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BEFORE THE
FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of:

DOCKET NO. 20210015-EI

Petition for rate increase
by Florida Power & Light
Company.

_____ /

PROCEEDINGS: SERVICE HEARING

COMMISSIONERS
PARTICIPATING: CHAIRMAN GARY F. CLARK
COMMISSIONER ANDREW GILES FAY
COMMISSIONER MIKE LA ROSA
COMMISSIONER GABRIELLA PASSIDOMO

DATE: Tuesday, June 22, 2021

TIME: Commenced: 2:00 p.m.
Concluded: 4:30 p.m.

PLACE: Betty Easley Conference Center
Room 148
4075 Esplanade Way
Tallahassee, Florida

REPORTED BY: DANA W. REEVES
Court Reporter

PREMIER REPORTING
112 W. 5TH AVENUE
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA
(850) 894-0828

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8 32520, appearing on behalf of Florida Power & Light
9 Company (FPL).

10 BRADLEY MARSHALL and JORDAN LUEBKEMANN,
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17 Southwest Florida.

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11 William C. Garner, 3425 Bannerman Road Unit 105, #414,
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17 Energy (SACE).

18 KATIE CHILES OTTENWELLER, ESQUIRE, 838 Barton
19 Woods Road, Atlanta, Georgia 30307, appearing on behalf
20 of Vote Solar.

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1 APPEARANCES CONTINUED:

2 RICHARD GENTRY, PUBLIC COUNSEL; CHARLES
3 REHWINKEL, DEPUTY PUBLIC COUNSEL; PATRICIA A.
4 CHRISTENSEN and ANASTACIA PIRRELLO, ESQUIRES, OFFICE OF
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9 SUZANNE BROWNLESS, BIANCA LHERISSON, SHAW
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13 the Florida Public Service Commission (Staff).

14 KEITH HETRICK, GENERAL COUNSEL; MARY ANNE
15 HELTON, DEPUTY GENERAL COUNSEL, Florida Public Service
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17 Florida 32399-0850, Advisor to the Florida Public
18 Service Commission.

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Good afternoon.
3 We're going to go ahead and get started. It's just
4 a couple of minutes after 2:00. I believe that we
5 have audio checked, mic checked everyone. So we'll
6 go ahead and get started.

7 I would like to welcome everyone to this
8 customer service hearing in the Florida Power &
9 Light Company, Gulf Power Company rate case.
10 Today's service hearing is an important part of the
11 rate case process and is dedicated to hearing from
12 you, the customers. That's our intent and focus
13 today. We want to hear from the actual customers
14 of the utility company about the quality and levels
15 of service and what their experience has been with
16 the utility company.

17 My name is Gary Clark and I am the Chairman of
18 the Public Service Commission. All of our
19 Commissioners are live here with us today, and it's
20 certainly good to have everyone back here with us.

21 At this time, I'm going to ask staff counsel
22 if they would to please read the notice.

23 MS. BROWNLESS: By notice issued on
24 June 3rd, 2021 this time and place has been set
25 for a customer service hearing in Docket No.

1 20210015-EI.

2 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. We'll take
3 appearances of counsel, starting with FPL.

4 MS. BARNES: Good afternoon. I'm Monica
5 Barnes, appearing on behalf of Florida Power &
6 Light Company. I'd also like to enter an
7 appearance for Wade Litchfield and Russell Badders.

8 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Ms. Barnes. OPC.
9 Mr. Gentry.

10 MR. GENTRY: Good afternoon. I'm Richard
11 Gentry, the Public Counsel, and I will be attending
12 this meeting today from my office.

13 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Gentry Florida
14 Rising.

15 MS. REICHERT: Good afternoon. My name is
16 Christina Reichert and I'll be here on behalf of
17 Florida Rising, LOLAC and ECOSWF, as well as my
18 colleague, Bradley Marshall.

19 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Ms. Reichert. I
20 apologize. I'm writing names down that are not on
21 my list. Federal Executive Agencies. FIPUG.
22 SACE. Florida Retail Federation. Vote Solar.

23 MS. OTTENWELLER: Good afternoon,
24 Mr. Chairman. This is Katie Chiles Ottenweller
25 with Vote Solar and I'd also like to enter an

1 appearance for Bill Garner with the Cleo Institute.

2 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Ms. Ottenweller.

3 Walmart. Larsons.

4 MR. SKOP: Yes. Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman.

5 Nathan Skop entering an appearance on behalf of

6 Alexandria and Daniel Larson.

7 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Scott. FAIR.

8 MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Robert

9 Scheffel Wright on behalf of Floridians Against

10 Increased Rates, Inc. I'd also like to enter an

11 appearance for my law partner, John Thomas LaVia,

12 III. Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Wright. Staff

14 counsel.

15 MS. BROWNLESS: Suzanne Brownless entering an

16 appearance on behalf of Commission staff and I'd

17 also like to enter an appearance for Bianca

18 Lherisson and Shaw Stiller.

19 MS. HELTON: And, finally, your advisor,

20 Mr. Chairman, Mary Anne Helton. I'd also like to

21 enter an appearance for your general counsel, Keith

22 Hetrick.

23 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you all

24 very much. Did I miss anyone? Any counsel?

25 All right. Let me begin by thanking you again

1 for taking your time to schedule to call into this
2 customer service hearing this afternoon. We
3 appreciate your interest in this petition. As I
4 mentioned, this hearing is designed so we can hear
5 directly from customers. It's your opportunity to
6 express your thoughts and concerns and comments
7 related to the utility's request. In August there
8 is going to be a technical hearing where the
9 Commission will take in the substance and evidence
10 of the case.

11 If you would like to speak to an FPL or a Gulf
12 Power customer service representative, we have a
13 phone number that you can call and reach a customer
14 service rep direct. That number is (833)407-2007
15 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday,
16 and they are available during the hearing today.
17 If you have technical questions, those can be
18 directed directly to the utility company and they
19 can help you address those.

20 Curt Mouring from our Accounting and Finance
21 Division is the PSC representative for this docket
22 and can be reached by e-mailing
23 cmouring@psc.state.fl.us, or by calling
24 (850)413-6427. Commission technical staff are also
25 on the line today. I like to remind our audience.

1 This as an official hearing that will be
2 transcribed and become part of the official record.
3 As such, I will swear you in over the phone if you
4 have not already been sworn in, before you share
5 your comments. Please note, your comments will
6 also be subject to cross-examination. That is, you
7 may be asked questions by either of the parties or
8 by one of the Commissioners. For those customers
9 calling in, we ask that you please keep your phone
10 on mute until it is your time to speak. Do not
11 place your phone or your device on hold or we will
12 have to disconnect you from our end.

13 When speaking, please do not use the speaker
14 function. Speak directly into your telephone or
15 use a headset. If you are disconnected
16 accidentally, please call back in as soon as you
17 can. We appreciate the professional nature of
18 these proceedings and ask that you do the same. Be
19 courteous to others who have taken the time to call
20 in today.

21 In addition to sharing your comments here, you
22 may also share your comments or any additional
23 materials that you would like to submit for the
24 Commission's consideration via mail or e-mail. To
25 contact the PSC by mail, you can find a

1 pre-addressed comment card or download on our
2 website. If you would like to e-mail, please
3 e-mail the Commission's clerk at
4 clerk@psc.state.fl.us. Reference this particular
5 docket number, 20210015-EI.

6 If during the course of this hearing another
7 customer said something that you wanted to say, or
8 that you absolutely agree with, please feel free to
9 just say ditto. We want to make sure you feel as
10 comfortable as possible when providing testimony,
11 whether your comments are made verbally today or
12 whether they are received in writing. Be assured
13 that your comments will be reviewed and taken into
14 consideration during the course of these
15 proceedings.

16 A couple other reminders for us. We are going
17 to cap each customer's comments to three minutes.
18 We are doing so because we have a fixed time at
19 which we have to adjourn this afternoon so that we
20 can begin our next hearing. We have about 50
21 customers that are signed up to speak this
22 afternoon, so we are going to allocate three
23 minutes per customer. At the end of your three
24 minutes, you will hear a bell ding. That bell
25 means you have about five seconds to wrap your

1 comments up. If you hear a second bell ring at
2 three-fifteen, that's your final warning. We will
3 be muting your connection at the three-fifteen
4 mark. I apologize in advance if someone is not
5 finished with their remarks, but in fairness and
6 courtesy to all those customers who have signed up
7 and that are waiting maybe to the very end to
8 speak, we want to be fair to those people, as well,
9 and want to make certain that we give them an
10 adequate amount of time, as well.

11 With that same note, I would ask our
12 intervenors to please keep their comments and their
13 opening remarks as brief as possible. As a
14 reminder, this is about the customers. There will
15 be plenty of time for testimony and evidence during
16 the technical hearings. So I would ask that you --
17 we have a max limit of three minutes on your time,
18 but I would ask that you please, please be as brief
19 as possible if you must make comments today.

20 As part of our practice also, we give elected
21 officials who call in an opportunity to speak. If
22 you are currently an elected official, please let
23 us know ahead of time. I will move you to the
24 front of the line so that you may continue the rest
25 of your day.

1 At this time, I'm going to invite FPL to make
2 a brief opening statement, followed by OPC, and
3 then we will open it up to other intervenors at
4 that particular time.

5 Ms. Barnes, you're recognized.

6 MS. BARNES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. At this
7 time, Christopher Chapel, Vice President of
8 Customer Service, will provide opening remarks on
9 behalf of FPL.

10 MR. CHAPEL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and
11 Commissioners, and thank you to all of our
12 customers who have taken the time to be with us
13 today. My name is Christopher Chapel and I'm the
14 Vice President of Customer Service for FPL. FPL is
15 a regulated energy company. This means the Public
16 Service Commission oversees our rates and
17 operations to ensure we deliver safe and reliable
18 service at fair prices.

19 We're here today because we're asking for new
20 base rates beginning in 2022. Let me begin by
21 saying that I'm proud to be a part of the team that
22 provides you with America's best energy value --
23 electricity that's not just clean and reliable, but
24 also affordable. That doesn't mean that we can't
25 be better, which is why your feedback is so

1 important to us. Fundamentally, our mission is to
2 provide you with excellent service at affordable
3 rates.

4 Your electricity is cleaner and more reliable
5 than ever. It's also affordable. The rates you
6 pay are well below the national average. Our
7 typical residential customer bill is lower today
8 than it was 15 years ago. This is the result of
9 FPL's consistent and deliberate effort to
10 continuously improve upon our performance and the
11 value we provide our customers. It is a purposeful
12 and never-ending commitment to be the best utility
13 possible.

14 And this is at the heart of our rate request.
15 We're standing by our proven track record and
16 promising an even better tomorrow, a more resilient
17 and sustainable energy future that all of us can
18 depend. Our smart investments have increased
19 generation efficiency and dramatically improved
20 reliability. In fact, we've been the most reliable
21 utility in Florida for the last 15 years. And
22 we've improved our storm preparedness and
23 mobilization. As a result, we've dramatically
24 improved our restoration times. But it's been five
25 years since our last rate request.

1 Florida is now the third-largest state and the
2 world's 17th-largest economy. FPL has grown,
3 too. We now serve more than 11 million Floridians.
4 And though we've invested billions of dollars every
5 year to support Florida's growth and to
6 continuously improve your service, many of these
7 investments are not included in current rates. So
8 we've asked the PSC to approve a plan that would
9 phase in new rates starting at 2022. Please keep
10 in mind that the proposed increases spread across
11 millions of customers in over a four-year period.
12 So even with the proposed rate increase, typical
13 residential bills will continue to remain well
14 below the national average.

15 And, importantly, the plan will allow us to
16 continue to make proven investments in
17 infrastructure, clean energy and technology that
18 benefits our customers and our growing state.

19 While we work hard every day to keep bills
20 low, we also recognize that some of our customers
21 face challenges. To this end, we've partnered with
22 his dozens of assistance agencies and distribute
23 LIHEAP and Care To Share Funding to help customers
24 who are struggling to pay their bills. And during
25 the COVID pandemic, we received approval from the

1 PSC to create a number of unique programs that
2 provided approximately 75 million dollars in
3 assistance to customers.

4 As we always have and always will, we are here
5 to support customers. In fact, we have employees
6 available right now to help customers. As the
7 Chairman mentioned, you can contact them at
8 (833)407-2007.

9 In closing, we are committed to serving you
10 today while always looking over the horizon so
11 we're ready to meet your energy needs tomorrow.
12 We're looking forward to hearing from you. We want
13 to hear what we do well. To that end, we've asked
14 customers who said they value our service to share
15 their thoughts today. But, more importantly, we
16 want to know where we can improve. Thank you for
17 your participation today. And thank you for the
18 opportunity to serve you.

19 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you very
20 much. Mr. Gentry, OPC.

21 MR. GENTRY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good
22 afternoon. I'm Richard Gentry. I head up the
23 Office of Public Council. We are an arm of the
24 legislature and we were created to, among other
25 things, review and participate in rate cases just

1 like this. Our role, as declared by the
2 legislature, is to get the best possible deal that
3 we can for you, the ratepayer. And my office
4 has -- in order to do that, my office has six other
5 attorneys, besides myself, four accountants and
6 CPAs, as well as five expert witnesses that we have
7 retained just for this case.

8 We are analyzing the company's requested
9 rates. And in so doing, we will review all aspects
10 of this filing. We think there may be further
11 savings to be had without compromising the
12 company's ability to deliver clean and reliable
13 power to ratepayers.

14 To that end, we are preparing for a hearing
15 before the Public Service Commission, which could
16 last as long as two weeks. And it would be for the
17 benefit of the ratepayers. Thank you,
18 Mr. Chairman.

19 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you,
20 Mr. Gentry. All right. Are there any parties that
21 need to make a brief statement?

22 MS. OTTENWELLER: Very briefly, Mr. Chairman,
23 if I may.

24 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Ms. Ottenweller.

25 MS. OTTENWELLER: Good afternoon. My name is

1 Katie Chiles Ottenweller. I'm here on behalf of
2 Vote Solar and the Cleo Institute, two nonprofit
3 organizations working towards an affordable, clean,
4 equitable and resilient energy system that works
5 for all Floridians, especially those who are most
6 vulnerable.

7 To all customers calling in, we want to say
8 thank you. We know you have a lot going on and we
9 really look forward to hearing your feedback. We
10 want to let you know that we are listening. Thank
11 you.

12 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Ms. Ottenweller.
13 Ms. Reichert.

14 MS. REICHERT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and
15 Commissioners, and thank you, well, to the
16 customers who are able to join today. Florida
17 Rising, LOLAC and ECOSWF's missions span across
18 environmental conservation, economic and civil
19 rights, and environmental and climate justice. All
20 three are opposed FPL's attempt to raise rates by
21 20 percent because it's bad for ratepayers, it's
22 bad for low-income communities and communities of
23 color, and it's bad for the environment.

24 Further, this rate spike is based on FPL's
25 request to increase its own profits and pay for

1 unnecessary fossil fuel gas plants in the midst of
2 the climate crisis, as well as other unnecessary
3 expenses. Electricity rates matter because
4 electricity bills matter. And according to data
5 from the United States Energy Information
6 Administration, FPL customers have some of the
7 highest bills in the country. As such, we will be
8 asking that FPL's request be rejected. Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Ms. Reichert.
10 Mr. Wright. Mr. Wright.

11 MR. WRIGHT: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair. It
12 took me a minute to click on. Good afternoon. My
13 name is Robert Scheffel Wright. I go by Schef. I
14 was born in Miami. I've worked on energy matters
15 here in Florida for more than 40 years, including
16 service in Governor Bob Graham's energy office and
17 seven-plus years on the Florida Public Service
18 Commission staff before I became an attorney.

19 This afternoon, I have the privilege of
20 representing Floridians Against Increased Rates,
21 Inc. we call it FAIR, which is a Florida nonprofit
22 corporations that exists to advocate by all lawful
23 means for electric rates that are as low as
24 possible while ensuring that the utility, FPL in
25 this case, has sufficient funds and resources to

1 maintain safe and reliable service. FAIR has
2 intervened in this case on behalf of its members
3 who are FPL customers.

4 On behalf of FAIR, I thank all of you
5 customers for participating in this hearing today.
6 I want to be clear about this from the outset.
7 From the customer side, FAIR wants and advocates
8 for a healthy FPL. But our position is simply that
9 FPL should have enough money, not too much. It is
10 FPL's duty and responsibility, it is FPL's job to
11 provide safe and reliable service at the lowest
12 possible cost to customers. The evidence in this
13 case will show that FPL's request, which, by the
14 way, is by far the largest in Florida history,
15 would give it way more money than it needs to do
16 its job. Putting it lightly, FPL's request is
17 unreasonable and unfair.

18 The unfairness of FPL's request is that FPL
19 doesn't need the extra 1.1 billion dollars that
20 it's asking for for next year and they don't need
21 all of what they're asking for for 2023. Even if
22 FPL got no increase at all next year, FPL could
23 cover all of its projected expenses, including
24 interest, make all of its projected investments and
25 still have well over \$2 billion in profits left

1 over.

2 But it's even worse than that. Based on FPL's
3 demonstrated practices over at least the past four
4 years, they also want to take surplus value on the
5 depreciation reserve surplus that your payments
6 will create, probably on the order of another
7 billion and a half dollars, and use it to make even
8 more money, such that four years from now they will
9 have used up the value that you create to earn even
10 more and you will be left with nothing of the value
11 you paid for, and higher rates thereafter.

12 FAIR and our team of witnesses will fight to
13 prevent FPL from getting any of your money that
14 they don't need and to prevent them from using up
15 value that you customers create, to pad their
16 profits even more. Tell the Commissioners what you
17 think. Thank you for participating today and thank
18 you for your attention.

19 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Wright. Any
20 of the other parties? Any of the other
21 intervenors?

22 MR. SKOP: Yes, Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the
23 Larsons, if I may.

24 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes, Mr. Skop, you're
25 recognized.

1 MR. SKOP: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
2 Nathan Skop appearing on behalf of the Larsons.
3 Privileged to represent them. Daniel and
4 Alexandria are residential FPL customers residing
5 in Palm Beach County, Florida. They've
6 participated in the last FPL rate case. They are,
7 as many FPL customers are, concerned about FPL's
8 rate request, that is the largest electric rate
9 request in Florida's history. And, again, FPL has
10 the burden of demonstrating that its request for
11 rates is fair, just and reasonable.

12 As Mr. Wright referenced, there are situations
13 where, you know, what they ask for is not what the
14 utility needs to maintain its financial health and
15 continue to provide quality services. So we, on
16 behalf of the Larsons, are also interested in
17 listening to other customer input. We would note
18 for the record that having low rates in and of
19 itself is not a legal basis to justify a rate
20 increase. Certainly FPL's main addition to rate
21 base, and I think given the nature and the
22 magnitude of the request, a fine pencil is required
23 on behalf of the Commission to separate what is
24 necessary versus requested, in order to ensure that
25 anything approved is fair, just and reasonable. In

1 that regard, we would hope that the rate case
2 itself could be avoided, the time and expense, by
3 entering into a fair and just settlement on behalf
4 of Florida consumers. Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Skop. All
6 right. I believe it is time that we will get to
7 our customer testimony portion of the program. I
8 do want to make a couple observation and notes for
9 our customers. I know a lot of you are going to be
10 on the line for a couple of hours. I apologize.
11 We have not found a better way for this to work so
12 far. So you're going to have to kind of hang on
13 until it's your turn. Please be patient.

14 If, for some reason we have to take you
15 off-line, that means there's been an interruption
16 that is occurring on our end caused by your phone
17 or your phone line. So sometimes when that
18 happens, our technical staff can see which line is
19 causing the issue and they will take you off line.
20 If you are disconnected for any reason, again I
21 apologize, please call back in immediately. You'll
22 be put right back in the queue. You have the phone
23 number. That should not be a problem or an issue
24 to get you right back in where you need to be.

25 In yesterday's testimony, we heard a lot of

1 consumers basically telling us the same thing.
2 Yesterday was -- the majority of the customers
3 yesterday were echoing the sentiments of quality of
4 service, excellent service. If you feel that way
5 and the person in front of you has testified and
6 there's not some specific testimony that you have
7 to give, feel free to just say I agree with the
8 statement that -- or I disagree with the statement
9 and keep your comments under the three-minute mark.
10 I don't want to have to cut anyone off, but we are
11 going to have to cut you off at three-fifteen. We
12 have to keep the process rolling. So I'll give you
13 that one-bell warning and then we will remove you.

14 Also, as a final note, just to remind the
15 customers out there, that we as the Commission are
16 not Florida Power & Light. There were several
17 references yesterday during testimony that kind of
18 makes the assumption that the Commission is the
19 utility company. That could not be further from
20 the truth. And as you direct your testimony to the
21 Commission, we are taking this testimony under
22 consideration as we make a determination as to
23 whether or not Florida Power & Light Company will
24 get a rate increase in the upcoming years.

25 So please understand the differences. We are

1 not the utility company and I just want to make
2 sure that folks understand that when they begin to
3 address us.

4 Okay. I'm going to call you in groups of
5 three, if you'll kind of be prepared to go as soon
6 as the other person is finished. We're going to
7 have Mr. Robert Lord, Ms. Rita Barreto and Sharon
8 Curtis are our first three speakers. Mr. Lord, are
9 you on the line?

10 MR. LORD: Yes, I am. Thank you, Mr.
11 Chairman, Commissioners. Good afternoon. I thank
12 the Commissioners for your service. My name is
13 Robert L. Lord, Jr. I go by Rob. I'm the
14 president of three hospitals in Martin and
15 St. Lucie County, as well as numerous outpatient
16 locations operated by Cleveland Clinic, Martin
17 Health. We have close to 4,500 employees. I am a
18 Florida resident and have been a resident of the
19 Treasure Coast since 1969. I started with Martin
20 Health in 1998 and has served the organization as
21 the Chief Legal Officer, Chief Operating Officer
22 and for the past several years as its president.
23 Led the organization through a merger with
24 Cleveland Clinic that was effective January 1st,
25 2019.

1 My experience with Florida Power & Light is
2 that they have provided excellent customer service
3 in my professional capacity, also personal, but I'm
4 here for professionally. Have numerous dealings
5 and they've always put the community first and
6 provided service with a big picture in mind.

7 A couple of examples that I would give. I go
8 back many years to Hurricanes Frances and Jeanne
9 making landfall in Stuart. Many of us remember
10 that awful year in the state. There was
11 significant damage to our facilities and Florida
12 Power & Light did what they do. We're the only
13 acute care hospital that exists in Martin County,
14 one of two in St. Lucie County, and they had our
15 campus' power backup and off of generators very
16 quickly, but I expected as much, and I'll give them
17 a pat on the back for that, but no extra credit.
18 We are certainly one of the most critical
19 facilities when it comes to getting power back up
20 after a wind storm.

21 What really caught me back then was that after
22 the storms, Florida Power & Light came to us and
23 they saw an opportunity to connect our main
24 facility to a separate feed, a second, a redundant
25 feed. It hardened the power grid around our

1 hospitals. They improved our capacity to withstand
2 wind storms. They provided consulting services.
3 They provided what I would view as outstanding
4 proactive customer service.

5 Just a few years ago, we built a new hospital.
6 Florida Power & Light provided valuable advice on
7 energy conservation. I oversaw that project as
8 Chief Operating Officer. I'm very proud to say
9 Tradition Hospital in Port St. Lucie is a lead
10 gold-certified hospital. There are not many
11 hospitals that can claim that designation, and FPL
12 earned some extra credit with me in helping us
13 achieve that status. I could give other examples,
14 but I don't want to go on too long. You know, it's
15 these sorts of things that are the reason I offered
16 to testify today. I have no doubt that our rates
17 are low for Florida and low when compared to other
18 power companies across the country. The fact is
19 that while our organization has grown and consumes
20 a great deal of power, per-unit cost of electricity
21 consumed has been stable for at least the last 15
22 years. I wish there were something else in the
23 operation of our hospital, or my personal life,
24 where I could say that's true as an expense. And
25 so we're very pleased with the service we've

1 received. And it's in that spirit that I'm here.
2 We're grateful for that service. I'll be pleased
3 to answer any questions.

4 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much,
5 Mr. Lord. Any questions for Mr. Lord?

6 All right. Thank you for your testimony
7 today.

8 Next up, Rita Barreto.

9 MS. BARRETO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and
10 Commissioners. I'm a customer of FPL and I want to
11 speak on their behalf. There are three key points
12 I would like to make. Number one, I have actively
13 monitored their decision and feel confident that
14 the leadership is exceptional and dedicated to
15 excellent fiscal responsibility and providing
16 clean, reliable service at a fair price. Number
17 two, these are extremely challenging times and I
18 think it would be easy to feel very confident with
19 their ability to continue to provide that excellent
20 service, but the reality is that they must invest
21 in a diverse portfolio of renewable energy and be
22 provided with that opportunity, that is solar to
23 ensure that we do continue to enjoy this long-term
24 reliability.

25 We've seen over the years the devastation

1 caused by storms and I've been repeatedly impressed
2 by their ability to quickly get back online and on
3 their ongoing communication that they provide, not
4 only for people in Florida, but throughout the
5 country when they go to other utilities.

6 And, finally, number three, the power service
7 is exceptional. The customer service is
8 exceptional. The gentleman before me mentioned the
9 community partnership that we enjoy. They're an
10 excellent community partner. They have an
11 excellent level of service, and I really don't want
12 to see that change. So, what I'd like to say is
13 that I support one hundred percent the rate
14 increase, which to me is another way of saying that
15 I one hundred percent support the continued high
16 level of clean and reliable service that FPL has
17 been providing, and I thank them for all that they
18 do in being an excellent company and an excellent
19 community partner. And thank you for the
20 opportunity to speak.

21 MR. CHAPEL: Thank you very much. Next up is
22 Sharon Curtis. Ms. Curtis, are you on the line?

23 MS. CURTIS: I am.

24 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Ms. Curtis, I need to swear
25 you in.

1 (Whereupon, Sharon Curtis was sworn in by
2 Chairman Clark.)

3 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you. You're recognized
4 for three minutes.

5 MS. CURTIS: Thank you very much for the
6 opportunity to speak, and I know it is the
7 Commission's job to determine whether or not the
8 increase is justified or not. As my experience as
9 a homeowner and a very-long-time resident of
10 Florida, since 1961, I have seen just about every
11 single hurricane that we have gotten in those
12 years. And especially after hearing the news now
13 that we're going be going into an even stronger
14 hurricane season than we've had in awhile, I'm
15 really concerned that we have the infrastructure to
16 get us back online as soon as possible. We've all
17 spent the last year on Zoom, and if we didn't have
18 electricity and Internet, we -- most of us would
19 not have made it through. I am currently living in
20 a community that's over 55. So I'm not just
21 concerned -- and, yes, selfishly concerned -- for
22 myself, but also for my neighbors, because even
23 though it's a four-story building, I know that
24 most -- many of the people here, could not walk up
25 and down the stairs, and because it's an older

1 community, I don't know if we even have a generator
2 or not that would operate the elevators.

3 So my concern primarily is to make sure that
4 Florida Power & Light stays healthy and is able to
5 provide us with the services that we all need.
6 Thank you very much.

7 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you very
8 much, Ms. Curtis. Our next three speakers will be
9 Ricardo Ferreira, Mark Nighbor and Laura Lee
10 Thompson. Mr. Ferreira, are you on the line?

11 MR. FERREIRA: Yes, I am, sir.

12 CHAIRMAN CLARK: You're recognized for three
13 minutes, sir.

14 MR. FERREIRA: Good afternoon, Commissioners.
15 My name is Ricardo Ferreira. My address is 11800
16 SW 107th Avenue, Miami, Florida, that is in south
17 Miami-Dade County. I have been a customer of FPL
18 for the last 50 years. I was an employee for a
19 Florida Power & Light for 30 years and I have been
20 a retiree for the past 11 years. What I wanted to
21 say is very simple. Over the last year, I have
22 witnessed in my neighborhood and the area that I
23 live, FPL crews have been working and upgrading
24 power poles, structures -- all structures that we
25 have in service, replacing them with concrete,

1 brand-new concrete structures, alongside upgrading
2 the distribution equipment that goes with the
3 structures, all along the power lines.

4 I was very impressed. As a matter of fact, I
5 would stop along the line just to look and see what
6 the process was, and it seemed like everything that
7 was being done, it was just top-quality. The same
8 way I have noticed and witnessed the tree-trimming
9 crews that have been going around the neighborhood
10 along the main power lines, clearing up the areas.
11 All the power lines that have structures close to
12 it, any type of branches, any type of obstruction
13 that could create disruptions during the storm,
14 clearing out those areas. That goes alongside with
15 the upgrading of the power structures.

16 The last thing that I want to talk about is
17 that I have experience in -- and I'm not a
18 technology person, but I was extremely impressed
19 with the new technology that the customer service
20 department has provided the customers in times of
21 outages, that you can basically, at the touch of a
22 phone, have the most reliable information during
23 any outage, the time expected, time of return, the
24 area that is obstructed, the number of units in
25 your neighborhood, anything you will want to know

1 has been provided automated. You do not have to
2 speak to anyone in order to get that information.
3 I was even more impressed by receiving callbacks
4 automatically to my home phone to update me on any
5 changes in the information I had received.

6 So based on my experience with the company
7 over the last 50 years, I have to say that any rate
8 increase, that is to reinvest it in maintaining and
9 upgrading the electric power system is worth every
10 penny of it. So I support the rate increase.

11 Thank you very much.

12 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Nighbor. Next
13 up, Laurilee Thompson.

14 MS. THOMPSON: Hi. My name is Laurilee
15 Thompson and I live at 3550 Urban Avenue in Nims,
16 and I am a FPL customer and have been all my life.
17 In addition to my home here in Nims, I own a very
18 large restaurant in Titusville. And I appreciate
19 the improvements to the infrastructure that FPL is
20 making. Back during the storm, the hurricanes of
21 2004, our power was out for more than a week at our
22 restaurant. We had a big CAT generator and I was
23 having to pour diesel into it every several hours,
24 even in the lightning and thunder and all the rain.
25 And so the experience that we had during Matthew

1 and Irma is quite different than what we had during
2 the storms of 2004. The community depends on us
3 for ice and for those that don't have power for a
4 warm meal after the storm. So it's really
5 important that our power is restored.

6 I also attended last week the ribbon-cutting
7 at the Kennedy Space Center for FP&L's 40th solar
8 power facility. I'm very happy that FP&L is
9 working to reduce its dependency on the use of
10 fossil fuels, because I come from a commercial
11 fishing family. I've seen already the impact the
12 climate change is having on our coastal waters and
13 the commercial fisheries. And it's critical that
14 Florida figures out how to address and get
15 resilience for what's happening with climate
16 change, because it's going to impact our state
17 worse than any other state.

18 So, with that said, I'm okay with paying a
19 little bit more for my power, as long as FP&L
20 invests the money wisely to ensure that the power
21 can be restored quickly following storms and that
22 their dependency on fossil fuels is reduced. Thank
23 you.

24 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you very
25 much, Ms. Thompson. Any questions for

1 Ms. Thompson? I think I may have missed one on the
2 list. Mr. Nighbor. Mark Nighbor. Are you on the
3 line?

4 MR. NIGHBOR: Yes, I'm here, thank you. I'm
5 here on the line.

6 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. You're
7 recognized.

8 MR. NIGHBOR: My name is Mark Nighbor. I'm at
9 808 Harbor Preserve Court, Ponte Vedra, Florida and
10 I'm a current customer of FPL. Thank you to
11 Mr. Chair and the Commissioners. I think the
12 increase on application is reasonable and fair and
13 I offer my support really along three main points.
14 One is I'm impressed with the support commitment
15 and the investments that they have made in clean
16 energy, the movement toward solar panels and the
17 conversion from coal to natural gas is impressive,
18 and I want them to continue with these investments
19 as we experience more and more issues as it relates
20 to fossil-based fuels.

21 Second, the reliability. I'm impressed with
22 how they are using technology to make sure that we
23 get reliable service. I'll say ditto to the
24 previous caller who talked about the way they're
25 using customer service to keep me informed during

1 an outage. That is very impressive.

2 And, finally, the rates. I relocated to the
3 Florida area from the Midwest, Chicago in
4 particular, about eight years ago. I could not
5 believe how competitive and low the rates for
6 electricity were compared to where I had been in
7 Chicago. I recently looked at my daughter's bill
8 and was shocked at how those rates were
9 significantly higher than what I'm experiencing
10 here. In return, I'm getting significant
11 reliability and alternative clean fuel sources to
12 provide my energy. Overall, I see value in what I
13 paid for and I support the application for the rate
14 increase. Thank you very much.

15 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much, Mr.
16 Nighbor. Any questions? All right.

17 Next three customers will be Jesenia
18 Portieles, Abby Brennan, Lee Gottlieb. First of
19 all, Ms. Jesenia Portieles. Ms. Portieles, are you
20 on the line? I may be mispronouncing her name so
21 bad she doesn't recognize it. I apologize.
22 Jesenia Portieles, P-O-R-T-I-E-L-E-S. All right.

23 We will move to Abby Brennan. Abby Brennan.

24 MS. BRENNAN: Good afternoon.

25 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Good afternoon.

1 MS. BRENNAN: This Abby Brennan.

2 CHAIRMAN CLARK: You're recognized.

3 MS. BRENNAN: And I reside at 523 North Dover
4 Road in Tequesta, Florida. Thank you for the
5 opportunity to address the members of this
6 Commission. I am a customer of Florida Power &
7 Light, as are all of the residents and businesses
8 in the Village of Tequesta. I recently retired
9 after having served eight years as mayor of this
10 community. Our village is in the upper northeast
11 corner of Palm Beach County and we are bordered by
12 the Atlantic Ocean, an intercoastal waterway and we
13 are surrounded on two sides by the Loxahatchee
14 River, which makes us extremely vulnerable to loss
15 of power because of this location. In my capacity
16 as mayor, I interacted in several ways with FP&L's
17 government affairs and customer service
18 representatives. Those interactions have been
19 excellent and they have always responded in a
20 timely fashion.

21 One example of exceptional customer service
22 occurred several years ago after we were glanced by
23 a hurricane. Most of Tequesta experienced some
24 level of interruption in service. Within hours
25 after the storm, FP&L trucks were working to

1 restore it. As this was occurring, I received
2 several calls from residents who were still out of
3 power, although their neighbors' power had been
4 restored. I was explaining this to an FPL
5 supervisor and he asked me to get in his truck and
6 ride around to those homes to determine what the
7 problem was. After he located the reason, he
8 radioed the technicians in the area and asked them
9 to prioritize these properties. Our residents were
10 so grateful that they brought out bottles of water
11 and offered food to the workers.

12 Another example of going above and beyond was
13 FPL program where at no charge to the village they
14 undergrounded several streets in an area that often
15 lost power during storms. The work went very well.
16 They completely cleaned up their work areas every
17 night and returned the next day to continue the
18 work. Suffice to say, the folks on those streets
19 were delighted and now have bragging rights that
20 they have underground utilities.

21 Once again, because of our vulnerable location
22 being surrounded by water and susceptible to strong
23 tropical winds, we greatly encourage FP&L to
24 underground lines for the entire village. There
25 are many other examples of FP&L's attention to our

1 community. And while no one wishes to pay more for
2 their electrical service, I support their request
3 for a fair and reasonable rate increase to handle
4 existing service and diverging growth in our area.
5 It is very important that continuing infrastructure
6 improvement and clean energy development occur.
7 Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much, Ms.
9 Brennan. Anybody have any questions?

10 All right. Next up, Lee Gottlieb.

11 MR. GOTTLIEB: Yes, hi. Good afternoon. My
12 name is Lee Gottlieb and I am the Director of
13 Community Affairs for the Youth Environmental
14 Alliance.

15 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Mr. Gottlieb, once second.
16 Before you begin your testimony.

17 (Whereupon, Lee Gottlieb was sworn in by
18 Chairman Clark.)

19 MR. GOTTLIEB: I do.

20 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. You're
21 recognized.

22 MR. GOTTLIEB: As I mentioned, I'm the
23 Director of Community Affairs for the Youth
24 Environmental Alliance. It's a 501(c)(3) nonprofit
25 organization. We are concerned about the effects

1 of climate change. The air we breathe, the water
2 we drink, are all at risk moving forward into the
3 future. We applaud FP&L's ongoing efforts to
4 protect the natural environment. The goal of
5 producing cleaner, more affordable energy by
6 replacing the old coal-burning generators with
7 natural gas, commitment to construct one of the
8 largest solar-power systems in the southeast and
9 its continued efforts to reduce water consumption,
10 FP&L has been a great environmentally conscious
11 community partner.

12 We firmly believe FP&L delivers America's best
13 energy value, electricity that's not just clean and
14 reliable, but also affordable. However, a
15 reliable, resilient and sustainable energy grid
16 requires long-term investment. Therefore, we
17 support FP&L's proposal four-year rate plan, which
18 we believe would benefit FP&L customers by building
19 a more resilient sustainable energy into the future
20 and also to confront the changes of climate change.
21 That's all I have.

22 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much, Mr.
23 Gottlieb. Does anybody have any questions?

24 All right. Thank you for being here today.
25 The next three customers up, James Hehl, Mayra

1 Cruz, Kevin Powers. Mr. Hehl, you're recognized.

2 MR. HEHL: Good afternoon. I'm representing
3 Florida Gulf Coast University in Fort Myers,
4 Florida. My title is Assistant Vice President of
5 Fiscal Planning. I'm responsible for overseeing
6 the FPL accounts here on our main campus. I also
7 oversee our satellite properties down in Naples.
8 I've had an excellent relationship with FPL going
9 back to the very beginning of our university in
10 1997. Had the pleasure of working with numerous
11 account reps along the way. Had an excellent
12 relationship throughout. FTCU is one of the
13 largest customers in Lee County, close to 60,000
14 kids on campus. So it's very important that we
15 have a strong partnership with keeping services up
16 and running throughout all seasons, especially with
17 the upcoming hurricane season.

18 Hurricane season is most critical for us when
19 housing students on campus. Through Hurricane
20 Charlie and most recently Hurricane Irma, FPL did a
21 fine job with us prior, during and post-storms,
22 assisting us with all of our needs as a priority
23 customer.

24 They also do an excellent job day to day with
25 any unplanned power outages, which have been very

1 rare. They're quick with communication, responses
2 to power restoration. In my view, some of the
3 best. I've lived in other parts of the States.
4 With our continued growth here at FTC with new
5 facilities at our university, they do a commendable
6 job of planning and collaborating with our new
7 building designs. They deliver power,
8 infrastructure and meet our schedules when we're
9 completing new construction projects.

10 In addition to that, they always sit down
11 every year and help me plan out my budgets to make
12 sure that I have the best available utility rates
13 for the many accounts that I do have. The
14 time-of-use rate, which has been an overall success
15 here at FTCU, ties in our ice storage tank system.
16 We collaborated with FPL back in 1997 to initially
17 install 24 ice storage tanks in our chiller plant.
18 We take advantage of the discounted off-peak rate
19 and FPL supplies us with large rebate checks. Over
20 the course of the years, we've reinvested those
21 monies back in with more tanks and additional
22 energy conservation measures.

23 To date, our ice storage tank system is one of
24 the largest educational ice tank farms in the
25 United States, close to 200 tanks. This is due

1 greatly to our partnership with FPL.

2 Lastly, we'd also like to tout ourselves as a
3 sustainable university. In doing so, we've had
4 several solar field installations. One large
5 two-megawatt system here on campus, satellite
6 systems down in Naples. In doing so, we had to
7 work in concert with FPL to have the proper
8 planning, approvals and installations, which were
9 all done successfully to date. They continue to
10 offset our annual energy consumption.

11 All in all, I could not be happier with our
12 long-standing partnership between the Florida Gulf
13 Coast University and Florida Power and Light and I
14 fully approve the rate increase for Florida Power.
15 Thank you and that's all I have to say today.

16 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much, Mr.
17 Hehl. Any questions? All right. Next up, Mayra
18 Cruz.

19 MS. CRUZ: Hi, yes. I'm here.

20 CHAIRMAN CLARK: You're recognized, Ms. Cruz.

21 MS. CRUZ: I haven't been sworn in.

22 CHAIRMAN CLARK: On the website when you
23 signed up, you checked the box that basically swore
24 you in. And for those who are wondering why some
25 people are sworn in and others aren't, that is the

1 reason. When you signed up, if you gave us a sworn
2 testimony statement at that time, we don't have to
3 swear you in again. You're all covered.

4 MS. CRUZ: Okay. Perfect. I'll get started
5 then. Good afternoon. My name is Mayra Cruz. I
6 am the Climate Justice Director for Catalyst Miami
7 and a member of the Miami Climate Alliance. I
8 currently live in Miami Springs and I'm an FPL
9 customer. First, thank you to the PSC in
10 Tallahassee for hosting these workshops. Catalyst
11 Miami primarily serves low-income households and
12 communities of color in Miami-Dade County.
13 Historically, these are the communities most energy
14 burdened and impacted by climate change and were
15 hardest hit by the ongoing pandemic. Currently,
16 23 percent of Miami households have a high energy
17 burden, according to an ACEEE report. Over 650,000
18 households were disconnected by FPL during the
19 pandemic and continue to do so. In Miami alone,
20 about two-thirds of the county is considered
21 working force, meaning they are one paycheck away
22 from falling into poverty. Our communities are
23 just getting back on their feet and now are forced
24 to contemplate a significant 20 percent increase on
25 their electricity bills.

1 So what is this potential rate increase meant
2 to do? From my assessment, some those of my fellow
3 partner organizations and those who are
4 intervening, these investments are not going back
5 to the communities that desperately need assistance
6 at this time. Investments are being made to
7 continue building infrastructure for frack gas
8 plans and will continue to pollute our environment
9 and communities and keep us from a truly clean
10 zero-emissions future. Let's all be clear here,
11 fracked, or natural gas, is not clean and it is not
12 pollution-free.

13 FPL claims to have one of the lowest rates in
14 the country, but are actually some of the highest
15 IOU rate in the nation. While they claim to be
16 investing in solar energy, according to the New
17 York Times, they spent \$31 million between 2014 and
18 2019 competing against solar. This is money that
19 would have been better spent on actual solar plants
20 and improving energy efficiency throughout its
21 territory. ACEEE ranked FPL as the second-worst
22 utility in energy efficiency out of 52 American
23 utilities. At the end of the day, the promise that
24 FPL has publicly made to be on the side of
25 customers and have a clean energy future are false.

1 If you follow the money, it is clear that FPL has
2 their own interest in mind with this rate increase.
3 Our communities need relief at this time in the
4 next several months and years to recuperate the
5 loss that they experienced due to the pandemic.
6 This rate increase is absolutely not necessary. It
7 is not the right time and it is a serious, serious
8 threat to the well-being of those burdened by an
9 energy system that provides little to no help in
10 keeping electric bills down. I ask you to say no
11 to this rate increase and put communities over
12 profit first. Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much, Ms.
14 Cruz. Does anyone have any questions?

15 All right. Next up, Kevin Powers.

16 MR. POWERS: Good afternoon, Chairman Clark
17 and Commissioners. My name is Kevin Powers and I'm
18 a small business owner from Indiantown and I want
19 to say thank you very much for the opportunity to
20 offer comments today in support of FPL's request.
21 I'm in full agreement with previous statements of
22 reliability of service, competitive rates,
23 investment and resilience, innovation, et cetera.
24 What I'd to add to that this afternoon is the
25 partnership with the rural community, our community

1 of Indiantown. Indiantown is home to Florida Power
2 and Light's Martin plants, and the two are
3 inseparable with regard to betterment of our
4 community, and I'm not just talking about after,
5 you know, after storms and getting everybody back
6 online. I'm talking about the everyday -- what
7 small towns do when they work together for the
8 betterment, the greater good in small towns. I
9 know that doesn't mean as much in large urban
10 areas; but in small towns, that goes a long, long
11 way to the fabric of what makes towns like
12 Indiantown what they are.

13 And this, in my observation, this is not a
14 coincidence. It's not a formula, but it's a
15 culture. It's a culture of the people. It's a
16 culture of the company that are committed to
17 excellence and betterment many ways. And that
18 concludes my comment. But thanks again for the
19 opportunity.

20 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thanks again, Mr. Powers.
21 Does anybody have any questions for Mr. Powers?

22 All right. Our next three individuals to
23 testify, Daren Jairam, Melissa Nash, MacKenzie
24 Marcelin. First up is Daren. Are you on the line?
25 Daren Jairam.

1 MR. JAIRAM: Yes. Yes, I am. Sorry about
2 that.

3 CHAIRMAN CLARK: That's quite all right.
4 You're recognized.

5 MR. JAIRAM: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and
6 Commissioners. Name is Darren Jairam. I reside in
7 the Miami Gardens area. I'm a customer of FP&L as
8 a resident. I'm also -- I've served -- worked
9 along with FP&L also in a professional capacity as
10 a community partner with the Albert C. Pierre
11 Community Service Center. As a customer and a
12 resident, I remember FP&L when I was building my
13 home. One of the issues I had with my property is
14 that FP&L had a power line that run from the right
15 end of the property to the 175th Street light
16 post, and the power line run directly over my
17 property. And I had an issue with that, having the
18 power line run directly over the property. I
19 reached out to FP&L concerning the power line and
20 they provided me some options. And one of the
21 options was I had the option to bury the power
22 line. I told them I was interested and they worked
23 along with me to submit the permit, the necessary
24 permits and worked along with my contractor by
25 providing the necessary piping needed to run the

1 power line, which was done and they gladly came in,
2 in a quick turnaround time and buried that power
3 line with service to 175th Street I no longer
4 have that power line run across my home, my
5 property.

6 Another incident is on that very same pole,
7 one Thanksgiving the transformer blew. It blew
8 out. And in no time FP&L was on site and they told
9 us that they were going to replace the transformer.
10 However, the transformer was not nearby and it
11 would take some time to bring it in. However, they
12 would stay with us on site until the transformer
13 came in and was installed. They were very
14 grateful -- they were very helpful with us. We
15 felt secure with them being there on site until
16 even that evening for Thanksgiving dinner my wife
17 also invited them in for dinner, which they had --
18 they didn't come into the house, but they had
19 dinner. They gladly stayed outside and enjoyed
20 that Thanksgiving dinner. Nevertheless, when the
21 transformer came in, they installed it and we were
22 back in power in no time.

23 That evening, it was one of the evenings that
24 we felt secure, we felt safe, and we felt that we
25 were part of the family of FP&L while they were

1 there servicing our home or servicing the area. I
2 was out of power due to the blowing of that
3 transformer.

4 Also, in a professional capacity as a
5 community partner, Albert C. Pierre Community
6 Center runs a Hope Summer Camp. And this summer
7 camp is for inner-city kids that provides STEM
8 classes, field trips and a lot of fun. FP&L has
9 been very instrumental in giving us support and
10 helping us to promote the program in the Hope
11 Summer Camp. Also, we run a peers pantry where we
12 serve inner-city meals, hot meals to the
13 inner-city. And FPL, again, has stepped up to the
14 plate and has worked with us in helping serve the
15 community in providing hot meals. We see FP&L as
16 not only a resident, but also a community partner
17 and I'm very thankful and grateful for their
18 service they provide to the residents of here in
19 South Florida, as well as to the businesses that
20 they support. With that being said, I want to
21 thank you for the opportunity. And if there's any
22 questions, I'm free to ask. Thank you.

23 COMMISSIONER FAY: Thank you for your
24 testimony, Mr. Jairam. Next, Melissa Nash.

25 MS. NASH: Good afternoon, everybody. Thank

1 you for having me here. I'm Melissa Nash, 610
2 Clematis in West Palm Beach, Florida. I'm a small
3 business owner, as well as a native Floridian. And
4 I live now in downtown West Palm Beach. So I want
5 to talk about the condo community and what it is to
6 be there. And it's kind of funny because when you
7 live in a downtown area, you kind of get to see
8 everything that's going on. And recently, in one
9 of our most recent hurricanes, I think it was
10 Dorian, I live like half a block away from the
11 substation and I got the most tremendous fireworks
12 you could ever believe in the middle of a
13 hurricane. And little by little, you'd start to
14 see all the buildings go dark. Boop, boop, boop,
15 boop, boop. We were probably without power for
16 five minutes. And you know that that's because
17 Florida Power and Light has some type of an
18 investment in a smart grid, a smart technology, and
19 while we couldn't get power from that substation,
20 they did whatever they had to do electronically
21 within minutes and instantly you watched all of the
22 buildings come back on.

23 So investment in our infrastructure is
24 critical. And one of the things, while I have to
25 ditto all of the positive things that are there,

1 one of the things that I want to mention is I'm a
2 debt collector for a living and I have the ability
3 to turn down taking on an account, collecting in 13
4 unregulated states where they do not have regulated
5 power authorities, and we just watched the huge
6 crisis that they had in Texas, and there is no way
7 that you could hold anybody there accountable
8 because who do you point a finger to. Florida
9 Power and Light is there for us in every way. And
10 I want to add to that, I'm addicted to my air
11 conditioning. Hi, my name is Melissa, I'm addicted
12 to air conditioning. I love Florida Power & Light.
13 I think they're a partner in our lives. They're a
14 partner in our communities and they're also a
15 partner in our environment and I hope that you
16 continue to give them what they need to support us.
17 Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much,
19 Ms. Nash. Any questions for Ms. Nash?

20 All right. Next up, MacKenzie Marcelin.

21 MR. MARCELIN: Hello?

22 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes, MacKenzie. You're
23 recognized for three minutes, sir.

24 MR. MARCELIN: All right. Thank you. Hi, my
25 name is MacKenzie Marcelin. I am the climate

1 justice organizer for Florida Rising and a member
2 of the Miami Climate Alliance, and also a customer
3 of FPL, as well. As you know, Florida Rising is
4 intervening in this rate case because we wanted to
5 represent black, brown, indigenous and low-income
6 communities that often shoulder the burden of the
7 energy sector -- the climate crisis. And even now
8 under COVID, under this COVID crisis, reports have
9 shown that lower-income communities were the
10 hardest hit from the global pandemic. And now even
11 as we begin to open these same communities -- as we
12 begin to open up, these same communities are
13 supposed to recover. And now, you know, we sit
14 here today as -- virtually as Florida Power &
15 Light, an energy provider, you know, we don't have
16 a choice in, and is asking for an additional, you
17 know, almost two billion dollars from their
18 customers and wants to increase bills by
19 20 percent. While this impacts, you know, the bill
20 increase will be felt by all Floridians within FPL
21 territories, lower-income communities, like I said,
22 will shoulder that burden more. You know,
23 lower-income communities, you know, shoulder -- you
24 know, they spend three times more on their
25 income -- you know, three times more of their

1 income towards their energy costs and, you know,
2 it's just really not the time for this. We have
3 real people right now that are making trade-offs,
4 like turning off their AC's because their homes are
5 so energy inefficient, you know, bills are -- rates
6 are from \$200 to \$300, so some folks, you know, are
7 having to go without AC. And as the last caller
8 said, AC is vital to Floridians. And, you know,
9 they're making these trade-offs because they're
10 receiving shutoff notices in the mail. You know,
11 and costs are already high for many people --
12 lower-income customers.

13 Many previous callers have said FPL has
14 assisted them in power outages, after hurricanes,
15 help able to get their lights on. What about the,
16 you know, over 500,000 or -- yeah, 500,000 of FPL's
17 customers that have been disconnected since the
18 pandemic? We have real people right now that are
19 living with no lights in their homes or facing that
20 burden of having to come up with the costs, or
21 having to come up with the cost to prevent their
22 lights from being shut off. And, again, you know,
23 FPL is asking for two billion from customers, all
24 to increase their profits, rebuild transmission
25 systems that FPL themselves, and many of these

1 business folks have said, is already reliable.
2 And, you know, customers -- and customers are
3 having to pay for fossil fuel gas plants that's
4 already been built in Dania Beach and asking the
5 community that didn't want that very plant in the
6 first place to come up with the cost to foot the
7 bill for that. It doesn't make sense. FPL says
8 this two billion is only going to spread across
9 four years, but I'm sure that --

10 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Mr. MacKenzie, your time is
11 up. Will you wrap up, please?

12 MR. MARCELIN: I ask that the Public Service
13 Commission just reject this increase and heavily
14 invest into energy efficiency before they even ask
15 a dollar --

16 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank for your testimony
17 today, Mr. MacKenzie. Does anybody have any
18 questions for Mr. MacKenzie?

19 All right. Thank you very much. Next up,
20 Cinde Martin, Felicia Cook and Aletha Player.
21 Ms. Martin, are you on the line?

22 MA. MARTIN: Hi, yes, this is Cinde Martin.

23 CHAIRMAN CLARK: You're recognized for three
24 minutes, Ms. Martin.

25 MA. MARTIN: Thank you everyone -- I'm sorry?

1 CHAIRMAN CLARK: You're recognized.

2 MA. MARTIN: Okay. This is Cinde Martin.
3 Hello, everyone. I live at 1966 Emilio Lane in
4 West Palm Beach, Florida, and I am an FP&L customer
5 and have been since 1985. First I say ditto to all
6 the testimony praising FP&L for the value they
7 give, for their rates, for their reliability, for
8 their investment in the future and investment in
9 the community, for their culture there, and for
10 their customer communication.

11 I think all of us take for granted just how
12 amazing and awesome electricity is in general, how
13 very much we use it each and every day and how
14 fortunate we are to have FP&L deliver it to our
15 homes safely. When we wake up in the morning, we
16 wake up with coolness and air conditioning so that
17 we slept well all night and can try to be kind to
18 people during the day. Electricity was delivered
19 safely to our homes. We reach for our cell phones,
20 which have been charged all night because
21 electricity has been delivered safely to our homes.
22 We go into the bathroom and turn on the lights. We
23 walk out of the bedroom and turn off our alarm
24 systems. We turn on our coffee pots, all without
25 thinking, because electricity has been delivered

1 safely to our homes. We take care out our coffee
2 mug, which was cleaned in the dishwasher using
3 electricity. We open the refrigerator to get the
4 milk, which has been kept cold all night because of
5 electricity. We don't even think about it. We
6 flip the switch and what we need is there. It's
7 reliable and it was delivered safely.

8 You understand what I'm saying. I also want
9 to ditto Melissa who is addicted to air
10 conditioning. As a menopausal woman, I literally
11 thank God for FP&L when I walk into my home and the
12 air conditioner is on. If you are menopausal or
13 married to someone who is, you know exactly what
14 I'm saying. I'm originally from Philadelphia. And
15 like the gentleman from Chicago, I think FP&L rates
16 are great comparison-ly. They're fabulous when you
17 look at what people -- my friends and family around
18 the country pay.

19 We live in a small 50-plus-year-old
20 neighborhood. We're not on a priority grid and
21 there's only 50 homes. During the last two
22 hurricanes, our neighborhood lost power for quite
23 some time. The FP&L app was a great way for us to
24 stay up to date -- updated. This is FP&L's service
25 and customer care. After the last hurricane, once

1 FP&L made it to us -- it was about 7:30 one
2 evening -- their crew found that a vacationing
3 neighbor had a power line down in their pool. They
4 said it would be a little longer, a more
5 challenging job than they originally thought and
6 they would need different equipment. So they were
7 going to leave, help out another neighborhood and
8 come back that night with the right equipment. We
9 all thought, yeah, right. We'll see them sometime
10 tomorrow. But, hallelujah, they came back about
11 9:00 o'clock that night and worked for several
12 hours until we had power. This is service and true
13 personal customer care.

14 I recently saw in the media that FPL is
15 working on the future with robots, drones solar
16 energy, et cetera --

17 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Ms. Martin --

18 MA. MARTIN: -- they work so hard at remaining
19 sustainable and not affected the environment. The
20 surface, customer care, community-mindedness and
21 forward thinking.

22 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Ms. Martin.
23 Ms. Martin, thank you very much for your testimony
24 today. Thank you very much for your testimony
25 today. Your time is up. Does anyone have any

1 questions for Ms. Martin? All right. Thank you,
2 again, for being with us today. You're going down
3 in history as my favorite testifier so far.

4 MA. MARTIN: Oh, thank you. All right.
5 Bye-bye.

6 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Ms. Felicia Cook.

7 MS. COOK: Yes, sir.

8 CHAIRMAN CLARK: You're recognized for three
9 minutes, please.

10 MS. COOK: Thank you. Felicia Cook. I am
11 both a commercial customer and a residential
12 customer at 24 Lakeside Place West, Palm Coast,
13 Florida. And I agree with everything that
14 Ms. Martin said as far as what a wonderful service
15 we have with FP&L. Having been on the mission
16 field and in locations that don't even have
17 electricity, I agree with her on how desperate it
18 is for us who are spoiled rotten to have
19 electricity. I agree with the man who spoke before
20 her about those who did not have it and saddened by
21 the fact that FP&L's customer service absolutely,
22 A, a billion pluses, throughout this COVID
23 situation. I am unfamiliar with people who got
24 their lights turned off, their electric turned off,
25 because we went around neighborhoods and helped

1 them contact FP&L and FP&L worked with every one of
2 those that we were helping connect with them. I
3 know that during COVID with our business, we
4 could've lost animals left and right, and FP&L was
5 willing to work with us. So I'm unfamiliar with
6 them having cut people off during this time and
7 saddened by what that gentleman had to say, and
8 really wish that we would look into that and see
9 because I'm just not familiar with that being their
10 customer service.

11 They made sure that people had heat during the
12 cold time. They made sure that people had air
13 during the hot time, that they could cook on their
14 stove, that their refrigerators were taking care of
15 them. We didn't get any denials of extension from
16 them with any of the groups of neighborhoods that
17 we worked with. So I really can't say enough about
18 their customer service, their willingness to put
19 the person ahead of the cost.

20 And I think that might be what's confusing to
21 people now is they're trying to make it even more
22 sustainable for us and make it even more
23 environmental. And to do that, the rates are going
24 to have to go up. And I agree with that
25 100 percent, because I know that we will all be

1 better off in the long run. My testimony doesn't
2 need to be long. I said it and I ask that the
3 Commission please approve what they're trying to do
4 and that we all help them get there because it's
5 for our betterment in the future.

6 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you very
7 much, Ms. Cook. Any member have any questions?

8 All right. Next up, Aletha Player.

9 MS. PLAYER: Good afternoon, Chairman Clark
10 and Commissioners. I'm Aletha Player. My address
11 is 20456 Northeast 34th Court in Aventura,
12 Florida. For the record, I'm recently retired from
13 FPL. But today I'm not here to talk about me. I
14 want to talk about three things. First,
15 reliability. I live in a townhouse community with
16 several high-rise buildings and multiple office
17 buildings. We are fed with underground lines and
18 experience fewer outages overall. However,
19 whenever there is an outage, FPL responds in a
20 timely manner and provides periodic updates on the
21 status of the outage. I'm totally satisfied with
22 reliability of service that I receive.

23 Second, I'd like to speak about the amount of
24 my bill or FPL's rates. I'm a native Floridian.
25 FPL has always been my service provider. However,

1 I have friends and family that live in Atlanta, New
2 York, LA and Houston and they are -- they can't
3 believe how little I pay for electricity compared
4 to the amount of their bills. I've shown them the
5 FPL app which allows me to pay my bill, make
6 changes to my account, but, more importantly, I can
7 see how I'm using electricity, make changes during
8 the month before my next bill comes in. It even
9 projects how much my bill is going to be. They're
10 blown away with the ease of the app and the
11 available information.

12 Finally, I want to talk about solar. I'm very
13 proud of the foresight and planning FPL has done
14 with investing in solar power, which protects our
15 environment and it also helps to lower our bills.
16 Their 3030 Solar Plan is second to none. To
17 install 30 million panels by 2030 is no small feat.
18 Overall, and in closing, I'm satisfied with my
19 service and I think FPL has invested well for its
20 customers and also for the state of Florida. Thank
21 you.

22 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you very
23 much, Ms. Player. Does anyone have questions for
24 Ms. Player?

25 All right. The next three individuals to

1 testify, Carl Klepper, Maria Cruz, David Powers.

2 Begin with Mr. Klepper, are you on the line?

3 MR. KLEPPER: Yes, sir. Thank you,

4 Mr. Chairman --

5 CHAIRMAN CLARK: You're recognized.

6 MR. KLEPPER: -- Commissioners, my name is
7 Carl Klepper, Jr. I reside at 305 South Mayapon
8 Drive, Boca Raton, Florida. Moved down here in
9 1997. Commercial real estate developer, and we've
10 developed millions of square feet in south Florida
11 and commercial properties and thousands of
12 residential units. We're grateful for all of
13 FP&L's staffing and innovation and personal
14 attention to all of the things that we do, because
15 we rely on that necessity to deliver luxurious
16 homes and businesses and things of that in our own
17 business.

18 I have -- I'm a personal homeowner and
19 obviously a vested real estate developer. I've
20 interacted with FP&L on all levels, both personal
21 and business. I ditto sentiments of a lot of the
22 speakers, but in addition, I'm going to offer some
23 of my following highlights. We own property down
24 the seaboard from New York, all the way down
25 through Virginia and all the way down through

1 Florida, and we work with a lot of different
2 municipalities and a lot of different power
3 companies. FP&L's handling of commercial accounts
4 on all levels, and specifically residential, with
5 respect to the emergency response, has been
6 incredible during the time of my tenure in Florida.
7 I think that their addressing of the pandemic
8 issues and the sensitivities to real-life customer
9 issues are a lot to be commended.

10 And one of the considerations I think that is
11 a necessity for the rate increase is the tremendous
12 breaks in the supply chain that I have personally
13 experienced with regards to equipment and
14 technology that has been -- there has been breaks
15 in the actual manufacturing all over the country
16 and all over the world for parts and supplies, and
17 I don't think we have quite felt the brunt of it.
18 I think we're seeing price increases across the
19 board on everything from plywood to copper to
20 gasoline and I think those -- there's a lot of
21 unforeseen challenges that a lot of businesses and
22 corporations are going to experience over the next
23 coming years. I think that FPL is a signature
24 provider when you compare it to its others in the
25 class across the country, and I think that I can

1 support an increase for them to continue to plan
2 and provide an excellent level of customer service
3 for the Florida residents. That's all I have to
4 say.

5 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you very
6 much, Mr. Klepper. Does anyone have any questions?

7 All right. Next up, Maria Cruz. Ms. Cruz,
8 are you on the line?

9 MS. CRUZ: Yes.

10 CHAIRMAN CLARK: You're recognized.

11 MS. CRUZ: Hi. Good afternoon. My name is
12 Maria Cruz. My address is 8885 100th Street in
13 Miami, Florida. I've been an FPL customer for over
14 20 years and I can honestly say that my experience
15 with FPL is consistently positive. I currently
16 live in an area of Miami-Dade County with a
17 beautiful tree canopy, but, unfortunately, these
18 trees often interfere with the power lines around
19 me and I've had to reach out to FPL a few times to
20 request the removal of vegetation surrounding the
21 power lines. FPL has been extremely responsive to
22 these calls. Their employees always communicate
23 with me to make sure that we're home when they have
24 to access the property. There has been times that
25 we're not here and we have been proactive in making

1 sure that they reach out to us and also supporting
2 me with that service. Can you hear me? Because I
3 hear an echo as I'm talking.

4 CHAIRMAN CLARK: No, ma'am. We can hear you
5 fine.

6 MS. CRUZ: Okay. I don't know why I hear
7 feedback as I'm talking. So, anyway, so that's
8 just been, like, one positive experience that we
9 constantly -- with FPL where they're always very
10 proactive.

11 I also want to say that I use the app
12 frequently and I find it to be very user-friendly
13 and I'm able to resolve issues without having to
14 contact the customer service line, which, in my
15 experience with other companies, is a dreadful
16 experience. So while we don't always like to pay
17 any more in fees, I recognize that in order to
18 maintain a quality level of service, we need to
19 make sure that FPL has adequate funds to continue
20 to provide the excellent customer service that they
21 provide and to consistently upgrade their
22 infrastructure, which is necessary to get us back
23 on the grid after major storms or hurricanes.

24 So I support FPL's request for a fair and
25 adequate rate increase. After listening to all of

1 this testimony, I was thinking like, I don't know
2 if the Commission oversees Comcast or AT&T, but if
3 you don't, I would suggest that maybe this is
4 something that can be looked at, because dealing
5 with Comcast and AT&T is a nightmare and you
6 compare it to the perfect customer service that
7 I've always had with FPL. So that's just something
8 I wanted to add and I listened to all the
9 testimony. And, lastly, I am also addicted to air
10 conditioning. So just wanted to state that for the
11 record. Thank you and have a great day.

12 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much for your
13 testimony, Ms. Cruz. Any questions for Ms. Cruz?

14 All right. Next up. David Powers.

15 Mr. Powers, are you on the line.

16 MR. POWERS: Yes, I am.

17 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Mr. Powers, I need to swear
18 you in before you begin.

19 (Whereupon, David Powers was sworn in by
20 Chairman Clark.)

21 MR. POWERS: I do.

22 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. You're
23 recognized, sir.

24 MR. POWERS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and
25 Commissioners. Appreciate the opportunity to

1 speak. And if that was a family member of Powers
2 before speaking, I'm the better looking one of
3 them.

4 I just wanted to -- a couple things I wanted
5 to hit on is the web base that FPL has for customer
6 service has been absolutely phenomenal, the
7 direction that it's heading into, the updating that
8 they have. If there's any problems or storms or
9 outages, you know, gives very detailed information
10 and that's very helpful. It's also really good
11 when you can pull your accounts together and take a
12 look at your -- everything that you have going on.
13 Their reliability continues to be at the best level
14 that I've seen, before, during or after storms.
15 Again, it goes back to the platform that they're
16 always giving you an update. And if something is
17 down, it kind of gives you a time estimate of when
18 they're going to be able to get there.

19 You know, it doesn't have to -- you don't have
20 to look far, you know, just take a look at states
21 like Texas and California, the horrible problems
22 that they're having as far as for, you know,
23 rolling brownouts and the loss of power for a long
24 period of time. This is going to get very
25 difficult as we continue to head into electric

1 vehicles and alternative energy if we don't have a
2 reliable system. So, you know, it's -- very
3 pleased with what they've had. It's always good to
4 see the FP&L employees. I don't care, you know,
5 the entire team from a new hire to the top
6 leadership, you know, continue to show a commitment
7 to excellent customer service. And, again, it
8 doesn't matter what level of employee that you talk
9 to in the company, it seems to be, you know, what
10 they strive for.

11 The other thing that they do very well at,
12 that I've seen as a subcontractor, is that they
13 took -- if they're coming out to clear the
14 vegetation off the lines or do repairs if it's not
15 an FP&L employee, it's a subcontractor of theirs,
16 and I think that they do a phenomenal job, you
17 know, working with or getting those teams to have
18 that same level of excellent service.

19 The other one is, you know, totally agree with
20 the renewable energy strategy that the FPL
21 leadership has taken. I think this is a good space
22 and a great path forward for the state of Florida
23 and for all the ratepayers. Again, I'm in full
24 support for FP&L's request and I hope you consider
25 it.

1 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you very
2 much, Mr. Powers. Anybody have any questions?

3 All right. Next three individuals to testify,
4 Catarina Fernandez, Ron Sharpe and Jack Ryals.
5 Ms. Fernandez, are you on the line?

6 MS. FERNANDEZ: Hi, can you guys hear me?

7 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. You're
8 recognized.

9 MS. FERNANDEZ: Okay. Hi, my name is Catarina
10 Fernandez. I'm a 21-year-old and a resident of
11 Miami, Florida. I'm here representing a nonprofit
12 called Our Climate, which helps peace climate
13 activists to acquire equitable science-based
14 climate action in their communities. As someone
15 who lives in a coastal community, I can tell you
16 that the effects of climate change are already
17 being solved. I've lived in Miami all my life. My
18 parents have invested their entire lives into the
19 city. I would love to live in Miami, too, but I
20 find myself wondering if there is still even going
21 to be a livable Miami by the time I'm ready to buy
22 a house. We need to be moving towards clean
23 energy. And though FPL tries to paint themselves
24 as a champion in the clean energy transition, their
25 portrayals of natural gas as an alternative is

1 simply false. The fact is natural gas releases
2 methane into the atmosphere, which in the short
3 term can actually contribute to even more warming
4 than carbon dioxide.

5 FPL simply does this to save accountability
6 and keep their profits up as more people begin to
7 rise up against cheaper fossil fuels, but it's all
8 a ruse and I don't think this should be rewarded by
9 giving them more money. We will soon be feeling
10 the effects of our inaction if we continue on this
11 route and people are going to be less willing to
12 invest into our city and other coastal communities
13 around Florida. I think it's unfair to raise
14 peoples' bills so that they can continue to fund
15 the very thing that would be the demise of their
16 community, especially after a pandemic in which
17 many families in Florida experienced a loss of jobs
18 and other financial hardships. I find this to be
19 really poor timing. People are already struggling
20 to get back on their feet without having to pay
21 higher bills.

22 Lots of people here today have been lucky
23 enough to talk about the reliability of their
24 power, but the sad reality is, is that this
25 reliability is only afforded to those with enough

1 money to pay the cost. It is a privilege to be
2 addicted to your air conditioning and,
3 unfortunately, this is not the experience of many
4 working-class families who have often had to
5 sacrifice such things in order to keep their energy
6 affordable. As a child of a working-class family
7 who is familiar with making these trade-offs, and
8 as a young person who is having to live in the
9 future you all are creating, I really urge you all
10 at the PSC, if you're truly asking in the interest
11 of the people in the future, to reject this rate
12 increase as proposed by FPL. Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much,
14 Ms. Fernandez. Does anybody have any questions?

15 Next up. Ron Sharpe.

16 MR. SHARPE: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and
17 Commissioners. I live in Panama City, Florida.
18 I'm a homeowner as well as an executive director
19 for a nonprofit, where we serve individuals with
20 disabilities. I want to let you know that we are
21 very, very pleased with the overall quality and the
22 service that we've received from Gulf Power, not
23 only for our local area, but for the whole
24 panhandle of Florida. We sincerely appreciate the
25 responsiveness and the way that they conduct

1 business, especially after Hurricane Michael and
2 after every disaster and emergency situation. They
3 are always on standby. They're there.

4 I recently had a tree here at our agency that
5 was dead and it was a safety issue. I called and
6 within two days, the tree was removed at no cost to
7 our agency. As a local resident, as well as I
8 mentioned earlier, the executive director for a
9 nonprofit, they are deeply engaged in our
10 community, volunteering their time serving on
11 various board of directors of nonprofits, they
12 truly embrace community engagement. They're
13 forward thinking, continuously looking for ways to
14 improve their service offering. They have built a
15 trust within our community that we can count on
16 their service at a reasonable rate.

17 As we heard earlier, they haven't had an
18 increase in close to five years. How can we expect
19 to receive the same excellent quality of service
20 with the rising cost of doing business? I
21 absolutely love their app. Whenever there's an
22 outage, whenever I can go there, it gives me the
23 time updates, the whole nine yards. I greatly
24 appreciate this opportunity to speak on their
25 behalf.

1 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you very
2 much, Mr. Sharpe. Does anybody have any questions?

3 Next up, Jack Ryals.

4 MR. RYALS: Good afternoon.

5 CHAIRMAN CLARK: You're recognized, Mr. Ryals.

6 MR. RYALS: Okay. Thank you. My name is Jack
7 Ryals. I live at 5365 Sand Lake Drive in
8 Melbourne. I've lived in Florida since 1960. I've
9 been in Melbourne since 1972. And my wife and I
10 have been in the same house for over 40 years now.
11 Living in a coastal community has always been a
12 pleasure to us. During the inevitable storms we
13 have from time to time, we have never lost power
14 for more than a very short period of time, never
15 had to worry about losing food or the freezer
16 defrosting or anything like that. It seems pretty
17 remarkable where we live that it has that history.

18 I've spent my career as an independent
19 businessman and very involved in the community.
20 And I've always -- I've known several
21 representatives from Florida Power & Light and have
22 always been very, very pleased that they get
23 involved in our community. They're always very
24 accessible, good sense of humor, very approachable
25 and actually listen to what the feedback they're

1 getting from the people I know.

2 Also, as an independent businessman, I know
3 how much -- how important it is to invest in the
4 future, as well as take care of the present. I
5 think many of the speakers before me have
6 emphasized how much Florida Power & Light does for
7 its current customers, and also what they do to
8 invest in the future for what's coming down the
9 road. Knowing friends and family from other parts
10 of the state and other parts of the country, our
11 rates have always seemed very competitive. I hear
12 of just astronomical rates in some areas of the
13 country, as well as when we have wind events here
14 and we lose power for a short period of time, we
15 see on the TV other areas lose power for lengthy
16 periods of time.

17 Also, as a businessman, I understand the
18 importance of having the ability to invest in the
19 future. The fact that Florida Power & Light has
20 not had a rate increase for five years, and
21 considering the job they're doing, although it's up
22 to the Commissioners to decide how much, if any,
23 rate increase is justified, I would trust Florida
24 Power & Light from the standpoint they've always
25 proven to be a good steward of the rates that they

1 collect. So without the numbers, my assumption
2 would be that they will continue to do so, as they
3 have in the past. Thank you for allowing me to
4 give my input.

5 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much,
6 Mr. Ryals. Does anybody have any questions?

7 All right. Our next three speakers are
8 Richard Murrell, Laura Tellez, Emilio Lizarraga.

9 And we start with Mr. Murrell. Are you on the
10 line, Mr. Murrell?

11 MR. MURRELL: Yes, sir, I am. Can you hear me
12 okay?

13 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes, sir.

14 MR. MURRELL: All right. My name is Richard
15 Murrell. I'm a resident in Palm Beach County at
16 175 Saddlewood Lane, Palm Beach Gardens. I am a
17 retired -- (technical interruption) --

18 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Mr. Murrell, we're having a
19 very hard time understanding you. You are breaking
20 up on us.

21 MR. MURRELL: All right. Can you hear me
22 better now?

23 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes, sir. That's better.

24 MR. MURRELL: All right, sir. Thank you. I
25 apologize. Commissioner Clark, thank you.

1 Commissioners, thank you for the opportunity. I
2 witnessed the devastation of Hurricane Hugo and
3 many months of power outages misery suffered by
4 families. It broke my heart to see the Virgin
5 Islands with all of the essential services and
6 supplies eliminated or severely interrupted. Since
7 that event in September 1989, I've made my career
8 as corporate social responsibility to focus on
9 disaster recovery and building community resilience
10 for all critical infrastructure in the communities
11 served by our companies.

12 I currently lead the North Palm Beach Chamber
13 of Commerce Resiliency Task Force, a group of
14 private and public sector focused on enhancing the
15 resilience of our community critical
16 infrastructure. After the 2004, 2005 hurricanes in
17 Florida and the long gas lines at fuel stations due
18 to the lack of power, I hired a lobbyist,
19 eventually passed legislation in Tallahassee in
20 2007, subsequently signed into law by Governor
21 Bush, to improve the availability of fuel
22 supporters and trucks. Both our cars and trucks
23 depends on the power at the pump.

24 I support Florida Power & Light's request for
25 this moderate rate increase, because some of the

1 increase is allocated to their strategic goal of
2 capital investment, of hardening the electrical
3 grid from natural disasters. None of us can do
4 without power. All of us know we're subject to the
5 potential kickbacks of devastating hurricanes.
6 When we don't have power, we'll pay anything to
7 have it, and that applies to our homes, our gas
8 stations, pharmacies, food stores and essential
9 services. This small request, I support because it
10 is a step in the ongoing capital investment that
11 all of us private citizens, utilities, public
12 sector and businesses need to commit to and pay for
13 in order to improve the resilience of the critical
14 infrastructure upon which all, each of our daily
15 lives depends. I support the increase. Thank you
16 for the opportunity to submit my testimony.

17 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much, Mr.
18 Murrell. Any questions? Anyone?

19 Next up, Laura Tellez.

20 MS. TELLEZ: Yes, can you hear me?

21 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes, Ms. Tellez. I need to
22 swear you in before you begin.

23 (Whereupon, Laura Tellez was sworn in by
24 Chairman Clark.)

25 MS. TELLEZ: Yes.

1 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. You're
2 recognized.

3 MS. TELLEZ: My name is Laura Tellez and I
4 live Weston Florida in Broward County. Thank you
5 so much for the opportunity to talk today. I'm
6 here to ask you to consider not to approve the FPL
7 rate increase. In a time of crisis, and we're
8 still recovering from the pandemic and suffering
9 financially, FPL and NextEra are one of the largest
10 most profitable energy companies in the United
11 States. With many Floridians still struggling
12 because of the pandemic, many Floridians on fixed
13 incomes and the small businesses trying to recover
14 after the pandemic, a 20-percent increase will
15 leave many vulnerable to the Florida heat and
16 having to choose between health care, life-saving
17 medications, groceries, other important needs, and
18 is more burden to recover.

19 FPL says they're one of the lowest utility
20 rates, but this is false. They're currently the
21 seventh-highest utility rate in the nation. Their
22 bills are among the highest. FPL customers consume
23 more energy than average, probably because the
24 company only invests 5 percent of the national
25 average on energy-efficiency improvement.

1 Instead of more centralized power generation
2 that makes us more vulnerable, I would like to see
3 more decentralized and distributed generation that
4 is cheaper, solar on our neighborhood rooftops,
5 solar and electric cars, and share and trade it
6 with the community. Locally-generated electricity
7 on our homes and community building rooftops with
8 truly renewable Florida sunshine, no natural gas,
9 fossil fuels or electricity that travels far and
10 saves huge energy losses from the end-energy user.
11 We have better alternatives and natural gas and
12 fossil fuels that impacts air quality and the
13 future of our planet and our livelihood.

14 With this in mind, I hope you consider the
15 impacts of this rate increases on all Floridians,
16 especially those more vulnerable and that are in a
17 higher percentage of their income to pay their
18 electric bills. Thank you so much.

19 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you very
20 much, Ms. Tellez. Any questions for Ms. Tellez?
21 Next up. Emilio Lizarraga.

22 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: A polite question.

23 CHAIRMAN CLARK: I'm sorry? Someone had a
24 question?

25 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Yes, sir. May I politely

1 ask whether the feedback we're getting is from one
2 of the Commissioner's open microphone?

3 CHAIRMAN CLARK: We're not hearing any
4 feedback on our end. I'll check with a couple of
5 our --

6 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: We're getting lots out here.

7 CHAIRMAN CLARK: I'm sorry. Repeat that,
8 please.

9 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: We are getting lots of echo
10 out here.

11 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Okay. Let me check with a
12 couple of our intervenors in this case. OPC, FPL,
13 can you give me some feedback on your end? Do you
14 have feedback? That would be a better question, I
15 guess.

16 MS. BARNES: Yes --

17 CHAIRMAN CLARK: We lost you there for a
18 second. Ms. Barnes, can you come back online for
19 me?

20 MS. BARNES: Yes, Mr. Chairman, we are
21 receiving feedback, as well.

22 CHAIRMAN CLARK: You are receiving feedback,
23 as well. Is it so bad that it's difficult to
24 understand?

25 MS. BARNES: There is a slight echo, but we

1 are able to hear the comments.

2 CHAIRMAN CLARK: OPC, can you confirm you're
3 hearing the -- I just want to get a couple of
4 confirmations we're getting it from the same place.
5 OPC may have dropped off the line. Is the court
6 reporter, can she come online for me a second?

7 COURT REPORTER: Yes, sir.

8 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Are you able to hear us okay?

9 COURT REPORTER: I am. Yes, sir.

10 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Are you getting feedback?

11 COURT REPORTER: I am not. The last speaker
12 had a slight echo, but I was able to understand
13 her. It might be a speakerphone issue.

14 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Okay.

15 MS. TELLEZ: If it helps, I can submit my
16 testimony, like, via e-mail.

17 CHAIRMAN CLARK: I'm sorry? Hold on one
18 second.

19 MS. TELLEZ: This is Laura Tellez. I can
20 submit my testimony via e-mail if there was an echo
21 and people couldn't hear it, if that helps.

22 CHAIRMAN CLARK: She was -- if this is Ms.
23 Tellez, she was able to understand it. She said
24 she got it.

25 MS. TELLEZ: Okay. Great. Thank you so much.

1 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you. Okay. Let's
2 stand by one second -- I'll tell you what we'll do.
3 We're going to take about a three-minute recess
4 here and let's see if we can resolve this real
5 quick, check some microphones. I think that will
6 give us time to stretch our legs just a second and
7 we'll be right back. About a three-minute recess.

8 (Brief recess.)

9 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. If we can get
10 everybody back in their seats. Thank you for
11 allowing us that short break. We kind of needed
12 that, as well. We've checked all the systems on
13 this and everything is running as normal on our
14 end. Audio is fine. I have heard from several of
15 you that there's feedback. Likely there is someone
16 with a speaker on that is picking up and causing
17 this problem somewhere. Everyone that's online,
18 please make sure that your phone or computer is on
19 mute. That is the only solution that we know of.
20 If it gets too bad and you're not able to hear, the
21 echo is so bad that it is causing a problem, first
22 of all, the court reporter, please let me know if
23 you have an issue. I'll also be counting on the
24 other parties, intervenors and the parties, to let
25 me know if there's an issue and they're having too

1 much trouble being able to hear. Other than that,
2 we're going to try to proceed and move on.

3 Our next person to testify is Emilio
4 Lizarraga. Emilio.

5 MR. LIZARRAGA: That's correct. Hello,
6 everybody. My name is Emilio Lizarraga. Actually,
7 Manuel Emilio Lizarraga. I have been in Florida
8 for the past 25 years and I'm a resident of the
9 City of South Miami for the past 15 years.

10 I wanted to share a couple of experiences
11 regarding the utility service in Florida. I -- due
12 to my work, I am the vice president of national
13 logistics and e-commerce group of companies. So I
14 have to travel a lot, not only inside the country,
15 but also to many communities of the world, the
16 Middle East, Latin America, Europe. What I can say
17 is that the service that you find here in the U.S.,
18 and especially in Florida, is extremely reliable.
19 I -- due to the COVID situation, I have employees
20 in other parts of the country, in other countries,
21 especially Peru, around 20 developers, and it is
22 regular for me every week, at least one or two
23 employees, have their service disconnected. A
24 schedule for disconnection because they need to do
25 something. I don't remember that this has happened

1 to me here. And even though we have a very
2 inclement weather. We have thunderstorms. We have
3 huge rains. Everybody that live here know, I rate
4 the service provided by FPL -- or by FPL here in
5 Florida -- extremely reliable.

6 And, personally, I happen to have experience,
7 I woke on Sunday morning and I didn't have any
8 electricity. So I called the service department
9 and very quickly they dispatched a truck. They
10 came. They didn't have the part that needs to be
11 replaced. Said they would be back in 45 minutes.
12 They were back in 45 minutes and it was fixed. The
13 whole process, I have tracking of the process, I
14 have information. I could call with my ticket
15 number and they provide be real-time information.
16 So I really appreciate as a consumer the quality of
17 service that I am being provided, you know. That
18 is what I wanted to share with you. I think it is
19 important to always recognize that, you know,
20 things are being done properly, and I think things
21 are being done properly and if financial
22 investments need to done because improvements need
23 to be made, you know, I think it's a good idea to
24 continue.

25 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you very

1 much for your testimony today. Any questions?

2 All right. Seeing none. The next we have --
3 the next three witnesses will be William Chivers,
4 Taylor Neverman, Andrew Hyde. Mr. Chivers, are you
5 on the line?

6 MR. CHIVERS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My
7 name is William Chivers. I reside at 3735 Chair
8 Drive in Titusville in Brevard County. I'm a
9 lifelong resident of this area. And I've been an
10 FPL customer for the past 43 years. Since we built
11 our home 30 years ago, the power service at our
12 home has tended to be pretty susceptible to
13 outages, especially during hurricane season. And
14 apparently there's a limited number of homes that
15 are served on our feeder. So it doesn't seem that
16 we're always the highest priority when it comes to
17 restoring power after an outage, which we certainly
18 understand. So for the past 30 years we've been
19 there, we've assumed that my generator always needs
20 to be ready once we get a storm of any magnitude on
21 the forecast. But, recently, I was thrilled to
22 learn that a hardening project was going to be
23 started in my neighborhood. So on the main road
24 that runs past our home, we're able to drive by for
25 the last couple of weeks and see a hardening

1 project go on with a crew, and it just gives us
2 hope that there's going to be a lot less likely for
3 us to suffer from an outage during an upcoming
4 storm season. Yes, it's delayed our daily commute
5 just a little bit, working around the crews, but
6 we, as we drive by, we cheer them on to see this
7 project after so many years finally come to life.
8 And, again, it's going to give us a hope for much
9 more reliable service.

10 So I went to applaud FP&L for the continued
11 investment that they are making in the hardening of
12 our power lines in our area. To us it signals
13 their desire to provide us with the most reliable
14 service that they can possibly provide. So we are
15 very, very happy for that. Also aware of their
16 continued commitment to not only providing clean
17 and reliable energy, but to alternate power sources
18 such as solar. I'm aware that they just recently
19 cut the ribbon on a large solar plant here not far
20 from where my office is located. I've used solar
21 in the past and will definitely be using it again
22 in the future. So I applaud their investment in
23 some of the alternative energy programs.

24 I do say ditto to all of those who have spoken
25 on FPL's customer service. Even when we've had

1 outages over the years, we know that we're going to
2 get a prompt response from the customer service
3 department and they'll get out as fast as they
4 possibly can. So we do love that. And also to say
5 ditto to those who have expressed their love of
6 electricity. It's something that we easily take
7 for granted until we don't have it, and that's a
8 good reminder of how important it is.

9 I do disagree with those that have tried to
10 make this kind of a socioeconomic issue. We all
11 pay the same for gas, for groceries. There are no
12 discriminators there. And we've seen costs in just
13 about every area of our life rise continually. So,
14 personally, I'm very happy to make some minor
15 sacrifices in other areas if it means that me and
16 my family will have reliable electricity, because
17 it is definitely important to us. To me this is a
18 quality-of-life issue for everybody in our state.

19 So, in closing, I'm happy to be an FP&L
20 customer, life-long customer. I do support them,
21 support the rate increase. I love the current
22 hardening programs I see in our area and I really
23 appreciate the opportunity to address the
24 Commission.

25 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you very

1 much, Mr. Chivers. Does anybody have any questions
2 for Mr. Chivers?

3 Seeing none, moving to our next witness,
4 Taylor Neverman.

5 MS. NEVERMAN: Hi. Yes, I'm here.

6 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Taylor, you're recognized for
7 three minutes.

8 MS. NEVERMAN: Thank you. Again, my name is
9 Taylor Neverman and I have been a resident of
10 Florida almost my entire life. I currently live in
11 North Miami Beach with my husband. And, like many
12 Floridians, the pandemic has caused financial
13 difficulties for my family, although we both have
14 college degrees and work experience, it took us
15 both over three to five months to find jobs in
16 2020. We had to use up most of our savings to stay
17 afloat during that time and we're receiving public
18 benefits. Now we're both working. We're building
19 back our savings and budgeting carefully for
20 expenses, including electricity.

21 The 20-percent rate increase on something so
22 necessary as air conditioning and electricity will
23 be a financial burden for us and many others,
24 especially in Florida where storms and temperatures
25 are huge safety concerns. Our utility payments

1 shouldn't be a cash cow for FPL and we shouldn't
2 have to pay for changes to the system that we
3 didn't ask for, all while FPL continues to harm the
4 environment and future safety through dirty energy
5 practices. FPL has not proven the necessity of
6 those changes, as evidenced by so many comments
7 today, speaking to its reliability and how many
8 people have enjoyed the services. While those
9 large businesses that have testified here today may
10 be able to afford these increased rates, the
11 over-500,000 households who were disconnected
12 during the pandemic were not able to, and there are
13 over 650,000 customers that are currently behind on
14 their payments.

15 The VP of customer service today in his
16 opening statement said that FPL is safe and
17 reliable at affordable rates with the best energy
18 value. As many have said already today, they
19 actually rank 51 out of 52 for energy efficiency
20 and have the seventh-highest IOU rate in the
21 nation, and 70 percent of their energy comes from
22 fossil gas. So I don't understand why we would
23 raise rates to pay for them to continue investing
24 in dirty energy. If these rate hikes are approved,
25 it will set a dangerous precedent for baseless

1 claims, negatively impacting people like me
2 immediately and ensuring greater damage to us all
3 in the long run. Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you very
5 much, Ms. Neverman. Does anybody have any
6 questions?

7 All right. Next up, Andrew Hyde. Andrew
8 Hyde, are you on the line?

9 All right. We will move to the next consumer
10 Nikisha Williams. Nikisha, are you on the line?

11 Next, Maria Orejuela. Maria, are you on the
12 line?

13 Next is Elena Hershey. Elena Hershey.

14 MS. HERSHEY: This is Elena Hershey.

15 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Hi. Ms. Hershey. All right.
16 You're recognized for three minutes, Ms. Hershey.

17 MS. HERSHEY: Thank you. Good afternoon,
18 everyone. My name Elena Hershey. I'm a resident
19 of Broward County since 1998. I reside at 1151
20 Southwest 156th Avenue, and I have another rental
21 property that's also located in Broward County.

22 I wanted to add praises to the previous
23 speakers on behalf of customer service of the
24 Florida Power & Light. It is very assuring to know
25 that we have a company that provides a critical

1 service to, as the consumers and residents, not
2 only an especially during the hurricane time, but
3 also in everyday life, even with mundane topics. I
4 had to reach out to the Florida Power & Light a
5 couple of times, one of which the back of the
6 building where we have residents, the alley was
7 very dark and we needed to find a way to put a
8 light pole to make sure everyone is safe in the
9 alley, and it was such an easy way to reach out to
10 the customer service in getting this issue resolved
11 in a very timely manner.

12 And I wanted to also add to -- and praise the
13 customer service with their online services where
14 you can go very simply online, look at all your
15 properties, figure out what bills are due, pay
16 online with any kind of problems and delays. And
17 today, in today's world, it is so important, so
18 critical to have a company with a easy customer
19 service, someone that is on the other side of the
20 line that can help you with those kind of problems
21 that affect a lot of people. And, yes, we have to
22 say the rate increase that, you know, is today's
23 reality. And, fortunately, we have a great company
24 that is very focused on customer service and
25 servicing the consumers. So I support and I add my

1 praises to the previous speakers. And that's all I
2 have to say.

3 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Wrong button. Thank you very
4 much, Ms. Hershey. Does anybody have any
5 questions?

6 Next up, Dewayne Youngblood.

7 MR. YOUNGBLOOD: Yes, can you hear me?

8 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes. Mr. Youngblood, you're
9 recognized for three minutes.

10 MR. YOUNGBLOOD: Yes. My name is Dewayne
11 Youngblood. I live at 82 Casa Grande Lane in Santa
12 Rosa Beach, Florida. That's in Walton County.
13 I've lived at that residence for 16 years now, have
14 been a customer of FP&L since then.

15 I would like to just talk about how FP&L's
16 customer service has been excellent for my family
17 and I over the last 16 years during several storms.
18 Actually, we never even lost power during Hurricane
19 Michael. We were very fortunate to be so close to
20 the eye-wall of that storm and not to lose power.
21 So kudos to them. But I also want to talk about a
22 specific example. Recent example, I had a
23 construction project at that location. And,
24 unfortunately, through no fault of ours, the
25 contractor hit the underground wire that ran from

1 the road to the house and simply pulled the conduit
2 and wire off the house and caused a pretty
3 dangerous situation. I called FP&L and immediately
4 a representative from them, FP&L, came to my house,
5 assessed the situation. And as soon as that
6 afternoon, the temporary power had been laid and
7 reinstalled to my home, and then they jumped
8 through several different hoops to get a contractor
9 lined up, along with their maintenance division to
10 permanently install the power, reinstall the power
11 back from the road to my house in less than a few
12 days time frame. They realized the situation was
13 difficult for me and my family not to have power
14 and not to have a safe installation of power during
15 that time period. And, really, stood out with
16 their service. And so I wanted to recognize that
17 on this call.

18 As far as rate studies, et cetera, I think
19 everyone knows that costs have gone up and, you
20 know, I'm sure you guys are going to do a good job
21 of monitoring their request and making sure what
22 they ask for is legitimate and I put a lot of faith
23 in you and FP&L and would support a legitimate rate
24 increase. Thank you for your time.

25 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you for that testimony,

1 Mr. Youngblood. All right. Anybody have any
2 questions for Mr. Youngblood?

3 All right. Seeing none, José Nimo. Mr. Nimo,
4 are you on the line? José Nimo.

5 Next is Scott Sensenbrenner. Scott
6 Sensenbrenner.

7 All right. Next is Susan Stewart.

8 MS. STEWART: Yes, thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Ms. Stewart, I need you swear
10 you in before you begin.

11 (Whereupon, Susan Stewart was sworn in by
12 Chairman Clark.)

13 MS. STEWART: I do.

14 CHAIRMAN CLARK: You're recognized for three
15 minutes.

16 MS. STEWART: Good afternoon. My name is
17 Susan Stewart. I live at 800 North Tamiami Trail,
18 Sarasota, Florida. I'm a customer of FPL. I've
19 lived in Florida for 12 years. Like the others,
20 I've seen the quality of service and value of the
21 rates charged by FPL. Over the coming years, we've
22 faced increasing demands on our power source as a
23 result of rising temperatures, greater demand for
24 more residents moving here and potential increases
25 in weather-related storms and conditions. We need

1 our infrastructure hardened and problem-solve
2 proactively before we have tremendous problems.

3 I also appreciate the growing interest of FPL
4 in solar infrastructure. During the pandemic, when
5 we were challenged to remain at home, and for me to
6 provide care for my aging parents in their home,
7 and subsequently in the hospital and a Hospice
8 setting, I never took electricity for granted.
9 Watching other communities struggle with no power
10 source -- I'm sorry. Watching other communities
11 struggle with power source issues, I felt
12 comfortable I could move this issue to my
13 not-to-worry list, while needing to grapple with so
14 many other life-or-death issues.

15 During Hurricane Irma in 2017, I was
16 responsible for both a workplace building and
17 ensuring continuity of service for my home and that
18 of those elderly parents.

19 Through my role as co-chair of the Sarasota
20 United Way Board of Directors, and as part of the
21 Season of Sharing and another nonprofits in
22 Sarasota, I'm very aware of special programs FPL
23 has to offer to offset costs for individuals and
24 families in need. The support absolutely will need
25 to grow in the coming years. I support the rate

1 increase so that we can have the necessary and
2 proactive service and personnel we have come to
3 depend on in the much more challenging times ahead.
4 Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you very
6 much, Ms. Stewart. Does anybody have any
7 questions?

8 All right. Next up, Lina Caicedo. Lina
9 Caicedo.

10 Next is Stibalys Gomez. Stibalys Gomez.
11 Charles Behrens.

12 MR. BEHRENS: Yes, I'm here.

13 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes. Mr. Behrens, you're
14 recognized for three minutes.

15 MR. BEHRENS: Good afternoon. My name is
16 Charles Behrens. I'm from down the street in
17 Orlando, so I am a customer of OUC, which is very
18 influenced by any FPL rate changes. Today I am
19 asking you to remember why we are all here in the
20 first place. We are citizens of the State of
21 Florida, figuring out the best way to get
22 electricity into our homes and towns. Long ago,
23 the best way to do this was to build a huge
24 centralized generating stations, and then license
25 monopoly companies to sell us their electricity.

1 PUC -- excuse me -- the PSC was soon formed to
2 limit the profiteering by those monopolies. What
3 is not as frequently talked about is that these
4 monopolies pass along their construction cost to
5 us, the citizens. That means huge profits for them
6 every time they build a new generating plant. That
7 has also created an unhealthy feedback loop of
8 continuously needing to build new ones, just to
9 grow their stock price, even when the citizens
10 don't need them.

11 Today's move to raise the rates by 20 percent
12 is just another attempt to justify, get more
13 centralized generators for FPL's monopoly profits.
14 Now, this is not wrong. FPL is just doing their
15 job to maximize profits. That's the job of a
16 corporation. That's the system we've set up. But
17 what the citizens of Florida need is for the PSC to
18 remember its job, too, and to represent the best
19 interests of the citizens. And at this point in
20 history, that means rethinking the overall
21 structure of our whole electrical system.

22 Today, we the citizens don't need or want more
23 centralized power generation. That simply makes
24 our society more vulnerable. The recent Colonial
25 pipeline ransomware attack is a chilling example of

1 this over-centralization. Today it's cheaper and
2 much more resilient for society to distribute its
3 electricity generation from within our
4 neighborhoods. We want to move to having solar on
5 our rooftops and in our backyards and we want to be
6 able to use vehicle-to-grid to create grid
7 stability. That's the vision we want our PSC to
8 implement, not yet another proposal to raise the
9 rates for, yet, more monopolized power. Instead,
10 the PSC needs to put the citizens first. We want
11 you, our Public Service Commissioners, to help us
12 go solar. Enough of the centralized fragile
13 monopoly profiteering. Put the citizens first.
14 Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Behrens. Does
16 anybody have any questions?

17 All right. Seeing none. Next up -- yes.

18 MS. GOMEZ: My name is Stibalys Gomez. You
19 guys called me previously, but I had my phone on
20 mute. So you guys weren't able to hear me.

21 CHAIRMAN CLARK: I'm sorry. So what is your
22 name again?

23 MS. GOMEZ: My name is Stibalys Gomez.

24 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Ms. Gomez. Okay. Yes, you
25 are recognized.

1 MS. GOMEZ: Awesome. Thank you. Hello,
2 everyone. Buenos Tardes. My name is Stibalys
3 Gomez. I live in the city of West Miami. I was
4 born here, raised, born in 1996. I'm here today as
5 a community member and as an organizer who mainly
6 organizes with Miami's Tenant Union to speak with
7 you guys about your plan to raise rates by
8 20 percent.

9 My concern is that now is not the time. It
10 matters because we are still recovering from the
11 global pandemic. And it also matters because more
12 than 11 million Americans are behind on rent and
13 facing eviction by the end of June, 20 percent
14 being Floridians, my own family included. If they
15 cannot pay rent, I fail to understand how you
16 expect communities to afford a rate increase.

17 I feel that you all should reconsider and
18 analyze the current state of our state and nation
19 so that you do not become part of the wrong side of
20 history where it brings more unnecessary suffering
21 to communities that haven't even fully recovered
22 yet.

23 It was mentioned prior that FPL has responded
24 very well during many crises, but currently we are
25 in one, and I believe that this response is not one

1 to be proud of. It was also mentioned prior that
2 many are not familiar with the shut-off of FPL, but
3 I am very familiar, because I work directly with
4 tenants on a day-to-day basis. I have spoken to
5 and worked with many individuals across North
6 Miami, down to Florida Keys, whose lights were shut
7 off while they were still recovering from COVID,
8 and I fail to see how this is also something to be
9 proud of.

10 I ask that you think more clearly about this
11 two-billion-dollar rate increase that communities
12 do not want or need at this time. I also ask that
13 you ask yourselves, will you do what is best for
14 our community or what is best for FPL. And, in
15 this case, this, what is best for FPL, is not is
16 what is best for communities.

17 I also want to mention, because somebody spoke
18 earlier and said that we all pay the same. When
19 groceries are high-end, we all pay the same, but it
20 is false to believe that we are all affected the
21 same way by these increases. Not everyone is able
22 to afford groceries. Not everyone is able to
23 afford all of these things, especially with the
24 evictions that are going on. Now is just not the
25 time, and I highly, highly disagree with increasing

1 the rates at this moment. Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much,
3 Ms. Gomez. Does anyone have any questions?

4 All right. Next up, Herman Younger. Herman
5 Younger. Kevin Lopez. Chris Lawrence. William
6 Feinberg.

7 MR. FEINBERG: Good afternoon. William
8 Feinberg here.

9 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Mr. Feinberg, you're
10 recognized for three minutes.

11 MR. FEINBERG: Thank you, Commissioners. It's
12 an honor to be here testifying for FP&L. And I am
13 in favor of the rate increase. And several reasons
14 that I would like to tell you about my personal
15 experience with them. Just this past year, after
16 hurricane season, I experienced FP&L going through
17 my entire neighborhood replacing the equipment and
18 installing underground lines. It was a huge
19 benefit to our neighborhood, which has constantly
20 been losing power every single year, even during a
21 heavy rainstorm. So their investment in our
22 neighborhood is crucial.

23 I am also a general contractor here in Fort
24 Lauderdale. I have built several buildings with
25 the assistance of FP&L's engineers and design team

1 to assist us, making our building energy-efficient.
2 And I must say that over the last 20 years, I'm a
3 40-year resident of Fort Lauderdale, actually, from
4 the north, and I must say that I've actually seen
5 my energy bills from FP&L go down over the last 20
6 years. Even though my home, I've added more things
7 to it, so I am, you know, proud to say that I don't
8 mind paying for the service, especially when the
9 service is good.

10 I also think it's very important that we all
11 recognize that FP&L is investing in clean energy.
12 I have been seeing the solar fields that they have
13 been building and that does not come cheaply. It
14 takes money to invest in our structure and the
15 future of our country and unless we are able to
16 build clean energy systems, we will not be able to
17 continue the lives that we have.

18 I also want to state that during the storm
19 season, the work that FPL does before, during and
20 after every storm is incredible. It keeps our
21 state running. So, with my approval, I say they do
22 deserve a rate increase and I thank you for this
23 opportunity to testify.

24 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Feinberg.
25 Anyone have any questions?

1 All right. Next up Sara Lavenka.

2 MS. LAVENKA: Hi, good afternoon.

3 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Ms. Lavenka. I need to swear
4 you in before you begin.

5 (Whereupon, Sara Lavenka was sworn in by
6 Chairman Clark.)

7 MS. LAVENKA: Yes, sir.

8 CHAIRMAN CLARK: You are recognized.

9 MS. LAVENKA: Well, thank you, Chairman and
10 good afternoon, Commissioners. Thank you for this
11 opportunity to share my experience with FP&L. You
12 know, I think I started -- I registered with a
13 mindset of what I wanted to share. It was going to
14 come from a personal experience, but after speaking
15 with my husband about what it is that we wanted to
16 share, we decided that it actually was deeper, the
17 impact that FP&L has on our community runs deeper
18 than just what our experience as a paying FP&L
19 customer.

20 My husband was impacted by the pandemic. And
21 during that time he was very blessed to still have
22 a job, but he was unfortunate to have to let go of
23 multiple employees. And during that time, many of
24 them were lucky enough to acquire at-home positions
25 with online customer service. This allowed them to

1 stay afloat, and because many of their bills with
2 FP&L -- because their service with FP&L was able to
3 continue by having their accounts frozen, they were
4 able to work. They were able to put food on their
5 table. They were able to put gas in their cars.
6 They were able to support their families. In
7 addition to that, I am very fortunate. I reside in
8 the city of Hollywood and I sit on the board for a
9 local nonprofit organization where we serve
10 underprivileged children.

11 I'm not sure if many of you have heard of PAL,
12 the Police Athletic League, but we service, prior
13 to COVID, children, I would say, anywhere between
14 275 to 300 kids on a given day. The demographics
15 of our children that we serve, 30 percent of them
16 are on the poverty line. And we heard multiple
17 stories over and over again about how FP&L had
18 their accounts frozen. And by doing that, these
19 families were able to take the little funds did
20 have, continue on with any type of necessities that
21 these children needed, services continued so these
22 kids could have education online, you know, access
23 to their internet.

24 So, again, this is not about the great
25 customer service, which we all know FP&L has, so I

1 echo everything everybody has shared before me, but
2 this is a testament to the impact, the footprint
3 that FP&L as an entity, as a customer, has played
4 in our community. Not only are they a business,
5 but they are a community partner. So I wanted to
6 take a moment to recognize that. And those
7 opportunities that we've watched them give back
8 would not be possible without the funding.

9 So, at the end of the day, I wholeheartedly
10 support this rate increase. Granted, nobody ever
11 wants to spend any extra money that they don't need
12 to, but without these funds, all of the pleasures
13 of our world would not be possible. So I
14 appreciate the efforts. I commend FP&L for what
15 they have done and I look forward to watching many
16 more moments take place. So, thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you very
18 much for your testimony. Does anyone have any
19 questions for Ms. Lavenka?

20 Seeing none, moving on. Dawn Mays. Dawn
21 Mays.

22 MS. MAYS: Hi, how are you today?

23 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Great. Ms. Mays, you're
24 recognized.

25 MS. MAYS: Good afternoon. Thank you,

1 Mr. Chairman and Commissioners. My name is Dawn
2 Mays and I am the Senior Director of Real Estate
3 for Sheldon Cove. Our address is 400 Imperial
4 Boulevard, Cape Canaveral, Florida. I am a
5 customer, personally, of FPL and we also, as a
6 family-owned small business with commercial
7 property holdings throughout Brevard County.

8 I'm here today to share my thoughts on FPL.
9 We, as individuals and as a business, have
10 experienced a continual improvement of service,
11 response, and I'm very encouraged by the plans FPL
12 has to continue its improvement that it provides to
13 Florida businesses and its residents. We have
14 watched as FPL invested in the future of Florida.
15 These investments and the hardening of power lines
16 throughout the state, and especially in our county,
17 the investments of solar power and natural gas
18 throughout the state, and, most importantly for us,
19 the investments of technology so that FPL is
20 focused on preparing Florida for its future.

21 As a business owner, I am always monitoring
22 what affects the cost of doing business. However,
23 I recognize that the investments in infrastructure,
24 technology and improving the product that is
25 delivered to each and every resident and business

1 is very important for the future of Florida. I'm
2 here today to support the rate increase for FPL.
3 And I hate supporting rate increases because that
4 means that things are going to cost more. However,
5 we cannot grow the state of Florida and grow our
6 businesses without making sure that we have a
7 secure and consistent power source and grid for our
8 state.

9 Thank you very much and I hope you have an
10 excellent day, and I appreciate the service that
11 the Commission does for the state of Florida.

12 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you. Thank you for
13 that very much, Ms. Mays. Anybody have any
14 questions for Ms. Mays?

15 All right. Next up, Suzanne Holmes.

16 MS. HOLMES: Thank you so much for allowing me
17 to give testimony today. I'm Suzanne Holmes, 3590
18 South Ocean Boulevard, Palm Beach. I've been an
19 FPL client for over 40 years and I just wanted to
20 say that I heartily approve this planned rate
21 increase.

22 One of the greatest perils in the US today is
23 our electrical grid, and it has been mentioned
24 before the disasters that have happened just
25 recently in Texas and California, and who can ever

1 forget the great blackout of New York City that
2 lasted a week. Without the infrastructure
3 investment that FPL plans to make and has been
4 making, our country, and not to say our very-much
5 imperiled Florida, will be in grave danger. I've
6 listened very attentively to all the testimony and
7 I agree and I'm happy to hear all the great service
8 that everybody has talked about. I've also heard
9 with somewhat alarm people who are opposed to this
10 again and again mention socioeconomic factors that
11 should more readily be addressed to the state
12 legislature and to other organizations that truly
13 have the ability to make a change in the lives of
14 people. FPL is a business. It's a well-run
15 business, it's a well-organized business and I hope
16 that it is an approval for this rate change. Thank
17 you.

18 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much,
19 Ms. Holmes. Any questions for Ms. Holmes?

20 All right. Next up is Raimundo Castellanos.
21 Raimundo Castellanos.

22 MR. CASTELLANOS: Good afternoon. How are you
23 doing?

24 CHAIRMAN CLARK: You're recognized, sir.

25 MR. CASTELLANOS: Good afternoon,

1 Commissioners. Can you guys hear me all right?

2 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes, sir. We can hear you
3 fine.

4 MR. CASTELLANOS: So I go by Ray. It's
5 easier. Ray Castellanos. My company is Authentic
6 Construction. Our office is 10261 Southwest 72
7 Street. I've been building homes in South Florida
8 since 1995 and have had a long-lasting relationship
9 with FPL and with individual members of the FPL
10 team over the years. I cannot deliver my product
11 and keep it running without FPL. The service has
12 always been excellent. I've heard so many people
13 say that. I'm very happy to hear that, but the
14 excellent service and the individuals have been
15 exceptional. I have no idea how they do it with
16 such a big corporation, but it is different than
17 what you're used to seeing. There is a culture in
18 there of service that is top-notch.

19 Over the years, I've had plenty of situations
20 to be able to see their efforts and service at
21 work, plenty of things that either one of my guys
22 screwed up or just a storm that came in, or just
23 equipment that went down, but I've needed their
24 help many times and every time they've never let me
25 down. They're always there, which is not what I

1 can say for most of the people I do business with.
2 They have had this great service, and over the
3 years they have increased their rates very little.
4 I think it's been, like, four years since the last
5 increase. And I'm telling you, I get sometimes
6 four increases in a week on materials that we're
7 buying today for construction. And it's not that
8 we're buying better materials. It's just that cost
9 is going up. And so the cost of everything I'm
10 doing today is going up. Everything I'm buying,
11 the supply chain issues, we've got labor shortages
12 down here. It's real, you know, and my little
13 business, my costs are going up every day to
14 operate and, quite frankly, I need to get more
15 revenues myself.

16 So I want FPL to be stronger. I want FPL to
17 maintain and build a more solid infrastructure to
18 be on top of it. You've seen it already happening
19 in our community. Somebody mentioned that earlier.
20 Happened in my community, as well. I've seen them
21 take all these posts out and put concrete posts. I
22 want FPL to be proactive in design and construction
23 to avoid outages in the future in storms. You
24 know, I want them to keep researching into and
25 investing into clean energy. And that costs money.

1 I want them to invest money in security. I think,
2 you know, a terrorist attack on a power grid could
3 be probably the worst thing that, you know, I can
4 imagine here. And I want them to be -- I want them
5 to be able to maintain a level of service that they
6 have been giving until now. And, again, this costs
7 money --

8 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you -- Mr. Castellanos,
9 your time is up. Thank you for your testimony
10 today. Let's see if anyone has any questions for
11 you. Does anyone have any questions for Mr.
12 Castellanos?

13 All right. Thank you very much, sir. I
14 appreciate that.

15 Next up this is Isabel Abreu-Nunez.

16 MS. ABREU-NUNEZ: Yes. Hello, how are you?

17 CHAIRMAN CLARK: You're recognized for three
18 minutes, Ms. Nunez.

19 MS. ABREU-NUNEZ: Thank you. My name is
20 Isabel Abreu-Nunez. I also work for Authentic
21 Construction with Mr. Castellanos. And my part of
22 the business is I deal mostly with the construction
23 service reps at FPL, and my experience has always
24 been extremely positive. My experience is that FPL
25 wants to work with its members, with the users,

1 with the end-user. We have a lot of clients who
2 want to go solar and FPL helps them. FPL takes an
3 active role in helping its members and its users
4 move to an energy-efficient future. I support the
5 rate increase, because I do see it, at least with
6 my experience with FPL, I do see that they are
7 doing everything they can to make it a better
8 future, a more energy-efficient future.

9 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you very
10 much, Ms. Nunez.

11 That concludes our list of scheduled callers.
12 Is there anyone that is registered to speak today
13 that did not get the opportunity? Anybody that we
14 called that did not get an opportunity to speak?

15 All right. Very good. With that in mind, I
16 believe that will conclude this particular service
17 hearing. We will reconvene tonight at 6:00 p.m.
18 for the second hearing of the day.

19 Commissioners, do you have anything, any
20 questions? Staff, anything to add?

21 All right. With that in mind, we'll stand
22 adjourned until 6:00 o'clock. Thank you.

23 (Proceedings concluded.)
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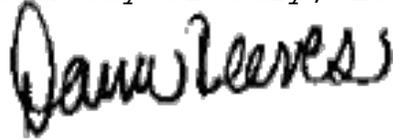
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COUNTY OF LEON)

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Reporter, do hereby certify that the foregoing
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I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not a relative,
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financially interested in the action.

DATED THIS 9th day of July, 2021.



DANA W. REEVES
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