

Collin Roehner

From: Collin Roehner on behalf of Records Clerk
Sent: Monday, January 30, 2017 12:13 PM
To: 'C Diggs'
Subject: RE: Petition for increase in rates by Gulf Power Co. Docket # 160186-EI

Good afternoon Ms. Diggs,

We will be placing your comments below in consumer correspondence in Docket No. 160186-EI and forwarding your comments to the Office of Consumer Assistance and Outreach.

Sincerely,

Collin D. Roehner
Commission Deputy Clerk I
Office of Commission Clerk
Florida Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Blvd.
Tallahassee, Florida, 32301
(850) 413-7123

From: C Diggs [<mailto:gamerjinx@cox.net>]
Sent: Monday, January 30, 2017 12:01 PM
To: Records Clerk
Subject: Petition for increase in rates by Gulf Power Co. Docket # 160186-EI

To:

Commission Clerk
Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Blvd.
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0850

My name is Cassandra S. Diggs. I live a 2601 Patricia Drive lot 78, Pensacola FL 32526. I am writing you today regarding docket number 160186 as I want my voice to be heard on this matter. I am, unfortunately, unable to attend the hearings on this matter but I believe that my voice is important in telling you that this increase in rates should not be allowed.

I would like to start out by telling you a little bit about myself. I am a widow. I was widowed at a very young age. My husband, a veteran, left me with one child of our own and 2 step children to look after. I do the best I can with what I have. Our life is not luxurious. We have never been able to afford the nicer things in life. I work 2 jobs just to make sure there is food on the table and clothes to wear. There are many times I will skip meals or go without clothing that is needed so my daughters have what they need. We have never been able to afford vacations, we don't even have flat screen TVS. or video game systems. Our heat in the winter is set at 65 degrees and in the summer to 85. Most people would find these temperatures unbearable. We do at times too but the reason we must is because otherwise our power bill goes beyond what we can afford. We have learned tricks to help, like putting on an extra pair of socks or wearing gloves in the house if we need to. In the summer a cold damp rag on the back of the neck goes a long way to making someone feel cooler in the heat.

Why did I tell you these things about myself? It is not to get pity. It is so that hopefully you can understand the circumstances of the situation in which we live our daily lives. We do everything we can to cut back on the power we use in our home. We even have many of the things in our home connected to power strips and surge protectors that we turn off when we leave the house so that the few electronics we have, and such are not held in a standby mode using power. Our power bill is manageable at the moment with taking the steps we have. This increase may well in fact mean that we are not able to run a heater in the winter or air conditioner at all in the summer. This large of an increase is nothing to some. Gulf Power already has the highest base rate in the state do they really need more? The \$30 dollars they propose to increase is \$30 less I will have to spend on an already tight food budget. I live near the poverty line. I work hard for every bit of money I have. I spend time with my daughters and try to help them with school work. I am not just a poor widow. I am also an educated poor widow. My education did not insure me a high paying job but I do something I love. I have to work 2 jobs though to even make ends meet. \$30 is nothing to some. To us \$30 is about 6 meals. Tell me, am I supposed to tell my daughters that they can't have dinner for 6 days a month so we can have power? Do you have any clue what it is like to have money stretched so tight that one change in the budget might mean you will be on the streets because you can't pay rent? \$30 dollars may not seem like much to some but to us it could be the difference between survival and devastation.

I thank you for reading my words and please ask you to take them into consideration when you make a decision on this increase. Mine is just one of many stories. I wanted to use my words for all those that may not feel they have a voice or are too afraid to speak that are in much the same situation as myself.

Thank you

Cassandra S. Diggs