

**BEFORE THE TENNESSEE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION  
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE**

**October 2, 2025**

**IN RE:** )  
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**APPLICATION OF PIEDMONT NATURAL GAS** )  
**COMPANY, INC. AND SPIRE TENNESSEE INC.** )  
**FOR APPROVAL OF A TRANSFER OF** ) **DOCKET NO. 25-00074**  
**AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE UTILITY** )  
**SERVICES PURSUANT TO TENN. CODE ANN** )  
**§65-4-113 AND RELATED AUTHORIZATIONS** )

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**ORDER GRANTING CONSUMER ADVOCATE’S MOTION  
TO ISSUE MORE THAN FORTY DISCOVERY REQUESTS**

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This matter is before the Administrative Judge upon the *Consumer Advocate’s Motion to Issue More than Forty Discovery Requests* (“*Motion*”) filed by the Consumer Advocate Division of the Office of the Tennessee Attorney General (“Consumer Advocate”) on September 29, 2025, requesting permission to serve more than forty discovery requests on Piedmont Natural Gas Company, Inc. (“Piedmont”) and Spire Tennessee Inc. (“Spire”) (collectively “Applicants”) in accordance Tennessee Public Utility Commission (“Commission” or “TPUC”) Rule 1220-1-2-.11(5)(a). The Consumer Advocate also filed a *Memorandum in Support of the Consumer Advocate’s Motion for Leave to Issue more than Forty Discovery Requests* (“*Memo*”) on September 29, 2025.

In its *Memo*, the Consumer Advocate maintains that it has good cause to issue more than forty discovery requests. The Consumer Advocate states it seeks to present a “complete case” to the Commission which means “a case that does not merely oppose some select parts of a company’s particular petition, but a case that sets forth a virtually parallel case to the petition

offered by a company.”<sup>1</sup> The Consumer Advocate states the Company seeks: (1) to transfer Piedmont’s authority to provide utility services in Tennessee to Spire Tennessee; and (2) to approve certain related authorizations, which Petitioners allege will smooth the transition of service from Piedmont to Spire Tennessee.<sup>2</sup> The Consumer Advocate argues that it is “vitaly important for the Consumer Advocate to have sufficient information to adequately analyze the *Petition* in order to adequately determine the interest of Tennessee customers before subjecting them to the transfer of services to a company never having served consumers in this jurisdiction before or been regulated [by] [sic] this Commission. Therefore, the Consumer Advocate requests more than 40 questions in its initial round of discovery is reasonable and meets the ‘good cause’ standard.”<sup>3</sup>

The Consumer Advocate maintains that “[t]he consequences of the denial of the additional discovery requested would include the inability of the Consumer Advocate to test the merits of the Petitioners proposed acquisition. Therefore, the Consumer Advocate would not have the ability to develop fully prepared positions on the myriad of issues presented in the *Petition*.”<sup>4</sup> According to the Consumer Advocate, “[w]ithout the requested discovery – and without receiving discovery responses in the format requested – the Consumer Advocate will be severely constrained in representing the interests of households that constitute the Company’s consumers.”<sup>5</sup> The Applicants filed a response to the *Motion* stating no opposition.

TPUC Rule 1220-1-2-.11 (5)(a) provides as follows:

No party shall serve on any other party more than forty (40) discovery requests including sub-parts without first having obtained leave of the Commission or a Hearing Officer. Any motion seeking permission to

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<sup>1</sup> *Memo*, p. 4 (September 29, 2025).

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> *Id.* at 4-5.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.* at 5.

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

serve more than forty (40) discovery requests shall set forth the additional requests. The motion shall be accompanied by a memorandum establishing good cause for the service of additional interrogatories or requests for production. If a party is served with more than forty (40) discovery requests without an order authorizing the same, such party need only respond to the first forty (40) requests.

TPUC Rules allow a maximum of 40 discovery requests to be served upon a party. Nevertheless, upon compliance with TPUC Rule 1220-1-2-.11(5)(a) and a showing of good cause, the Commission has been flexible in permitting supplemental discovery to occur. In light of the foregoing, the Administrative Judge finds that the Consumer Advocate has met the requirements of the Rule by showing good cause to issue additional discovery requests to Piedmont. Further, the Applicants did not object to the *Motion*. Therefore, based on these findings, the Administrative Judge grants the *Motion*.

**IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED THAT:**

The *Consumer Advocate's Motion to Issue More than Forty Discovery Requests* is **GRANTED.**

  
Aaron J. Conklin, Administrative Judge