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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
21 S. Fruit St., Suite 10
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May 19, 2023

Daniel C. Goldner, Chair
Public Utilities Commission
21 S. Fruit Street
Concord, NH 03301-2429

Re: DG 22-041 Liberty Utilities (EnergyNorth Natural Gas) Corp. d/b/a Liberty, Petition for Approval to Recover Revenue Decoupling Adjustment Factor Costs, *DOE's Request for Consultant to Testify Remotely and for Remote Attendance for Primary Contractor*

Dear Chairman Goldner:

As explained in more detail below, the Department of Energy ("Department" or "DOE") is seeking leave for a certain witness, Mark Thompson., to testify remotely to reduce witness travel time and related expenses. The Department is also requesting that the primary contractor, Hugh Gil Peach Ph.D., be permitted to attend remotely. The Department anticipates that consultant Mark Thompson, will testify remotely in conjunction with the in-person testimony of Gas Director Faisal Deen Arif, Ph.D.

By way of background, the two-day hearing in this docket is scheduled to begin on Thursday, June 22, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. *See* Procedural Order (November 17, 2022). The Commission has directed that the hearing be "conducted in person" *See id.* at 2; *Hearing Guidelines* at 1 (September 6, 2022)

Mr. Thompson is a subcontractor of H. Gil Peach & Associates LLC and President of Forefront Economics Inc. *See Joint Testimony of Deen Arif & Thompson* (filed April 20, 2023). He is based in Beaverton, Oregon, approximately 3,100 miles away. The Department's primary contractor, Hugh Gil Peach, is also based in Beaverton, Oregon.

To significantly reduce witness travel time and related expenses, the Department respectfully requests permission from the Commission for Mr. Mark Thompson to testify remotely. Mr. Thompson expects to be in Beaverton, Oregon on or about June 20- June 23, 2023. If Mr. Thompson were to testify in person before the New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission in Concord, he would need to travel by plane and stay overnight in New Hampshire for at least two nights. Ultimately, the costs for his flight and hotel stay would be borne by rate payers. Moreover, Mr. Thompson can testify through WebEx effectively and without diminishing the clarity of his testimony. Based upon information and belief, Mr. Thompson is equipped to testify remotely in this proceeding.

See Hearing Guidelines at 1. The Department anticipates that Mr. Thompson will “download and test the WebEx software in advance of the hearing,” as the Commission directs. *See id.*

As a related matter, the Department is also seeking permission for the primary contractor, Hugh Gil Peach to be given remote access to the hearing to permit him to attend remotely. Mr. Peach has not filed testimony in this docket. Nonetheless, as the primary contractor, it is appropriate for him to attend the hearing and in-person attendance would similarly require rate payers to cover costs of at least two nights in New Hampshire and related travel expenses. The Department similarly understands Mr. Peach to be equipped to attend remotely. He also expects to be in Beaverton, Oregon during the relevant time period.

The Department’s request is consistent with the fifteen-day notice period required by the applicable Hearing Guidelines.

Consistent with the Commission’s current policy, this letter is being filed solely in electronic form. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

/s/ Mary E. Schwarzer

Mary E. Schwarzer
Staff Attorney/Hearings Examiner

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