

**COMMISSIONER QUESTIONNAIRE
PERFORMANCE SUMMARY**

NAME: JUSTIN THOMAS WILLIAMS
SEAT: SIXTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
DATE ELECTED: MAY 11, 2018
DATE TERM EXPIRES: JUNE 30, 2022

Please provide information for the review period covering July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024. Be sure to fully address each item.

1. Educational programs.

Provide the following information regarding educational programs attended:

A. The name of the program and the sponsoring organization

Duke University, Nicholas School of the Environment, Duke Environmental Leadership Master of Environmental Management (concentration in energy and the environment).

B. A description of the topics and any certificate or recognition received

Strategic Planning for Environmental Leaders: This course focused on the development of management skills, including decision-making, motivation, working in teams, organizational cultures, organizational design, learning organizations, and change management for private, public, and not-for-profit organizations.

Environmental Law and Policy: This course focused on the evolution of environmental policies from strict reliance on command-and-control systems to experimentation with alternative approaches by examining the history and context of U.S. policy development processes and institutions. This course also explored command approaches to air and water pollution and waste management and alternative approaches, such as market-based programs, public-private partnerships, voluntarism, policies for managing land, natural resources, species protection, and addressing transnational and global environmental problems.

Duke Environmental Leadership Seminar: This course focused on reflecting on each student's leadership journey, defining and refining the "WHY" for each student's leadership efforts, and learning and practicing leadership skills crucial for today's rapidly changing world.

Research Design for Environmental Social Science: The purpose of the course was to 1) examine the concept of 'research' (philosophy and epistemology, as well as practice) in general and the environmental and social sciences specifically and 2) overview types of data used by environmental, social scientists, and some specific methods for collecting them. Although a range of methods and data sources were scoped, the focus was on qualitative data and the methods used to 'collect' data from/with people; 3) introduce approaches to and methods for analyzing qualitative data and presenting it. Although topics and methods are relevant to social sciences generally, readings, examples, and activities highlight the relevance and utility of research methods for understanding human uses, values, interactions, and beliefs about the environment.

Mandatory Masters Project: This course was a culminating hands-on experience that allowed me to apply the professional skills and knowledge that I acquired in the classroom to tackle a real-world industry and government challenge.

After completing 36 hours of coursework, including a 43-page Master's project, Duke University, Nicholas School of the Environment awarded me a Master of Environmental Management on May 12, 2024.

C. How the program helped you as a commissioner and benefitted the Commission

This rigorous academic program has exposed me to educational theories and emerging issues of law, policy, and technology related to the provision of energy and environmental management. It has also enhanced my critical thinking skills regarding energy and environmental issues associated with the local community, the state, the nation, and the world. I have also received intensive leadership coaching and counseling, allowing me to grow as a leader. The commission has benefited from my participation in this program through my sharing of the lessons that I have learned with fellow commissioners and commission staff and offering a spectrum of academic perspectives during commission deliberations.

D. The amount of time spent out of the office due to attending educational programs.

I spent nine days out of the office during the rating period to complete this program.

A. The name of the program and the sponsoring organization

United States Army Command and General Staff Officer College Intermediate Leader Education Phases 2 and 3.

B. A description of the topics and any certificate or recognition received

C300A Unified Action: C300 Unified Action (UA) is a 44-hour block of instruction broken into two blocks (C300A and C300B) that builds on the study of the strategic level of war and systems perspective introduced in C200 *Strategic Context of Operational Art*. The block (C300A) begins with a basic understanding of the roles, functions, capabilities, limitations, and operational considerations of the US military services and unified action partners: US Army, US Air Force, US Navy & US Coast Guard, USMC, Special Operations Forces (SOF), Space Operations, Cyberspace Operations, Conventional Nuclear Integration, and Joint Logistics & Army Sustainment Support of UA. The remaining lessons (C300B in Phase 3) provided me with an understanding of the fundamentals of Unified Action, Joint Functions, the range of military operations (ROMO), Multinational Operations, and Interorganizational Cooperation and Support to provide the context for how joint forces and unified action partners are integrated and synchronized to support the Joint Force Command's plans and operations.

F100 Force Management: This course focused on following the Force Management Model in examining primary systems, concepts, and issues of Army change management while describing how resource management supports integrating and maintaining capabilities at the unit level. Students' understanding of force management and resource management are key topics in developing military professionals who understand the service as a whole.

H100 History: The course gave a broad perspective on the relationship between the study of history, the development of the theory upon which doctrine is written, and that doctrine's

implementation in war. The block also examines the interplay between war and Western society and, through that perspective, some insights into the challenges and opportunities the US military faces today. The block consisted of 27 hours of instruction, distributed across thirteen lessons. H100 contributes to the college's outcomes by producing officers who can understand war, the spectrum of conflict, and the complexity of the operational environment (history, culture, ethics, geography). The block also develops critical and creative thinkers who can apply solutions to operational problems in a volatile, uncertain, complex, or ambiguous environment. Last, H100 enhances an officer's ability to communicate concepts clearly and precisely in written and oral forms.

L100 Leadership: This course discussed leadership in a formal professional military education setting. It also focused on professional growth as an organizational-level leader, centered on transitioning from direct to organizational-level leadership. It addressed the challenges leaders face as they improve organizations while operating to accomplish the mission.

C400 Apply US Army Doctrine: This course focused on learning and applying Unified Land Operations and Mission Command, which links critical and creative thinking with the tactical level of war, the strategic level of war, and Unified Action.

C500 Operational Art and Joint Planning: This course was a culminating hands-on capstone experience that allowed students to practice and display their understanding of operational art and design by developing, analyzing, and evaluating an operation approach with a doctrinally complete course of action at the operational level of war based on a scenario in the Baltics State region.

After completing 284.5 hours of coursework, including five significant papers, two briefings, eight exams, and a capstone project, I graduated from the United States Army Command and General Staff College Command and General Staff Officer Common Core Course on May 24, 2024.

C. How the program helped you as a commissioner and benefitted the Commission

This program helped me develop as a leader by teaching me to dissect and evaluate various leadership styles and organizational theories to determine their effectiveness. It also helped me understand how to use the tools available in an organization, including how to interpret and apply history to accomplish the desired end state. The commission benefitted from my participation in this program because I am actively using the skills that I learned to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the commission at all levels (commissioners, staff, hearing preparation, hearings, and orders).

D. The amount of time spent out of the office due to attending educational programs.

I spent 10 days out of the office during the rating period to complete this program.

A. The name of the program and the sponsoring organization

National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) Winter Policy Summit

B. A description of the topics and any certificate or recognition received

The Changing Energy Landscape and Regulatory Challenges: *The Hon. Jennifer Granholm, Secretary of Energy, DOE*

The Wright Touch: A Conversation with David Wright

The Hon. Tricia Pridemore, Georgia, hosted a one-on-one with the Hon. David Wright, Nuclear Regulatory Commission and past president of NARUC.

Measuring Equity: The Energy Equity Roundtable

The IIJA and IRA will provide more than \$1 trillion in investments to address climate change and a just energy transition. There is a clear focus on equity in these significant investments, and the Justice40 Initiative is most visible. The established goal is to achieve an equitable distribution of resources, such that 40 percent of the federal investment spending should benefit disadvantaged and underserved communities. But how do you measure success? The goals of equitable opportunities, allocation of resources, and impact of programs cannot be achieved without a precise measure of what constitutes equity.

This session used a roundtable talk show format that brought together crucial energy equity stakeholders, including the current administration, corporate leaders, energy regulators, and community engagement experts. The roundtable discussed and examined existing initiatives to probe for a universal definition of equity. Participants further discussed evaluative tools to assess community needs and strategic approaches for policymakers who must direct efforts to achieve equitable impacts for underserved and disadvantaged communities. Discussions overall center on big-bucket energy issues such as infrastructure, transportation/EV, energy manufacturing/innovation, and Workforce development. This session stimulated collaborative conversations that could lead to action solutions so that the great energy transition leaves no community behind.

Overcoming the Transmission Bottleneck: Exploring Federal Funding and Regional Planning to Support Transmission Expansion for a Clean Energy Future

Over the past two decades, approximately 200 GW of wind and solar were added to the U.S. power grid, and recently enacted federal incentives in the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) will only accelerate the deployment of clean energy and storage across the U.S. Currently, a large amount of potential clean power capacity is struggling with the wait times and costs of connecting to the transmission grid, and the declining construction of new high-voltage transmission lines over the last decade. A lack of sufficient transmission capacity stands to be a potential barrier to fully achieving IRA's emissions reduction potential, which studies have shown will require a doubling of the historical pace of electricity transmission expansion that has been seen over the last decade. This panel covered how IRA, IIJA, and DOE funding can be leveraged to support transmission projects by deploying capacity-enhancing Grid Enhancing Technologies (GETs) on existing transmission infrastructure and exploring ways to engage in effective regional infrastructure planning.

Making the Smart Grid Smarter Through Intelligent Rate Design

As the array of distributed energy resources (DERs) available to customers expands and diversifies, the ability to facilitate an increasingly flexible, efficient, and cleaner "grid of the future" becomes more important than ever. In the past decade, billions of dollars have been spent on "smart" meters and other advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) to modernize the grid, improve grid resilience, increase DER participation, and reduce costs to ratepayers. However, the benefits of a "smart" grid can't be realized without implementing rates intelligently designed to activate changes on the demand side. Rate design is, therefore, central to optimizing DERs and the other benefits of AMI for customers and the grid. States are

piloting and exploring DER-optimized rate designs, from designs that provide price signals to charge and discharge battery storage to options that encourage EV owners to charge their cars during off-peak hours. This panel explored the various time-varying and dynamic rate design options to facilitate optimized DER adoption, grid resilience, and increased customer benefits.

GSA-Utility Partnerships Will Cut Emissions and Lower Energy Costs for the Nation's Largest Energy Consumer

The federal government is the single largest consumer of energy in the country and also the country's biggest landlord, overseeing nearly 350,000 buildings. The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) has committed to 100% Carbon Pollution-Free Electricity on a Net Annual Basis by 2030, including 50% on a 24/7 basis. GSA is continuing its work to eliminate onsite carbon pollution in newly constructed facilities and facilities undergoing major modernization to achieve Net-Zero Emissions Buildings by 2045, including a 50% reduction by 2032. Through these actions, GSA creates innovative economic opportunities that advance clean energy goals, create jobs, develop healthy and prosperous communities, and save taxpayer money. Partnerships are critical to success, including utilities regulated by NARUC's members. Panelists discussed the impact and implementation of these goals as well as the role of utility regulators and stakeholders.

First Do No Harm: Siting EV Charging Infrastructure Joint with the Committee on Energy Resources and the Environment

Electrification, including transportation electrification (TE), has the potential to be a source of downward pressure on rates. To allow for this potential, the infrastructure necessary to serve TE load must be sited strategically to avoid locations requiring costly and time-consuming upgrades to support additional load on the electric system. Moreover, as we prepare for the disbursement of National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) program funds, planning for and siting infrastructure in locations requiring less grid investment will stretch those funds. However, to ensure that ratepayers paying for all or a part of this infrastructure get the most benefits for their cost, charging infrastructure should be placed in high-traffic areas and convenient locations for EV users to maximize usage. To ensure these deciding factors are considered, regulators and utilities must partner with local traffic planners to determine if and where optimal traffic-based locations also have minimal grid upgrades and associated costs. Panelists discussed the issues mentioned above and offered an opportunity for the audience to ask questions.

Looking Back--and Forward--at FERC-State Engagement

Managing energy policies that affect the entire nation is a daunting but necessary task for regulators. This session looks at the relationship between state regulators and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in recent history, often with NARUC as an essential facilitator in these dialogues. We have reached a point where communication and engagement have increased, with all players having to, at times, navigate through an atmosphere of politics while staying focused on serving the public interest. Managing and respecting different and competing priorities is not a simple feat, and we've reached this point through intentional measures. The panelists, all former members of FERC, discussed how the relationships with state regulators have evolved and offered insight on how to ensure that the relationship continues in the right direction.

C. How the program helped you as a commissioner and benefitted the Commission

Participating in NARUC's Winter Policy Summit helps me stay current on utility regulatory issues. It also benefits the commission by allowing commissioners to access utility regulatory information and discuss utility regulatory issues in an academic setting.

D. The amount of time spent out of the office due to attending educational programs.

I spent 3 days out of the office during the rating period to complete this program.

2. Participation in organizations.

Provide the following information regarding your participation in organizations:

- A. The name of the organization, position held, and committee served on;
- B. A description of the organization's function;
- C. How did participation in the organization helped you as a commissioner and benefitted the Commission; and
- D. The amount of time spent out of the office due to your participation in organizations.

National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC). Currently, I am a member of the electricity committee.

NARUC is a non-profit organization dedicated to representing the state public service commissions who regulate the utilities that provide essential services such as energy, telecommunications, power, water, and transportation.

NARUC's members include all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Most state commissioners are appointed by their governor or legislature, whereas commissioners in 11 states are elected by the public and in two states by the general assembly.

NARUC's mission is to serve the public interest by improving the quality and effectiveness of public utility regulation. Under state laws, NARUC's members have an obligation to ensure the establishment and maintenance of utility services as may be required by law and to ensure that such services are provided at rates and conditions that are fair, reasonable, and nondiscriminatory for all consumers.

Participation in NARUC helps me stay knowledgeable and informed on various utility issues that impact South Carolina, the Southeast, and the rest of the United States.

I was out of the office for three days to attend NARUC's Winter Policy Summit.

3. Representation in Official Capacity as Commissioner.

For any event attended in your official capacity as commissioner that has not been included in item 1 or 2, provide the following information:

- A. Leadership South Carolina Natural Resources Session;
 - B. Leadership South Carolina;
 - C. Oral presentation on the history and purpose of the Public Service Commission of South Carolina.
 - D. I spent 1 day out of the office to attend this event.
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- A. HBCU Energy Pathways Energy Panel;
 - B. E4 Carolinas;
 - C. Oral presentation on my path to working in the energy industry.
 - D. I spent 2 hours out of the office to attend this event.

- A. HBCU Energy Pathways Energy Competition;
- B. E4 Carolinas;
- C. Provided feedback on student case studies that resolved an energy and environmental issue.
- D. I spent 1 day out of the office to attend this event.

- A. Energy Efficiency and Demand Side Management Panel (during lunch at the NARUC Winter Policy Summit);
- B. Edison Foundation Institute for Electric Innovation;
- C. Oral presentation on how energy efficiency and demand side management programs work in South Carolina
- D. I did not spend additional time out of the office for this event as I was already attending the NARUC Winter Policy Summit.

4. Notable Cases.

In your own words, describe three cases you participated in that you believe were the most significant during the review period. Provide a summary of the case, including the case name, the docket number, and the issues and outcome (two to three sentences). Your response should focus on: (a) why this case was significant; and (b) how the educational programs you attended, your participation in organizations and experience as a commissioner benefitted your decisions in each case.

2023-89-E: Duke Energy Progress, LLC's Petition for a Storm Securitization Financing Order ("Phase II")

Duke Energy Progress, LLC filed a petition before the commission requesting permission to securitize storm costs and up-front financing costs associated with the issuance of storm recovery bonds, approval of their securitization financing structure, approval to issue storm recovery bonds, approval of financing costs, and approval to create storm recovery property. This case was significant because it was the first petition for a storm securitization financing order in South Carolina and the result of the commission's approval of the petition will deliver \$35 million in savings to ratepayers. The educational programs I attended during the review period gave me insight into long-term planning, innovative problem-solving, and best practices in the utility regulatory space, making it easier for me to understand, appreciate, and grant the petition.

2024-34-E: Application of Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. for Authority to Adjust and Increase Its Retail Electric Rate Schedules, Tariffs, and Terms and Conditions

Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc. filed an application to adjust and increase its retail electric rates. Notwithstanding the unopposed settlement agreement, the applicant presented the most robust and transparent rate case I witnessed as a commissioner. This case was significant because it demonstrated the applicant's willingness to be accountable, forthright, and transparent with the commission, parties to the processing, and ratepayers. The educational programs that I attended during the review period, especially the education at Duke University and the United States Army Command and General Staff College, exposed me to various leadership methods, risks associated with utility operation and regulation, and the ability to learn from past mistakes without being crippled from moving forward towards a better future.

**2023-242-E: Johnny Hedwin, Complainant/Petitioner v. Duke Energy Progress, LLC
Defendant/Respondent**

Johnny Hedwin filed a complaint against Duke Energy Progress, LLC (Company) alleging that the Company overcharged his electricity account. The commission conducted a hearing where Mr. Hedwin appeared as a pro se litigant. While working through this case, the commission identified a billing discrepancy on Mr. Hedwin's account, resulting in the company overcharging Mr. Hedwin. This case is significant because it demonstrates the commission's commitment to giving ratepayers access and due process as the commission worked with Mr. Hedwin so that he could appear virtually. While it may seem like a small accomplishment, the commission's staff worked very hard to make sure Mr. Hedwin could "have his day in court" without having to drive to Columbia, S.C. Additionally, this case is significant because it proves that when ratepayers have access and due process before the commission, the commission is empowered to better serve ratepayers by adjudicating matters that it would not know of without hearing the ratepayers case. In this case, the Company realized that Mr. Hedwin was not the only customer overcharged and was in the process of issuing refunds. The educational programs that I attended during the review period helped strengthen my ability to resolve unconventional issues involving parties with various backgrounds through a collaborative process that focuses on problem-solving rather than finger-pointing and casting blame.

5. Accomplishments of the Public Service Commission

Describe what you believe are the most significant accomplishments of the commission during the review period.

During this review period, the commission's most significant accomplishments were its continued commitment to demonstrated results in increasing access to the commission and protecting the due process of ratepayers, utilities, and interested parties. The commission has leveraged technology to allow ratepayers, utilities, and interested parties to appear in proceedings remotely, telephonically, and in person.

6. Work Schedule and Preparation.

- A. The average work week included a commission business meeting briefing on Mondays and commission business meetings on Thursdays at a minimum. Most weeks during the review period included a hearing or a hearing briefing. After the commission business meeting briefing, professional staff and commissioners prepare motions for each item. On average, I was in the office four days a week during the review period. When I was not in the office, I was telecommuting using my government-issued laptop, the docket management system, or performing reading and mental preparation for an upcoming matter.
- B. During this review period, I have worked closely with the Special Counsel to prepare for hearings. First, I prepared individually by reading the application/petition, the applicable law and regulations, and the pre-filed testimony and discussing my questions with the Special Counsel and other commissioners.

7. Effects of the Code of Judicial Conduct and South Carolina's ethics laws on your role as Commissioner.

In your own words, discuss how the Code of Judicial Conduct and the Ethics Laws interact and affect you and your role as a commissioner.

I constantly check my words and deeds against the Code of Judicial Conduct and the Ethics Laws to ensure that I meet both standards. Strictly adhering to these Laws is the only way to maintain public trust and afford all parties due process.

8. Challenges of the Public Service Commission

Describe three challenges of the Public Service Commission during the review period and how those challenges were managed.

Internal case management – The commission has many open complex dockets and double-digit filings are made in commission dockets daily. This creates an overwhelming number of matters to manage for commissioners and staff, and sometimes, filings fall through the cracks. The commission is managing this issue through new docket management software and continuing to refine the Docket Management System.

Understanding our purpose – The commission’s mission is “[t]o regulate just and reasonable rates and services of public utilities in the state of South Carolina.” Regulating utilities according to the applicable laws and regulations is not the same as managing a utility in the way that we believe is appropriate. The commission is managing this issue by focusing on understanding our limited role in the regulatory process by focusing on better understanding our laws and regulations.

Commissioner and staff efficiency and effectiveness – Since my election to the commission, the commission has increased its operational tempo every year. With the requirements of new laws and the filing of more cases, the commission is still working to identify the best commissioner and staff model that allows the commission to operate at maximum efficiency and effectiveness.

9. Recusal

If there was a matter in which you were recused during the review period, provide a brief description of the matter and the reason(s) for the recusal.

Not applicable for this review period.

NOTE: Do not provide any information that would violate the prohibition against ex parte communication or otherwise violate any privilege.

Ethics Statement: I, Commissioner Justin T. Williams, have read and understand the Code of Judicial Conduct and the ethics laws of South Carolina. I certify that I have adhered to these standards at all times during this review period.

Signature: _____

Date: 11/17/2024