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Good morning, Chairmen Godshall, Daley, and members of the Committee. I'm Dave Karafa, President of FirstEnergy's Pennsylvania operations. I appreciate the opportunity to provide information regarding the response of Met-Ed to Winter Storm Nika that hit our service area on February 5, 2014.

My testimony will address key issues, including our planning and preparation in advance of the storm; the scale and scope of our service restoration efforts; as well as our communications outreach to customers, state and local officials, emergency management agencies and media outlets. I also would like to discuss the substantial capital investments in our energy delivery infrastructure, our ongoing vegetation management activities, and the implementation of lessons learned from Hurricane Sandy – all of which enabled us to restore service safely and quickly in response to the winter storm.

To put the impact of Winter Storm Nika in perspective, the severe weather disrupted service to nearly 136,000, or 25 percent, of our Met-Ed customers.

Before I discuss our efforts specific to the February storm, I would like to underscore our commitment to continuously improving our response to our Pennsylvania customers on two fronts: strengthening and enhancing day-to-day service reliability, and providing options for customers to connect with us and get the information they need if they do experience a power outage.

Regarding our electric system, FirstEnergy's Pennsylvania utilities spent more than $366 million last year to expand and strengthen their energy infrastructure. Major projects included maintaining overhead and underground circuits and inspecting nearly 130,000 utility poles, as well as energizing new substations and installing sectionalizing devices to help limit the impact of unplanned outages. Of particular note are infrastructure projects completed in recent years across our Met-Ed service area that are helping to reduce the number and duration of outages. In 2013, we produced some of the best service

reliability numbers ever reported for Met-Ed, surpassing the benchmark established by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission.

To further reduce service interruptions, this year FirstEnergy expects to spend nearly $460 million in major projects designed to meet our primary objective of providing the quality of service our customers expect and deserve. In addition to operational and maintenance work, these projects include upgrading existing distribution circuits, replacing underground cables, installing automated and remote control devices, and ongoing tree-trimming activities – all designed to enhance electric system reliability.

As you may know, tree-related storm damage is the leading cause of power outages in the Commonwealth. To address this reality, we have spent nearly $256 million since our merger with Allegheny Energy in 2011, trimming trees and other vegetation across our Pennsylvania service area. And this year, we're spending approximately $83.5 million as part of our ongoing program to trim trees and help maintain proper clearance along thousands of circuit miles of electrical lines.

Now, I would like to provide a brief overview of FirstEnergy's service restoration process, which is recognized by the Edison Electric Institute as one of the best in the industry, and was implemented by Met-Ed in response to the severe winter weather in early February.

Let me begin by highlighting that safety is essential to all FirstEnergy activities, and throughout every stage of our service restoration process, safety is our top priority. To that end, we make sure our employees have the information, procedures and equipment to perform their duties in a manner that helps ensure safety for themselves, their coworkers and the public.

Another key element of our service restoration process is the planning, preparation and pre-staging efforts that we initiate days before a storm strikes. As part of those efforts, FirstEnergy's in-house meteorologists monitor weather reports and track storms to assess the potential impact on our electric system and service area.

If we determine that a storm could potentially disrupt service, company leadership and operations managers from across the affected area evaluate the need for crews, materials and equipment – including crews from other FirstEnergy operating companies, our mutual assistance partners, line contractors, outside utilities and electric cooperatives.

During early stages of the service restoration process, hazard responders assess damage to the electric infrastructure and locate electrical hazards – such as downed and potentially energized wires and other equipment – and then remain at those locations to protect the public until linemen safely isolate or clear the hazard. Next, forestry crews clear fallen trees and other vegetation so utility workers can repair and reenergize power lines.

Crews then focus on restoring service to high-voltage transmission equipment, substation facilities that supply power to local distribution systems, then on a high-priority basis to hospitals, critical care and life-support facilities, fire departments and other first responders. After that, we make repairs that will bring the greatest number of customers back in service.

At the same time, we implement an integrated communications process for reaching customers, state and local officials, emergency management agencies, media outlets and other stakeholders to keep them apprised of our preparation and planning efforts. We do this through proactive outreach by phone and email as well as with communications materials, including news releases, public service announcements, media advisories, website content and social media. Working in tandem with FirstEnergy's Communications team, our External Affairs managers establish one-on-one communications with state and local officials and county EMAs.

As a result of lessons learned from Hurricane Sandy, we're making information more accessible to customers so they can check the progress of service restoration efforts when experiencing an outage. Our 24/7 Power Center outage maps available on our website display the status of crews restoring service after a power outage. With this enhancement, which launched February 28, customers can see when crews have been dispatched, when

they are working on a repair, and when additional crews and equipment are needed to complete restoration work.

Following Hurricane Irene, we also acknowledged the need to more aggressively pursue social media as another channel to communicate with customers during a storm. We now include enhanced social media components to our communications efforts, including Twitter feeds and two-way conversations with customers via Twitter regarding service issues. Customers who visit Met-Ed's Facebook page can use the new "Report an Outage" tab to let us know about a power disruption. The app, which we introduced earlier this month, is integrated with our automated reporting system to help ensure outages are quickly and accurately recorded. These new tools complement the broad array of communications services we've introduced in the past year, including our email and text message alert notifications that contain weather alerts in advance of major storms, and updates on scheduled or extended power outages. Customers also can use two-way text messaging to report outages, request updates on restoration efforts, and make other inquiries about their electric accounts.

Now, I would like to provide information specific to our service restoration efforts in response to Winter Storm Nika, which brought up to half an inch of ice that downed trees and power lines in eastern Pennsylvania.

Several days before the storm hit, we began monitoring weather conditions and preparing for the possible impacts of heavy ice and snow accumulations across the region. Due to the weather forecasts, we implemented our storm preparation process, including staffing additional dispatchers and analysts at our regional dispatch office, and making arrangements to bring in additional line, substation and forestry personnel, as required, based on the severity of the weather. In addition, our on-site contractors were notified they were on standby to assist, if required, with storm restoration efforts over the next several days.

The ultimate goal of our pre-planning efforts is to accelerate the restoration process and minimize any inconvenience our customers experience due to the weather. To that end, we pre-staged line and hazard crews while increasing the number of forestry personnel and support staff at various locations in Pennsylvania. And to further prepare for the efficient deployment of crews and equipment, we established a staging site at the York County Fairgrounds.

Our service restoration activities required the efforts of support staff and utility crews, including 640 workers from Met-Ed, 865 workers from FirstEnergy and other FirstEnergy utility companies, 560 line contractors and mutual assistance workers, and nearly 410 forestry contractors.

In all, approximately 2,500 individuals – including FirstEnergy employees, contractors and mutual assistance crews – responded to more than 1,615 damage locations. Due to the damage caused by scores of fallen tree limbs and other debris, we repaired or replaced 174 poles, 526 cross arms, 115 transformers, and 31 miles of wire, in addition to the miles of wire that were reattached to poles.

Although the storm disrupted service to 136,000 customers over the duration of the storm, 122,000 customers – or more than 90 percent – experienced an outage duration of less than three days.

Well before the snow and ice began falling – we issued news releases regarding the possible impacts of heavy ice and snow accumulations across our service area and our efforts to prepare for the oncoming storm. In the releases, we encouraged customers to report any outages and downed wires, and provided information on how to receive updates on reported outages. Over the course of the storm, we issued numerous news releases and media advisories.

Through social media, including Facebook and Twitter, we shared pre-storm information as well as updates throughout the service restoration process, and responded to customer

inquiries on both platforms. We had nearly 2,500 Twitter followers and about 950 Facebook "likes" by the time we concluded our restoration efforts.

On our website, our Newsroom and Storm Information pages provided a central source of information, including outage updates, safety information and tips, available shelters and warming stations, and ice and water distribution locations. As another follow up to "lessons learned" following Sandy, we created a mobile version of our website that customers can access through their mobile phones or other devices.

Our 24/7 Power Center outage maps, which are updated about every 15 minutes, were available on our website and displayed the status of crews restoring service after a power outage. We also displayed information including the number of customers affected and cause of the outage as well as estimated restoration times. Our outage maps received nearly 132,000 page views for the mobile version, and 82,000 page views for the web version during our service restoration process.

From Tuesday, February 4, through Sunday, February 9, our Communications Department conducted daily interviews with radio and TV stations, including in-studio and phone interviews, and at our Met-Ed offices in York.

In preparation for the severe weather, Met-Ed's External Affairs managers began sending notification emails to local officials, emergency management agencies and Red Cross chapters in the nine counties expected to be most affected by the storm. Our customer contact centers handled approximately 83,000 outage-related calls from Met-Ed customers from February 5 to February 9.

Over the course of this weather event, we continued making outbound calls and sending emails to emergency management agencies and local officials as well as schools, water treatment plants, hospitals and other critical facilities located across the affected area. These communications provided status updates on our storm activities, outage numbers and safety tips. We conducted calls with elected and public officials in York County, one

of the areas hardest hit by the storm, and helped post current outage information to their website.

Our outreach continued with service restoration updates, including detailed information as individual circuits were restored, and we responded to inquiries from legislators to resolve issues with specific customers. In addition, Met-Ed representatives were made available as needed to assist county emergency management agencies and operations centers.

In closing, I would like to thank our customers for their patience as our dedicated crews worked around the clock to restore service safely and quickly following the severe winter weather in early February. And on behalf of the thousands of employees, contractors and others who assisted in our efforts, I would like to extend a special thank you to the emergency management agencies and the Red Cross, as well as state and local officials, for their invaluable help during the storm.

While Winter Storm Nika presented many challenges, our response was well managed, effective and safe. We believe there's always room for improvement, and remain committed to enhancing our service restoration process in ways that should even better serve our customers during storm-related outages in the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today.