

Testimony of Cynthia E. in the

DTE Advanced (Smart) Meter Opt-Out Case, U-17053

What follows are the relevant portions of the testimony Cynthia E. offered in the DTE opt-out case, [U-17053](#). The judge refused to allow any of this health testimony, stating that it was impermissible because the only thing to be decided at the hearing was whether DTE's proposed radio-off smart meter opt-out fulfilled cost-of-service principles. An appeal has been filed an appeal with the Michigan Court of Appeals.

Q. How long have you lived at your current residence?

A. March 31, 2012.

Q. What do you do for a living?

A. I have worked at Recreational Equipment Inc. since 2008. I also have been a landscape gardener for 35 years, and am a receptionist at Jessica's Apothecary and Spa

Q. Do you have a smart meter on your home?

A. No

Q. When as the first time you learned about smart meters?

A. I saw a magazine article sometime in 2011 talking about improving the electric grid which mentioned smart meters, and also talked about how they were going to save energy and reduce energy consumption, of which I am very in favor of.

Q. So prior to reading this article, you knew nothing about smart meters?

A. No.

q. Did you have any concerns about smart meters at that time?

A. No. They seemed like a great idea.

Q. Why did you become concerned about smart meters?

A. I received an email from a friend with information saying there were health problems associated with smart meters and there were issues that the electric companies weren't addressing, but I didn't pursue looking into it. I forgot about it until I received a letter from DTE saying a smart meter was going

to be installed on my house within a few weeks. Because I had heard more negative information in the meantime, and I was becoming concerned, I attended a talk at a bookstore in Ann Arbor a few weeks later, which presented information on the health impact of smart meters and radio frequencies. I became very concerned for my health and decided to learn more.

Q. What did you do then?

A. I called DTE to say I didn't want a smart meter and had a 45 min argument on the phone with a customer service person. The assured me there were no problems with the meters and said there was nothing I could do to stop the installation even if my doctor said I shouldn't have one because of my health issues. I then sent a certified letter to DTE saying not to install a smart meter on my house because I had health issues that it would negatively impact and locked my meter. I then called a Mrs. Curtis at DTE and discussed the situation. She told me she would put me on an "opt-out" list, but that the details of that were yet to be decided. This was in mid-late June.

Q. What are the health issues you refer to?

A. I have a compromised immune system and digestive system, an irregular heartbeat, and have had fatigue and sleep issues. I have hypothyroidism which I take medication for. I have worked hard and at great expense for many years to build my health and strength so that I can functional normally in the world. My doctor said it would not be safe for me to have a smart meter on my house. She also told me to limit my exposure to all radio frequency devices.

Q. Have you noticed any effects from smart meters?

A. When I go into buildings with smart meters I experience heart palpitations, tightness in my chest and head, headaches, mental confusion, my ears ring at a very high level

Q. How do you know it is smart meters and not something else?

A. Before the installations of smart meters in Ann Arbor, my health symptoms were minor and under control. I was doing hard physical labor without problems. Late this spring I started having an increase in heart issues, increased fatigue, and cognitive issues with memory and fuzzy thinking at work. And I started having headaches, which I rarely ever had. This was all before I knew anything about smart meters and their impact. My symptoms have increased steadily since then from exposure outside of my house. So I am extremely worried about a smart meter being installed on my house and these symptoms becoming worse. From what I have researched, the physical impact is cumulative and does not just go away, but continues to degrade health.

Q. Have you had sensitivity to any other electrical or wireless devices other than smart meters?

A. I have always been negatively impacted by fluorescent lights, which cause me to feel fatigued. With what I have learned about radio frequencies I think I am impacted by radio phones and just never made the connection to what I was experiencing.

Q. Have the health effects you experience as a result of smart meters affected your ability to work and earn a living? If the answer is yes, describe how.

A. Not in a big way yet. I do notice I am a lot more tired now that there are smart meters in my work place and virtually everywhere I go. I have had to call in sick several times since spring with terrible headaches as well. If my symptoms increase I could be at risk of losing my job and not having the energy to do physical labor.

Q. Have the health effects you experience as a result of smart meters affected your ability to access public services, such as the public library, government offices? If the answer is yes, describe how.

A. Yes. I can't stay in the library for very long as my heart starts acting up and my head gets tight , sometimes I get a headache, and my thinking gets fuzzy.

Q. Have the health effects you experience as a result of smart meters affected your ability to access religious or spiritual services? If the answer is yes, describe how.

A. Yes, when I go to a place with a smart meter because of the physical impact. I don't want to be there because I don't feel well.

Q. Have the health effects you experience as a result of smart meters affected your ability to freely access health services? If the answer is yes, describe how.

A. I notice the impact but I go anyhow, because what else can I do?

Q. DTE has asked the Commission for approval of a plan that would not allow anyone to keep their analog meter. Instead, those choosing to opt out of smart meter installation, if an opt-out is instituted, will be forced to take a 3-watt digital meter on their house. Have you had experience with the 3-watt digital meter?

A. Yes.

Q. What was that experience like?

A. I was recently in a house with the 3-watt digital meter. After I had been there a while my heart began pounding, my head felt buzzy and very tight, and my ears were ringing very loudly. I took my blood pressure and it was 145 over 75. Because I have chronically low blood pressure (often less than 100) this was quite alarming. , The woman who lives there had also been experiencing severe problems

which included increased blood pressure. If the same meter was installed on my house I would be in big trouble.

Q. Do you have anything else to say regarding smart meters?

A Yes. I don't want to have to pay for something that is endangering my health. If these meters have to be installed then I expect DTE to install mitigation devices to protect me from the negative impacts. If I'm to have no choice then DTE has to bear the cost of protecting me.

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