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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 ART GRAHAM
COMMISSIONER ANDREW GILES FAY
COMMISSIONER MIKE LA ROSA
COMMISSIONER GABRIELLA PASSIDOMO

DATE: Thursday, June 24, 2021

TIME: Commenced: 2:00 p.m.
Concluded: 3:53 p.m.

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

REPORTED BY: DEBRA R. KRICK
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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16 Citizens of Florida, and Environmental Confederation of
17 Southwest Florida.

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23

24

25

1 APPEARANCES CONTINUED:

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11 William C. Garner, 3425 Bannerman Road Unit 105, #414,
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14 GEORGE CAVROS, ESQUIRE, 120 E. Oakland Park
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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.

21 NATHAN A. SKOP, ESQUIRE, 420 NW 50th
22 Boulevard, Gainesville, Florida 32607, appearing on
23 behalf of Daniel R. and Alexandria Larson (Larsons).

24
25

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
16 Commission, 2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard, Tallahassee,
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: Good afternoon. It is two
3 o'clock. I would like to welcome you all to this
4 customer service hearing in the Florida Power &
5 Light and Gulf Power rate case.

6 Today's hearing is an important part of the
7 rate case process and is our opportunity to hear
8 from you, the customers.

9 My name is Gary Clark. I am the Chairman of
10 the Florida Public Service Commission, and me and
11 my fellow Commissioners are very interested in
12 hearing your comments about the quality of service
13 that you receive from Gulf Power Company and
14 Florida Power & Light, and about the proposed rate
15 increase today.

16 At this time, I am going to ask staff, if they
17 would, to please read the notice.

18 MS. LHERISSON: By notice issued on June 4th,
19 2021, this time and place has been set for a
20 customer service hearing in Docket No. 20210015-EI.

21 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Ms. Lherisson.

22 Next we will take appearances of counsel,
23 beginning with Florida Power & Light.

24 MS. COTNER: Good afternoon. My name is Kate
25 Cotner, and I am appearing on behalf of Florida

1 Power & Light Company. I would like to also enter
2 an appearance for Wade Litchfield and Russell
3 Badders.

4 At the appropriate time, Christopher Chapel
5 will provide FPL's opening remarks, followed
6 briefly by remarks in Spanish by Ms. Prieto.

7 Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much.

9 OPC.

10 MS. CHRISTENSEN: Good afternoon. My name is
11 Patricia Christensen. I would like to put in an
12 appearance for Richard Gentry, the Public Counsel,
13 Charles Rehwinkel and Anastacia Pirrello.

14 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Ms. Christensen.
15 Florida Rising.

16 MR. LUEBKEMANN: Good afternoon, and thank
17 you, Mr. Chairman.

18 This is Jordan Luebkekmann for Florida Rising,
19 LULAC and ECOSWF. I would also like to enter an
20 appearance for Bradley Marshall and Christina
21 Reichert.

22 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you very
23 much.

24 FEA.

25 FIPUG.

1 SACE.

2 Florida Retail.

3 Vote Solar.

4 MS. OTTENWELLER: Good afternoon, Mr.
5 Chairman. Katie Chiles Ottenweller is here for
6 Vote Solar. And I would also like to enter an
7 appearance for Bill Garner on behalf of the CLEO
8 Institute.

9 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Ms. Ottenweller.
10 Walmart.
11 Larsons.

12 MR. SKOP: Yes, good afternoon, Mr. Chairman.
13 Nathan Skop entering an appearance on behalf of
14 Daniel and Alexandra Larson.

15 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Skop.
16 Let my go back. Was someone on from Walmart?
17 All right. Next up is FAIR.

18 MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Robert
19 Scheffel Wright appearing on behalf of Floridians
20 Against Increased Rates, Incorporated. I would
21 also like to enter an opinion -- an appearance for
22 my law partner, John Thomas LaVia, III.

23 Thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Wright. We
25 will get your opinion later.

1 Staff counsel.

2 MS. LHERISSON: Bianca Lherisson. I
3 would also like to enter an appearance for Suzanne
4 Brownless and Shaw Stiller.

5 MR. HETRICK: And Keith Hetrick, your General
6 Counsel, Mr. Chair. And I will enter an
7 appearance, I will go ahead and do that for Mary
8 Anne Helton, the Deputy General Counsel.

9 Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much.

11 Did we overlook anyone?

12 MR. JOHNSON: Hi. Good afternoon. My name is
13 Jeremy Johnson, and I just joined the call. I
14 apologize. I am a couple minutes late.

15 MR. HERNANDEZ: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman.
16 My name is Peter Hernandez, and I also just joined
17 the call a couple minutes late.

18 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Just for the
19 record, this is for the attorneys -- this -- this
20 particular introduction is for the attorneys making
21 an appearance. If you are an attorney making an
22 appearance, we need you to state the company you
23 are representing, please.

24 MR. HERNANDEZ: I'm not an attorney.

25 MR. JOHNSON: Nor am I.

1 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you very
2 much.

3 All right. For our customers that are on the
4 line, we will be getting to you in just a couple of
5 minutes. Let me kind of lay out some instructions
6 how we are going to be proceeding today, and then
7 we will move on from there.

8 As I mentioned, this hearing is designed so
9 that we can hear directly from the consumers. This
10 is your opportunity to express your thoughts, your
11 concern and comments related to the utility's
12 request. In August, there will be a technical
13 hearing where the Commission will take in the
14 substance and the evidence of the case.

15 If you are on the line and you would like to
16 speak directly to an FPL or a Gulf Power customer
17 service representative, we have them available
18 standing by, and they can be reached by calling
19 (833)407-2007. They will be available throughout
20 the hearing today, and the hearing that is
21 conducted this evening.

22 We also have a Public Service Commission
23 employee that is available. Mr. Curt Mouring from
24 our accounting department is a PSC representative
25 for this docket. He can be reached by emailing

1 cmouring@psc.state.fl.us, or by calling
2 (850)413-6427.

3 Commission technical staff are also on the
4 line today.

5 As a reminder, this is an official hearing
6 that will be transcribed and become part of the
7 official record. As such, we will make certain
8 that each customer is sworn in prior to their
9 testimony. If you signed up on-line, many of you
10 had the opportunity to swear in by checking a box
11 on-line. If you did so, that will suffice. If you
12 did not, then we will ask you to swear or affirm
13 your testimony before you begin today.

14 I also remind you that your comments are
15 subject to cross-examination by the other parties;
16 that is, you may be asked questions by any of the
17 parties or by any of the Commissioners.

18 Pardon me one second.

19 If you are calling in today, we ask that you
20 please keep your phone on mute at all times until
21 you are called upon to speak. If your phone is off
22 mute and has any interference in the hearing, we
23 will have to remove you on-line immediately. We
24 would encourage you to resolve the problem and call
25 back in immediately. If you are disconnected for

1 any reason, please call back in as soon as
2 possible.

3 I would also encourage you to not use the
4 speakerphone function when speaking. Please speak
5 directly into your phone, or use a headset. It
6 causes a lot less interference on our end. If you
7 are disconnected, please dial back in as soon as
8 possible.

9 Also, we will have a three-minute time limit
10 on all speakers. I apologize for what may seem
11 like a short duration in advance, but we have 50
12 speakers lined up to speak today. It's going to be
13 a couple of hours, and out of courtesy to those
14 that are at the line, we would like to try to get
15 through all of our speakers as quickly as possible
16 so that everyone is given a fair amount of time.

17 At the three-minute mark, you will hear a
18 bell. It is our understanding that sometimes it is
19 difficult to hear the bell. We will ring it at the
20 three o'clock mark -- excuse me, the three-minute
21 mark and the 3:15 mark, okay? At 3:15, I will
22 interrupt you and ask you to wrap up your comments
23 in about five seconds if you are still going. So
24 please be respectful of the other speakers, and try
25 to keep your comments within the three-minute

1 timeline.

2 In addition to sharing your comments with us
3 here today, you may submit written comments to the
4 Commission. There is a pre-addressed comment card
5 for download on our website, or you can email your
6 comments directly to the Commission's Clerk --
7 Commission Clerk, and that email address is
8 clerk@psc.state.fl.us. Please reference Docket No.
9 20210015-EI.

10 I would also like to remind you that if during
11 the course of the hearing another customer has said
12 basically the same thing that you would like to
13 say, you can simply agree with that customer's
14 comments and allow us the opportunity to move on a
15 little bit faster. We want to make sure that
16 everyone is as comfortable as possible while
17 providing their testimony. Whether your comments
18 are made verbally tonight, or whether they are
19 received in writing, please be assured that your
20 comments will be reviewed and taken into
21 consideration during the course of these
22 proceedings.

23 All right. Before we begin, any Commissioners
24 have anything they would like to add? I know
25 Commissioner Graham is on-line. I know

1 Commissioner Fay is on-line as well. Any comments
2 from Commissioners before we begin today?

3 COMMISSIONER FAY: None from me, Mr. Chairman.
4 Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you very
6 much.

7 We are going to begin with opening statement
8 from FPL followed by OPC. And then from that
9 point, we will allow the other parties just a
10 second or two to make a brief introduction as well.

11 FPL, you are recognized.

12 MS. COTNER: Thank you, Chairman.

13 As I noted earlier, Christopher Chapel will
14 provide our opening remarks, followed by Ms.
15 Prieto.

16 We also have members from our customer service
17 team on-line and available for this hearing.

18 MR. CHAPEL: Thank you, Chairman Clark. Thank
19 you, Commissioners, and thank you for all the
20 customers who have taken the time to be with us
21 here today.

22 Before I begin, I would like to extend our
23 thoughts and prayers to the families affected by
24 the tragedy in Surfside, Miami. FPL is working
25 closely with Miami-Dade Fire & Rescue to ensure the

1 safety, and the safety of our customers and crews.
2 As ever, we remain on site for as long as
3 necessary, and will continue to provide support to
4 the responders and to the community.

5 My name is Christopher Chapel, and I am the
6 Vice-President of Customer Service for FPL.

7 FPL is a regulated energy company. This means
8 the Public Service Commission oversees our rates
9 and operations to ensure we deliver safe and
10 reliable service at fair prices. We are here today
11 because we are asking for new base rates beginning
12 in 2022.

13 I am proud to be a part of the team that
14 provides you with America's best energy value;
15 electricity that's not just clean and reliable, but
16 also affordable. That doesn't mean we can't be
17 better, which is why your feedback today is so
18 important to us. Fundamentally, our mission is to
19 provide you with excellent service at affordable
20 rates.

21 Your electricity is cleaner and more reliable
22 than ever. It is also affordable. The rates you
23 pay are well below the national average. Our
24 typical residential bill is lower today than it was
25 15 years ago. This is the result of FPL's

1 consistent and deliberate effort to continuously
2 improve upon our performance in the value we
3 provide our customers. It's a purposeful and
4 never-ending commitment to be the best utility
5 possible, and this is at the heart of our rate
6 request.

7 We are standing by our proven track record and
8 promising an even better tomorrow, a more resilient
9 and sustainable energy future that all of us can
10 depend on.

11 Our smart investments have increased
12 generation efficiency and dramatically improved
13 reliability. In fact, we have been the most
14 reliable utility in Florida for the last 15 years,
15 and we have improved our storm preparedness and
16 mobilization. As a result, we have dramatically
17 improved our restoration times. It's been five
18 years since our last rate request.

19 Florida is now the third large state and this
20 world's 17th largest economy. FPL has grown too.
21 We now serve more than 11 million Floridians, and
22 though we have invested billions of dollars every
23 year to support Florida's growth, and to
24 continuously improve your service, many of these
25 investments are not included in current rates. So

1 we've asked the PSC to approve a plan that would
2 phase in new rates starting in 2022.

3 Please keep in mind that the proposed increase
4 is spread across millions of customers in over a
5 four-year period. So even with the proposed rate
6 increase, typical residential bills will continue
7 to remain well below the national average. And
8 importantly, the plan will allow us to continue to
9 make proven investments in infrastructure, clean
10 energy and technologies that benefit our customers
11 and our growing state.

12 While we work hard every day to keep bills
13 low, we also recognize that some of our customers
14 face challenges. To this end, we partner with
15 dozen of assistance agencies to distribute LIHEAP
16 and Care to Share funding to help customers who are
17 struggling to pay their bills, and during the COVID
18 pandemic, we a received approval from the PSC to
19 create a number of unique programs that provided
20 approximately \$75 million in assistance to
21 customers.

22 As we always have, and always will, we are
23 here to support our customers. In fact, we have
24 employees right now to help. As Chairman Clark
25 mentioned, you can contact them at (833)407-2007.

1 In closing, we are committed to serving you
2 today, while always looking over the horizon so we
3 are ready to meet your energy needs tomorrow. We
4 are looking forward to hearing from you. We want
5 to hear what we do well. To that end, we've asked
6 customers who have said they value our service to
7 share their thoughts today. But more importantly,
8 we want to know where we can improve. So thank you
9 for your participation, and thank you for the
10 opportunity to serve you.

11 I would like now to turn it over to Rosie
12 Prieto, Senior Director of our Customer Care team,
13 to welcome our Spanish speaking customers.

14 MS. PRIETO: Thank you, Christopher.

15 (Whereupon, Ms. Rosie Prieto made introductory
16 remarks in Spanish.)

17 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you, FPL.

18 Just a quick reminder, if you put your phone
19 on hold, we will probably have to disconnect you.
20 If you use the hold function, sometimes we get all
21 kind of feedback here. We are hearing music now,
22 so please do not put your phone on hold. Put it on
23 mute only.

24 Just another reminder as well. This is a
25 designated Spanish speaking hearing. We have an

1 interpreter available for anyone that might need
2 it, Jackie Guldris is our interpreter. Thank you
3 for being with us today as well, Jackie.

4 (Whereupon, interpreter translated Chairman
5 Clark's statement.)

6 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you.

7 Ms. Christensen, you are recognized.

8 MS. CHRISTENSEN: Good afternoon, Chairman.

9 Good afternoon. My name is Patricia
10 Christensen. I am with the Office of Public
11 Counsel. We are an office with the Legislature set
12 up to represent you, the ratepayers of Florida
13 Power & Light.

14 We are investigating FPL's rate request in
15 this matter. To help us, we've hired experts in
16 accounting, depreciation, cost of capital and other
17 regulatory matters, and we will try to get the best
18 results we can for you, the customer.

19 Today we are here to hear from you, the
20 customers, about your experience with FPL, good or
21 bad. We thank you for taking your time to attend
22 this hearing and give us your input.

23 Thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much, Ms.
25 Christensen.

1 Florida Rising.

2 MR. LUEBKEMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman,
3 Commissioners. Good afternoon. My name is Jordan
4 Luebkekmann, and along with my colleagues, Bradley
5 Marshall and Christina Reichert, I have the great
6 privilege of representing Florida Rising, the
7 League of United Latin American Citizens of Florida
8 and the Environmental Confederation of Southwest
9 Florida in this proceeding.

10 These organizations have missions spanning
11 environmental conservation, economic and civil
12 rights and environmental and climate justice, but
13 all three are in this case to oppose FPL's attempt
14 to raise rates by 20 percent. This rate hike
15 allows FPL to increase their profits and pay for
16 unneeded fossil fuel gas plants, among other
17 unnecessary expenses.

18 We have been listening during these hearings
19 and know that many of you have notices the service
20 crews you see making upgrades to transmission lines
21 or repairs after storms. It's important that you
22 know that these activities are mostly or entirely
23 paid for by other cost recovery mechanisms separate
24 from the additional \$6.5 billion that FPL is
25 seeking to charge you in rates over the next four

1 years in this docket. FPL doesn't need to charge
2 you one more cent to pay for that work.

3 As the evidence will show, FPL's proposed rate
4 increase, and how FPL plans to spend that extra
5 money, is bad for ratepayers, bad for low-income
6 households and communities of color, and bad for
7 the environment. For these reasons, we will be
8 asking that FPL's request be rejected.

9 Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much.

11 Any of the other intervenors like to speak?

12 Ms. Ottenweller, you are recognized.

13 MS. OTTENWELLER: Yes, Mr. Chairman, if I may.

14 CHAIRMAN CLARK: You are recognized, Ms.

15 Ottenweller.

16 MS. OTTENWELLER: Thank you, and good
17 afternoon.

18 I am here on behalf of the CLEO Institute and
19 Vote Solar. Two nonprofit organizations working
20 towards an affordable, clean, equitable and
21 resilient energy system that works for all
22 Floridians, especially those who are most
23 vulnerable.

24 We know you have a lot going on, and so to all
25 the customers calling in, we want to say thank you

1 so much for taking the time and we really look
2 forward to hearing your thoughts.

3 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you, Ms.
4 Ottenweller.

5 Any other party like to speak?

6 MR. SKOP: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Nathan Skop on
7 behalf of Larsons, if I may be recognized.

8 CHAIRMAN CLARK: You are recognized, sir.

9 MR. SKOP: Yes. Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman.
10 My name is Nathan Skop. As an attorney, it's my
11 privilege to represent the Larsons in the FPL rate
12 case.

13 The Larsons are FPL residential customers
14 living in Palm Beach County who are very concerned
15 about the significant rate impact to the FPL
16 proposed rate increase. The Larsons would like to
17 thank the other FPL customers for participating in
18 this customer service hearing today, and also
19 extend their condolences to victims of the
20 condominium collapse in Surfside, as FPL mentioned.

21 The FPL rate increase represents the largest
22 electric rate increase in Florida's history. FPL
23 has the burden to demonstrate that this request is
24 fair, just and reasonable. FPL should be allowed
25 to recover the prudent additions made to rate base

1 since the last rate request and settlement, but
2 whether that requires a rate increase is a
3 completely separate matter.

4 It's also important to understand, however,
5 that FPL claims about having low -- lower bills
6 than other electric utilities does not provide the
7 legal basis for the Florida Public Service
8 Commission to increase FPL's base rates.

9 The Larsons oppose the FPL request because the
10 evidence will demonstrate the FPL request is well
11 in excess of what FPL needs to continue to provide
12 reliable service to FPL customers while remaining
13 financially healthy.

14 As the Commission is aware, the return on
15 equity is one of the many contested issues in the
16 FPL rate case. In the -- in this current rate
17 case, FPL has requested a mid point ROE of 11.5
18 percent. FPL has a very strong balance sheet and
19 is very financially healthy.

20 In sharp contrast to the FPL request, on
21 May 4th, the Florida Public Service Commission
22 approved the Duke rate case settlement with a mid
23 point ROE of 9.85, which set a new benchmark for
24 investor-owned utilities in the state of Florida.
25 With a much stronger balance sheet than Duke, it's

1 difficult to understand how FPL could justify a mid
2 point ROE that's 165 basis points above the ROE
3 benchmark that was recently approved by the Florida
4 Public Service Commission on May 4th.

5 The Larsons are also deeply concerned about
6 media reports about the influence of investor-owned
7 utilities, such as FPL, alleged to have over the
8 Florida Public Service Commission and the Florida
9 Legislature.

10 In closing, the Larsons are hopeful that the
11 time and expense of a fully litigated rate case,
12 which would require the Public Service Commission
13 to decide the case, could be avoided and that a
14 fair and reasonable settlement can be reached
15 between the parties which would balance the
16 interests of the consumers in Florida and FPL
17 alike.

18 Thank you for your time.

19 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much, Mr.
20 Skop.

21 Mr. Wright, you are recognized.

22 MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

23 Good afternoon. My name is Robert Scheffel
24 Wright, I go by Schef. I was born in Miami, and I
25 have worked on energy matters and issues in Florida

1 here in Florida for more than 40 years, including
2 service in Governor Bob Graham's Energy Office, and
3 seven years on the Public Service Commission staff
4 before I became an attorney.

5 This afternoon, I have the privilege of
6 representing Floridians Against Increased Rates,
7 Incorporated, which we call FAIR, a nonprofit
8 corporation here in Florida. On behalf of FAIR, I
9 thank all of you customers for turning out and
10 participating in this hearing today.

11 I want to be clear about this, and this is
12 borne out in our Articles of Incorporation. From
13 the viewpoint of customers, from all customers and
14 from the more than 500 FPL customers who are
15 already members of FAIR, FAIR wants a healthy FPL,
16 but our position is real simple, FPL should have
17 enough money to do its job, but not too much. It
18 is FPL's duty and responsibility, its job, to
19 provide safe and reliable service at the lowest
20 possible cost.

21 The evidence in this case will show that FPL's
22 rate increase request, which by the way is by far
23 the largest in Florida history, would give it way
24 more money than it needs to do its job. Putting it
25 politely, FPL's request is unreasonable, and the

1 resulting rates would be unfair.

2 The unfairness of FPL's request is this: FPL
3 does not need the extra \$1.1 billion of your money
4 that it wants next year, and they surely don't need
5 all of what they've asked for in 2023 either. Even
6 if FPL received no rate increase in this case at
7 all, FPL could cover all of its projected expenses
8 for 2022, including interest. It could recover all
9 costs associated with their existing and projected
10 investments for 2022, and still have well over \$2
11 billion in profits left over.

12 While some investments in FPL's existing rate
13 base were not included when the current rates were
14 set, that does not mean that those costs are not
15 covered. FPL has earned at the very top of its
16 allowed rate of return range for the last three
17 years.

18 And it's even worse than that. FPL also want
19 to take money, surplus value that your payments
20 will create use what they call a depreciation
21 reserve surplus to pad their profits even further,
22 perhaps up to another billion-and-a-half dollars
23 over the next four years.

24 FAIR and our team of witnesses will fight to
25 prevent FPL from getting any of your money that FPL

1 does not need. We want them to have what they
2 need, and to prevent them from using up value that
3 you create to further pad their profits.

4 This is your hearing. Tell the Commissioners
5 what you think. Thank you for participating, and
6 thank you for your attention.

7 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Wright.

8 Any other parties?

9 All right. Let's move on to the reason we are
10 here, and that's to hear directly from FPL and Gulf
11 Power customers.

12 Just as a reminder, you will have three
13 minutes to provide your testimony. I am going to
14 try to call each name in blocks of three, give you
15 kind of a heads-up to be ready to turn your phone
16 off of mute and be ready to speak. I will call
17 each person out by name. If you have not been
18 sworn in, I will swear you in. We will recognize
19 you to begin three minutes of testimony.

20 All right. Let's begin. We are going to
21 have -- the first three are going to be Councilman
22 Douglas Lawson, William Midgett and John Dunnuck.
23 Are you three on the line? Mr. Lawson, are you
24 available?

25 MR. LAWSON: Thank you, good afternoon, Mr.

1 Chairman.

2 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Mr. Lawson, let me swear you
3 in before you begin.

4 (Whereupon, Councilman Daniel Lawson was sworn
5 by Chairman Clark.)

6 MR. LAWSON: I do.

7 CHAIRMAN CLARK: You are recognized, sir.

8 MR. LAWSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and board
9 members. My name is Douglas Lawson. I am a
10 Councilman for the City of Riviera Beach.

11 I have been a lifelong member of this
12 community. I am also a business owner -- I'm from
13 this community -- for the last 12 years in the City
14 of Riviera Beach, and I also have an office located
15 in West Palm Beach.

16 As a resident and as a business owner I have
17 been extremely pleased with level of service I have
18 experienced with FPL. I do understand that the
19 board has this tough decision of this rate increase
20 spread over millions of customers, and I understand
21 that as a business owner, and as an elected
22 official, that business must go on.

23 It's tough decisions like this that we have to
24 operate on. And business that operates off my
25 clients within my specific personal business and

1 within the government within the residents that we
2 elect.

3 So we try our very best to operate within our
4 budget within our ad valorem tax as a city elected,
5 but have to continue to provide the amazing
6 service. The water plant that we are trying to
7 bring for our city is going to require inevitable
8 increases. Our services and delapidated buildings
9 in our community require the increases, require the
10 investment from the community.

11 So the service that FPL is providing has been
12 stellar, and I just want to thank FPL for their
13 prompt responses to my businesses and for my local
14 residents that I serve here in this community, and
15 actually investing into our community with the
16 smart technology, the micro grid, the EV chargers,
17 the solar trees at Barracuda Bay, those are just
18 some of the amenities that FPL has offered, and
19 understanding that this rate increase is part of
20 business. So we have to understand that we have to
21 continue to move forward, and we have to be
22 supportive of them.

23 Now, residents and individuals and customers
24 are not going to see that the budget and operations
25 that come with certain things that continue to move

1 this business forward, but it's something that we
2 have to make these tough decisions to do.

3 I want, as elected officials, especially one
4 that services the plant that FPL is currently is,
5 is to work as a better partner with FPL. So we are
6 here to offer whatever services that are needed so
7 that we can work on better relationships from local
8 municipalities, from our current residents, and to
9 see how we can continue to bridge this gap. So we
10 are in support of -- of the raise that's going to
11 be coming from FPL.

12 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

13 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much, Mr.
14 Lawson.

15 Anyone have any questions for Mr. Lawson?

16 Next up, William Midgett. Mr. Midgett, are
17 you on the line?

18 All right. Next up John Dunnuck. Mr. John
19 Dunnuck.

20 All right. Next is Elizabeth -- the next
21 three will be Elizabeth Benac, Jeanette Ruiz and
22 Mary Michelle Lamb.

23 Ms. Benac, are you on the line?

24 MS. BENAC: Hi, yes. This is Elizabeth, Betsy
25 Benac.

1 CHAIRMAN CLARK: You are recognized.

2 MS. BENAC: I am a customer of FPL and -- can
3 you hear me, please?

4 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes, ma'am. We can hear you.
5 You are recognized.

6 MS. BENAC: You can hear me? Okay. Good.
7 Thank you so much.

8 And I am a customer in Manatee County,
9 Florida. I also served as a county commissioner
10 for the past eight years in Manatee County,
11 Florida. I did retire. Did not seek reelection in
12 November, but -- so I am speaking today solely as a
13 customer of Florida Power & Light.

14 I want to say, though, that while serving as a
15 county commissioner, we had a great relationship
16 with Florida Power & Light. Many investments have
17 been made in our community. They are trying to
18 strengthen the grid to provide great service for
19 our residents.

20 We've had a large investment in solar fields
21 in our community. And we have the largest battery,
22 as I understand, in the United States being
23 constructed right now.

24 We appreciate all of these improvements. We
25 know that nobody, nobody wants to see their rates

1 go up, but unfortunately, we seem to have -- be in
2 a very inflationary time, everything is costing
3 more. We recognize infrastructure is so important
4 in our community, as well as our state. And to
5 make sure that this infrastructure is reliable, we
6 understand it that there has to be investments, and
7 the costs have to be covered.

8 I understand the Public Service Commission has
9 a very tough job to try to weigh all of the
10 evidence. I appreciated listening to everyone's
11 point of view as -- as each person and
12 representative spoke. And I am sure that the
13 Public Service Commission will take all of that
14 evidence into consideration and make the right
15 decision.

16 I just want to say that as a Florida Power &
17 Light customer, one who is currently up in
18 Michigan, for example, and the rates are so much
19 higher here, and it's important in Florida that we
20 keep the rates reasonable, at the same time, we
21 invest in the infrastructure that we need.

22 So I am in support of this effort by Florida
23 Power & Light to try to make sure over the next
24 five years, whatever the period will be, that they
25 have the resources they need to keep providing

1 reliable energy.

2 You know, things are changing as far as we are
3 having maybe more storms, more frequent storms,
4 more intense storms, and it's very important that
5 we be prepared so that our residents can weather
6 the storm.

7 So I just wanted to thank you all for taking
8 the time to hear from customers, and I want to say
9 that I am in support of Florida Power & Light doing
10 what they need to do to continue to provide safe,
11 affordable energy for our residents.

12 Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you very
14 much.

15 Anyone have any questions?

16 Moving to the next customer, Jeanette Ruiz?

17 MS. RUIZ: Yes, I am here. Can you hear me?

18 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes, you are recognized, Ms.
19 Ruiz.

20 MS. RUIZ: Thank you.

21 So my name is Jeanette Ruiz, and I am an FPL
22 customer in Hialeah, Florida. I am speaking today
23 against the FPL rate increase. I am concerned
24 about this crease for two reasons.

25 One, although I personally live in an energy

1 efficient home and am able to afford my electric
2 bills, many of my family are not. My parents and
3 grandparents, who are also FPL customers but could
4 not be on this call, are fixed incomes and find
5 themselves to stretch their money to afford their
6 electric bills, especially during these brutally
7 hot summer months. Oftentimes, they opt to open
8 their windows at night and run fans and have their
9 AC unit running all day.

10 I have lived in Miami my entire life, and
11 anyone who lives here knows that the high heat days
12 have become more frequent. I worry that with the
13 rate increase, many people will be forced to limit
14 their energy and risk putting their health and
15 safety in danger.

16 My second reason why I am against the rate
17 increase is that I, as a customer of FPL, am
18 unwillingly contributing to worsening our climate
19 crisis. As a small business owner, and homeowner,
20 I worry about the future of Miami. We are ground
21 zero for climate change.

22 I received a letter regarding my FPSC
23 correspondence from FPL, and I wanted to quote
24 something as it's written here: Serving customers
25 today comes with a fundamental responsibility of

1 also looking over the horizon to ensure we are
2 ready to serve customers tomorrow.

3 I couldn't agree with this more, however, FPL
4 plans to continue investing in fossil fuels which
5 contribute to emissions as well as pollute our
6 community.

7 Here in Florida, we have a unique opportunity
8 to be an example for the nation by using clean
9 renewable energy sources like solar that could
10 create jobs. I would love for FPL seriously
11 consider what its customers are asking for and work
12 together with us towards a resilient and equitable
13 future.

14 Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Ms. Ruiz.

16 Anybody have any questions?

17 All right. Next up, Mary Michelle Lamb.

18 MS. LAMB: Hello, yes, I am here.

19 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes, you are recognized,
20 Ms. Lamp.

21 MS. LAMB: I live in Ormond Beach in Volusia
22 County, and from 2005 to 2016, I lived in Merritt
23 Island in Brevard County, and FPL was our service
24 provider. We were always pleased with service
25 during all the storms through those 10 years, and

1 FPL was always quick to get power back up and
2 running.

3 And then in 2017 through 2020, I lived in
4 Brevard North Carolina in Transylvania County in
5 the mountains, and had a different service provider
6 there. We have ice and snowstorms in the
7 mountains, and more frequent power outages and
8 higher electric bills.

9 So I am very happy to be back in Florida for
10 many reasons, and -- (inaudible) -- out the
11 proposed four-year rate plan, and I support the
12 increase so that FPL can protect their customers
13 during all the storms that we have here in Florida,
14 and also see that they are increasing needs of
15 green energy. So I support the rate increase, if
16 that's what it takes to keep the residents in
17 Florida safe and up and running during the storms.

18 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you very
19 much.

20 Anyone have any questions for Ms. Lamb?

21 All right. Thank you for being here today.

22 Next up, Maria Johnston, Nicole Kaiser and
23 Peter Hernandez.

24 Ms. Johnston.

25 MS. JOHNSTON: Thank you. Thank you for the

1 opportunity to speak today.

2 My name is Maria Johnston. I am both a
3 resident and business owner in Plantation, Florida,
4 which is Broward County, and I am a customer of
5 Florida Power & Light.

6 I do support the rate increase due to the fact
7 that Florida Power & Light has done a great job of
8 keeping the service going in my area even during
9 and after major storms.

10 In addition, over the last decade, my bills
11 have not changed significantly. And unlike what we
12 saw happen in the Texas area, where the power grid
13 was in such bad shape that not only the residents
14 were without service for longer than anyone
15 expected, but the bills were much higher than
16 anyone ever imagined. I actually have family in
17 Texas, and they receive bills higher than \$2,000
18 due to the way that their power sources are set up.

19 We don't have to worry about that here in
20 Florida. And I want Florida Power & Light to
21 continue to harden and improve the infrastructure,
22 and I feel that they should be allowed to increase
23 the rates in order to keep the power reliability
24 the same or better than it is today.

25 Thank you very much.

1 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you very
2 much.

3 Next up, Nicole Kaiser.

4 MS. KAISER: Good afternoon, everyone. My
5 name is Nicole Kaiser, and I am a member ON behalf
6 of the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce, a recent
7 graduate of the Leadership Miami Class of 41, the
8 2020 class. I am here today to speak about FPL's
9 commitment to helping our communities.

10 During my experience with Leadership Miami,
11 our group had to put together a community service
12 project to give back, and we decided to assist a
13 local South Dade school that services primary and
14 pre-education students from a nearby homeless
15 shelter and transitional housing facility in
16 Homestead, Florida.

17 Our group approached FPL to assist us with
18 volunteers, and they came through with over 70
19 employees who volunteered their entire day to
20 renovate the complete outdoor area of the space for
21 the school, implementing a new turf field, new
22 learning apparatuses for the students, as well as
23 implementing a lot of the building materials.

24 Thanks to FPL, the volunteers were able to
25 complete all of the renovations in one day. And I

1 would also like to mention that in addition to
2 their help with that, I do work in the commercial
3 real estate industry, and thanks to FPL's power, we
4 are seeing an increased interest from users coming
5 down from the north, and they are very pleased with
6 what FPL is providing.

7 Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much, Ms.
9 Kaiser.

10 Anyone have any questions?

11 Next up, Peter Hernandez.

12 MR. HERNANDEZ: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman,
13 members of the Commission. My name is Peter
14 Hernandez, I am a resident --

15 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Mr. Hernandez, my apologies,
16 let me swear I you in before you begin.

17 (Whereupon, Peter Hernandez was sworn by
18 Chairman Clark.)

19 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yes, sir.

20 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. You are
21 recognized.

22 MR. HERNANDEZ: Good afternoon again. Mr.
23 Chair and members of the Commission. My name is
24 Peter Hernandez. I am a resident, small business
25 owner, property owner and a former City

1 Commissioner for the City of Hollywood.

2 My observation of FPL has been that they are a
3 forward-thinking company. The clean energy center
4 that they did in Port Everglades is
5 state-of-the-art and has the future in mind for our
6 children in order for them to be able to prosper on
7 something that is sustainable.

8 As a former City Commissioner, I experienced
9 when FPL retrofitted all of the LED lights in the
10 City of Hollywood in order for our streets to be
11 brighter and safer, and therefore, I am supportive
12 of their request.

13 Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and have a good
14 afternoon, everyone.

15 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much, Mr.
16 Hernandez.

17 Anyone have any questions?

18 All right. Our next three speakers, Stephen
19 Clements, Adrian Madriz and Ira Waitz.

20 Stephen Clements, are you on the line?

21 MR. CLEMENTS: Yes, I am on the line.

22 CHAIRMAN CLARK: You are recognized, sir.

23 MR. CLEMENTS: Thank you. I -- good
24 afternoon, Mr. Chairman and members of the
25 Commission. I am speaking to you as Financial

1 Controller of the Bonaventure Resort and Spa, which
2 is located in Weston, Florida, in Broward County,
3 and I am calling in support of FPL and just to tell
4 you a little bit about its terrific relationship
5 with businesses such as ours.

6 We have -- we are a nine building resort, plus
7 a large conference center and spa, which was built
8 in the early '80s, and some of our infrastructure
9 is pretty dated right now. But with FPL's help and
10 assistance, we have been able to continue using the
11 infrastructure that we have, and have excellent
12 service with it.

13 During the last few years, we have noticed
14 that the amount of power outages caused by storms
15 have decreased substantially, which, of course,
16 enables our guests to enjoy the facility rather
17 than enduring power outages.

18 Also, we, last year during the COVID-19
19 crisis, incurred a financial hardship and worked
20 very diligently with our account representatives
21 and management at FPL to help us through to keep
22 service going and be able to make proper
23 arrangements so that we could keep our accounts
24 current, but work it out that we would also be in
25 conjunction with our cash flow, and that

1 partnership and understanding has been tremendous
2 to our success.

3 And finally, I want to be able to say that
4 back in 2017, when FPL needed emergency crews, we
5 were able to house them during the Hurricane Irma,
6 and we just worked very well in partnership with
7 the utility. And we have seen improvements in
8 service through the years, and whatever they need
9 to make it happen, we want to support because it's
10 for the good of the economy and good for the local
11 community.

12 Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you very
14 much, Mr. Clements.

15 Any questions?

16 Next up Adrian Madriz. Adrian Madriz.

17 Next speaker, Ira Waitz.

18 MR. WAITZ: This is Ira.

19 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Mr. Waitz, you are
20 recognized.

21 MR. WAITZ: Thank you.

22 My name is Ira Waitz, 201 East Las Olas
23 Boulevard, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. I currently
24 work for the Stiles Corporation, a 70-year old Ft.
25 Lauderdale based real estate development company,

1 and I have worked in the real estate development
2 industry for about 35 years, and during those
3 years, many, if not most of my projects were in the
4 Florida Power & Light service area. I primarily
5 work with engineering and construction divisions at
6 FPL, but also set up accounts for temporary and
7 permanent service.

8 We recently completed a 430,000 square foot
9 shopping center development in West Dade County
10 where Florida Power & Light brought in the
11 infrastructure to service this development, and
12 their efforts were well coordinated with our
13 development and construction teams, and electric
14 service was provided timely, so we were able to
15 meet our deliverables to our major tenants.

16 I am currently managing the development of
17 three other projects located in Dade, preferred and
18 St. Johns Counties, and the Florida Power & Light
19 representatives assigned to these projects are
20 doing an outstanding job with communication and
21 infrastructure design efforts.

22 Having worked with FPL over such a long period
23 of time, they appear to have made many customer
24 service improvements, which in turn makes my job as
25 a development manager less stressful, and as the

1 timely delivery of permanent electric power to
2 these projects is critical to our success.

3 As it relates to rate increases for FPL. I
4 know nobody likes rate increases, so I am not in
5 support -- not not in support. I'm going to leave
6 the merits of their rate increase to other
7 witnesses that have better knowledge of the
8 internal workings of Florida Power & Light.

9 Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you very
11 much, Mr. Waitz.

12 Anybody have any questions?

13 Next three speakers are Patricia Chukerman,
14 Donald Collins, Stibalys Gomez.

15 Ms. Chukerman.

16 MS. CHUCKERMAN: I am here?

17 CHAIRMAN CLARK: You are recognized.

18 MS. CHUCKERMAN: I think you have to swear me
19 in.

20 CHAIRMAN CLARK: You were -- you are sworn in
21 already?

22 MS. CHUCKERMAN: Okay. Great.

23 So I am calling on -- I live in Dania Beach,
24 Florida. I have been an FPL customer since I moved
25 into my house. And I am happy to say that since

1 2008, we have had maybe five brownouts. We have
2 never had an interruption of services since 2008.
3 I feel the price is fair for the service that I
4 get. I would like to continue to get continue to
5 get this great service. I think a price increase
6 request is fair.

7 I also think that the way they handled the
8 payment plans during COVID was a big help to all
9 those people who needed it.

10 I think that's all. I think FPL is a great
11 community partner, and they try and work really
12 hard with their customers to make sure that
13 everything is going fine.

14 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you very
15 much --

16 MS. CHUCKERMAN: Thank you for the
17 opportunity.

18 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much, Ms.
19 Chukerman. We appreciate that.

20 Anyone have any questions?

21 All right. Next speaker, Donald Collins.
22 Donald Collins.

23 Next speaker --

24 MR. MADRIZ: Again, hello, hello?

25 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes, Mr. Collins, yes. You

1 are recognized.

2 MR. MADRIZ: No. No. This is not
3 Mr. Collins. Hello, yes. My name is Adrian
4 Madriz. My name was called earlier. I apologize.
5 I wasn't able to get into the meeting, can I speak
6 now?

7 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Your name was what again?

8 MR. MADRIZ: Adrain Madriz, OR Adrian Madriz.

9 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes, Mr. Madriz, you are
10 recognized.

11 MR. MADRIZ: Thank you very much.

12 My comments today are regarding the FPL rate
13 increase. I am strongly against this rate
14 increase. I believe that FPL has placed an undue
15 burden already enough as it is on all of their
16 utilities bill payers in the state of Florida,
17 especially during the pandemic, in which they were
18 very inflexible with the majority of people who
19 could not pay their utilities due to some kind of
20 strain, some kind of economic stresser. So I don't
21 think they are in a position right now to be asking
22 the very people that they have been taking
23 advantage of throughout the entire pandemic for a
24 rate increase given their past performance. And I
25 very much would like to see a situation in the

1 future where any future rate increases have to be
2 approved by voters through a state referendum.

3 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you very
4 much, Mr. Madriz.

5 Anyone have any questions?

6 Thank you for your testimony today.

7 MR. MADRIZ: Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Next up we will call again
9 Mr. Donald Collins.

10 All right. Stibalys Gomez.

11 MS. GOMEZ: Yes. Hello.

12 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes, Ms. Gomez, were you on
13 our list last night?

14 MS. GOMEZ: No, not last night, but on one of
15 the previous ones.

16 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Okay. All right. You are
17 recognized.

18 MS. GOMEZ: Thank you Mr. Chairman.

19 Hello everyone, my name is Stibalys Gomez. So
20 I would born here in Miami in 1996. I will be 25
21 in August, and I live in the City of West Miami.

22 Today I am here as a community member and
23 organizer with the Miami Tenant Union to speak
24 about your plan to raise rates by 20 percent.

25 I had the amazing opportunity to speak at a

1 previous meeting and hear the opinions of other
2 community members, but I would be lying to you if I
3 said I wasn't disappointed. The vast majority were
4 in favor of this increase of -- (inaudible) -- as
5 their reason for support.

6 At the last meeting, I told you my story, my
7 concerns and shared experiences working with
8 tenants from North Miami all the way down to
9 Florida City. Today I am going to debunk some
10 myths surrounding this increase, and help you all
11 keep us in mind as you hear other testimony,
12 because we should be making informed decisions, and
13 my concern is that that isn't the case for Miami.

14 Let me begin with some myths of how this will
15 be an investment into clean energy to combat the
16 climate crisis.

17 For background, I am a graduate of the
18 Catalyst Miami Career program, graduate of the CLEO
19 Institute CLEO Speaker Network, was a training team
20 lettered for the Climate Mobilization, where I
21 taught individuals across the country how to give
22 Climate emergency response training. I am a
23 journalism major and have been involved with
24 countless individuals, organizations and elected
25 officials who center around climate crisis process

1 to put in place solutions that we need.

2 To start off, FPL has said that we -- in order
3 to reach -- the goal of going toward zero
4 emissions, and FPL's parent company, NextEra,
5 enjoys boasting about how it is a leader in the
6 clean energy transition, yet it is still one of the
7 few utility companies that has not pledged to
8 decarbonize. Instead, you will see phrases like
9 reducing carbon intensity, which gives them the
10 freedom to continue polluting. FPL also fails to
11 support legislation that would increase renewable
12 usage, and instead, actively lobbies against it.

13 Another myth is that they say we use clean
14 American natural gas. Natural gas does not equal
15 clean energy. In fact, the drilling and extraction
16 of natural gas emits methane, which has an up to 56
17 times more potent warming potential than carbon
18 dioxide.

19 FPL also has been converting shutdown coal
20 plants into natural gas plants, which will continue
21 to pollute. For example, the Gulf Power's Plant
22 Crist converted into natural gas was renamed the
23 Gulf Clean Energy Center, despite the fact that it
24 will not be releasing clean energy.

25 I, for one, don't want a future where we

1 continue to use fossil fuels. And I am sure those
2 of you here today that understand and believe in
3 the science would agree that the transition also to
4 fossil fuels isn't something we can debate anymore.
5 It has to be done.

6 As of yesterday, we are at 419 parts per
7 million --

8 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Ms. Gomez. Ms.
9 Gomez. Ms. Gomez --

10 MS. GOMEZ: I am so sorry, did I --

11 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Your time is up, Ms. Gomez.
12 Wrap your comments up, please.

13 MS. GOMEZ: Well, just to conclude, I hope
14 that everyone here today does more research into
15 this, and that you guys make an informed decision,
16 and not to just believe everything that is told.

17 Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Ms. Gomez.

19 Anybody have any questions for Ms. Gomez?

20 All right. Next three speakers will be Joel
21 Morales, Clinton Shannon, Herman Younger.

22 Mr. Morales. Mr. Morales.

23 Clinton Shannon, Clinton Shannon.

24 MR. SHANNON: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman.

25 Clint Shannon.

1 CHAIRMAN CLARK: You are recognized.

2 MR. SHANNON: Thank you, sir.

3 My name is Clint Shannon, and I am the Chief
4 of Police for the City of Palm Beach Gardens in
5 Palm Beach County.

6 I just wanted to take a minute of your time
7 today to discuss and inform you of our relationship
8 with -- with Florida Power & Light, and
9 specifically with Florida Power & Light corporate
10 security division.

11 We have formed an outstanding partnership with
12 them. They are an active member and participants
13 in our Chiefs of Police Association in the county
14 and -- and have a lot of support for law
15 enforcement throughout Palm Beach County.

16 We share training. We support each other's
17 endeavors in our roles. We share intelligence on
18 related criminal activity and shared interests. We
19 work together with securing infrastructure sites,
20 and we collectively work together company-wide when
21 we mobilize for storm preparation.

22 I just wanted to mention our -- our
23 outstanding relationship is -- is quite furthered
24 by the professional quality employees that Florida
25 Power & Light have, and they always display a

1 cooperative effort with law enforcement.

2 The City also worked closely on many projects
3 with Florida Power & Light, including a lot of
4 clean initiatives. But I just wanted to take a
5 minute of your time, and my purpose today for
6 calling in would be just to discuss the quality
7 employees and the cooperative effort, and the
8 professionalism of Florida Power & Light. We
9 realize you have a tough decision and a tough job
10 making these decisions that you are faced with
11 today.

12 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much for your
13 comments, Mr. Shannon.

14 Anyone have any questions?

15 Next speaker is Herman Younger. Herman
16 Younger.

17 All right. Next three speakers will be Marion
18 Skalicky, Todd Huffstickler, Tanya Burke. Marion
19 Skalicky, are available?

20 MS. SKALICKY: Yes, I am here.

21 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. You are
22 recognized for three minutes.

23 MS. SKALICKY: Thank you.

24 My name is Marion Ruckel Skalicky. I am a
25 customer in Niceville, which is in Okaloosa County

1 in Northwest Florida.

2 As a residential customer, I have experienced
3 fair prices and rare power outages, despite severe
4 storms. As a business owner and landlord, our
5 company was able to improve energy efficiency by
6 replacing our shopping center roof with reflective
7 roofing and replacing parking lot lighting with --
8 (inaudible). The energy cost savings enables us to
9 help keep the common area utility costs down.
10 Because of Gulf Power, Florida Power & Light's
11 assistance, my company won the Florida PSC's EEE
12 award in March 2021 for these energy improvements.

13 As a real estate developer, I have experienced
14 excellent customer service in design and
15 engineering phases of new neighborhood power and
16 lighting.

17 As a businesses owner, I understand it
18 sometimes costs money to maintain the level of
19 service and value we currently enjoy in the state
20 of Florida. I support Gulf Power and Florida Power
21 & Light in the price increase.

22 Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Ms. Skalicky.

24 MR. COLLINS: This is Don Collins. Don
25 Collins is on.

1 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Anyone have any questions for
2 Ms. Skalicky?

3 All right. Who was it?

4 MR. COLLINS: Don Collins is on.

5 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes, Mr. Collins, is that
6 you?

7 MR. COLLINS: Yes, sir.

8 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. You are
9 recognized for three minutes, sir.

10 MR. COLLINS: Thank you, sir.

11 My name is Don Collins, I am Senior
12 Vice-President with First Florida Bank, a division
13 of The First here in the Okaloosa County market.
14 We cover Okaloosa and Walton Counties. We deal a
15 lot with construction, both commercial and
16 residential, dealing with contractors. And I would
17 like to say that Florida Power and Gulf Power, the
18 local representatives have made my job a lot easier
19 by helping with the development process, as Marion
20 stated, working with us and getting everything done
21 properly and on time.

22 The customer service from the local group is
23 phenomenal, they are always there to help, to
24 communicate, to work with and talk to you. And any
25 storm we've had in the past, they've always been

1 very visible, very cooperative and help get our
2 power restored in a very timely manner.

3 So from a business perspective and the banking
4 world, we support Gulf Power and Florida Power 100
5 percent.

6 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much, Mr.
7 Collins.

8 Anyone have any questions for Mr. Collins?

9 All right. Next speaker, Todd Huffstickler.

10 MR. HUFFSTICKLER: Hi. Good afternoon. I am
11 Todd Huffstickler. Co-owner of Vann Data Services
12 in Daytona Beach, Florida. We are located in
13 Volusia County, and we have been a satisfied
14 customer of Florida Power & Light since 1978. Vann
15 Data Services provides IT service and support for
16 many small and medium businesses across Central
17 Florida, and our clients depend on us to keep their
18 computer networks up and running 24/7.

19 With that being said, it is paramount that
20 power to our building is clean and reliable so that
21 our servers and networks are up and running, and we
22 can support our clients every day.

23 We are constantly seeing FPL in our area
24 upgrading their equipment, including replacing many
25 wooden power poles with concrete poles to

1 strengthen their infrastructure.

2 So we understand that with increased
3 infrastructure costs increased, we understand it's
4 a necessary cost of just doing business. So we are
5 very happy with Florida Power & Light and their
6 services and response over the years, and depend on
7 them to continue to provide this essential service.
8 So we feel that Florida Power & Light is a great
9 partner and understand the needs to move forward.

10 Thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Mr. Huffstickler, we are
12 having a very difficult time hearing you. If you
13 can get a little closer to the mic, or make a quick
14 adjustment for us.

15 MR. HUFFSTICKLER: Absolutely. I had my
16 headset on it. I thought it was okay. Can you
17 hear me now?

18 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes, sir, that's much better.

19 MR. HUFFSTICKLER: All right. You want me --
20 I will go one more time. Hear we go.

21 I am Todd Huffstickler, co-owner of Vann Data
22 Services in Daytona Beach, Florida, located in
23 Volusia County. We have been a satisfied customer
24 of Florida Power & Light since 1978.

25 Vann Data Services provides IT service and

1 support for many small to medium businesses across
2 Central Florida. Our clients depend on us to keep
3 their computer networks up and running 24/7. With
4 that being said, it's paramount that power to our
5 building is clean and reliable so that our servers
6 and networks are up and running, and we can support
7 our clients every day.

8 We are constantly seeing FPL in our area
9 upgrading their equipment, including replacing many
10 wooden power poles with concrete poles to
11 strengthen their infrastructure. We understand
12 that with increased infrastructure comes increased
13 costs, and we understand it's a necessary cost of
14 doing business.

15 We have been very happy with FPL and their
16 services and response over the years, and depend on
17 them to continue to provide this essential service,
18 so we feel Florida Power & Light is a great partner
19 with us.

20 Thank you. Hopefully that was better.

21 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much. Much
22 better.

23 Anyone have any questions?

24 Next up, Tanya Burke.

25 MS. BURKE: Good afternoon. Tanya Burke. I

1 row side at 618 Clear Lake Avenue, West Palm Beach,
2 Florida, and I am a customer of Florida Power &
3 Light.

4 Do I need to be sworn in, Mr. Chairman?

5 CHAIRMAN CLARK: No, ma'am, you are
6 recognized.

7 MS. BURKE: Okay. Well, good afternoon, sir,
8 and members of the Commission.

9 Again, my name is Tanya Burke. I was born and
10 raised in West Palm Beach, Florida, in the
11 Roosevelt Estates community. In 1984, I left to
12 pursue my educational and professional career. I
13 returned in 2015 to the same community to care for
14 my aging parents. Currently, I am the caregiver of
15 my 89-year-old father.

16 Please know that I am in support of the rate
17 increase for several reasons, but will share two.

18 First, Florida Power & Light must continue to
19 make strategic capital investments to its
20 infrastructure to prevent failures before, during
21 and after major storms. Continuous investments
22 improve the quality and longevity of uninterrupted
23 service and their competitive advantage.

24 Second, power is essential and needed. At
25 home, I need safe, reliable and consistent service

1 for my father, who depends on power for various
2 equipment and devices as a part of his care. If it
3 costs a bit more to receive this type of service,
4 then it's the best value for me. He depends on me
5 to provide safe, reliable, consistent care for him,
6 and I depend on Florida Power & Light to provide,
7 safe, reliable and world class service, not only to
8 our household, but also the greater community in
9 Palm Beach County.

10 Thank you in advance, Florida Power & Light,
11 for delivering and keeping your promise.

12 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you very
13 much, Ms. Burke.

14 Any questions for Ms. Burke?

15 All right. Next three speakers, Lynne Larkin,
16 Mark Shelton, Luis Gonzalez-Mendez, beginning
17 William Ms. Larkin.

18 MS. LARKIN: Good afternoon. Thank you,
19 Chairman Clark. This is Lynne Larkin from Vero
20 Beach, Florida, a fairly recent customer of FPL.

21 I wanted to say first to some of the comments
22 that have been made. We are talking about a base
23 rate increase here, and isn't taking into
24 consideration the fact that it doesn't include
25 storm -- extra storm charges and such that do also

1 get taken into account at the Public Service
2 Commission after each storm. And the point I think
3 was made earlier that regular upgrades and such are
4 not part of this increase.

5 A lot of the customers don't have easy access
6 to the finances that it takes that really would
7 take a forensic accountant to determine the
8 accuracy of the numbers, but in summary, I will say
9 that there is ample money available for FPL to do
10 everything that they have said that their goals
11 were. And so I do not understand why all of this
12 gigantic increase is coming so quickly. Not
13 everyone has access also to the Public Counsel's
14 office, for whom we have great appreciation, and I
15 hope other than the outstanding plaudits that are
16 given to FPL for their volunteer service, et
17 cetera, that our real focus is on the numbers, and
18 the experts can verify the extraordinary amount of
19 money that is being asked for here when the things
20 such as solar power are not being invested in as
21 much, as someone said, the unclean natural gas.

22 Having much of the work that FPL does now here
23 in Vero Beach, Florida, I note -- I note that a lot
24 of it is contracted out, and to the lowest bidder.
25 So a good deal of what their normal expenses are be

1 also taken into consideration when talking about
2 giving rate increases of this size.

3 Finally, there is really no guarantee that
4 this -- this type of oversight is going to ensure
5 that FPL uses this money the way they say they will
6 in past hearings -- (inaudible) -- testimony given,
7 and I am hoping that that a non-expert attorney,
8 such as myself, would also rely on what is truly
9 the nature of this inquiry, which is do they need
10 this much money.

11 So again, thank you for your time, and I hope
12 you do not approve of this rate increase.

13 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you very
14 much, Ms. Larkin, for your comments.

15 Anyone have any questions for Ms. Larkin?

16 Next up, Mark Shelton.

17 MR. SHELTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can
18 you hear me okay?

19 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes, sir, loud and clear.

20 MR. SHELTON: Thank you.

21 My name is Mark Shelton. I'm at 212 South
22 Hampton Club Way, St. Augustine, Florida, 32092,
23 and I am an existing FPL customer.

24 I understand FPL is making upgrades to their
25 system. In my experience, they have been very

1 reliable and responsive. I have seen and
2 appreciate their efforts on renewable energy, such
3 as solar farms, and other new efficiencies in their
4 system. There certainly seems to be a noticeable
5 difference with FPL, and they are cheaper than what
6 I have experienced elsewhere in Florida in the last
7 15 years before I came on with FPL.

8 Although, I rarely want rates to go up, I am
9 of the mindset that you have get what you pay for.
10 And with FPL, I believe that I am getting a good
11 product.

12 This is all I have to say, and thank you for
13 your time.

14 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much, Mr.
15 Shelton.

16 Anyone have any questions?

17 Next up, Luis Gonzalez Menendez.

18 MR. GONZALEZ-MENDEZ: Thank you, Chairman.
19 Can you hear me?

20 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes, sir, loud and clear.

21 MR. GONZALEZ-MENDEZ: Excellent.

22 Okay. So my name is Luis Gonzalez-Mendez, and
23 I am actually here in representation of Trividia
24 Health. It's a medical device manufacturer in
25 Broward County, and also as a resident.

1 But specifically from the manufacturing
2 standpoint, and a company that has been in the
3 Broward County for over 35 years, we being a key
4 partner with Florida Power & Light to really
5 develop and understand the good manufacturing
6 process for an environmental friendly manufacturing
7 and the consumption of power.

8 In the last five years, personally, as
9 Director of Progress and Engineering, I partnered
10 with the local team of Florida Power & Light to
11 really go through a journey of reduction and
12 consumption of power to increase the efficiency of
13 the manufacturing, and they collaborate to help
14 with us their smart grid, and understanding the
15 consumption of the power here.

16 Florida Power & Light has done a great job to
17 inform us and collaborate with us to maintain the
18 manufacturing that we have today in a reliable way.
19 As a medical device manufacturer, reliable energy
20 is critical. For most people, losing power for a
21 couple of hours is a problem. For us, losing
22 powers for less than 10 minutes is a big problem,
23 and they have been able to deliver renewal energy
24 all these years, and work with us to have a
25 reliable manufacturing.

1 Now, I know that they are requesting this
2 increase, and I understand why. Specifically for
3 manufacturing, we are starting here in Florida to
4 start the journey of what we call the industry 4.0,
5 or smart manufacturing. Where, in the next 10
6 years, Florida is trying to get in the advanced
7 manufacturing environment where power is going to
8 be critical. So now the reliability of the power
9 is not a situation of five or 10 minutes. It's
10 having power reliable for a lot of the
11 manufacturers in a minute base, and I know that
12 will require a lot of investment for the future,
13 and I see how that is necessary.

14 So with that, I will say that I thank Florida
15 Power & Light for everything that they have done
16 for the manufacturing for medical device down here
17 in Broward, and I am looking forward to continue
18 working with them for the next 10, 20 years.

19 Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much,
21 Mr. Mendez.

22 Anyone have any questions?

23 All right. Next three speakers Dendy Herndon,
24 Ben Benavente, Missie Barletto.

25 Dendy Herndon. Dendy Herndon.

1 All right. Next Ben Benavente. Ben
2 Benavente.

3 Next is Missie Barletto.

4 MS. BARLETTO: Yes. Good afternoon, this is
5 Missie Barletto. I am the Public Works Director
6 for the City of Delray Beach, and I am calling this
7 afternoon to echo what many of the other local
8 government partners with FPL have said about what a
9 great partner they are with us.

10 The City of Delray Beach is extremely
11 sustainability minded, and we work with them on
12 several different projects. We are a partner in
13 the SolarTogether program.

14 FPL is currently in the process of replacing
15 all sodium halogen lights in the city, about just
16 under 4,000 streetlights, with LED lights at no
17 cost to the city -- no upfront cost to the City,
18 let me be clear about that, which will be the
19 equivalent of taking about 172 cars off the road.

20 Additionally, they have partnered with us to
21 provide free of cost EV chargers for electric
22 vehicles in our downtown area.

23 In addition to these things, FPL is working
24 consistently to help provide consistent power
25 supply to our residents through a hardening

1 project. They are replacing all of their wooden
2 poles with cement poles.

3 And in those areas of our city where our tree
4 canopy prevents a consistent provision of service,
5 they are working at no cost to the city or the
6 residents to provide undergrounding for consistent
7 power supply in those areas.

8 And I thank you very much for the opportunity
9 to speak.

10 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you very
11 much.

12 Next -- any questions?

13 Next three speakers Andrew Price, Carl
14 Laystrom --

15 MR. YOUNG: I'm so sorry. This is --

16 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes.

17 MR. YOUNGER: This is Herman Younger. I had
18 trouble connecting earlier, but I am on the line
19 now.

20 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Mr. Younger, you
21 are recognized for three minutes.

22 MR. YOUNG: Thank you.

23 My name is Herman Younger. I am a Sierra Club
24 organizer based in Gainesville, Florida.

25 FPL has always been a bad actor. On low

1 rates, they say that they are the lowest, but this
2 is false. They are currently the seventh highest
3 IOU rate in the nation.

4 The ACEEE reports rank FPL 51 of 52 major
5 utility companies when it comes to energy
6 efficiency.

7 And on great customer service, FPL wants to
8 increase rates by 6.5 billion over the next four
9 years. FPL requests substantial base rate
10 increases over the next four years.

11 FPL attempted to end shutoff moratoriums at
12 the height of a second wave of the pandemic.
13 600,000 Florida customers are behind on their
14 electric bills, how will that end?

15 FPL is making customers pay for plants that
16 they are producing. Customers may foot a bill for
17 FPL Turkey Point sewage plant, shouldn't Biscayne
18 Bay benefit.

19 And FPL pushed to end the shutoff moratorium
20 multiple times amid a pandemic -- (inaudible) --
21 regulators reject -- (inaudible) -- moratorium on
22 utility cutoffs. 30,000 people are behind on FPL
23 bills as power shutoffs resume saying that they
24 cannot afford it.

25 And FPL wants to decrease simple ways for

1 customer to lessen their power bills. FPL is
2 seeking state approval to slash energy efficiency
3 goals.

4 FPL attempted to block Florida Rising, an
5 organization focused on racial and economic
6 justice, from participating in the rate case of
7 historically white dominant base. And our fossil
8 fuels leaders, FPL is converting shutdown coal
9 plants and converting them to natural gas plants,
10 continuing to pollute with natural gas.

11 FPL tried to trick the Floridians into voting
12 for a utility backed a measure that would limit
13 rooftop expansion and net metering. So this
14 narrative that FPL has always been a good actor is
15 a false narrative, and I want to make a statement
16 that -- that this is not the case, and it has never
17 been the case.

18 Thank you so much.

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

21 Anyone have any questions?

22 All right. Next speaker, Andrew Price.

23 MR. PRICE: Yes, good afternoon, Mr. Chairman,
24 and board members.

25 I will start by saying that I am a resident in

1 Palm City, Martin County, Florida. And I will
2 start by saying that while I have been here for the
3 past eight years, and I will also state that prior
4 to that, I was with, for 25 years, Dominion Power
5 from the state of Virginia, as well as, for a
6 10-year period, with the Southern Company in the
7 state of Georgia.

8 Comparatively speaking, FPL rates are lower
9 than my last, or previous power companies or
10 entities, and that FPL appear to be on the cutting
11 edge as being environmentally friendly utilizing
12 solar energy, et cetera.

13 The last rate increase as of 2017, and I -- I
14 listened to one of our speak colleagues -- one of
15 our speaking colleagues of today indicating that
16 they wanted -- FPL wants an increase of about 20
17 percent. That would equate to on or about, if you
18 did the math, of about four percent each year,
19 somewhere in that average.

20 I agree with FPL by my standards, or opinion,
21 is below the average of the last two states in
22 which I resided in. And lastly, I support a rate
23 increase for this service due to the fact that,
24 since I have been here, I feel that FPL services
25 have been impeccable.

1 And thank you for your time, Mr. Chairman, and
2 board members.

3 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much, Mr.
4 Price.

5 Any questions for Mr. Price?

6 Next up, Carl Laystrom.

7 MR. LAYSTROM: Mr. Chair, my name is Carl
8 Laystrom. Can you hear me?

9 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes, sir. You are
10 recognized.

11 MR. LAYSTROM: Thank you.

12 My name is Carl Laystrom. I live in Broward
13 County Florida. I have been a resident of Broward
14 County for 60 years.

15 I support the rate increase. As a small
16 business owner and as a personal user of FPL power,
17 I found them to be outstanding during all of our
18 storms, impeccable service is what I just heard,
19 and I would absolutely agree with that.

20 With five years of no rate increases, it's
21 time -- it's time for those dollars to flow in.
22 We've all been trying to hold our belts, but we
23 have to adjust our rates as time goes on to take
24 care of employees, employee benefits, as well as
25 the hardening of our infrastructure, the investment

1 in wind and solar energy is important.

2 And on a personal note, two weeks ago, I had
3 the power go off on my street due to a transformer
4 issue caused by some construction in the neighbor's
5 house across the street. FPL had their trucks
6 there within two hours. They worked all night in
7 difficult heat and rain both, and got our power on
8 that night, kept us informed throughout. Their
9 employees were absolutely outstanding, and then
10 came by with three more trucks the next day in
11 order to complete the work.

12 And with that I would again recommend approval
13 of the rate increase. I thank you very much.

14 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Thank you, Mr.
15 Laystrom.

16 Any questions from any member?

17 All right. The next three witnesses will all
18 three have to be sworn in. I am going to go ahead
19 and start with you Shahin Etessam. Shahin Etessam.

20 MR. ETESSAM: Yes. Yes. Good afternoon, Mr.
21 Chairman. I am here.

22 (Whereupon, Shahin Etessam Cosner was sworn by
23 Chairman Clark.)

24 MR. ETESSAM: I do.

25 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. You are

1 recognized, sir.

2 MR. ETESSAM: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good
3 afternoon, Commissioners.

4 My name is Shahin Etessam. I am president of
5 CD Group and Greatstone Development, offices at
6 7480 SW 40th Street, Miami. I am a developer,
7 residents and FPL customer.

8 For the past several decades, I have worked
9 very closely with FPL as it pertained to my
10 development projects. FPL has often been taken for
11 granted. The simple act of going to a light switch
12 and turn the power on comes at a massive amount of
13 work and organization behind the scenes, which FPL
14 is actually expert at. Their availability,
15 professionalism and knowledge is considerable, and
16 very much recognized.

17 FPL's relentless pursuit of finding solutions
18 to our energy needs is also remarkable. FPL's
19 ability for continued R&D is highly visible; EV,
20 solar and many others.

21 I am also a helicopter pilot, and often fly
22 over the massive solar field just west of Miami
23 Executive Airport. As I turn whiskey, or west
24 arrival to -- (inaudible) -- I see the massive
25 impressive field that was developed and built by

1 FPL.

2 I have witnessed the project being built
3 step-by-step, super organized and planned, which is
4 a testament to FPL's commitment to a better and
5 cleaner energy for everyone they serve.

6 The site is the first of 14 sites FPL plans on
7 building throughout the state. The West Kendall
8 Solar Energy Center takes up to 465 acres of land,
9 and will be able to generate 75 megawatts of
10 electricity, which is roughly equivalent of
11 powering 15,000 homes.

12 FPL's ability to provide ample support during
13 and after a storm prevalence in South Florida is
14 also incredible. FPL's commitment to serve the
15 community and most vulnerable to various plans and
16 programs definitely.

17 As a developer, I see price increase and labor
18 shortage in every aspect of our development. As a
19 South Florida resident, I also have noticed price
20 increases in everything that we buy; fuel, food,
21 clothing, health care and everything else. So
22 although I am not an expert in rate increase, I am
23 totally in support of FPL's judgment in their needs
24 to further accommodate its customers.

25 Mr. Chairman, and the Commissioners, thank you

1 for the opportunity, and have a great afternoon.

2 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much, Mr.

3 Etessam.

4 Any questions?

5 All right. Our next speaker also needs to be
6 sworn in. Esperanza Cazo. Esperanza Cazo. Cazo.

7 All right. Next Jose Jimenez. Jose Jimenez.

8 Gary Rostran. Gary Rostran.

9 Marilyne Martin.

10 MS. MARTIN: I am here.

11 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Ms. Martin, you are
12 recognized for three minutes.

13 MS. MARTIN: Hi. I am a resident of Venice,
14 Florida and FPL customer. My name is Marilynne
15 Martin. I am here to oppose the rate increase.

16 First, I want to express my displeasure with
17 these meetings being virtual instead of in person,
18 but I oppose it because the same reason I opposed
19 the last one four years ago, because the rate of
20 return is way too high, and it should be in the
21 eight to nine percent range if you compare this low
22 interest rate period over the last 10 to 12 years,
23 and their rate of return is just unjustified, and I
24 expect that to be challenged.

25 I also believe that the capital expansion

1 program for this environment after having the whole
2 economy destroyed this past year by politicians, it
3 just isn't warranted. It can't be a Florida be
4 affordable if the state of Florida is putting
5 through a new \$75 million program to help people in
6 need.

7 I am also a little disappointed with the
8 deception, and it continued today, from FPL which
9 is our rates are lower. I have -- I couldn't find
10 one from 15 years ago, but my bill from August 2009
11 has a base rate of \$5.33 a month, and our current
12 bill is 8.34. That's a 56.5 percent increase. The
13 nonfuel charges under a thousand is up 25.2 percent
14 over the same period, and over a thousand is 23
15 point -- 22.2 percent. And these new requests will
16 bring these even higher.

17 They keep saying it, but they keep trying to
18 take credit for fuel. And as you all know, it's a
19 pass-through and they shouldn't take credit for it.
20 I support the pass-through accounting treatment of
21 fuel because of timing and ability. So the
22 deception needs to stop. And it's also in your --
23 you know, in their petition, page two.

24 I challenge anybody to show me a CEO that
25 talks about -- let me read this to you: Generate

1 additional total annual revenues of \$1,108 million
2 to be effective January 1st, 2022. Nobody talks
3 like that. It's \$1.1 billion. And I would give
4 \$1,000 if anybody can give me a video of Mr. Silagy
5 saying that to the shareholders and to his
6 investment community, that he is going to deliver
7 1,108 million. That's just not the way to talk.
8 It's meant to be deceptive.

9 You know, about a month ago, I sat in the same
10 seat I am sitting in there next to my commuter, and
11 a big bang and my commuter went blank, there was an
12 outage, and I went next door and they were out.
13 And I give a big A plus to the repair, the rank and
14 file FPL employees, they had it fixed in an
15 hour-and-a-half. But I give an F to the FPL
16 executives because they keep cutting the vegetation
17 management budgets, and therefore, the reason for
18 the outage was vines growing into the terminals of
19 the equipment.

20 Now, the guy who repaired it got his stuff
21 done, but there is still vines on that pole, so is
22 next month it going to out? That was a
23 non-avoidable -- that was an avoidable outage that
24 could have been, if they did proper vegetation
25 management, which is basic for utilities. I would

1 also like to say that when I call customer service,
2 they didn't know that the power was out, so the
3 smart meters aren't working.

4 I want to thank J.R. Kelly for his time. He
5 was always accessible, but I am a little
6 disappointed that Mr. Gentry didn't give more
7 detailed comments today for the people. We depend
8 upon your analysis, and testimony went in three
9 days ago, there should have been some opinions
10 shown.

11 And that's all I have to say. Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much for your
13 comments today, Ms. Martin.

14 Anyone have any comments for Ms. Martin?

15 All right. Next up Yadira Capaz. Yadira
16 Capaz, you are going to need to be sworn in if you
17 are on the line.

18 All right. Not available.

19 MR. DUNNUCK: Hey, good afternoon. This is
20 John Dunnuck with Broward College .

21 CHAIRMAN CLARK: I am sorry, your name again?

22 MR. JOHNSON: I am john Dunnuck with Broward
23 College. You called my name earlier but I had a
24 technical issue.

25 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Mr. Dunnuck, John

1 Dunnuck, all right, you are recognized, sir.

2 MR. DUNNUCK: Yes. Thank you.

3 Good afternoon. My name is John Dunnuck. I
4 am the Senior Vice-President of Broward College in
5 Broward County, Florida.

6 We service about 60,000 students and our
7 relationship with FPL has been nothing but a great
8 partnership. They help us with -- with energy
9 savings doing energy audits where we can -- we go
10 in and look at our chiller plant operations and
11 make sure we are using off peak hours to operate
12 those.

13 Additionally, we are part of the Florida, you
14 know, the SolarTogether program, you know, where
15 our normal spend is about \$4 million a year with
16 energy, and so obviously, any kind of energy
17 savings we are all for, but they have been a great
18 partnership. But more importantly it's been the
19 customer service.

20 When we have a hurricane, or a challenge, FPL
21 has been on top of it to help support us through
22 thick and thin. You know, we recognize that a lot
23 of our students, our 60,000 students that we have,
24 the safest place they are going to be in any given
25 day is actually on our campus. And so it's so

1 important that we get up and running when have
2 service disruptions for them to have a place to go,
3 and FPL has been tremendous in terms of their
4 ability to support us and be responsive, and so
5 while -- (inaudible) -- seek a rate increase one
6 way or another, I will say from a customer service
7 standpoint that we have enjoyed a great
8 relationship with FPL.

9 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you for your testimony,
10 Mr. Dunnuck.

11 Anyone have any questions?

12 All right. Next speaker is Stephen Averhart.

13 MR. AVERHART: I am here.

14 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. You are
15 recognized, Mr. Averhart.

16 MR. AVERHART: Yes, sir. I just want to thank
17 the Commission for the time and effort on this
18 decision. I want to recognize all those on both
19 sides of the points being made -- (inaudible) --
20 but I do want to say as an FPL customer for the
21 last 25 years, I have been very pleased with the
22 service and value that they have provided me,
23 especially compared to other electric companies
24 that I have been a customer of, and also when you
25 compare it to the other services in general that a

1 lot of us receive, cable and internet services, I
2 certainly appreciate this process that we go
3 through to try to come up with a -- (inaudible) --

4 So I am in support of FPL, and I appreciate
5 your time and efforts, Commissioners, for making
6 the decision for everybody. Thank you very much.

7 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Averhart.
8 Anyone have any questions?

9 Next speaker Walker Crego. If Mr. Crego is on
10 the line, he will need to be sworn in. Are you
11 available, Mr. Crego?

12 Next is Michael Hawkins. Michael Hawkins.
13 Tim Daubert.

14 MR. DAUBERT: I'm here, Mr. Chairman.

15 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Mr. Daubert, you
16 are recognized.

17 MR. DAUBERT: Thank you very much.

18 Good afternoon, Mr. Chair and Commissioners.
19 My name is Tim Daubert. I live in Miami Lakes, and
20 I would like to talk about the great work that FPL
21 does in our community, probably something I haven't
22 heard in all the speakers that I have heard so far
23 today.

24 FPL does so much work in our community with
25 our veterans. Being a United States Marine Corps

1 Veteran myself, FPL employs about 2,000 veterans
2 and provides support for them through their
3 employee resource group.

4 Recently, a fellow veteran called me and said
5 that there was a American flag that was on a pole
6 that had been caught in some power lines down
7 south, and asked me what we could do to take it
8 down and get it replaced. I immediately called the
9 external affairs people that I know, and within two
10 hours they had a team out there at that pole to
11 take it down and replace it. Then they brought
12 that flag to me today where I can -- I am sorry --
13 where I could retire it respectfully.

14 I want to thank FPL External Affairs for all
15 the hard work they do and FPL for the great power
16 and service they provide.

17 Thank you, Mr. Chair and Commissioners, for
18 allowing me the opportunity to speak today. Have a
19 great day.

20 COMMISSIONER LA ROSA: Thank you.

21 Any questions for Mr. Daubert?

22 Next up is Mr. Doug Capuder.

23 Moving on is Luis Javier Dominguez.

24 MR. DOMINGUEZ: Hi, this is Luis Javier
25 Dominguez. I am here. Can you hear me?

1 COMMISSIONER LA ROSA: We can hear you, Mr.
2 Dominguez. I need to swear you in.

3 MR. DOMINGUEZ: Okay.

4 (Whereupon, Luis Javier Dominguez was sworn by
5 Commissioner La Rosa.)

6 MR. DOMINGUEZ: I do?

7 COMMISSIONER LA ROSA: Thank you. You are
8 recognized.

9 MR. DOMINGUEZ: My name is Luis Javier
10 Dominguez with Florida East Coast Industries. I
11 have been a developer in South Florida market for
12 over 25 years. My experience with FPL has been
13 incredibly professional and fast-acting company to
14 work with and assist us in moving forward any
15 projects that we have done.

16 They are very good at training and providing
17 jobs for new graduates within the Florida market as
18 well. I have had the pleasure to work with
19 Sabastian -- (INAUDIBLE) -- as a service
20 representative for FPL for the last three years,
21 and they take it very percentage to provide that
22 kind of service, which is unknown today in the
23 market of development.

24 I don't have an opinion on their rate
25 increase. That's up to accountants and the

1 Commission to do the analysis as to whether it's
2 justified or not. I do know that there is a lot of
3 different projects that FPL is involved with solar,
4 and if we do want a change and we want to support
5 the environment, it's going to take -- it's going
6 to take money. It's not going to happen
7 automatically.

8 So my opinion on FPL is that it's a topnotch
9 company, very professional, and I have had the
10 greatest experience with them.

11 Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you for your testimony,
13 Mr. Dominguez.

14 Anyone have any questions?

15 Next up, Rebecca Miller.

16 MS. MILLER: I'm here.

17 CHAIRMAN CLARK: You are recognized, Ms.
18 Miller.

19 MS. MILLER: Thank you.

20 Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and
21 Commissioners. My name is Rebecca Miller, and I am
22 the President of Founder of MPLD Consulting. We
23 have offices in West Palm Beach, Fort Pierce,
24 Naples and Port St. Lucie.

25 I am happy to say that we currently represent

1 a billion and a half dollars worth of residential
2 and commercial real estate projects over 16
3 counties in the state of Florida. We also work in
4 the state of New York and New Jersey. We act as
5 both developers and owner representatives for all
6 projects, and are happy to report that are in our
7 18th year of business, with over 600 large and
8 small scale projects under our belt.

9 I am also a resident of West Palm Beach and an
10 FPL customer. I work with FPL on a regular weekly
11 and often daily, sometimes to their annoyance,
12 basis over multiple municipalities and counties
13 with our primary market being South Florida.

14 When I am my most stressed in getting my
15 projects powered up, the FPL team are incredibly
16 responsive partners, from the top of the customer
17 service divisions and engineering services to the
18 field workers, who get me my transformers and my
19 permanent power. We are very much in favor of
20 pursuing green technologies through our power
21 provider, where they are currently taking -- where
22 they are currently stakeholders in our local
23 efforts at renewable energy with large solar farms
24 and other alternative energies.

25 FPL is also an enormous employer in our local

1 environment, and contribute greatly to our
2 community nonprofits with both employee time and
3 corporate funding.

4 All said, I support rate increases that
5 provide additional staff and infrastructure that
6 keeps up with our lightning growth rate currently
7 here in the state. Our numbers are unprecedented
8 at any other time in our state's history. FPL's
9 rates continue to be the lowest of anywhere else I
10 develop and work in, which is worth mentioning.

11 On another note, I am also originally from
12 Canada, where our utility rates are considerably
13 higher than any FPL rates anywhere I think.

14 I support FPL in their goals to strengthen
15 their grid, green technologies and impacts to our
16 Florida community.

17 Thank you for your time and efforts on our
18 behalf, Commission, and I appreciate your time
19 today.

20 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much, Ms.
21 Miller.

22 Does anyone have any questions?

23 Next up, Jeremy Johnson.

24 MR. JOHNSON: Hi, good afternoon, Mr.
25 Chairman.

1 CHAIRMAN CLARK: You are recognized.

2 MR. JOHNSON: This is Jeremy Johnson.

3 Clearly, a lot of ground has been covered so
4 far this afternoon, both the positive and negative.
5 I am on the call today to express my support for
6 FPL's rate increase.

7 I echo a lot of the sentiments that have
8 already been articulated, but I would also like to
9 add that as both a residential customer and
10 commercial customer, I have experienced outstanding
11 levels of service from Florida Power & Light, and I
12 would also like to add, as many others have, that
13 their involvement in their local communities, and
14 support of activities that are beneficial to broad
15 and wide ranging communities is also very important
16 as a corporate partner.

17 I think they are an outstanding corporate
18 citizen, and I think they do a fantastic job
19 delivering safe, cost-effective energy, reliable
20 energy, and I applaud their efforts to continue
21 research and development for alternative and green
22 methods of energy production.

23 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

24 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much, Mr.
25 Johnson.

1 Anyone have any questions?

2 Next up, Giancarlo Cuniberti. Giancarlo
3 Cuniberti.

4 Next, Timothy Zorc. Timothy Zorc.

5 MR. ZORC: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

6 Good afternoon, Chairman Clark and
7 Commissioners. My name is Tim Zorc, a lifelong
8 Florida resident, a former eight-year Indian River
9 County Commissioner, and 40 plus year customer of
10 Florida Power & Light. I will be speaking in favor
11 of the FPL rate increase.

12 No one looks forward to higher costs for
13 anything, but you need to look behind the numbers
14 to understand them. During my eight years on the
15 County Commission, I appeared several times before
16 the PSC relating to the sale of Vero Beach Electric
17 to Florida Power & Light. The sale was a very
18 important issue to the community because more Vero
19 Beach Electric customers lived outside the city
20 limits than inside the city limits. The rate
21 difference was measured in significant double digit
22 rate difference, and many realtors felt compelled
23 to disclose to a potential buyer that they were
24 looking at a property that was located in the City
25 of Vero Beach Electric power area.

1 It has been estimated by a local watch
2 customer that since December 2018, the sale of Vero
3 Beach Electric to Florida Power & Light, the local
4 ratepayers have now saved over \$70 million from
5 lower rates.

6 Lower rates are only part of what residents
7 and businesses are concerned with. The reliability
8 of the system both day-to-day as well as storm
9 events are very important.

10 True story: Shortly before the sale of Vero
11 Beach Electric to FPL was to close, one of the
12 county's largest employers asked the day shift to
13 stay for overtime due to a backlog of business.
14 Right at that time, a power outage hit the
15 facility. The CEO is now faced with likely
16 hundreds of employees waiting to see if the power
17 will come back on, or will it be an extended power
18 outage. A tough decision for anyone to have to
19 make.

20 Here in Indian River County, FPL has invested
21 tens of millions of dollars upgrading the local
22 grid, from installing new concrete poles, removing
23 extensive vegetation and adding underground service
24 in existing communities.

25 For example, the City of Sebastian have

1 started a large overhead to underground conversion
2 that will add more reliability and reduced outages
3 during a storm event.

4 In looking at the future, Florida Power &
5 Light is consistently exploring new ways to
6 delivery clean, reliable and low-cost power to its
7 customers.

8 Again here in Indian River County, FPL has
9 recently installed, one of the first in the
10 country, a new non-combustible cutting edge natural
11 gas linear generator that is the primary source of
12 power for a manufacturing facility located here in
13 Vero Beach.

14 Florida Power & Light has also invested
15 heavily. A few years ago had no solar farms in our
16 community, but today we have millions of solar
17 panels, and multiple projects completed and
18 proposed here in our local county.

19 In closing, it's my opinion that FPL has --
20 (inaudible) -- to continue the goal of lower --
21 (inaudible) -- reliable electric power to its
22 customers. Their investments in solar generators
23 and other emerging technology, as well as current
24 investments in storm hardening will help them
25 achieve those goals, and I thank you for your time

1 today.

2 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much for your
3 testimony, Mr. Zorc.

4 Anyone have any questions?

5 Next up Lorrisann Cole.

6 MS. COLE: Yes. Good afternoon.

7 CHAIRMAN CLARK: You are recognized, Ms. Cole.

8 MS. COLE: Yes. I am a loyal FPL residential
9 customer for almost 20 years, during which time I
10 have been living in North Lauderdale.

11 Unfortunately, we -- (inaudible) -- my house the
12 end of 2019, and then shortly after the pandemic
13 came. And because of the pandemic, everything has
14 been -- was delayed with the renovation and repairs
15 in my house. The one less headache I had was FPL,
16 because every time I had to reach out to them for
17 any advice, or to get the power disconnected, or
18 when it was time to get it connected, everything
19 was done promptly. Customer service was great.
20 The management responded quickly, so I want to
21 acknowledge them for their outstanding job.

22 I have no opinion on the rate increase. If it
23 needs to be done, then, hey, go ahead and do what
24 you have to do, but thank you for everything that
25 you have done.

1 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much, Ms.
2 Cole.

3 Anyone have any questions?

4 All right. Next speaker is Marcia Breen, Ms.
5 Breen, you are going to need to be sworn in. Are
6 you on the line? Marcia Breen.

7 Next, Laura Nelson. Laura Nelson.

8 MR. JIMENEZ: Mr. Chairman, I apologize. I
9 had to -- I had to hang up for a minute and dial
10 back in. I don't know if my name was called
11 previously. My name is Joe Jimenez in Miami.

12 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes, Mr. Jimenez, hang on one
13 second and we will come back to you.

14 MR. JIMENEZ: Thank you, sir.

15 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Laura Nelson.

16 Alina Roces, R-O-C-E-S, Roces.

17 MS. ROCES: Hello.

18 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes. Alina?

19 MS. ROCES: Yes. Hold on, I am trying to get
20 it off speaker.

21 Okay. Can you hear me okay?

22 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Yes, we can hear you now. Is
23 this Alina?

24 MS. ROCES: Yes, this is Alina.

25 CHAIRMAN CLARK: You are recognized.

1 MS. ROCES: Hello, my name is Alina Rocés,
2 okay.

3 My name is Alina Rocés, and up until April, I
4 was a resident in Plantation, Florida. I am
5 currently staying at a friend's house in Sunrise,
6 Florida, and will be back in Plantation in August,
7 once my new residence is available.

8 I have been an FPL customer for more than 30
9 years, and have been very pleased with the service
10 I have received. In fact, I think it was several
11 years back, FPL actually decreased our rates over
12 the course of a few years, and I don't think this
13 is something that they needed to do.

14 I have also used the budget billing option,
15 which I think is great, and keeps my average
16 monthly bill relatively consistent throughout the
17 year.

18 Recently, I experienced a power outage and was
19 able to use their on-line tools to quickly find out
20 when the power would be restored, and they did it
21 relatively close to the estimated time. So
22 therefore, I knew roughly when the power would be
23 back on, and that was something great for me to
24 know.

25 Lastly, I was an engineer manager at Motorola

1 Solutions for 33 years, and we developed two-way
2 portable and mobile radios for the police and fire
3 department. We had to periodically design new
4 platforms for two reasons. One, we could no longer
5 support the old platform due to obsolete parts, and
6 two, the technology was evolving quickly and this
7 allowed us to improve -- make improvements to our
8 design and provide new features to our customers.
9 Therefore, I totally understand the need to update
10 infrastructure and to continue to improve the core
11 design as technology improves and changes occur.

12 I am in favor of the rate increase in order
13 for FPL to continue to provide excellent service.
14 I thank you for your time.

15 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you very much, Ms.
16 Roces.

17 Any questions?

18 Next speaker, Clarence Williams. Clarence
19 Williams.

20 MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you, and good afternoon,
21 Commissioners.

22 CHAIRMAN CLARK: You are recognized, sir.

23 MR. WILLIAMS: My name is Clarence Williams --
24 I am sorry?

25 CHAIRMAN CLARK: I said you are recognized.

1 MS. WILLIAMS: Thank you so very much,
2 Commissioners.

3 My name is Clarence Williams. I am a resident
4 of West Palm Beach, Florida, Palm Beach County. I
5 am a retired law enforcement chief executive and
6 lawyer. Thank you for the opportunity to address
7 you on this matter this afternoon.

8 By now, no doubt you have heard that FPL is
9 the largest energy company in Florida; that FPL is
10 committed to delivering America's best energy
11 value; that FPL is making Florida a clean energy
12 and sustainability leader in the industry; that FPL
13 was building the strongest energy grid in America
14 for our state; the FPL is building the smartest
15 energy grid in the U.S.

16 You know, as a customer I may not understand
17 it what all that means, but as a senior citizen, I
18 understand when my lights flicker, I experience
19 rapid customer attention; that when my lights
20 flicker, I have a corporate partner that supports
21 causes that advance humidity within our state; that
22 FPL offers real cost saving services to all its
23 customers.

24 If a carefully calculated rate increase will
25 enhance and further FPL's current service delivery

1 models, I view it as necessary.

2 Commissioners, thank you so very much for
3 allowing me this opportunity to address you.

4 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Williams.

5 Anyone have any questions?

6 And Mr. Jose Jimenez.

7 MR. JIMENEZ: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Thank you
8 very much, and I apologize for not being here when
9 originally called.

10 CHAIRMAN CLARK: No problem.

11 MR. JIMENEZ: I am speaking on behalf of
12 Celina Partners, and we are a commercial
13 customer --

14 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Mr. Jimenez, one second, my
15 apologies to you. I flipped back over. You have
16 not been sworn in yet.

17 (Whereupon, Jose Jimenez was sworn by Chairman
18 Clark.)

19 MR. JIMENEZ: I do.

20 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Now you are
21 recognized. Go ahead, sir.

22 MR. JIMENEZ: Thank you. Again, Jose Jimenez
23 from Miami, Florida, speaking on behalf of Celina
24 Partners a commercial customer of Florida Power &
25 Light.

1 As a commercial real estate developer, we have
2 a relationship with FPL that is -- that is
3 absolutely necessary for us to do our jobs. And I
4 can tell you that of all the governmental entities
5 that we deal with, which I will equate with what
6 Florida Power & Light, it does down here, they are
7 far in a way the best once to deal with. Their
8 engineering staff, which has to literally design
9 systems for us to install, works diligently, works
10 intelligently, works cooperatively with us at every
11 stage, whether it's designing the overall grid
12 system, or coming and installing a meter, you can
13 always count on FPL to provide excellent customer
14 service, excellent responsiveness. They are
15 accessible. They are -- and they are just
16 absolutely professional.

17 On behalf of myself personally, I am also a
18 residential customer, and the day before I was
19 moving into a new home, it turns out that the
20 entire line feeding the house went, and I lost all
21 power to the house, but within a day they were
22 there, they bored under my driveway, they brought a
23 new line from -- (inaudible) -- they had it up and
24 running in less than 24 hours, three separate
25 trucks diagnosing and solving the problem.

1 So I am not only happy to speak here on behalf
2 of FPL's commercial -- commercial abilities with
3 us, but also the residential.

4 I have no opinion on the rate increase, but if
5 it allows them to provide the level of service that
6 they had been providing, then I am completely in
7 agreement with, and I thank you for your time.

8 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Jimenez.

9 Are there any individuals on the line who are
10 registered and signed up to speak that I overlooked
11 or did not get an opportunity?

12 All right. Well, thank you very much for
13 taking time out of your schedules to be here with
14 us today and for calling into this hearing. Your
15 comments, again, are very important to the process
16 and we appreciate you assisting us in this
17 proceeding.

18 If you have any questions, please feel free to
19 call in and discuss them with one of our staff
20 members or with a company representative. Their
21 contact information has been provided in the
22 notices for this proceeding.

23 Any Commissioners have any questions or
24 comments before we adjourn?

25 Seeing none, we stand adjourned until six

1 o'clock p.m. Thank you for being here.

2 (Proceedings concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

STATE OF FLORIDA)
COUNTY OF LEON)

I, DEBRA KRICK, Court Reporter, do hereby
certify that the foregoing proceeding was heard at the
time and place herein stated.

IT IS FURTHER CERTIFIED that I
stenographically reported the said proceedings; that the
same has been transcribed under my direct supervision;
and that this transcript constitutes a true
transcription of my notes of said proceedings.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not a relative,
employee, attorney or counsel of any of the parties, nor
am I a relative or employee of any of the parties'
attorney or counsel connected with the action, nor am I
financially interested in the action.

DATED this 19th day of July, 2021.



DEBRA R. KRICK
NOTARY PUBLIC
COMMISSION #HH31926
EXPIRES AUGUST 13, 2024