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April 7, 1998

Paul Curl
Acting Executive Secretary
Washington Utilities and
Transportation Commission
1300 South Evergreen Park Drive SW
P.O. Box 47250
Olympia, WA 98504-7250

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STATE OF WASH.
UTIL. AND TRANSP.
COMMISSION

Re: PUGET SOUND ENERGY, INC.'S PETITION FOR REHEARING

Petition of Puget Sound Energy, Inc. for Rehearing for the Limited Purpose of Eliminating a Required Increase in Residential Natural Gas Water Heater Rental Rates in Docket No. UG-920840;

Petition for Rehearing filed March 24, 1998;

Commission's Fourth Supplemental Order Rejecting Tariff Filing; Authorizing Refiling issued in Docket No. UG-920840 on September 27, 1993 (Washington Natural Gas Company's Rate Case).

Dear Mr. Curl:

The purpose of this letter is to request that the Commission send a letter to the parties asking for a waiver of objection to Mr. Merton Lott's participation in the above-referenced proceeding on behalf of Commission Staff. In 1993, Mr. Lott participated as an advisor to the Commissioners in the rate case filed by Washington Natural Gas Company in Docket No. UG-920840.


Prior to June 1, 1996, Mr. Lott was employed by the Commission as its Accounting Advisor. In that role, he advised the Commissioners and the Administrative Law Judge on Washington Natural Gas Company's request for a general rate increase totaling \$14.8 million in Docket No. UG-920874. On June 1, 1996, Mr. Lott assumed his present duties as Gas Program Coordinator. In his current position he works with Commission Staff, which presents cases

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before the Commission or Administrative Law Judges in adversarial proceedings. The Staff of the gas program is currently participating in a review of Puget Sound Energy's Petition for Rehearing in Docket No. UG-920874.

Staff respectfully requests that the Commission send a letter to the parties asking for a waiver of objection to Mr. Lott's participation on behalf of Commission Staff in Docket No. UG-920840. Staff further requests that the Commission's letter invite parties to respond by April 21, 1998. If necessary, the Commission may also wish to schedule a conference call regarding this matter.

Sincerely,



SALLY G. JOHNSTON
Assistant Attorney General

c: Robert Wallis,
Administrative Law Judge
All Parties