying costs on incremental capital
12 investment;
- 13 2. Depreciation and amortization expense;
- 14 3. Property tax expense;
- 15 4. Incremental O&M expense; and
- 16 5. Gross Revenue Conversion Factor ("GRCF") costs.

17 **Q: If I&M receives approval of an AMI Rider over the OUCC's objection, how**
18 **should it be structured?**

19 A: Like other plant investment trackers, if I&M receives tracking authority for AMI
20 meters, its weighted average cost of capital ("WACC") would be applied to its
21 investment annually, with only the return "on" equity portion remaining static and
22 all other capital structure elements, including rates and weightings, updated
23 annually. O&M expense, depreciation, amortization, and property taxes would be
24 included in the tracker. When AMR meters are retired, the only appropriate
25 tracker treatment would be to recognize the retirement of those meters by

1 reducing depreciation expense within the AMI Rider.

2 I&M proposes filing its AMI Rider in mid-2022 in order to track its 2023
3 forecasted costs. If that is approved, I&M would recover capital costs that include
4 earnings before the associated assets are installed and used and useful in the
5 provision of electric utility service. This is improper ratemaking, inconsistent with
6 Indiana's used and useful statute (Ind. Code § 8-1-2-6) and should not be
7 approved. The Transmission Distribution Storage System Improvement Charge
8 ("TDSIC") tracker and other plant investment trackers permit forecasted O&M on
9 used and useful plant in service; however, these other plant investment trackers do
10 not forecast plant in service. Even in forecasted test year rate cases, utility plant
11 in service cannot be placed into rates until that plant has been verified as used and
12 useful. If I&M's AMI Rider is approved, which the OUCC argues it should not,
13 I&M's 2023 investments must be accounted for as construction work in progress
14 ("CWIP") until such time as those investments are complete and used and useful,
15 at which time I&M would be permitted to recover a return "on."

V. ROCKPORT UNIT 2 ACCOUNTING AND RATEMAKING TREATMENT

16 **Q: What accounting and ratemaking treatment does I&M request for Rockport**
17 **Unit 2?**

18 **A:** I&M notified the Commission in Cause No. 45546 that its Rockport Unit 2 lease
19 will end on December 7, 2022, at the end of the forecasted test year.¹⁷ I&M
20 proposes to include the approximate \$70 million lease payment as a credit in its

¹⁷ Cause No. 45576, Direct Testimony of Andrew Williamson p. 16, l. 1.

1 Resource Adequacy Rider (“RAR”).¹⁸ As a result of the Cause No. 45546
2 Settlement Agreement, which is currently pending before the Commission,
3 Rockport Unit 2 will be carried as a “below the line” asset as of December 8,
4 2022.¹⁹

5 Section 4(a) of the Cause No. 45546 Settlement Agreement also states
6 “I&M agrees to exclude from its Indiana retail customers’ rates any costs
7 associated with ... (ii) any going-forward costs specifically associated with the
8 continued ownership and operation of Rockport Unit 2 incurred after termination
9 of the Rockport Unit 2 Lease” Section 4(a) of the Settlement Agreement
10 further explains that except as otherwise provided, “I&M’s cost of service will be
11 reduced to eliminate all costs related to the ownership and operation of Rockport
12 Unit 2 after the termination of the Lease, including O&M expenses, and an
13 adjustment will be made to credit customers with any amounts collected from
14 customers after December 7, 2022.”

15 **Q: What does the OUCC recommend in addition to I&M’s Rockport Unit 2**
16 **accounting and ratemaking treatment proposal?**

17 A: Consistent with the Settlement Agreement’s provision that parties “reserve all
18 rights to propose mechanisms to accomplish this [Rockport Unit 2 credit] in
19 Cause No. 45576,” the OUCC recommends I&M’s O&M expenses needed to
20 operate Rockport Unit 2, as well as any other Rockport Unit 2 associated expense
21 that is not already separately tracked, also be included as a credit in I&M’s RAR.

¹⁸ *Id.*, p. 19, l. 1.

¹⁹ Cause No. 45546, Stipulation and Settlement Agreement, Section A(1), filed with the Commission on September 13, 2021 (pending approval).

1 This credit should be made in I&M's first RAR filing after the termination of the
2 Rockport Unit 2 lease on December 7, 2022.

3 **Q: Do you have any other Rockport Unit 2 recommendations?**

4 A: Yes. I&M's rate base includes Rockport Unit 2 pollution control equipment.
5 Therefore, I&M receives a return "on" and a return "of" this equipment in its base
6 rates, which, absent a change in this Cause, it would continue to receive while it
7 operates Rockport Unit 2 as a below-the-line asset that is not for the benefit of its
8 retail customers.

9 I&M received a certificate of public convenience and necessity for the
10 Rockport Unit 2 pollution control equipment so that it would comply with
11 environmental regulations. The OUCC does not challenge the prudence of I&M's
12 pollution control equipment investment, but rather the appropriateness of I&M
13 receiving a return "on" an asset that will not be used and useful in the provision of
14 retail energy service. Therefore, I recommend the net book value of the Rockport
15 Unit 2 pollution control equipment be excluded from base rates and included in
16 I&M's ECR tracker, where it should receive a return "of" only.

17 **Q: As of the end of the forecasted test year, what is the approximate net book**
18 **value of Rockport Unit 2-related rate base?**

1 A: In response to OUCC DR 20-3, I&M provided Attachment 1 that indicates as of
2 December 31, 2022, the Total Company net book value of Rockport Unit 2 rate
3 base will be \$109,889,363. Applying the Indiana jurisdictional allocation factor
4 from I&M's ECR filings of 66.23353% produces an Indiana jurisdictional rate
5 base for Rockport Unit 2 of approximately \$72,783,604. The Rockport Unit 2
6 pollution control equipment are the Rockport Unit 2 assets I&M owns and does
7 not lease. Therefore, consistent with my recommendation above, I recommend
8 \$72,783,604 be removed from I&M's rate base and moved into I&M's ECR
9 tracker for recovery of only a return "of" and not a return "on."

VI. TAX RIDER

10 **Q: Does I&M propose to modify its Tax Rider in this Cause?**

11 A: Yes. I&M proposes to reduce the protected portion of its excess Accumulated
12 Deferred Federal Income Tax ("ADFIT") refund by an amount it argues is
13 associated with its net operating loss carryforward ("NOLC"). Mr. Mark Garrett
14 rejects I&M's NOLC proposal in his testimony.

15 I&M witness Ross testifies at page 20 that I&M is also seeking "new
16 deferral accounting related to a potential future increase to the corporate federal
17 income tax rate." Mr. Ross details the deferral accounting treatment I&M seeks at
18 page 23 of his testimony.

19 **Q: Does the OUCC oppose changes to I&M's Tax Rider to address a potential**
20 **future increase to the corporate federal income tax rate?**

1 A: Yes. The purpose of I&M's Tax Rider is to return excess ADFIT associated with
2 the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 ("TCJA") to customers. That authority is
3 limited and based on tax changes that are known and have been addressed in
4 Commission orders. I&M's proposal to expand its Tax Rider to reflect an
5 unknown, potential increase to the corporate federal income tax rate is
6 inappropriate. Federal tax changes are complicated and reasonable minds can
7 disagree about how to implement the impacts of those changes, particularly on
8 regulated utilities. It is premature at this time to provide I&M with open authority
9 to implement deferral accounting associated with a federal income tax rate change
10 that has not occurred.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

11 **Q: What do you recommend in this proceeding?**

12 A: Based on my analysis described above, my recommendations are as follows:

13 (1) I recommend I&M's calculation of 2020 incremental bad debt expense be
14 based on the regulatory accounting authority provided by the Commission in
15 Cause No. 45380 from March 6, 2020 to October 12, 2020. I do not oppose
16 I&M's proposed two-year amortization period. I recommend denial of I&M's
17 proposal to receive rate base treatment for the unamortized balance of its
18 deferred bad debt expense.

19 (2) Should I&M's new AMI Rider be accepted over the OUCC's objection, I
20 recommend retirement of AMR meters be recognized as a decrease in
21 depreciation expense in any AMI Rider and I&M's AMI capital costs be

1 recovered only when construction is completed and/or the assets are used and
2 useful.

3 (3) In addition to I&M's proposed Rockport Unit 2 lease credit through the RAR,
4 I recommend I&M's O&M expenses needed to operate Rockport Unit 2, as
5 well as any other Rockport Unit 2 associated expense that is not already
6 separately tracked, be included as a credit in I&M's RAR. The credit should
7 be made in I&M's first RAR filing after the termination of the Rockport Unit
8 2 lease on December 7, 2022.

9 (4) I recommend removal of \$72,783,604 associated with the Rockport Unit 2
10 pollution control equipment from I&M's rate base, so that its net book value
11 can be recovered in I&M's current ECR tracker to recover return "of" only.

12 (5) I recommend denial of I&M's proposal modify its Tax Rider to include
13 deferral accounting associated with a potential future corporate federal income
14 tax rate change because no such tax change has taken place and the
15 implications of any future tax rate change are unknown. I&M's request for
16 deferral authority is premature and should be rejected.

17 **Q: Does this conclude your testimony?**

18 A: Yes.

APPENDIX A

1 **Q: Please describe your educational background and experience.**

2 A: I received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business with a major in Accounting
3 from Eastern Illinois University in 1987 and worked for Illinois Consolidated
4 Telephone Company until joining the OUCC in April 1991 as a staff accountant.
5 Since that time, I have reviewed and testified in hundreds of trackers, rate cases
6 and other proceedings before the Commission. I have attended the Annual
7 Regulatory Studies Program sponsored by NARUC at Michigan State University
8 in East Lansing, Michigan as well as the Wisconsin Public Utility Institute at the
9 University of Wisconsin-Madison Energy Basics Program.

Indiana Michigan Power Company
Year Ended December 31, 2020


Month	Bad Debt Expense	Included in Base Rates	Under-Recovered Deferral
Mar-20	\$ 341,716	\$ 205,953	\$ 135,763
Apr-20	408,340	245,559	162,781
May-20	334,058	245,559	88,499
Jun-20	617,413	245,559	371,853
Jul-20	773,546	245,559	527,987
Aug-20	780,020	245,559	534,461
Sep-20	866,084	245,559	620,525
Oct-20	606,123	245,559	360,564
Nov-20	330,190	245,559	84,631
Dec-20	393,206	245,559	147,647
Totals	\$ 5,450,696	\$ 2,415,985	\$ 3,034,711

I&M
 Deferred Bad Debt Expense
 2020

	Moratorium Period	Bad Debt Expense	Embedded Base Rates	I&M Unrecovered	OUCC Unrecovered	
Mar-20	6-Mar	341,716	205,953	135,763	\$109,486	Pro rate
Apr-20		408,340	245,559	162,781	162,781	
May-20		334,058	245,559	88,499	88,499	
Jun-20		617,413	245,559	371,854	371,854	
Jul-20		773,546	245,559	527,987	527,987	
Aug-20		780,020	245,559	534,461	534,461	
Sep-20		866,084	245,559	620,525	620,525	
Oct-20	12-Oct	606,123	245,559	360,564	139,573	Pro rate
Nov-20		330,190	245,559	84,631	0	
Dec-20		<u>393,206</u>	<u>245,559</u>	<u>147,647</u>	<u>0</u>	
		5,450,696	2,415,984	<u>3,034,712</u>	<u>2,555,166</u>	
	Divide by			2 years	2 years	
	Annual Amortization			<u>\$1,517,356</u>	<u>\$1,277,583</u>	
	Adjustment decrease					<u><u>\$239,773</u></u>

AFFIRMATION

I affirm, under the penalties for perjury, that the foregoing representations are true.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wes R. Blakley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the name.

Wes R. Blakley
Senior Utility Analyst
Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor
Cause No 45576
Indiana Michigan Power Co.

October 12, 2021

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

This is to certify that a copy of the Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor's Testimony Filing has been served upon the following parties of record in the captioned proceeding by electronic service on October 12, 2021.

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