

BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In re: Petition for rate increase by Tampa Electric Company.	DOCKET NO. 20240026-EI
In re: Petition for approval of 2023 depreciation and dismantlement study, by Tampa Electric Company.	DOCKET NO. 20230139-EI
In re: Petition to implement 2024 generation base rate adjustment provisions in paragraph 4 of the 2021 stipulation and settlement agreement, by Tampa Electric Company.	DOCKET NO. 20230090-EI ORDER NO. PSC-2024-0121-PCO-EI ISSUED: April 23, 2024

ORDER GRANTING INTERVENTION OF
FEDERAL EXECUTIVE AGENCIES

On April 2, 2024, Tampa Electric Company (“TECO”) filed a petition, minimum filing requirements, and testimony for an increase in base rates effective January 2025.

Petition for Intervention

Federal Executive Agencies (“FEA”) filed a Petition to Intervene on March 20, 2024. Petitioner represents that it consulted with the parties and neither TECO nor the Office of Public Counsel object to its intervention.

FEA states it is comprised of certain federal agencies which have offices, facilities, and/or installations in TECO’s service area. FEA alleges that its members will be significantly affected by rates set in this proceeding because utility costs represent one of the largest variable expenses of operating federal offices, facilities, and installations. FEA indicates that the United States Department of Defense was delegated authority by the General Services Administration to represent the consumer interests of FEA in this rate proceeding.¹ FEA expresses an interest in ensuring federal tax dollars are spent in a fair, just, and reasonable manner.² FEA asserts that its participation in this matter is appropriate and will allow it to advocate for reliable service and fair, just, and reasonable rates on behalf of its members.

¹ “For . . . public utility services used by executive agencies, the Administrator of General Services shall represent the agencies . . . in proceedings involving . . . public utilities before . . . state regulatory bodies.” 40 U.S.C. § 501(c)(1)(B). The U.S. General Services Administrator may delegate the responsibility to represent the consumer interests of FEA in utility proceedings. *See id.* § 121(d); *id.* § 501(c)(1)(A)–(B).

² “The Administrator of General Services shall take action under this subchapter for an executive agency to the extent . . . determine[d] that the action is advantageous to the Federal Government in terms of *economy*, efficiency, or service.” 40 U.S.C. § 501(a)(1)(A) (2023) (emphasis added).

Standard for Intervention

Pursuant to Rule 28-106.205, F.A.C., persons, other than the original parties to a pending proceeding, who have a substantial interest in the proceeding and who desire to become parties, may move for leave to intervene. Motions for leave to intervene must be filed at least twenty (20) days before the final hearing, must comply with Rule 28-106.204(3), F.A.C., and must include allegations sufficient to demonstrate that the intervenor is entitled to participate in the proceeding as a matter of constitutional or statutory right, pursuant to Florida Public Service Commission (“Commission”) rule, or that the substantial interests of the intervenor are subject to determination or will be affected through the proceeding. Intervenors take the case as they find it.

The test for associational standing was established in *Florida Home Builders Association v. Department of Labor and Employment Security*³ and *Farmworker Rights Organization, Inc. v. Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services*,⁴ which is based on the basic standing principles established in *Agrico Chemical Company v. Department of Environmental Regulation*.⁵ Associational standing may be found where: (1) the association demonstrates that a substantial number of an association’s members may be substantially affected by the Commission’s decision in a docket; (2) the subject matter of the proceeding is within the association’s general scope of interest and activity; and (3) the relief requested is of a type appropriate for the association to receive on behalf of its members.⁶

Analysis & Ruling

Based on a review of the materials provided by FEA, it appears that FEA meets the three-prong associational standing test established in *Florida Home Builders*. With respect to the first prong, FEA demonstrates that a substantial number of its members will be substantially affected by the Commission’s determination in this rate proceeding. Some of its member agencies are located in TECO’s service area, receive electric service from TECO, and are charged TECO’s applicable service rates. These members face the prospect of paying higher electricity base rates going forward. With respect to the second prong, the subject matter of this proceeding appears to be within FEA’s general scope of interest and activity. One purpose of FEA is to advance the

³ *Fla. Home Builders Ass’n v. Dep’t of Labor & Emp’t Sec.*, 412 So.2d 351 (Fla. 1982).

⁴ *Farmworker Rights Org., Inc. v. Dep’t of Health & Rehab. Servs.*, 417 So.2d 753 (Fla. 1st DCA 1982).

⁵ *Agrico Chem. Co. v. Dep’t of Env’tl. Regulation*, 406 So. 2d 478, 481–82 (Fla. 2d DCA 1981). Under *Agrico*, the individual intervenor must show that (1) they will suffer injury in fact which is of sufficient immediacy to entitle them to a Section 120.57, Florida Statutes (“F.S.”), hearing, and (2) this substantial injury is of a type or nature which the proceeding is designed to protect. The first aspect of the test deals with the degree of injury. The second deals with the nature of the injury. *Id.* at 482. The “injury in fact” must be both real and immediate and not speculative or conjectural. *Int’l Jai-Alai Players Ass’n v. Fla. Pari-Mutuel Comm’n*, 561 So.2d 1224, 1225–26 (Fla. 3d DCA 1990); *see also Vill. Park Mobile Home Ass’n, Inc. v. State Dep’t of Bus. Regulation*, 506 So.2d 426, 434 (Fla. 1st DCA 1987), *rev. den.*, 513 So.2d 1063 (Fla. 1987) (noting speculation on the possible occurrence of injurious events was too remote).

⁶ *Fla. Home Builders Ass’n*, 412 So.2d at 353–54; *Farmworker Rights Org., Inc.*, 417 So.2d at 754.

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economic and efficiency interests of federal executive agencies. Here it seeks to do so by ensuring federal tax dollars spent by federal offices, facilities, and installations are spent on fair, just, and reasonable electricity rates. With respect to the third prong, the relief being requested by FEA appears to be of a type appropriate for this association to obtain on behalf of its members. FEA seeks to intervene in this docket to represent the interests of its members in seeking fair, just, and reasonable rates. Therefore, FEA meets the requirements for associational standing and will be permitted to intervene as a party in this proceeding.

Based on the foregoing, it is

ORDERED by Commissioner Gary F. Clark, as Prehearing Officer, that the Petition to Intervene by Federal Executive Agencies is hereby granted as set forth in the body of this Order. It is further

ORDERED that Federal Executive Agencies takes the case as it finds it. It is further

ORDERED that all parties to this proceeding shall furnish copies of all testimony, exhibits, pleadings, and other documents which may hereinafter be filed in this proceeding to:

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By ORDER of Commissioner Gary F. Clark, as Prehearing Officer, this 23rd day of April, 2024.



GARY F. CLARK
Commissioner and Prehearing Officer
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Copies furnished: A copy of this document is provided to the parties of record at the time of issuance and, if applicable, interested persons.

CMM

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NOTICE OF FURTHER PROCEEDINGS OR JUDICIAL REVIEW

The Florida Public Service Commission is required by Section 120.569(1), Florida Statutes, to notify parties of any administrative hearing or judicial review of Commission orders that is available under Sections 120.57 or 120.68, Florida Statutes, as well as the procedures and time limits that apply. This notice should not be construed to mean all requests for an administrative hearing or judicial review will be granted or result in the relief sought.

Mediation may be available on a case-by-case basis. If mediation is conducted, it does not affect a substantially interested person's right to a hearing.

Any party adversely affected by this order, which is preliminary, procedural, or intermediate in nature, may request: (1) reconsideration within 10 days pursuant to Rule 25-22.0376, Florida Administrative Code; or (2) judicial review by the Florida Supreme Court, in the case of an electric, gas, or telephone utility. A motion for reconsideration shall be filed with the Office of Commission Clerk, in the form prescribed by Rule 25-22.0376, Florida Administrative Code. Judicial review of a preliminary, procedural, or intermediate ruling or order is available if review of the final action will not provide an adequate remedy. Such review may be requested from the appropriate court, as described above, pursuant to Rule 9.100, Florida Rules of Appellate Procedure.