1 STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE 1 2 PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION 3 January 14, 2022 -11:30 a.m. 4 5 [Remote Hearing conducted via Webex] 6 RE: DE 21-029 7 PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE D/B/A EVERSOURCE ENERGY 8 Petition for Approval of Change in Regulatory Reconciliation Adjustment 9 Rate [Hearing] 10 11 **PRESENT:** Chairman Daniel C. Goldner, Presiding 12 Commissioner Carleton B. Simpson 13 Doreen Borden, Clerk Corrine Lemay, Web Moderator 14 15 16 **APPEARANCES:** 17 Reptg. Public Service Co. of NH, d/b/a Eversource Energy: 18 Jessica Bruno Ralston, Esq. (Keegan...) 19 Reptg. N.H. Department of Energy: Paul D. Dexter, Esq. 20 21 22 COURT REPORTER: SUSAN J. ROBIDAS, NHLCR NO. 44 23 24 {DE 21-029} [Hearing] $\{01/14/22\}$

INDEX WITNESS PANEL: MARISA B. PARUTA ERICA L. MENARD JENNIFER A. ULLRAM EXAMINATION PAGE Direct Examination By Ms. Ralston Cross-examination by Mr. Dexter INTERROGATORIES BY COMMISSIONERS: By Commissioner Simpson CLOSING ARGUMENTS: Mr. Dexter Ms. Ralston {DE 21-029} [Hearing] {01/14/22}

EXHIBITS EXHIBIT ID DESCRIPTION PAGE NO. Updated Petition for Approval Premarked for Change in Regulatory Reconciliation Adjustment Mechanism Rate RECORD REQUEST: Provide Excel versions of Attachments MBP/ELM/JAU-1/2/3 $\{01/14/22\}$ {DE 21-029} [Hearing]

PROCEEDINGS 1 2 CHAIRMAN GOLDNER: Okay. Good I'm Chairman Goldner, joined by morning. 3 Commissioner Simpson. I'll now call the 4 second hearing today, Docket 21-029, to 5 This hearing is on Eversource's 6 order. petition for approval of change in the 7 regulatory rate reconciliation adjustment 8 mechanism rate. I'll note for the record 9 that this is a request for an off-cycle 10 11 adjustment resulting from the record being left open following a hearing occurring on 12 July 16th, 2021 and Order 26,503 on 13 14 July 30th, 2021. The Commission held the 15 record open for additional filings, testimony 16 if needed, and a further hearing to resolve 17 issues concerning the settlement, the recoupment calculation, and the appropriate 18 amount for recovery of vegetation management 19 20 costs. 21 I'll also note that in Order 22 26,503, the Commission specifically requested 23 that the filing parties provide the Commission with live spreadsheets for all 24 $\{ DE \ 21 - 029 \}$ $\{01/14/22\}$ [Hearing]

1	work papers relating to request for rate
2	recovery or any other financial recovery.
3	So, unfortunately, I need to start the
4	hearing off with a record request for live
5	spreadsheets of Attachments MBP/ELM/JAU-1,
6	MBP/ELM/JAU-2, and the same for $/3$.
7	So let's take appearances.
8	Eversource.
9	MS. RALSTON: Jessica Ralston from
10	the law firm of Keegan Werlin, on behalf of
11	Public Service Company of New Hampshire,
12	doing business as Eversource Energy.
13	CHAIRMAN GOLDNER: Thank you, Ms.
14	Ralston.
15	Department of Energy.
16	MR. DEXTER: Good morning, Chairman
17	Goldner and Commissioner Simpson. My name is
18	Paul Dexter. I'm an attorney with the
19	Department of Energy.
20	CHAIRMAN GOLDNER: Thank you, Mr.
21	Dexter.
22	So for preliminary matters,
23	Exhibit 10 has been prefiled and premarked
24	for identification. Is there anything else
	{DE 21-029} [Hearing] {01/14/22}

1 that we need to cover regarding exhibits? 2 [No verbal response] MR. DEXTER: Nothing from the 3 Department. 4 5 CHAIRMAN GOLDNER: Thank you. Any other preliminary matters 6 7 before we have the witnesses sworn in? [No verbal response] 8 9 CHAIRMAN GOLDNER: No. Does anyone 10 object to the witnesses in the prefiled 11 testimony? [No verbal response] 12 13 MR. DEXTER: No objection. 14 CHAIRMAN GOLDNER: Thank you. So 15 let's proceed with the witnesses. 16 Ms. Robidas, would you please swear 17 in the panel of witnesses. (WHEREUPON, MARISA B. PARUTA, ERICA L. 18 MENARD, JENNIFER A. ULLRAM were duly 19 20 sworn and cautioned by the Court 21 Reporter.) 22 MARISA B. PARUTA, SWORN 23 ERICA L. MENARD, SWORN 24 {DE 21-029} [Hearing] {01/14/22}

1		JENNIFER A. ULLRAM, SWORN
2		CHAIRMAN GOLDNER: Okay. Very
3		good. We'll move to direct examination.
4		I'll recognize Ms. Ralston.
5		MS. RALSTON: Thank you.
6		DIRECT EXAMINATION
7	BY M	S. RALSTON:
8	Q.	I will start with Ms. Paruta. Would you
9		please state your full name, your company
10		position and your responsibilities.
11	A.	(Paruta) My name is Marisa Paruta. I'm the
12		director of revenue requirements for
13		Connecticut and New Hampshire. I'm
14		responsible for the coordination and
15		implementation of revenue requirement
16		calculations and regulatory filings for the
17		Connecticut and New Hampshire electric and
18		gas subsidiaries of Eversource Energy.
19	Q.	And are you familiar with the exhibit that
20		has been marked as Exhibit 10, which is the
21		Company's initial filing submitted on
22		January 4th that's under consideration today?
23	Α.	(Paruta) Yes. Exhibit 10 includes testimony
24		and attachments that I co-sponsored with Ms.
I		{DE 21-029} [Hearing] {01/14/22}

1		Menard and Ms. Ullram.
2	Q.	Do you have any corrections or amendments to
3		Exhibit 10?
4	A.	(Paruta) No, I do not.
5	Q.	And do you adopt Exhibit 10 as part of your
6		sworn testimony today?
7	A.	(Paruta) Yes, I do.
8	Q.	Thank you.
9		And Ms. Menard, would you please state
10		your full name, company position and
11		responsibilities.
12	A.	(Menard) My name is Erica Menard. I'm the
13		manager of revenue requirements, employed by
14		Eversource Energy Service Company,
15		responsible for New Hampshire rates.
16	Q.	Thank you. And are you familiar with the
17		exhibit marked as Exhibit 10, which is the
18		Company's initial filing as submitted on
19		January 4th?
20	A.	(Menard) Yes, I am. Exhibit 10 includes
21		testimony that I co-sponsored with Ms. Ullram
22		and Ms. Paruta.
23	Q.	And do you have any corrections or amendments
24		to Exhibit 10?
I		{DE 21-029} [Hearing] {01/14/22}

1	A.	(Menard) No, I do not.
2	Q.	And do you adopt Exhibit 10 as part of your
3		sworn testimony today?
4	A.	(Menard) Yes, I do.
5	Q.	Thank you.
6		And Ms. Ullram, would you please state
7		your full name, company position and
8		responsibilities.
9	A.	(Ullram) My name is Jennifer Ullram. I'm the
10		manager of rates. In this role I'm
11		responsible for all activities pertaining to
12		rate design, cost of service and rates
13		administration for the Eversource Energy
14		subsidiaries in both New Hampshire and
15		Connecticut.
16	Q.	And are you familiar with the exhibit marked
17		as Exhibit 10, which is the Company's initial
18		filing as submitted on January 4th?
19	Α.	(Ullram) Yes. That exhibit includes
20		testimony and attachments that I co-sponsored
21		with Ms. Paruta and Ms. Menard.
22	Q.	And do you have any corrections or amendments
23		to Exhibit 10?
24	A.	(Ullram) No, I do not.
		{DE 21-029} [Hearing] {01/14/22}

1	Q.	And do you adopt Exhibit 10 as part of your
2		sworn testimony today?
3	Α.	(Ullram) Yes, I do.
4	Q.	Thank you.
5		And could the panel summarize the
6		Company's request today with respect to the
7		regulatory reconciliation adjustment rate,
8		also known as the RRA rate.
9	А.	(Paruta) Yes. So the Company's RRA rate was
10		effective August 1 of 2021 pursuant to the
11		Settlement Agreement that was approved in
12		Docket 19-057. The Company is proposing an
13		adjustment to the RRA rate for effect
14		February 1, 2022, and that adjustment is
15		going to be for a six-month period.
16	Q.	And why is the Company proposing an interim
17		adjustment to the RRA rate at this time?
18	Α.	(Paruta) Pursuant to the terms of the
19		Settlement Agreement that was approved in
20		19-057, Eversource refunded \$3.482 million
21		through the RRA for the six-month period of
22		July through December 2020 that was related
23		to the vegetation management portion of the
24		RRA. That over-recovered vegetation
		{DE 21-029} [Hearing] {01/14/22}

	management amount of 3.482 million was the
	difference between the amount that was used
	as the base rate recovery level within our
	calculation and the actual vegetation
	management spend. The Department of Energy
	did dispute that base rate recovery level at
	the July 16, 2021 hearing in this docket, and
	in response to the issues that were raised by
	the Department of Energy, the Commission did
	leave the record open with respect to the
	vegetation management portion of the RRA.
	And since that time, the Company has
	conducted additional analysis, engaged with
	DOE Staff, and now presenting a proposed rate
	adjustment.
Q.	Than you. And can you please provide a brief
	overview of the Company's analysis and
	findings?
A.	(Paruta) Sure. The Company determined that
	the amount used as the base rate recovery
	level was incorrect, and this filing proposes
	a revised reconciliation amount to reflect
	this. The base rate recovery level that
	should have been used was the annualized
	{DE 21-029} [Hearing] {01/14/22}
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1	amount for vegetation management allowed in
2	temporary rates pro rated for the period from
3	July 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020. This is
4	appropriate because it was approved in our
5	Settlement Agreement. The recoupment
6	calculation included a specific adjustment
7	for vegetation management to remove the
8	effects of the difference between the
9	temporary and permanent rates. So, said
10	differently, the recoupment calculation that
11	brought our temporary rates to permanent
12	rates had to be negated for vegetation
13	management, as it was decided that the
14	temporary rates for vegetation management
15	specifically would stay in effect for the
16	full temporary rate period ending
17	December 31, 2020.
18	The Company recommends a corrected
19	vegetation management program refund amount
20	of \$4.332 million for the six-month period
21	July to December 2020, which is \$850,000
22	higher than the refund that we had proposed
23	in the initial RRA filing and presently
24	included in rates. The 4.332 million amount
	{DE 21-029} [Hearing] {01/14/22}

	represents the difference between the actual
	amount recovered in base distribution rates
	and the actual vegetation management
	spending.
Q.	And have you provided any documents
	demonstrating this revised refund amount?
Α.	(Paruta) Yes, Attachment MBP/ELM/JAU-1. And
	then MBP/ELM/JAU-2 shows the revised refund
	amount. And the Company has also presented
	this analysis to DOE Staff.
Q.	And can you just summarize Eversource's
	request in terms of what we're asking the
	Commission to approve today?
Α.	(Paruta) The Company is requesting approval
	to adjust the RRA to refund the
	over-collection for vegetation management.
	And the requested adjustment would apply to
	the six-month period from February 1, 2022 to
	July 31, 2022. The adjusted rate is .023
	cents per kilowatt hour, a higher credit than
	the presently approved rate of negative .012
	cents a kilowatt hour. The Company is
	requesting this off-cycle adjustment to
	resolve the vegetation management issue that
	{DE 21-029} [Hearing] {01/14/22}
	A. Q.

1		remains outstanding. Approving this
2		adjustment for February 1, 2022 aligns nicely
3		with the other adjustments proposed by the
4		Company for the same date, and it will help
5		to mitigate any overall bill impacts that may
6		occur from those other adjustments.
7	Q.	And has this proposed adjustment been
8		calculated consistent with the terms of the
9		Settlement Agreement from Docket DE 19-057?
10	A.	(Paruta) Yes. Attachments MPB/ELM/JAU-1 and
11		2 do provide the calculation of the revised
12		vegetation management variance for the
13		calendar year 2020. No other adjustments to
14		the currently approved RRA rate were made.
15		And the Company has allocated the total
16		average RRA rate to each rate class
17		consistent with the allocation methodology
18		that we used to allocate the Step 1 and
19		Step 2 rate adjustments. These allocations
20		are shown in Attachment MPB/ELM/JAU-2.
21	Q.	And can you provide the bill impact for an
22		average residential customer associated with
23		the adjustment?
24	A.	(Paruta) Jen, I'm going to ask you
ļ		{DE 21-029} [Hearing] {01/14/22}

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1
         (Ullram) Yeah. Sorry. I couldn't get myself
    Α.
         off mute.
2
              Certainly. So in MPB/ELM/JAU-3, we
3
         included the impact to the average
4
         residential customer for customers with 550,
5
         600 and 650 kilowatt hours per month.
6
                                                 And
7
         those bill impacts range from a credit of 8
         cents a month on a customer's bill to 11
8
         cents. Obviously the higher the usage, the
9
         larger the credit. And that's provided in
10
11
         Bates Page 27 of the filing.
         Thank you. And does the adjustment result in
12
    Q.
         rates that are just and reasonable?
13
         (Ullram) Yes, it does.
14
    Α.
15
         Thank you.
    Q.
16
                   MS. RALSTON: No further questions.
17
         The witnesses are now available for
         cross-examination.
18
19
                   CHAIRMAN GOLDNER: All right.
         We'll move to cross-examination, and I'll
20
21
         recognize Mr. Dexter.
22
                   MR. DEXTER: Thank you, Chairman
23
         Goldner.
24
                     CROSS-EXAMINATION
         {DE 21-029} [Hearing]
                                        \{01/14/22\}
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1 BY MR. DEXTER:

2	Q.	I guess I would like to start by turning to
3		Bates Page 21 Bates Page 20. And I would
4		like to ask the witnesses about the column
5		labeled "Change" and Lines 8 and 9. I see
6		two rates there or two, I guess they're
7		rates, cents per kWh of 0.23 and 0.35.
8		And I would like to ask them what exactly is
9		proposed in this case and what's the
10		difference between those two numbers.
11	A.	(Ullram) So Erica, I can take this. It
12		doesn't matter.
13		So the Line 8, the adjusted average RRA,
14		so that's the incremental credit on top of
15		the already average rate that's currently
16		being billed of .012. So the total of those
17		two would be from February 1st to July 2022.
18		The average RRA rate would be a credit of
19		.035 cents per kilowatt hour.
20	Q.	And so I know and we'll get into the
21		differences in the classes shortly. But are
22		you saying that what's proposed for approval
23		in this docket is an RRA rate of negative
24		.035 for effect February 1st, and to stay in
l	<u>.</u>	{DE 21-029} [Hearing] {01/14/22}

1		effect for six months?
2	A.	(Ullram) Correct.
3	Q.	Okay. And if we okay. I'll leave it at
4		that.
5		So let's turn now to Page 22. This page
6		looks familiar to me from the very hot
7		hearing day we held back in July that I
8		recall. And I'd like the witnesses to tell
9		me what's the difference between this
10		schedule and what was presented back in July
11		on the equivalent schedule.
12	A.	(Paruta) Yes. So if you look at Line 7 of
13		the schedule, when this was originally filed
14		within our RRA filing and reviewed in July
15		during our hearing, the July through
16		December 2020 base rates amount of 6850
17		indicated an even \$6 million.
18	Q.	And everything else on this schedule is the
19		same as we saw it last summer?
20	A.	(Paruta) We have not changed anything else in
21		this schedule.
22	Q.	Okay. And then could you I know you went
23		over it fairly quickly on direct. But could
24		you just explain again why the number in that
ļ		{DE 21-029} [Hearing] {01/14/22}

1		box goes what was 6 million you said
2		was 6 million and is now \$6,850,000.
3	A.	(Paruta) Sure. I can walk through what we
4		believe to be the history behind that, based
5		on hindsight and taking a look at what's on
6		record.
7		So the Company and I apologize. The
8		Company, during the temporary Settlement
9		Agreement, determined that the amount that
10		would be recovered for vegetation management
11		costs would be a total of \$7.7 million for
12		the period of July 1, 2019 through
13		December 31, 2019, and the subsequent
14		six-month period in the temporary Settlement
15		Agreement for January 1, 2020 through
16		June 30, 2020 would be \$6 million. When
17		COVID occurred, there was an extension of the
18		temporary rate settlement, resulting in an
19		18-month period of the temporary settlement
20		as opposed to the 12-month period. So,
21		essentially, the Company had determined that
22		the amount that would be allowed to be
23		recovered in that third trunk in the
24		temporary settlement period as a result of
		{DE 21-029} [Hearing] {01/14/22}

the COVID extension was \$6 million. So that was the assumption used when determining the RRA calculation that was submitted in our
RRA calculation that was submitted in our
and reviewed in our July hearing, the
\$6 million.
Upon further evaluation when the DOE
Staff had challenged that number, we did go
back and we took a look at the amounts that
were actually included within the rate
calculation. And what we determined was the
permanent Settlement Agreement locked in the
vegetation management allowance in rates that
was 13.7 million for the 12-month period. So
we determined that within the permanent
Settlement Agreement, our rates effective for
the period July 1, 2019 through December 31,
2020 would be at 13.7 times a 1.5 factor, if
you will, to carry you over through the full
18-month period.
What we didn't at the time when we
were preparing our RRA calculation, what we
didn't evaluate was the fact that for the
third trunk period, our rates reflected the
13.7 million simply divided by two, which is
{DE 21-029} [Hearing] {01/14/22}

1		how it was calculated when we ultimately
2		determined the rates billed to customers.
3		So when the DOE Staff challenged us,
4		there was certain, I'll say confusion in
5		terms of what was actually included in
6		permanent rates for vegetation management.
7		And they challenged us to say that that 6
8		million should have been 13.1 million, which
9		is the vegetation management allowed in
10		permanent rates, but did not take effect
11		until January 1, 2021. And they had
12		challenged us the DOE Staff had challenged
13		us that the 6 million should be 13.1 million
14		divided by 2, which was the 6,550,000 that
15		was discussed at the hearing. But again,
16		when we went back and took a look at the
17		records and took a look at the rates, we had
18		calculated the rates in effect for the period
19		July 1, 2019 through December 31, 2020, using
20		the 13.7 times a 1.5 factor. So as a result
21		of that, the amount that should have been
22		included in that RRA schedule was truly the
23		6,850,000.
24	Q.	And, again, the 6,850,000 is an annual amount
	L	{DE 21-029} [Hearing] {01/14/22}

 of vegetation management costs built into base rates of 13.7 million do I have that right divided by two? A. (Paruta) That's correct. Q. Thank you. So getting to the so that explains, then, I believe, where the \$850,000 that shows up on Bates 21 comes from. And we've talked about how that gets translated into the proposed rate. With that, I'd like to turn to Bates Page 23, where the rate is being allocated to the various classes. And starting with the residential rate, just confirm that the rate has the size of the credit has doubled on Line 1. Do I have that right? A. (Ullram) Yes, it has. Q. Okay. And again, we don't if we go back to Page 20, we see three different rates on that sheet on Lines 8 and 9 that we just talked about. Those are in cents per kWh. And then I go forward to Page 23, and I guess I'm in dollars per kWh for Rate R. But I don't see any of those other three rates that 			
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	24		are on the prior page either in effect or
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1		proposed. Can you explain that?
2	A.	(Ullram) Sure. So on Bates Page 20, those
3		are average rates. So what we first do is we
4		create an overall average rate. So when we
5		had discussed on Bates Page 20 that .035
6		cents per kilowatt hour, that was the average
7		rate. And as you alluded to earlier, the
8		we allocate differently to each rate class
9		based upon our allocation methodology that
10		was approved in the settlement. So just like
11		we did in each of our step adjustments, as
12		well as last year's RRA calculation, Bates
13		Page 25 shows the allocation to each rate
14		class.
15		And so what you'll see on Bates 25 is
16		that we are taking the entire proposed
17		adjustment that equates to the .035 cents per
18		kilowatt hour, revenues that equate to that
19		amount, and we're allocating it across each
20		of the rate classes using equal class
21		percentage increase based on revenues. And
22		so that page allocates the revenues in
23		Column C to create an RRA target, and that's
24		the total target.
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1		And then Page 26 shows the detailed
2		allocation and the math behind getting to
3		either the per kW or per kilowatt-hour rate
4		for each rate class.
5	Q.	Thank you for that. Just one question on the
6		rate calculation on Page 25, Line 13.
7		Can you explain why the number on
8		Line 13 is 1,764,000 and not the 854,000 we
9		were talking about the 850,000 we were
10		talking about earlier?
11	A.	(Ullram) Because it's a total rate and not
12		just the incremental. So the 850 is the
13		incremental rate. So it's taking the rate
14		that the revenue requirements are currently
15		being recovered through the RRA, as well as
16		the \$850,000 that's also being proposed for
17		this period, because we have to set a total
18		RRA rate and not just the incremental piece
19		of it. So this is setting the total rate for
20		the period.
21	Q.	Okay. Thanks.
22		So, again, back on Page 23. I see a
23		footnote in Column B, which you can read.
24		And I'd just ask you to explain that footnote
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			2
1		to me because I don't understand it.	
2	A.	(Ullram) That would be a leftover footnote	
3		from a prior, because it should say based on	
4		the average rate of the .00 or .012 cents	
5		per kilowatt hour.	
6	Q.	Well, that's what it does say.	
7	A.	(Ullram) Oh, yeah. Sorry. Pardon me. I was	
8		reading it as .011.	
9		Yes, so that is just showing you what	
10		the current average RRA rate is currently in	
11		effect plus the incremental piece. The	
12		footnote probably should be clearer, to be	
13		honest with you, because it should say the	
14		proposed rates are based on an average	
15		retail yeah. I'd have to think about how	
16		to make that clearer. It really just should	
17		be referring back to Bates 26 or 25, in all	
18		reality.	
19	Q.	Okay. But I thought we established that the	
20		average rate for the interim period that's	
21		proposed up on Bates 20 is 0.35 cents per	
22		kWh; is that right?	
23	A.	(Ullram) Yes, you are correct. I'm looking	
24		at it now. Sorry for the confusion. It was	
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1		a holdover from the last RRA. What it should
2		say is an average rate of .035 cents per
3		kilowatt hour. My apologies.
4	Q.	Okay. So I understand, you're just trying to
5		make that tie between Page 20 to show that's
6		the rate that's proposed, and then Page 23
7		shows how it's allocated or shows the
8		results of the allocations between all the
9		classes.
10	A.	(Ullram) Yes, that's correct. And I
11		apologize again for the confusion.
12	Q.	So I want to go to Bates 27 and 28 for a
13		moment. Starting with Bates 27, can you tell
14		me what this schedule is intended to show?
15	A.	(Ullram) So all the schedule's intended to do
16		is just to show the difference in the RRA
17		rate between the rates that are currently in
18		effect as of August 1st, 2021 to the rates
19		proposed for February 1st, 2022. So it's
20		just that one RRA rate change that's
21		occurring.
22	Q.	How about the next page, Bates 28? What does
23		that show?
24	A.	(Ullram) Yup. So that shows the rates that
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1		were currently in effect as of February 1st,
2		2021 compared to what we're proposing for the
3		RRA rate change for February 1st, 2022. It
4		doesn't reflect the other changes that we
5		proposed either in the distribution rates
6		that we're proposing for February 1st or the
7		SCRC rates, or the supply rates that changed
8		also. So it's just isolating, and it's
9		really just for illustrative purposes, just
10		isolating the one change for the RRA.
11		And just for your own benefit, we do
12		have it's filed elsewhere in DE 21-117.
13		But we do have an exhibit that kind of
14		combines everything because, as you know, the
15		SCRC is the last one that gets filed. So we
16		wouldn't have had some of the rates in
17		effect or some of the proposed rates yet
18		filed. And so that's why each of these
19		individual ones, we just show the actual rate
20		that we're proposing to be changed in the
21		individual dockets. But there is an exhibit
22		that does show all of them. So I can tell
23		you the impacts overall if you'd like me to.
24	Q.	No, that's fine. I guess we'll get to that
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1		in the third docket today.
2		But just so I understand I'm on
3		Page 28 now. So, for example, the change
4		that you're pointing out, that's reflective
5		of what in this case falls in Column G;
6		correct?
7	A.	(Ullram) That is correct.
8	Q.	The change or the non-change that's shown
9		in Column F, the systems benefit charge,
10		that's not really the systems benefit charge
11		that's in effect on February 1st, 2022;
12		correct?
13	A.	(Ullram) That's correct. It is not.
14	Q.	It is the system benefit charge that was in
15		effect February 2021; correct?
16	A.	(Ullram) That is correct.
17	Q.	Just wanted to clear that up.
18		And lastly, I just want to carry these
19		rate changes into the proposed tariff which
20		is included. I had a couple questions. I'd
21		like to go to Bates Page 55.
22	A.	(Ullram) Give me one second.
23	Q.	Redlined version.
24	Α.	(Ullram) Okay.
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1	Q.	About the middle of the page, under the
2		heading "Water Heating - Uncontrolled" I see
3		a regulatory reconciliation adjustment of
4		.018 cents. And so if I go back to Bates
5		page, I guess 23, where all the rates are
6		laid out, I would expect to find that rate.
7		So let me do that.
8		So I'm back on Page 23. I'm at
9		Uncontrolled Water Heating, and I see that
10		the rate changed from .00009 to .00018. So
11		the proposed rate is the .00018; correct?
12	A.	(Ullram) Yes. It looks like for some reason
13		the redlined change didn't get captured. I'm
14		not sure why. But you are correct, that it
15		should show, based on Bates 23, the change
16		from .009 a credit of .009 cents per
17		kilowatt hour to .018. And we could
18		easily I know we have to file a compliance
19		tariff after this, so we can make sure that
20		those redlined changes are captured.
21	Q.	So the correct rate is included, it just
22		didn't show up in red as a change. Is that
23		what you're saying?
24	A.	(Ullram) Yes, that's what it appears to be.
		{DE 21-029} [Hearing] {01/14/22}

1		You know, subject to check, that's what it's
2		looking like on the sheet.
3	Q.	And if we were to go to Bates Page 57
4	Α.	(Ullram) Yeah, I think this yeah, I just
5		noticed as I was flipping through, that one
6		looks like it didn't capture showing that we
7		are changing it from .016, but it is not
8		provided in the new one, which should be
9		.032.
10	Q.	Sorry. I'm just getting there myself. So,
11		again, we're talking I guess you have to
12		go up to Page 55 now. And we're talking
13		about water heater controlled, and I see a
14		regulatory reconciliation adjustment that
15		looks like it's going from .016 to zero. And
16		I don't think we'd find a zero if we went
17		back to Bates Page 23; is that correct?
18	Α.	(Ullram) Correct. It should be .032.
19	Q.	Okay.
20	Α.	(Ullram) Again, I'm not sure why those
21		redlined changes weren't captured, but we can
22		change those and update those when we make
23		our compliance filing to reflect the correct
24		amounts.
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1 Okay. Very good. Q. MR. DEXTER: That's all the 2 questions I had, Commissioners. 3 CHAIRMAN GOLDNER: Thank you, Mr. 4 5 Dexter. I'll recognize Commissioner 6 7 Simpson. Thank you, 8 COMMISSIONER SIMPSON: Mr. Chairman. That was a helpful line of 9 10 questioning from Mr. Dexter. 11 INTERROGATORIES BY COMMISSIONERS: BY COMMISSIONER SIMPSON: 12 I just want to go back at a high level and 13 **Q**. understand where this adjustment originated 14 from. 15 16 So it sounds like the temporary rates 17 that Eversource put into effect were different from the permanent rates as per the 18 Settlement Agreement. Is that a fair 19 characterization? 20 21 Α. (Paruta) So I think the origination -- the 22 original discovery of an issue was not for 23 that reason, but ultimately we discovered 24 that there was a perpetual issue concerning {DE 21-029} [Hearing] $\{01/14/22\}$

1 this. So the original issue was that we h 2 included an amount of \$6 million within th 3 reconciliation, and the DOE Staff challeng 4 that and said that that amount was incorrect	ie
3 reconciliation, and the DOE Staff challeng	
	red
4 that and said that that amount was incorre	
	ect.
5 They believed it should be what was includ	led
6 in permanent rates for vegetation manageme	ent
7 and what was allowed in permanent rates of	:
8 13.1 million divided by 2, which is	
9 6,550,000.	
10 So we had challenged and said was that	ιt
11 we were only allowed to recover \$6 million	L
12 for that third trunk period. COVID I w	<i>7</i> ill
13 say COVID created a bit of a complexity he	ere
14 because it added a third period and a	
15 temporary rate period, which is typically	
16 only 12 months, as far as back in the hist	ory
17 I can recall for New Hampshire. So our	
18 temporary rate settlement period of 12 mor	iths
19 turned into 18 months. And so that 13.1	
20 million that was identified as what should	L
21 have been included within our RRA calculat	ion
divided by 2, the 6,550,000, is what we to	ok
23 away from the hearing and said, okay, let	S
24 go back and see what was included in rates	•
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Now, when we went back to take a look at 1 what was actually included in rates billed to 2 customers for that third trunk period, we 3 discovered that what we included in there was 4 the temporary rates for veg management only. 5 Veg management was the only piece, along with 6 the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act -- so there were 7 8 two components of the temporary rate 9 settlement compared to the final permanent Settlement Agreement that were treated very 10 differently than everything else when we go 11 12 from temporary to permanent rates. Because of that, the amount that was included within 13 the temporary rate period was never adjusted 14 15 to reflect permanent rates, as is typical in the type of rate reconciling factors in a 16 17 rate Settlement Agreement. So because of that, the temporary rate 18 19 that was approved within the temporary 20 Settlement Agreement for the vegetation 21 management continued to be carried through 22 the 18-month period, and that temporary rate Settlement Agreement had 13.7 million 23

annualized allowance for vegetation

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24

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1		management. So when you extend that through
2		that third trunk, because of COVID-created
3		complexity, the 13.7 divided by 2, which is
4		what was included in rates, is the 6,850,000.
5	Α.	(Menard) Commissioner Simpson, just if I
6		could add to it.
7		So because of the pandemic and because
8		our temp rate was separated into two pieces,
9		the language, when we extended the temp rate,
10		said to continue to spend at the temp rate
11		level. So the second piece of the year
12		you know, as Ms. Paruta said, the first half
13		of the year was 7.7 and the second half of
14		the year was 6 million. The intent was to
15		ratchet down vegetation management spending
16		in the temp rate.
17		When the pandemic extended the temp
18		rate, we extended our vegetation management
19		spending at the \$6 million level because that
20		was the intent, only spend \$6 million. So
21		when we put together the reconciling
22		schedules, that's what we were thinking. We
23		compared it to the \$6 million level because
24		that's what we were allowed to spend. But
		{DE 21-029} [Hearing] {01/14/22}

1		then when you take a look back at, well, what
2		did you actually recover in rates, we didn't
3		adjust rates down to that \$6 million level.
4		Temporary rates remained at the two pieces,
5		the 7.7 plus the 6 million. So the temp rate
6		level remained at that \$13.7 million. So if
7		you cut that in two, you say, okay, well,
8		half of that, when you extend it because of
9		the pandemic, it's really half of the 13.7
10		that got extended. So that led to the
11		confusion was just the intent of the temp
12		Settlement Agreement and the level of
13		spending versus what was actually collected
14		in rates, if that's helpful.
15	Q.	So it was ultimately a somewhat
16		administrative error in terms of interpreting
17		what should be billed for vegetation
18		management costs in transition from temp
19		rates to permanent rates as dictated by the
20		Settlement Agreement?
21	A.	(Paruta) I would say go ahead, Ms. Menard.
22	A.	(Menard) I wouldn't say that we continued to
23		bill at the temp rate level. So, you know,
24		there wasn't any error in what we billed to
ļ		{DE 21-029} [Hearing] {01/14/22}

1		customers. It was just an interpretation of
2		what we were reconciling against for purposes
3		of RRA.
4	A.	(Paruta) And to add to what Ms. Menard said,
5		the error occurred within the RRA schedule.
6		There was no error within temporary rates
7		that were billed. I will say this: There
8		was no error within the rates that were
9		billed to customers within the temporary rate
10		period. It was just a human error when we
11		interpreted the amount that was included in
12		base rates as what was recovered.
13		As Erica indicated, because we were
14		ratcheting it down, we expected a \$6 million
15		amount, which was the 6 million in the second
16		six-month period. And it can get confusing.
17		We keep tripping over this 18-month temporary
18		rate period. So I'm trying to make sure I
19		keep my six-month periods in order in my
20		mind, because that second six-month period
21		within the temporary rates was 6 million, and
22		the way the COVID extension happened, we
23		moved that 6 million within our thought
24		process into a third trunk. But because of
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1		the way rates were calculated, it simply took
2		the 13.7 million and multiplied it by a 1.5
3		factor. So it essentially extended it out.
4		13.7 divided by 2 is what was included in
5		customers' rates, which is the 6,850,000.
6		So, no error in rates. It was simply an
7		error in what was ultimately used in the
8		calculation included in the RRA that was
9		evaluated and reviewed in the hearing this
10		summer.
11	Q.	Okay. How is that not a rate error?
12	A.	(Paruta) Let me go back and rephrase what I
13		said.
14		The temporary rates that were in effect
15		from July 1, 2019 through December 31, 2020
16		were not erroneous. The rate error that did
17		occur is in the calculation of the RRA that
18		ultimately impacted the rates that we changed
19		this past summer. Correct. I agree with you
20		there.
21	Q.	Okay. Generally speaking, when
22		over-collections occur, does anyone on the
23		panel have thoughts regarding how to make
24		customers whole, in terms of the lost
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1		opportunity cost and the cost of capital from
2		that over-collection?
3	A.	(Paruta) Because this is going back to
4		customers within the rate year for which it
5		would have ultimately, we did discuss that
6		and determined that there would not be the
7		customers have not been held harmless because
8		it will go back to them appropriately within
9		the rates by the end of this rate period.
10	Q.	Thank you.
11		COMMISSIONER SIMPSON: I have no
12		further questions, Mr. Chairman.
13		CHAIRMAN GOLDNER: Okay. Thank
14		you.
15		So I have no questions, but one
16		comment. And I'll just say that it does not
17		build confidence when the redline is wrong,
18		and it makes me wonder what else is wrong in
19		the filing. So I'll just mention that on the
20		record.
21		Any redirect for your witnesses,
22		Ms. Ralston?
23		MS. RALSTON: No redirect. Thank
24		you.
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CHAIRMAN GOLDNER: Okay. 1 The 2 witnesses are released. Thank you. Without objection, we'll strike 3 I.D. ON Exhibit 10 and admit it as a full 4 exhibit. 5 And just as a reminder for the 6 7 record request I mentioned at the outset, we'll mark that as Exhibit 11. 8 That's MPB/ELM/JAU-1, 2 and 3. 9 And Ms. Ralston, I know that you 10 11 are looking for, on these first two dockets -- and I apologize for mixing my 12 dockets this morning. But would it be 13 14 reasonable on this docket and the prior one 15 to get the data by, say, Tuesday of next week 16 so that we have an opportunity to reply by 17 the timeline that you've asked for? MS. RALSTON: I believe that 18 19 Tuesday is reasonable for the record request 20 in this docket. I am not sure if Tuesday is 21 feasible for the record request in the prior 22 docket. We may need a couple extra days for 23 those just to verify the data. Sure, sure. 24 CHAIRMAN GOLDNER: {DE 21-029} [Hearing] $\{01/14/22\}$

1 MS. RALSTON: If we can have until Wednesday or Thursday for the prior docket --2 CHAIRMAN GOLDNER: Very sensible. 3 We will react as quickly as we can, in terms 4 5 of your requested deadline. So just know that sooner is better, and it gives us a 6 7 better chance of hitting the February 1st -or January 24th, depending on which deadline 8 you're looking for. So, yeah, the sooner the 9 better. So thank you. 10 11 MS. RALSTON: Of course. CHAIRMAN GOLDNER: 12 Okay. Thank 13 you. 14 So let's move to the closing 15 arguments. Energy and Mr. Dexter. 16 MR. DEXTER: Thank you. The 17 Department of Energy supports the rate change presented here. We are pleased that \$850,000 18 19 will be passed back to customers through the 20 proposed rate, and we support doing it over 21 the remaining period so that it does take 22 place in the originally contemplated period 23 of the RRA mechanism. We want to thank the Commission for 24 {DE 21-029} [Hearing] $\{01/14/22\}$

holding this issue open last summer when we 1 raised the issues that we did; that was our 2 questioning of the numbers in that case. Ι 3 don't think it was welcomed by the Company, 4 frankly, if you look at the statements during 5 that summer hearing. But we believed that we 6 7 were right at the time. And we understand that this record shows that we weren't 8 necessarily right at the time, but we were 9 correct, it appears that we were correct that 10 11 there was a fairly significant error in the schedule that shows up in this case on Bates 12 Page 22. 13

14 Having said that, we very much 15 appreciate the effort that Eversource put 16 forth before this hearing to investigate this 17 matter and look into this very complicated issue of base rates, temp rates, COVID, and 18 reconciliation for the RRA, and, in fact, 19 20 contacted us to tell us, us being the 21 Department of Energy, that they believed that 22 an \$850,000 refund was appropriate. So we 23 appreciate the efforts that Eversource put in to correct this, given the time allotted by 24

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the Commission. But it was important that 1 the Commission held this issue open for 2 further investigation, particularly given 3 that the reconciliation dockets that the 4 5 Commission hears have to be decided fairly 6 quickly. 7 So having said all that, we 8 recommend approval of the rates as requested. CHAIRMAN GOLDNER: 9 Thank you, Mr. 10 Dexter. 11 Eversource and Ms. Ralston. Thank you, Chair 12 MS. RALSTON: Goldner and Commissioner Simpson. And thank 13 14 you to the Department of Energy for raising 15 this issue and for working with us to reach 16 the resolution that we proposed today. 17 We don't have anything to add, just 18 simply we request that it be approved as 19 filed. And as I previously stated, we will 20 endeavor to provide the additional 21 information requested as quickly as possible. 22 CHAIRMAN GOLDNER: Thank Okay. 23 you, Ms. Ralston. So before we close here, I'll just 24 $\{ DE \ 21-029 \}$ $\{01/14/22\}$ [Hearing]

mention that let's start the next hearing at 1 p.m. And that would be in 19-117. And we'll regroup then. And if nobody has any questions or concerns, I'll thank everyone. We'll take the matter under advisement and issue an order. We are adjourned. Thank you. (Whereupon the hearing was concluded at 12:26 p.m.) $\{01/14/22\}$ {DE 21-029} [Hearing]

CERTIFICATE

1 2 I, Susan J. Robidas, a Licensed Shorthand Court Reporter and Notary Public 3 of the State of New Hampshire, do hereby 4 5 certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate transcript of my stenographic 6 7 notes of these proceedings taken at the 8 place and on the date hereinbefore set forth, to the best of my skill and ability 9 under the conditions present at the time. 10 11 I further certify that I am neither attorney or counsel for, nor related to or 12 employed by any of the parties to the 13 14 action; and further, that I am not a 15 relative or employee of any attorney or 16 counsel employed in this case, nor am I 17 financially interested in this action. 18 (ORIGINAL CERTIFICATION FILED WITH 19 PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION) 20 21 Susan J. Robidas, LCR/RPR Licensed Shorthand Court Reporter 22 Registered Professional Reporter N.H. LCR No. 44 (RSA 310-A:173) 23 24 {DE 21-029} $\{01/14/22\}$

[Hearing]

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