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October 9, 2026

VIA ELECTRONIC DELIVERY

Ms. Sallie Tanner
Executive Secretary
Georgia Public Service Commission
244 Washington Street, SW
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

Re: Direct Testimony of Sara Vinson; Docket No. 57243

Dear Ms. Tanner:

Please find enclosed an electronic version of the following **Direct Testimony of Sara Vinson** to be filed in Docket No. 57243.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Whitfield
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Counsel for Petitioners

BEFORE THE GEORGIA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
STATE OF GEORGIA

Sustainable Newton, Sara and Randall ("Randy") Vinson, and Theodosia and William ("Billy") Wade, Petitioners, v. VoltaGrid, LLC, Respondent	Docket No. 57243

DIRECT TESTIMONY OF SARA VINSON

October 8th, 2026

Q: PLEASE STATE YOUR NAME, TITLE, AND ADDRESS.

A: My name is Sara Vinson. I am a resident of Newton County. My address is 450 Jenkins Road, Covington, GA 30014, where I have lived for 32 years with my husband, Randy Vinson.

Q: MRS. VINSON, PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR BIOGRAPHICAL, EDUCATIONAL, AND PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND.

A: I grew up in metro Atlanta and went to college in Maryland, where I met my husband, Randy. After college, we both moved to Georgia to attend graduate school at the University of Georgia, where I earned a master's degree in education. We lived in Social Circle, Georgia while in graduate school, and decided we wanted to stay in the area to raise our family. In 1994, we bought our house at 450 Jenkins Road, where we have lived ever since and raised our children. I worked as a teacher in Gwinnett County from 1994 to 1997 and then as a teacher at the Montessori School of Covington from 2001 to 2011. Since 2018, I have been an active member in Sustainable Newton.

Q: WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO LIVE IN NEWTON COUNTY AND WHY HAVE YOU STAYED?

A: Randy and I enjoyed living in nearby Walton County during graduate school. We loved the rural nature of the area and the community in Covington. We bought our current home in Newton County because it was surrounded by beautiful forests and fields on the Alcovy River. It has been a wonderful place to raise our family, to host friends and neighbors, to walk by the river or work in the garden. We added 8 acres adjacent to our initial 12-acre property more than 20 years ago, and more recently bought 10 acres of

land directly across the street. We have horses, chickens, and crop fields on our property. I enjoy spending time with the horses, caring for them and riding them on the trails that we have created on our property over the years. We take great pride in tending to the land, removing invasive species, and growing vegetables using organic methods. Much of what we eat comes from our garden. I also run a small farming business through which I sell fresh eggs and produce to the local community. Randy and I have a design and construction business that works on projects in Newton County, Covington, Oxford, and other areas nearby. We own residential and commercial properties in the Clark's Grove development in Covington. We are also active in civic engagement and local policymaking in our community, including leading and working on behalf of groups like Newton Trails, Keep Newton Beautiful, and Sustainable Newton.

Q: PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR PARTICIPATION IN SUSTAINABLE NEWTON.

A: I am a dues-paying member of Sustainable Newton, and have been such since its inception in 2018. I am co-founder of Sustainable Newton, which I helped form because of my concerns about climate change, environmental issues, and public health. Sustainable Newton is a grassroots, community-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization headquartered in Newton County, Georgia. Sustainable Newton partners with residents, businesses, and government officials to implement local climate solutions. I currently serve as the Secretary of Sustainable Newton and as the chair of its Clean Energy and Efficiency Committee. The Clean Energy and Efficiency Committee is one of Sustainable Newton's four primary committees, and we focus on promoting the installation and use of clean and efficient technologies like rooftop solar, battery storage, and electric vehicles as

well as increasing energy efficiency with insulation and appliance upgrades. These technologies are vitally important because they can help people across Newton County save money, breathe cleaner air, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Over the years, Sustainable Newton has shared information and resources that help people in our community acquire, install, and use clean energy technology like rooftop solar and electric cars, as well as take advantage of available home energy tax credits and rebates. Together, these collaborations and choices to pursue clean and efficient energy systems have made a positive impact on public health and climate change.

Q: HAVE YOU ADVOCATED ON UTILITY REGULATION ISSUES BEFORE?

Yes, in 2019, as part of a project called "Solarize Newton-Morgan" I went before the Covington City Council and Oxford City Council to ask them to reduce or get rid of distributed generation fees that made using solar power in those utility territories cost prohibitive. The City of Covington ended up significantly lowering those fees, and the City of Oxford got rid of them entirely. This provided a formative example of how advocating for utility policy changes can create opportunities for communities to generate cost effective sustainable electricity. This experience also highlighted the importance of public input and appropriate regulation of electric utilities that have territorial monopolies in our state.

Q: HOW DOES VOLTAGRID RELATE TO YOUR INTERESTS AND ADVOCACY IN UTILITY REGULATION?

A: VoltaGrid is attempting to build a power plant in my community without appropriate accountability to utility regulators or the public, especially members of the community

like Randy and me. Both Covington, where we do business, and Newton County, where we live, are provided electricity by utilities that have a monopoly on retail service in their respective territories. Covington has a municipal utility, and our home in Newton County is in Georgia Power's territory, as is VoltaGrid. Normally, if either Covington or Georgia Power wanted to build a power plant in our community, there would be a regulator there to hear public concerns and try to make the best possible decisions about what kind of power plant to build, where to build it, and whether it is really necessary and in the public interest. But in the case of VoltaGrid, the company has just gone ahead and tried to build this power plant without any opportunity for Randy and me and our neighbors to raise our concerns with the responsible public officials, be they Public Service Commissioners or City Councilors.

Q: HOW HAVE YOUR PROPERTIES AND BUSINESSES IN COVINGTON BEEN IMPACTED BY COVINGTON'S UTILITY POLICY?

A: We have three businesses, one owned solely by Randy, and two jointly owned by Randy and me, each of which includes property holdings in the Clark's Grove development. We own a commercial building in the Clark's Grove development in Covington on which we installed a solar panel array in 2010, prior to the implementation of distributed generation fees in by Covington, so that project was not impacted by the change in distributed generation fees for which I later advocated. As part of our business and property ownership in Covington, we have often engaged local decision-makers at the City Council, city government, and the municipal utility to sort out utility infrastructure issues.

For example, the elimination of distributed generation fees in Oxford, which we advocated for, made it more economical to generate clean energy in the community, offsetting energy demand that might have otherwise been provided by dirty and expensive fossil-burning power plants. As part of our business and property ownership in Covington, we have also paid into the utility infrastructure through taxes, utility bills, and various regulatory fees. For example, we have often paid a fee to the City of Covington based on the square footage and size of the electrical panel for a new building. We have a vested interest in Covington's utility infrastructure, and want to make sure those investments are made cost-effectively and support clean energy and good public health and environmental quality.

Q: HOW ARE YOUR BUSINESSES AND PROPERTIES IN COVINGTON IMPACTED BY VOLTAGRID?

A: For one, the air pollution from VoltaGrid will impact Clark's Grove and those who live and do business there, including ourselves and others in our family. Randy and I both spend a lot of time in Clark's Grove managing our business. The air pollution from VoltaGrid will add to other air pollution already in the area, and will affect us both. We also understand that Covington is building a new gas line to service VoltaGrid. As Covington utility customers and fee payers, we contribute revenue that pays for Covington's buildout of utility infrastructure like gas pipelines. We have an interest in making sure those expenditures are made prudently and not on duplicative or speculative investments.

Q: HOW HAS UTILITY REGULATION AND DISTRIBUTED GENERATION IMPACTED YOUR HOUSEHOLD?

A: We have two electric vehicles and rooftop solar panels. Our home is in Georgia Power's territory, so we are Georgia Power customers. We are on the "Overnight Advantage" rate plan, which Georgia Power offers and which the Public Service Commission approved. Having that plan means we pay more for electricity during peak daytime hours and less during off-peak nighttime hours. Ours is a totally electric household, so we strive to minimize our electricity use during the day and charge our electric vehicles at night, when electricity is cheaper. The Overnight Advantage plan incentivizes us to reduce our contribution to peak demand and stress on the grid and as a result makes the whole system easier to plan, cheaper to power, and more efficient in its function. I am proud of our ability to contribute to reducing Georgia Power's peak demand in this way, which I understand helps Georgia Power reduce its need to rely on fossil fuels during those times. We also have a rooftop solar system that generates power for our home when the sun is shining and allows us to buy less electricity from Georgia Power. Whenever we are using less electricity than our solar panels are producing, we can sell that electricity back onto the grid. We save money on our household energy bills both by using clean solar energy and by selling some extra clean solar energy back to the system. In addition, we've taken advantage of Georgia Power's rebates to install a highly efficient heat pump water heater as well as upgrade our insulation and HVAC system.

Q: PLEASE DESCRIBE IN MORE DETAIL HOW YOUR SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM IMPACTS YOUR HOUSEHOLD.

A: We have a five-kilowatt rooftop solar array, which we installed in 2019. Our five-kilowatt system has served us well, providing cheap and clean energy for our use, and electricity bill credits for the excess energy that we send back onto the grid. Over the years, this has saved us a significant amount of money. For example, in June, July, and August of this year, we sold a total of 819 kilowatts back to the grid and paid an average electricity bill of $123 over those months during a very hot summer. More recently, we have considered expanding our rooftop system or installing another solar system on our 10-acre pasture across the street. The pasture is particularly sunny and has plenty of space for a small solar array. However, we would not be able to use all the electricity produced by a larger rooftop system or connect to a system across the street. We also would not be able to send or sell excess electricity from a new system to our neighbors. It's my understanding that Georgia's electric-service laws prohibit anyone outside of the utility provider from acting as a electric supplier to neighboring customers.

Q: HOW DOES VOLTAGRID'S REGULATION UNDER THE TERRITORIAL ACT AND COGENERATION ACT IMPACT YOU AND YOUR HOUSEHOLD?

A: As I mentioned, we are in Georgia Power's service territory, so like most people in Georgia, we can either live without electricity, generate all of our own electricity off the grid, or buy electricity from Georgia Power. It is my understanding that the Territorial Act is the law that makes that so, and that in exchange for such a guaranteed customer base, Georgia Power is regulated and held accountable by the Public Service Commission. If

Georgia Power wants to build a power plant, run transmission lines, or raise electricity prices, that has to be considered and approved by the Public Service Commission. The Public Service Commission, in turn, is elected by Georgia voters, and has to approve or deny Georgia Power's decisions only if they further the objectives of providing affordable and reliable electricity supply and protecting public interests like health, safety, and the environment. It is my understanding that this arrangement is mandated by law and is designed to prevent anyone and everyone from building private power plants wherever they please or criss-crossing every street with multiple sets of power lines. The end result for our household is that we have to buy electricity from Georgia Power, but we can also make our vote count and voice heard at the Public Service Commission when Georgia Power seeks approval for a new power plant or transmission line. VoltaGrid is seeking to avoid this whole arrangement. Even though they are in Georgia Power's territory, they are building a power plant and planning to sell electricity, but assert that they cannot be scrutinized and regulated by the Public Service Commission, voters, or the community.

Q: HOW WILL THE CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF THE VOLTAGRID FACILITY IN NEWTON COUNTY IMPACT YOU?

A: The VoltaGrid facility in Covington, Georgia currently under construction has attempted to avoid enforcement of Georgia laws governing our electricity system and air pollution. VoltaGrid intends to burn dirty gas, spew toxic air pollution, and skirt the rules that ensure we have an affordable, dependable, and accountable electric grid. VoltaGrid will also cause noise and light pollution that will disturb our family, our property, our horses, our farm, and the rural character of Newton County.

Q: HOW WILL AIR POLLUTION FROM VOLTAGRID IMPACT YOU?

A: VoltaGrid will emit a variety of air pollutants that cause health problems, including formaldehyde, fine particulate matter, nitrogen oxides, and volatile organic compounds. These pollutants can make asthma worse, contribute to lung and heart diseases, and even cause cancer. VoltaGrid is only about one and a half miles from our home, so I am deeply concerned that the air pollutants it emits will travel to our property and make us sick. We also often drive right past VoltaGrid, since it is on our way to town. I am aware that air pollution can negatively impact brain health and that exposure to particulate matter is linked to higher rates of dementia. My father passed away recently after suffering from dementia, so I have a heightened fear I might suffer from such a disease as a result of increased air pollution from VoltaGrid. The presence of VoltaGrid in our community also increases my concern for the health and wellbeing of my family. Our daughter and her boyfriend and my sister also live in the area, and would be impacted by air pollution from VoltaGrid. My daughter's boyfriend has asthma, and I worry that he would suffer more attacks and breathing trouble due to VoltaGrid's emissions. The nature of our work requires both Randy and me to spend extended time outdoors. I feel a deep sense of responsibility for making sure my family has clean and safe air to breathe.

Q: WILL VOLTAGRID IMPACT YOUR FARM?

Our horses, our farm, and the wildlife on our property would suffer negative impacts from VoltaGrid's air and noise pollution. Our horses are always outside, and they breathe deeply when they are running or carrying riders. Just like people, they would suffer negative health consequences from increased air pollution. I grow our farm crops using

safe and organic methods, and I fear that air pollutants could contaminate crops directly, or poison the soil or even our well, which is our sole source of water. I do not want to feed my family or community foods that are tainted with pollutants when I have worked hard to make sure they are fresh and healthy. I am also worried about the impact of noise from VoltaGrid's 24/7 operations. We can hear industrial noise that seems to come from the area near or around VoltaGrid, so we know that noise from that location can travel to us. We have worked hard over more than 30 years to make these properties our home, but the development of VoltaGrid has pushed us to consider other places and properties to live. I never thought we would consider moving, but the combination of air pollution, noise impacts, the threat to the rural nature of our community, and the lack of regulatory process or accountability have pushed us to consider finding a new home.

Q: DO YOU ATTEST THAT THE ASSERTIONS IN PETITIONERS' COMPLAINT, PARAGRAPHS TWO, THREE, FOUR, AND SIX ARE TRUE AND COMPLETE TO THE BEST OF YOUR KNOWLEDGE?

A: Yes, they are.

Q: DOES THIS CONCLUDE YOUR TESTIMONY?

A: Yes, it does.

VERIFICATION

STATE OF GEORGIA

COUNTY OF NEWTON

Personally appeared before the undersigned officer, duly authorized to administer oaths in the State and County aforesaid, **Sara Vinson**, who, after being duly sworn, deposes and says that the facts contained in the foregoing Direct Testimony are true and correct to the best of her information and belief.

This 8th day of October, 2026.

Sara Vinson

Sara Vinson

Sworn to and subscribed before me
this 8th day of October, 2026.

Notary Public

BEVERLY HUGHES
NOTARY PUBLIC
Gwinnett County
State of Georgia
My Comm. Expires 12/18/2027

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on this day, I have e-filed with the Commission the foregoing Direct Testimony of Sara Vinson served by email to the following:

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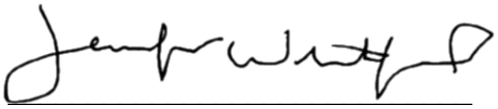
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This 9th day of October, 2026.



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