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BEFORE THE
FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of:

In re: DOCKET NO. 20250011-EI

Petition for rate increase by
Florida Power & Light Company.

PROCEEDINGS: SERVICE HEARING

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

DATE: Wednesday, May 28, 2025

TIME: Commenced: 6:00 p.m.
Concluded: 9:55 p.m.

PLACE: Florida Memorial University
Rawls Center for the Performing Arts
15800 NW 42nd Avenue
Miami Gardens, Florida

REPORTED BY: DEBRA R. KRICK
Court Reporter and
Notary Public in and for
the State of Florida at Large

PREMIER REPORTING
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA
(850) 894-0828

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15 Rising, Inc. (Florida Rising), League of United Latin
16 American Citizens of Florida (LULAC), and Environmental
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21 Florida Public Service Commission (Staff).

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

2 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: All right. I think we can
3 at least start the ball rolling here. I know we
4 are still waiting for one member, but I hear he is
5 in the parking lot, so we will start with the
6 protocols.

7 Welcome, and thank you all for attending this
8 customer service hearing this evening. This is in
9 review of the Florida Power & Light Company's
10 request for a rate adjustment. Today's service
11 hearing is an important part of the process, and is
12 dedicated to hearing from you all, the customers.

13 Is my name is Mike La Rosa. It is my
14 privilege to serve as Chairman of the Florida
15 Public Service Commission. Along with me are four
16 other Commissioners, five of us in total. And I
17 will just kind of maybe start right to left and
18 allow them to introduce themselves.

19 Commissioner Clark.

20 COMMISSIONER CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

21 My name is Gary Clark. It's a privilege to be
22 here with you tonight. Thank you for taking time
23 out of your schedules to be here to provide
24 testimony for us in this rate case. We are
25 certainly interested in hearing how your service is

1 affected, the quality of service that you are
2 receiving and how this rate impact potentially
3 affects you.

4 Thank you for being here tonight.

5 COMMISSIONER PASSIDOMO SMITH: Hello. Again,
6 I would like to -- my name is Gabriella Passidomo
7 Smith. I am one of the five Commissioners. I
8 would like to just thank you all for taking the
9 time to be here, and to kind of elaborate a little
10 bit on -- we -- you are able to also submit
11 comments so that if any of your friends or
12 neighbors are not able to attend tonight, that they
13 are welcome to do so and we will read those and
14 take those into consideration just like if they
15 were here. So we know it's a big deal to get here
16 tonight, so we appreciate you all making the time,
17 but just know that there are -- the process is not
18 over yet to submit your comments, so thank you
19 again.

20 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Commissioner Graham.

21 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Good evening. My name
22 is Art Graham, and I am one of the five
23 Commissioners, and I welcome y'all here tonight.

24 COMMISSIONER FAY: Thank you. Andrew Fay. I
25 am one of the five Commissioners, and just echo my

1 colleagues. Thanks for taking the time to be here.
2 Your comments are important to this decision-making
3 process, and so thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Commissioners, thank you.

5 Customers, if you notice, there is a large
6 screen to my right and to your left. That will
7 provide a Spanish translation, so anything that we
8 are saying should be appearing there in Spanish.

9 We also have a Spanish translator who is
10 available here, and she will be able to assist
11 anyone who is speaking Spanish to translate back to
12 English. So if you need that, just cue us, and we
13 will make sure that she's there ready to when we
14 get to the customer hearing portion.

15 Let's go ahead and knock out a few items here.
16 Let's start with the notice.

17 MR. SPARKS: By notice issued May 14, 2025,
18 this time and place has been set for a customer
19 service hearing in Docket No. 20250011-EI. The
20 purpose of the service hearing is set forth more
21 fully in the notice.

22 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Excellent. Great.

23 Now, let's go to appearance, and we will start
24 with Florida Power & Light.

25 MS. BARNES: Good evening. Monica Barnes,

1 appearing on behalf of Florida Power & Light
2 Company. And I would also like to enter an
3 appearance for our General Counsel, John Burnett.

4 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Office of Public Counsel.

5 MR. TRIERWEILER: Walt Trierweiler, Public
6 Counsel.

7 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Florida Rising.

8 MR. LUEBKEMANN: Jordan Luebke for Florida
9 Rising, the League of United Latin American
10 Citizens and the Environment Confederation of
11 Southwest Florida. And I would also like to enter
12 appearances for Bradley Marshall and Daniel
13 McManamon.

14 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Excellent. Great. Thank
15 you, counsel.

16 Thank you all for participating today and
17 sharing your experiences with your quality of
18 service with FPL.

19 In August there will be a more technical
20 hearing where the Commission will hear from
21 witnesses, we will hear evidence in the case. I
22 encourage you all to watch the hearing on our
23 website as you will get a better understanding how
24 you process works ultimately, and then how we make
25 our decisions in the case.

1 In addition to sharing your comments here, you
2 can also provide written comments and additional
3 material by paper mail or by email. The rate case
4 overview, that's the green paper that was probably
5 handed to you as you came in. If not, there are
6 some available there in the lobby. And with that I
7 give you further instructions on how to do that.
8 Be rest assured that any written comments will be
9 available ultimately for us, as Commissioners, to
10 review.

11 If you have any specific service or billing
12 issues, employees from FPL are here to assist you.
13 Also, our Commission staff is available if you have
14 any answer -- if you have any questions regarding
15 the rate case process.

16 So we are going to go into opening statements.
17 I have asked the parties if they can limit their
18 opening statements to three minutes. Again, there
19 is a light here, everyone is familiar with how that
20 ultimately works.

21 Let's go ahead and start off with FPL.

22 MS. BARNES: Thank you, Chairman La Rosa. I
23 would like to introduce Armando Pimentel, the
24 President and CEO of FPL. He will provide comments
25 this evening.

1 MR. PIMENTEL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and
2 Commissioners. My name is Armando Pimentel,
3 President and CEO of Florida Power & Light Company.

4 We are here because we have asked the Public
5 Service Commission for new base rates starting in
6 2026. Let me begin by thanking our customers who
7 are taken the time to be here today.

8 I am proud of the 9,000 FPL employees who work
9 hard every day to provide the nation's best
10 combination of high reliability, resiliency and low
11 bills, but we can always be better, which is why
12 your feedback is so important to us.

13 FPL's mission is to deliver reliable
14 electricity every day, while keeping bills as low
15 as possible. Today FPL service is 59 percent more
16 reliable than the national average, and our typical
17 residential bill is lower than it was two decades
18 ago when adjusted for inflation, this. Is the
19 result of smart investments and a culture of
20 continuous improvement. Our teamworks relentlessly
21 to improve our service every day.

22 By operating the most efficient utility in
23 America, we save typical customers roughly \$24 a
24 month. We have saved customers more than \$16
25 billion in fuel costs by modernizing our power

1 plants, which include natural gas, nuclear and
2 solar.

3 That's what our rate request is about,
4 continuing these smart investments to deliver
5 reliable service while enhancing resiliency and
6 keeping our bills as low as possible. It's been
7 four years since our last rate request.

8 Florida is a growing state. Meeting Florida's
9 continuing growing demand for power and making our
10 grid more resilient to severe weather, and
11 delivering the outstanding service our customers
12 deserve and expect will require significant new
13 investment. Even with the proposed increase,
14 typical FPL bills are expected to stay well below
15 the national average.

16 While we work hard to keep bills low, we
17 recognize some of our customers face challenges.
18 Our Vice-President of customer service, Dawn
19 Nichols and her team, are always here to help, and
20 they are here if you have any questions.

21 At FPL, customers all come first. We have
22 let our customers know about these service hearings
23 so they can share their experiences with the
24 company. We want to hear about what we do well,
25 and more importantly, we want to hear how we can

1 improve. So thank you for participating and thank
2 you for the opportunity to serve you.

3 Mr. Chairman, I will make these remarks in
4 Spanish.

5 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Please do.

6 (Whereupon, Mr. Pimentel provided his opening
7 remarks in Spanish.)

8 MR. PIMENTEL: Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you, Office of Public
10 Counsel.

11 MR. TRIERWEILER: Good afternoon. My name is
12 Walt Trierweiler, and I am the Public Counsel for
13 the State of Florida. My office, the Office of
14 Public Counsel, or sometimes known as OPC, was
15 created 51 years ago by the Florida Legislature to
16 give customers a voice in these proceedings. My
17 office serves the citizens as an effective consumer
18 advocate in utility cases and appeals that are
19 originally brought before the Florida Public
20 Service Commission.

21 Today, I want you to know that the Office of
22 Public Counsel actively opposes the increases FPL
23 has proposed in 2026 and 2027. Our theme is
24 affordability, and we argue, with the help of eight
25 nationally respected expert witnesses, against all

1 aspects of FPL's two rate increases, as well as the
2 Tax Recovery Mechanism. We assert that these
3 increases and the proposed Tax Recovery Mechanism
4 will result in unfair, unjust and unreasonable
5 rates for you.

6 I am not going to take the time today to share
7 all the things that we are doing to resolve this
8 case in your favor. Me and my team, they are back
9 in Tallahassee, but I want you to be confident in
10 the extent of the discovery that our office has
11 conducted with FPL, the hours my team has devoted
12 to studying thousands of pages of responsive
13 documents from FPL, and the depositions of FPL
14 witnesses we have taken to identify reductions that
15 should be made to FPL's request.

16 I also want you to be confident that your
17 voice is a valuable part of this case. These rate
18 increase have not yet been decided, and these
19 Commissioners who are traveling all over the state,
20 from Miami to Pensacola, are here to listen to you.
21 This is your service hearing. Please share your
22 thoughts as clearly and persuasively as you can,
23 because your sworn testimony will be considered by
24 the Commission and the parties, both now and in the
25 future, when the Commission examines all of the

1 evidence before them to approve only that portion
2 of FPL's rate increases that are reasonable,
3 prudent and in the public interest.

4 I invite you to share the details of your
5 experiences as a customer of FPL, and to share the
6 personal impacts FPL's proposed rate increases will
7 have upon you, your family, your friends and your
8 business.

9 Do be mindful of the time so that your
10 neighbors will also have time to speak. In fact,
11 as of right now, we have 63 people shown -- have
12 signed up to speak. I encourage you, all of you,
13 to speak. However, if someone says something that
14 you intended to say, you can say ditto, or I agree.
15 I agree with Maria Casas, or I agree with the man
16 in the red shirt -- there is a lot of those here
17 tonight -- or the blue hat, and add any additional
18 details that you wish.

19 Thank you again for taking the time to be here
20 today, and we look forward to hearing from you.

21 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

22 Florida Rising/LULAC.

23 MR. LUEBKEMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

24 Jordan Luebkekmann on behalf of Florida Rising,
25 the League of United Latin American Citizens,

1 better known as LULAC, and the Environment
2 Confederation of Southwest Florida, better known as
3 ECOSWF.

4 Florida Rising, LULAC and ECOSWF are members
5 comprised mostly of residential customers, and are
6 in this case because their members cannot afford
7 FPL's \$9.8 billion rate increase that they are
8 asking for this in this case. Too many Floridians
9 are already unable to afford their electric bills,
10 especially since FPL's last rate increase in 2021.
11 By bills, I mean the amount that actually comes out
12 of your packets each month.

13 For 2023, the latest year for which we have
14 complete data, FPL's actual residential bills were
15 \$170 a year on average for residential customers.
16 Compared to the then national average of \$132,
17 that's about \$450 a year higher. That made FPL the
18 tenth highest bill in the country among large
19 investor-owned utilities.

20 Today, even as FPL asks for this rate
21 increase, the preliminary data for 2025 shows that
22 residential customers, on average, are paying more
23 than \$400 a year higher than they were in 2021.

24 We agree with the Public Counsel, and so we
25 won't get into all of the reasons why we oppose

1 this rate hike, but I want you to know that we do.
2 However, some other things bear noting.

3 Of course, living in Florida means living with
4 storms. I am sure you all want to be sure that
5 your power is going to come back on, and quickly,
6 when those happen. Good news, FPL already does
7 that, and I am sure longer customers will know that
8 restoration times have gotten shorter, but that's
9 not because of the money that's supported in rate
10 cases like this one.

11 FPL comes before the same commission in a
12 completely unrelated and recurring docket for storm
13 protection plan, where FPL will ask for and receive
14 billions of dollars to do just that, to make their
15 grid more resilient and storm ready. So if you
16 think that FPL needs this money tonight to be ready
17 for hurricane season or to keep getting your lights
18 back on quickly, they simply don't. They have got
19 that covered elsewhere.

20 One last thing that I would like to touch on.
21 As a quick housekeeping matter, as you heard, we
22 have got a lot of speakers tonight, and we would
23 like to keep an efficient hearing. So I am just
24 going to ask if any of you have been asked by FPL
25 to come tonight to support their rate case, if you

1 have got FPL or affiliates on your boards or that
2 you get money or dues from, just go ahead and say
3 that in your comments. It's perfectly okay, but
4 that's valuable information for the record, and it
5 will save us time of me having to ask you those
6 questions in cross-examination.

7 With that, Mr. Chairman, thank you very much,
8 and thank you all for being here and I look forward
9 to hearing your testimony.

10 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you for the opening
11 statements.

12 Normally, we allow elected officials to come
13 and testify first. Are there any elected officials
14 in the room? If you can raise your hand, and I can
15 only see about three rows, so I don't see any.

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Former?

17 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Unfortunately no. Current.
18 Close. Sorry about that.

19 Okay. So let's move on to the customer
20 testimony.

21 We will now hear from you, the customers.
22 Your comments will become part of the official
23 record, so therefore, subject to cross-examination
24 are, meaning that you may be asked questions by one
25 of the parties or one of us, as Commissioners.

1 That's not intended by any means for intimidation.
2 That's just intended so that we can understand and
3 clarify any comments that are made and understood.

4 For all the guests who intend to testify, who
5 are able to do so, if you don't mind please
6 standing and we will just administer are very quick
7 oath. So if you do plan on testifying, please
8 stand up, we are going to administer an oath.

9 Please raise your right hand.

10 (Whereupon, Chairman La Rosa administered the
11 oath.)

12 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Excellent. Great. Thank
13 you. You may have a seat.

14 To make sure that all of your neighbors have
15 an equal opportunity to have some input, so please
16 limit your comments to just three minutes. Again,
17 we have the system up here that will start at green
18 and go to yellow, and go to red and start blinking.

19 Again, there is a lot of customers that have
20 signed up. I think the number that I just saw was
21 72, so I certainly want to make sure that everyone
22 has an opportunity to speak today.

23 We do have a court reporter. She's feverishly
24 recording everything that is being said. So I will
25 start to slow down a little bit as I am speaking,

1 but we will take breaks periodically. So if we
2 take a five- or seven-minute intermission, it's
3 obviously to make sure she has a rest.

4 The Public Counsel will be assisting me today
5 in this service hearing, Mr. Trierweiler. He will
6 go ahead and call out the names in the orders in
7 which they have been -- everyone has signed up. He
8 is going to call two names at a time. So please,
9 if you are the second name, be ready, maybe start
10 making your way up front and be ready to talk
11 behind the microphone.

12 The microphone is directly in front of me, in
13 front of us, in front of the stage. Please speak
14 into the microphone and get a little bit
15 comfortable, or uncomfortable close to it, meaning
16 that it's literally right in your face, we want to
17 make sure that it's heard throughout.

18 And I think we can go ahead and get started.
19 Ready, Walt?

20 MR. TRIERWEILER: Yes, Chairman.

21 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Awesome. Let's go.

22 MR. TRIERWEILER: Ricardo Ferreira and Yvonne
23 Fernandez.

24 PUBLIC COMMENT

25 MR. FERREIRA: Good evening. My name is

1 Ricardo Ferreira. I have been a resident of
2 Miami-Dade County and a customer of FPL for the
3 past 58 years. The main point that I want to make
4 -- or one of the two main points that I want to
5 make is the reliability of service that FPL has
6 provided throughout those 58 years.

7 During the dark years, for example, in '92
8 during Hurricane Andrew, and in the year 2004,
9 where we had five hurricanes in the service
10 territory, FPL was always there. They were always
11 there in the reconstruction and helping out of
12 their community to get back on its feet to put the
13 system back together and to get everybody back to
14 business.

15 In normal everyday life, I count reliability
16 as being able to go home and every day turn on my
17 lights, and the lights are there. And I challenge
18 anyone in this room today to -- if they ever think
19 during the day any day of the year when they are
20 out there doing whatever they are doing and say, I
21 wonder if the lights will be on tonight, no,
22 because their lights will be on.

23 Now, in order to get the lights on, the way I
24 look at it is get investment, and investment means
25 that every month we get a bill from FPL, and that

1 bill we have to pay for our service, for our usage,
2 that money that we are going to spend and doing
3 whatever we want to do by using electricity. At
4 the same time, I consider my bill to be an
5 investment, an investment in the future of my
6 family, of my children, of my community.

7 And what does that mean? That means that the
8 power company, the one that has to provide the
9 service, needs to have the funds necessary to make
10 adjustments, improvements and the new technology,
11 or whatever means they want to use, to provide
12 better service.

13 So in conclusion, I look at it, if I want
14 reliability of my electric service, I have to be
15 responsible and contribute and make an investment
16 for that reliability.

17 Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you for your
19 testimony.

20 PUBLIC COMMENT

21 MS. FERNANDEZ: Good afternoon. My name is
22 Yvonne Fernandez, and I am an FPL customer, and I
23 am the Associate State Director for Advocacy with
24 AARP, but I am here today representing myself and
25 my family, and I would like to speak in Spanish.

1 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Sure.

2 MS. FERNANDEZ: My husband and have I been
3 pastors for the last 30 years. And we have seen
4 the difficulty throughout those years, housing
5 costs, cooling costs in Florida, and food costs are
6 something that I don't have to mention. So it's
7 important that we try to prevent in any small way
8 any impactful factors that may affect families.

9 The most difficult thing to front is that we
10 have to face increases in every single corner of
11 life daily. And this Commission is asking for this
12 kind of increase based on their rateability of
13 their services.

14 The profit -- the return of investment for
15 the -- therefore, I would like to ask the committee
16 to carefully consider what this hike and rate
17 increase would mean on a daily basis for families,
18 and not only the impact that it would have on
19 Florida, but also considering the fact that it is
20 the largest increase in rate ever seen, and how
21 that would nationally affect the rest of the
22 services in the nation.

23 Everyone is watching this, so it's your time.
24 They are all watching us, so it's your moment at
25 this time, Commission.

1 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

2 MR. TRIERWEILER: Rene Diaz and Karla Reyes.

3 PUBLIC COMMENT

4 MR. DIAZ: Chairman, board members, I am Rene
5 Diaz. Thank you.

6 I guess I am echoing the gentleman that spoke
7 first. I lived in Miami all my life. I lived
8 through several storms, and I have noticed a change
9 going back to maybe 1992 to 2004, how long it took
10 for the power to come back on.

11 It's hard to compliment knowing that this
12 would bring an increase in rates if it passes, but
13 at the same time, I don't think there could be any
14 progress unless the investments is made into the
15 service.

16 Aside from Miami-Dade County and turning on
17 the electricity, whenever there is a storm, we
18 cannot only base ourselves on the storm, what we
19 have here to gauge is basically how many people in
20 Miami-Dade County rely on electricity because they
21 either have -- because of the condition that they
22 have.

23 Nowadays, Metro-Dade County has a system or
24 method that they bring those people into a location
25 where they are sure that the electricity won't go

1 out. If by any chance the electricity is going to
2 be out for a couple of days, it comes back in one
3 day, imagine the savings of having to transport and
4 inconvenience for those people who already live
5 with the condition, a preexisting condition.

6 I also have a farmland in Desoto County that
7 is in Arcadia. It's a small business. And South
8 Florida, Miami-Dade County, has been spared from
9 storms the past couple of years, exactly taken a
10 turn into the west coast coming into Ft. Myers,
11 Arcadia. And the impact that's been there from the
12 previous years, you see improvement on the
13 investment that the company is making to the
14 infrastructure. Anyone that wants to drive down
15 Country Road 70, or 31, or 17, you see how many
16 light poles are going up, and the lines, and the
17 recovery. The last hurricane that we had two years
18 ago, it only took us about two days to get the
19 power back versus a week before.

20 Again, speaking about having an increase, I
21 know that many people live on check-to-check if
22 they have a check, but I think that cautiously, we
23 also need to make sure that the -- we install in
24 the service that we are provided. In order to make
25 progress, I think that we need to move forward, and

1 progress needs an investment.

2 Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

4 PUBLIC COMMENT

5 MS. REYES: Hello. I am Karla Reyes. I am
6 the climate justice organizer at Florida --
7 Coalition, and I am also a member of community
8 organization Power U Center for Social Change, and
9 I am an FPL consumer.

10 I am here to speak about my concerns for
11 approving this rate, especially with the rising
12 heat that we will be experiencing, and unsure how
13 that's going to affect our day-to-day costs. We
14 are already hearing from our community members
15 having to decide what bills they are going to pay,
16 whether it's groceries or keeping the AC on in
17 their homes.

18 So I also would like to thank y'all for
19 sharing that FPL does not need this rate increase
20 in order to continue their services, or to even
21 approve them, and to uplift that, as well as the
22 fact that they had, was it \$8 million to invest and
23 lobby against the solar energy programs. So that,
24 as a consumer and as a member of a community
25 organization who was out here yesterday knocking on

1 doors in the neighborhood right across the street,
2 Miami Gardens, to ask if they knew that this
3 hearing was happening, and if they could make it
4 out here and talk about how this would affect their
5 lives. They had no idea.

6 We have been doing this work for maybe the
7 month -- a few months just to get folks to these
8 hearings, and this is the only one that you are
9 having in Miami-Dade County, and too many people
10 are not in this room, as you can see with the empty
11 seats behind me.

12 So I think that FPL can do a lot better before
13 they even have these discussions. We can have more
14 transparency on why you would like a rate increase,
15 but I don't think that this -- that we should
16 approve this right now.

17 Thank you.

18 MR. TRIERWEILER: Moni Gonzalez, Steven Brimo.

19 PUBLIC COMMENT

20 MS. GONZALEZ: I will just hold it. I am Moni
21 Gonzalez. I am coming today as a minority owned
22 small business in South Miami. I am in the SoMiami
23 area, so I am very fortunate that our power comes
24 back very quickly since I am also near a hospital,
25 but I will also say that I serve on the Board of

1 ChamberSouth. I am the Chairman with. So I am
2 very aware of how this affects multiple people and
3 residents in Miami-Dade County.

4 Speaking as a small business owner, I will say
5 that the reliability that I get from FPL is the
6 reason why I am pro getting this increase. When
7 you are making cakes and desserts for multiple
8 events and your oven shuts off in the middle of it,
9 you lose all your products. So my stability and
10 reliability of my power staying on is extremely
11 important to me so that I don't lose money in the
12 long-term.

13 It has affected me in the past, I haven't just
14 been an FPL customer. I have been a Homestead
15 Electric customer. If other people in this room
16 have had Homestead Electric, they know the lack of
17 service that you get, the unreliability, and it's
18 actually a lot more expensive than FPL.

19 So I am one of the fortunate ones that does
20 not have to depend on Homestead Electric anymore.
21 Thank God. And I am actually in agreement also
22 with the gentlemen that have spoken before me about
23 how fast our power comes back now compared to
24 Andrew and prior to Andrew, because I did live
25 through all of those, and I was one of the

1 customers that spent two months without electricity
2 back then.

3 So I am completely pro this increase and I
4 welcome any question that you guys may have.

5 MR. TRIERWEILER: Ms. Reyes, I actually have
6 some questions for you, because you are such a
7 knowledgeable member of your community and a small
8 business owner.

9 When you say that you are in favor of the rate
10 increase, as a business owner, what kind of profit
11 margins -- well, you would agree that FPL is
12 entitled to make a profit, is that correct?

13 MS. GONZALEZ: Absolutely. Every business
14 does.

15 MR. TRIERWEILER: A reasonable profit?

16 MS. GONZALEZ: Yes.

17 MR. TRIERWEILER: And what would -- what kind
18 of profit margins in your business are you used to
19 seeing, if you don't mind me asking?

20 MS. GONZALEZ: Absolutely. My business is
21 completely transparent. We file our taxes.
22 Everything is on-line, and I use the three point
23 method. It's time, product and profit. So
24 whenever you see my prices and I quote for you a
25 gate, my profit after expenses is a third of that.

1 MR. TRIERWEILER: And your bill, how many
2 pennies in a dollar do you think that profit should
3 make up of your electric bill? Considering all the
4 positive things that you say about the product and
5 about the service, how many pennies on the dollar
6 should go beyond what it costs to produce those
7 services?

8 MS. GONZALEZ: Are you including what it takes
9 to staff everybody at FPL?

10 MR. TRIERWEILER: Absolutely everything,
11 because they bill the customer for everything in
12 storms, storm recovery and base rates. And this is
13 a base rate proceeding, so they recover everything.
14 So I am going beyond the costs. How much -- how
15 many pennies on the dollar beyond what it costs
16 them to provide those services you to do you think
17 that you should be paying on your bill?

18 MS. GONZALEZ: I don't have that answer, to be
19 honest with you. I have never dove into the
20 numbers, and I would hate to answer the question
21 without being knowledgeable enough.

22 MR. TRIERWEILER: Do you think that a third,
23 which is what you utilize for your own services,
24 would be appropriate?

25 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Mr. Trierweiler, these are

1 some complex questions. I am not deterring you
2 from asking questions, but I think it would be more
3 fair if they were more general to the spirit of
4 what the comments that they might be saying and the
5 experience that they have had with the company. I
6 mean, probably would need to pull out a calculator
7 for some of the things you just mentioned.

8 MR. TRIERWEILER: I appreciate that. I was
9 just trying to put a fine point on the willingness
10 to accept and to pay for the rate increase, and I
11 just -- I couldn't tell if it was 100 percent of
12 it, or some percentage, is what we were looking
13 for.

14 MS. GONZALEZ: Honestly, everything has gone
15 up. You know, I -- when I experienced the egg hike
16 last year because of all the flus, nobody was out
17 there turning over those prices, right. I had to
18 figure out how to incorporate that into my business
19 and still turn a profit.

20 So when you are a business owner, you have to
21 be savvy enough to be able to do that on a pivot to
22 whatever is going on in that current climate, just
23 like I had to pivot during COVID and become
24 completely contactless and be able to survive, and
25 I did.

1 So it's maybe educating others to how they can
2 adjust. And I am not saying it works for
3 everybody, because I do have family that's elderly,
4 and I understand how it impacts families, but it
5 does take an effort on both sides, and FPL has to
6 survive to be able to provide this power. So
7 increases will eventually come, but I can't speak
8 to what percentage, because honestly I don't get to
9 see their books. I don't want to dive into those
10 books. I don't want to have two sets of books at
11 my house.

12 MR. TRIERWEILER: Thank you so much for
13 excellent answers.

14 MS. GONZALEZ: You're welcome.

15 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: One more question. Florida
16 Rising.

17 MR. LUEBKEMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I
18 will keep this to her experience with FPL.

19 Ms. Gonzalez, you mentioned that you are on
20 the board for ChamberSouth?

21 MS. GONZALEZ: Correct.

22 MR. LUEBKEMANN: Do you know if FPL has any
23 members on your board?

24 MS. GONZALEZ: They do.

25 MR. LUEBKEMANN: Okay. Thank you very much.

1 That's all my questions.

2 MS. GONZALEZ: I do not make my comments off
3 other people.

4 MR. TRIERWEILER: Steven.

5 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Mr. Brimo, you are
6 recognized once you are set and ready.

7 PUBLIC COMMENT

8 MR. BRIMO: Hello. My name is Steven Brimo.
9 I am here representing myself, my wife, my family.
10 I have been a client, my family has been a client
11 of FPL for 50 years, a household client. I
12 recently retired and, yes, it's challenging,
13 finding challenges to live on a fixed budget, but
14 what I have realized over the years that is
15 constant is the need for reliable power.

16 I also have experienced the impact of Andrew
17 as well as Wilma. I have seen the recovery times,
18 and I think what really brought some things home to
19 me regarding FPL and the quality of their service,
20 or the reliability of their service, is that my
21 wife and I had to take care of our two elderly
22 mothers, which have since passed, at our home, and
23 both of these ladies relied on an oxygen machine to
24 survive, okay. I am giving you my feedback on it.

25 So as far as we are concerned, we have had a

1 regarding the rate increase by FPL.

2 As stated on your website, the Commission is
3 committed to making sure that customers receive
4 essential services in a safe, reasonable and
5 reliable manner. However, a case rate increase by
6 FPL is other than reasonable.

7 Electricity is not a commodity. It's a
8 necessity. Everyone deserves access to affordable
9 and reliable electrical service. We need it to
10 power everything from our medical devices to
11 cooking our meals. No one should have to make an
12 agonizing choice between keeping the air
13 conditioning running, staying healthy or paying for
14 groceries.

15 This increase will impose undue financial
16 burdens on my household, and many others like mine,
17 while FPL will accumulate substantial profits. I
18 respectfully request that you prioritize the need
19 of consumers over profits.

20 If approved, this increase, without a doubt,
21 will make a -- negatively impact families like
22 mine, and potentially dissuade other veterans and
23 seniors from calling Florida their home.

24 Thank you for your time.

25 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

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PUBLIC COMMENT

MR. JIMENEZ: Thank you very much. My name is Joe Jimenez. I have been a landuse and real estate attorney in Miami-Dade County for the last 20 years, and what I want to speak about was roof. With the state Legislature recently passing a live local act, and every developer now building in places that were not customarily thought of as residential, and maybe the infrastructure is not ready for more, or doesn't have the capacity to take on what now developers have the right to do. I have encountered problems with sites that FPL really has to go above and beyond to get power to these sites.

I can only tell from you my experience, FPL is as responsive a quasi-governmental entity, and I deal with 10 a day. And if Miami-Dade County and the cities that I work in and everybody else were as responsive as the FPL team, that doesn't come from a political place, but comes from a customer service place. And I have dealt with the team that they have had in place over -- there is people working for FPL now that weren't out of high school when I started practicing, and that's how long I have been with them, and the service has always

1 been consistent. There is people that are here
2 that are retired that have come back that I
3 remember dealing with back in the day.

4 I am worried about not getting FPL resources.
5 How they spend it is for this body and experts to
6 discuss at length, but in my industry, we need to
7 worry about capacity, because as people have
8 mentioned here before, whether it's a highrise
9 luxury tower, or whether it's an affordable housing
10 complex, electricity is electricity. Drywall is
11 drywall. It doesn't cost any more to put it in one
12 than it does in the other, and it doesn't cost any
13 more to buy brick, or block, or anything else. So
14 we need power to go to all sorts of residential
15 uses.

16 And to the people that are mentioning housing
17 costs, which are real, very valid concern in
18 Miami-Dade County, and South Florida in general,
19 the only way that some people say to do that is to
20 raise the stock. And the only way to do that is to
21 sometimes expand into areas that aren't residential
22 now, maybe don't have that capacity.

23 So I would like this board to consider that,
24 because it is something that I am seeing in my
25 industry that when we get a piece of land, we are

1 not thinking about -- we are thinking about things
2 now that we didn't used to, and that is something
3 that FPL has been very good at keeping up with, but
4 I think they are going to need to continue
5 investment for that purpose.

6 And that's all I wanted to say. Thank you
7 very much.

8 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

9 MR. TRIERWEILER: Michi Cearo and Dewey
10 Knight.

11 PUBLIC COMMENT

12 MS. CEARO: Good afternoon, Commissioners. My
13 name is Michi, and I am speaking today as a young
14 FPL customer, who has been paying an FPL bill since
15 I was 16.

16 I am here to urge you to reject Florida Power
17 & Light's proposed \$10 billion rate hike, the
18 largest in U.S. history. This isn't just a number
19 on a spreadsheet. It's a decision that's going to
20 raise costs for families, students and communities
21 already struggling to make ends moment.

22 As a young person, I am especially concerned
23 about how this hike reflects FPL's outdated
24 priorities. Instead of leading us to more clean
25 affordable energy. FPL continues to rely on

1 methane gas, a fossil fuel that is here on our
2 planet, increasing the intensity of storms and
3 making Florida more dangerous to live in.

4 We are already living through the
5 consequences. More extreme heat, I know y'all see
6 how hot it is outside, more blackouts, more anxiety
7 about whether we can afford our basic needs. And
8 young people like me are rejecting this rate hike
9 because we understand what's at stake, our climate,
10 our future and our ability to thrive this the state
11 we call home.

12 FPL is making billions while asking students
13 and working people to foot the bill for a dirty
14 energy system that's driving both climate and
15 economic injustice. That's just not fair, it's
16 unacceptable. I have experienced shutoffs because
17 of my family not being able to pay an FPL bill.

18 And as an FPL paying customer, which I will
19 add I have no choice of because there are only a
20 few monopoly utility corporations in Florida. When
21 it comes to shutoffs, FPL has no mercy. They
22 currently have a payment extension option, but it
23 really doesn't extend past a few days, and this has
24 caused a lot of stress on myself and other family
25 members.

1 I am for energy justice for clean energy and a
2 future where we are not being punished for
3 demanding better. Commissioners, I am just asking,
4 please stand with us, not corporate profit. Deny
5 this rate hike. Invest in a just transition to
6 renewable energy that works for all of us,
7 especially the -- thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

9 PUBLIC COMMENT

10 MR. KNIGHT: Good evening. My name is Dewey
11 Knight, I am a small business owner, developer. I
12 am very grateful for the treatment. I was very
13 afraid when I started to build on whether Florida
14 Power & Light would be able to efficiently rapidly
15 move to help me, and I was amazed at the time and
16 the manner in which they helped to get my business
17 started.

18 I have big loans to pay, even though I am a
19 small business, and they came and, in fact, what
20 the attorney said, I was thinking the same myself,
21 is that I wish they could take their customer
22 service and take it to the municipalities and the
23 county government to teach them how to efficiently
24 move so that the permitting, et cetera, could be
25 faster.

1 I understand the importance of the finances
2 for small people, but I appreciate what Florida
3 Power & Light has done, and I am very scared,
4 because South Florida is growing rapidly, and they
5 are going to continue to need support so that we
6 can keep that power on.

7 And the last thing I will say is, it's a
8 beautiful thing when we are all scared of
9 hurricanes, and I am riding down the street and I
10 see those trucks lined up waiting, ready in case
11 something happens. I pray that it doesn't happen,
12 but I know that Florida Power & Light is standing
13 by to help us all.

14 Thank you very much.

15 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

16 MR. TRIERWEILER: Arnaldo Pastrana and Janette
17 Martinez.

18 PUBLIC COMMENT

19 MR. PASTRANA: Good evening. Thank you for
20 the opportunity.

21 Initially, I was just going to talk about my
22 experience as a professional. I am a life safety
23 consultant for highrises, and I work directly with
24 developers and during -- when it comes to working
25 on highrises, but after hearing about how important

1 it is for the community to be concerned on the hike
2 -- on the increases on the rates, I want to mention
3 sure one thing.

4 I am Cuban, come from Cuba. And the reason I
5 want to mention that is so that people understand.
6 The only reason Florida -- FPL is able to provide
7 the reliable services that they provide is because
8 it's a private company, and there are people,
9 investors that they rely -- they have to respond
10 to, and normally people think that is a bad thing
11 because they think of profit, right, but typically,
12 most of these companies, the only reason they are
13 reliable on providing the services is because they
14 have to maintain a certain level of performance.

15 Besides that, they have the responsibility of
16 helping the citizens through all the -- I mean, the
17 agreements that they have with the government on
18 being able to provide the services, but at the same
19 time attending the company alike.

20 Now, I know it sounds a little -- I mean, I am
21 not being clear with the message, but what I am
22 trying to say is even though I don't support some
23 type of crazy increase, because I feel that every
24 day, I do support that there is an increase and how
25 they managed the money that comes down, like the

1 other gentleman mentioned, you guys to be able to
2 support to put pressure on them to provide the
3 reliable services, but I do believe that the fact
4 that it's a private company controlled by you guys,
5 the Commissioners and the government, that's the
6 section that would make sure that they invest the
7 money properly. But I do believe the fact that
8 it's a private company, and it's not completely
9 controlled by politicians, makes it so that either
10 a highrise that needs a life safety, is multiple
11 systems to provide protection for those highrises
12 for people living in them, they can also provide
13 the service for the people that cannot afford it,
14 like low-income houses.

15 I just want to say that I do believe that an
16 increase to provide the services is good. It just
17 needs to be controlled by you guys in the proper
18 way.

19 Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

21 PUBLIC COMMENT

22 MS. MARTINEZ: Okay. Thank you for giving me
23 the opportunity to speak this evening. And I want
24 to point out that the one thing we all have in
25 common in this room is that we all live in the

1 beautiful state of Florida. That comes with its
2 pluses and its minuses, and we all know what that
3 feels like.

4 I was born here in south Florida, and I have
5 had the opportunity to be an FPL customer since
6 birth, but I have also had the opportunity to also
7 live in central Florida. And in living in central
8 Florida, I had not one, but three electric
9 companies that I had to deal with at different
10 various times. And it wasn't until that point that
11 I realized there is a difference.

12 And when I was in Central Florida, I lived in
13 Juliota (ph), Oviedo and Orlando proper, and all
14 three of them had different services. One of them
15 was FPL, but the other two, which were Duke Energy
16 and OUC, very different experience for me and for
17 my family. And I was shocked to show how I was
18 living in a large house at one point, and the bill
19 was lower, but yet when I was living in an
20 apartment that was significantly smaller, my bill
21 was much higher with a different company.

22 So I know for a fact that FPL, its rates, I
23 understand we all have bills, but its rates are
24 what they are but they are fair. And I know that
25 not everybody has had that experience being in

1 other places to experience the difference with the
2 other utility companies.

3 And I also want to say this, everyone is
4 talking about the hurricanes, the storms, and
5 that's very important. We all are Floridians. We
6 live that. But I have in my house a liver
7 transplant patient just two months out. I have an
8 elderly mother-in-law that I moved into our home,
9 and electricity is not a luxury. It's a necessity.
10 And I want accompany that's going to provide that
11 continuous, continuous service.

12 And we have outages and we don't need a big
13 storm. We don't need something big to happen in
14 order to experience those outages. We all have
15 done that. And how many of times has something
16 gone out and we get impatient more and more each
17 day with the response times for certain things.

18 I am going to tell you right now, we have
19 outages, and FPL has been there. And not only have
20 they been there, but they have given me the
21 opportunity to track it, to call it, to see it on
22 the app. So I feel that they are very forthcoming
23 with their service. And if that means that I have
24 to pay a little bit more even though it is a
25 sacrifice, I will do it, because I want to make

1 yet our electricity bill has progressively
2 increased every month between \$5 to \$10. It
3 doesn't seem like a lot, but in this economy, it
4 adds up.

5 A lot of Floridians already face some of the
6 highest energy burdens in the country, with
7 families forced to make impossible choices between
8 keeping the lights on and paying for food, medicine
9 or rent.

10 In 2021, we had the opportunity to speak out
11 against another FPL rate increase, and now we are
12 four years later, FPL is asking for another one,
13 the biggest increase to our electric bills ever.

14 If the rate increase happens, peoples monthly
15 bills will go up between 10 to \$11 every month, and
16 then another \$8 every month after the first year.
17 While I understand that FPL wants to provide better
18 service and connectivity for its users, it should
19 fund it's own projects without bringing our
20 electricity bills.

21 FPL continues to boast record profits by
22 paying its executives one of the highest salaries
23 in the industry. If y'all approve this rate
24 increase, it's only going to open the floodgates to
25 more rate cases in the next few years. When will

1 enough be enough?

2 I urge you to stand with the people of
3 Florida, reject this rate hike and demand real
4 solutions that lower bills and protect our most
5 vulnerable.

6 Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

8 MR. TRIERWEILER: Before the next speaker,
9 let's put Bruce Fischman on deck, please.

10 PUBLIC COMMENT

11 MS. WOOD: Good evening. My name is Jaime
12 Wood, and I am a younger consumer of FPL, so I
13 began my usage about six months ago, so I can say
14 that I can appreciate the investment that FPL has
15 provided for the technology.

16 I pay my bill through the app. I can use it
17 to determine my usage for the month in the upcoming
18 month so I am not surprised by what I am paying
19 for. It gives you a breakdown, you know, by
20 heating, cooling, water heating, et cetera. So it
21 really helps me stay informed on my usage, try to
22 adjust it to not be wasteful or just to prevent,
23 you know, overspending, if I can help it.

24 So I also use the app to stay up-to-date on
25 outages, and it makes me feel very interactive in

1 regards to safety, you know, in case that does
2 happen. I am aware of the situation. I am aware
3 that they are working on it.

4 I understand that investment is necessary for
5 progress and for growth, you know, at a reasonable
6 rate. That is up to the discretion of the
7 Commission. But I am appreciative of the
8 technology portion of FPL.

9 Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

11 PUBLIC COMMENT

12 MR. FISCHMAN: Good evening, Commissioners. I
13 am Bruce Fischman. I am general counsel for The
14 Mana Organization. The Mana Organization is the
15 largest land developer/owner in Miami-Dade county.
16 We have 80 folios on or around Flagler Street. We
17 have 35 acres in Winwood, Winwood Convention
18 Center. We have been instrumental and involved in
19 the development of the expansion of Flagler Street.

20 We are commercial developers. So you have
21 heard a lot about residences here, but the
22 commercial developers pay a lot. We support
23 Florida Power & Light, money is important,
24 infrastructure is important.

25 I watched the redevelopment underneath the

1 streets of Flagler going back to Henry Flagler that
2 had been torn up, new infrastructure put in on
3 Flagler Street, which allows us to put in new
4 offices for the people of Dade County to work,
5 play, to eat, to interact, to live.

6 In Winwood, Winwood has turned itself from a
7 geographic area of old warehouses into a vibrant
8 artist, restaurant, entertainment and now
9 residential community.

10 We support the residences. We support the
11 commercial development, but this cannot, it just
12 cannot be done without money. So it's very
13 important that we support, even though it costs us,
14 and it costs us a lot. We pay a huge amount in
15 electric bills, but we know when those lines go
16 there the ground and we need new infrastructure,
17 and we need to bury lines in Winwood because we
18 don't want those lines, those high power lines
19 blowing down, that rate increases are necessary.

20 Before I am asked, I can't calculate for you
21 whether the rate increase is reasonable or not. I
22 will leave that to the Commission to calculate it.
23 Any questions you have, I am here to answer.

24 MR. TRIERWEILER: I do have a question.

25 MR. FISCHMAN: I am sure. I was expecting

1 you.

2 MR. TRIERWEILER: Well, when you come up here
3 all prepared, of course I am going to have a
4 question.

5 You came up here with the insight into
6 commercial development. In the proposed bills in
7 this plan, are your commercial developers looking
8 for reliable power, are they looking for green
9 power, or is it complicated?

10 MR. FISCHMAN: Well, our organization is
11 complicated. And it's not my developers. I
12 represent one company. I am general counsel, as I
13 said, for one company, the Mana Organization. But
14 let me tell you, we have old the vaults from
15 Florida Power & Light that go back to 1935,
16 redundant vaults we find in buildings. We have
17 buildings from the '20s and '30s downtown. If it
18 wasn't for these guys from Florida Power & Light
19 working with us and helping us, we wouldn't be able
20 to do anything. And you are going to see over the
21 next five to seven years blossoms and growth in
22 downtown. We cannot do it without Florida Power &
23 Light.

24 Thank you.

25 MR. TRIERWEILER: Okay. Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Walt, next up, I believe we
2 have, is it Jules Julien, and I believe they are
3 asking for Creole.

4 MR. TRIERWEILER: Chairman, I believe they
5 have their own interpreter.

6 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: And they are bringing with
7 them the Creole interpretation. You guys are
8 recognized as soon as you are set up.

9 PUBLIC COMMENT

10 MR. JULIEN: Good afternoon, Commissioners.
11 My name is Jules Julien. I am happy to be in front
12 of you today. I am someone who is sick. I
13 suffered with cancer since I was two years old. I
14 cannot work anymore. It's with a lot of difficulty
15 that I pay my bills. If FPL were to even add a
16 cent onto my bill, it would kill me. I can't do
17 anything anymore.

18 I thank you all. Please reject the rate hike.

19 MR. REHWINKEL: Thank you.

20 MR. TRIERWEILER: Irela Bagué, Daniel Gohari,
21 and on deck Rosa Hervio.

22 PUBLIC COMMENT

23 MS. BAGUÉ: Good evening, Commissioners. For
24 the record, my name is Irela Bagué. I previously
25 served as Miami-Dade County's Chief Bay Officer,

1 where I focused on water quality, environmental
2 policy and securing funding for the same bay's
3 recovery. I also had the honor of serving on the
4 South Florida Water Management District Governing
5 Board, where I worked to advance restoration, water
6 conservation, reuse and resilience across south
7 Florida.

8 I am here today to speak about the partnership
9 FPL and Miami-Dade County formed to build clean --
10 the Clean Water Recovery Center. This
11 forward-thinking project, which went live in
12 January, represents a significant step forward more
13 towards innovation on water and enhanced
14 infrastructure resilience.

15 Each day the -- that wasn't me.

16 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: No, it wasn't.

17 MS. BAGUÉ: Each day the facility treats and
18 reuses up to 15 million gallons of reclaimed water
19 from the County's South District Wastewater
20 Treatment Plant, water that would otherwise be
21 thrown away. That recycled water is now being used
22 to cool the natural gas units at Turkey Point, one
23 of our region's most critical power plants.

24 This project is a model for smart reuse, water
25 reuse, uses water a second time to reduce waste,

1 strengthens our infrastructure and helps the county
2 comply with the ocean outfall legislation. But
3 more importantly, it takes a big straw out of our
4 drinking water supply, conserving precious
5 groundwater from our aquifer and leaving more water
6 available for the environment and for other
7 essential uses.

8 It's a win-win public/private partnership,
9 strengthening our energy infrastructure, supporting
10 environmental goals and protecting future
11 generations access to clean water. FPL deserves
12 real credit for their leadership and investment in
13 the partnership with the county. They have shown
14 that innovation and environmental stewardship go
15 hand-in-hand.

16 Thank you for the opportunity to speak, and to
17 all those who worked on that project.

18 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

19 PUBLIC COMMENT

20 MR. GOHARI: Hello. My name is Daniel Gohari.
21 I am in the -- I am a real estate owner/developer
22 for over 25 years, five years now in Miami. I am
23 here today just for two reasons, so I haven't been
24 to one of these before, so I am interested to be
25 here. But number two, I am working on a project

1 with FPL, and it has to do with the new rate that's
2 part of this rate case. And I have worked with a
3 lot of utility companies. It's never easy, but
4 experience with FPL has been good, and looking
5 forward to working with them in the future.

6 And I just wanted to say, as an FPL customer,
7 reliability obviously is really important. I have
8 no affiliation with anybody in the company of any
9 sort. And it's -- you know, I just want to say we
10 appreciate what they do, and just very happy with
11 everything you guys do, so thank you so much.

12 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

13 MR. TRIERWEILER: I have a question. That
14 same question, if you don't mind.

15 MR. GOHARI: Please.

16 MR. TRIERWEILER: Renewable power or reliable
17 power, is there a preference for whatever you can
18 get the quickest?

19 MR. GOHARI: So what we do is -- and I have
20 been in Miami only for five years now, but we are
21 working on data centers and bringing end users
22 here, so it depends on them. But depending on what
23 their preference is, is obviously what we are
24 looking at.

25 But I think, you know, I think it's really

1 important to take note that, you know, I think FPL,
2 with their large load users, you know, as an FPL
3 customer, they are not subsidizing them, but at the
4 same time, you know, for economic growth and for
5 job creation, I think it's important for them to
6 have that.

7 MR. TRIERWEILER: Thank you.

8 MR. GOHARI: Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

10 Sir, if you don't mind, one more question.

11 MR. LUEBKEMANN: I have just one more question
12 for you.

13 MR. GOHARI: Please.

14 MR. LUEBKEMANN: So you mentioned that your
15 real estate development is on behalf of data
16 centers, do have I of that right?

17 MR. GOHARI: It's not on behalf, it's -- we
18 are looking to work with data centers.

19 MR. LUEBKEMANN: Okay.

20 MR. GOHARI: So we don't have anything going.
21 We are working on a project right now, it's a piece
22 of land, but we are in the infancy of the process,
23 and it's my first project in Florida.

24 MR. LUEBKEMANN: So would you have any
25 familiarity with the data centers generally?

1 MR. GOHARI: I mean, now I have -- for the
2 past six months, yes.

3 MR. LUEBKEMANN: Okay. Do you have a sense
4 about what their electricity usage looks like
5 compared to other kinds of users on the grid?

6 MR. GOHARI: Obviously large.

7 MR. LUEBKEMANN: Do you have an opinion as to
8 whether it would cost FPL a different kind of
9 amount of money to serve the data center versus,
10 you know, another commercial or industrial use
11 opening up?

12 MR. GOHARI: It would cost more, which is why
13 they would charge more.

14 MR. LUEBKEMANN: And do you have an opinion as
15 to who should bear that additional cost in the
16 system?

17 MR. GOHARI: Of course, the large load users
18 that are part of that. So not the -- definitely
19 not the customers, but the users that are using it,
20 of course.

21 MR. LUEBKEMANN: Thank you, Mr. Gohari. Good
22 luck with your project.

23 MR. GOHARI: Thank you so much.

24 MR. TRIERWEILER: And before we have Rosa, if
25 we could have Rene and Gyselle Pino on deck,

1 please.

2 PUBLIC COMMENT

3 MS. HERVIS: Good evening. My name is Rosa
4 Hervis, and I would like to thank the Commission
5 for allowing us to voice our concerns at this
6 meeting.

7 I am here tonight because I suffer from
8 chronic respiratory illness, sleep apnea and
9 diabetes, which are exacerbated by the heat and
10 humidity in the summers, which is our hurricane
11 season. I also have a service dog and a very sick
12 cat, which are my if your babies.

13 So I am here because even if I pay a little
14 bit more for my monthly services, for my electrical
15 services, I find that since -- that it will be
16 worth it since I need electricity to operate my
17 nebulizer, my breathing instrument, and also to see
18 my fur baby, my cat, my very sick cat and dog in
19 the cameras when I am not home. As I said, they
20 are very sick.

21 I also need -- as I said, these things are
22 more important to me that I am paying a small
23 increase to FPL our dependable power company. I
24 trust them because I know that they will do the
25 right thing for me and thousands like me who depend

1 on reliable power and quick restoration, and this
2 doesn't happen for free. Therefore, I support the
3 increase that will allow FPL to maintain, support
4 and improve the services to the community they
5 serve.

6 Currently, the neighborhood where I reside is
7 being underground -- prepared for underground
8 utilities, and that is going to be a tremendous
9 change in my life. I have had times during
10 hurricane season and windstorms that we have lost
11 electricity, and I have had to keep going out to my
12 car and put the air conditioning high because I
13 can't breath due to the humidity at home. So I
14 think that an increase will be very worth it.

15 Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

17 As the next speaker approaches, just remind
18 you to talk into the microphone because if the
19 microphone doesn't pick it up, the translation
20 doesn't work.

21 PUBLIC COMMENT

22 MR. CABEZA: Okay. My name is Rene Cabeza.
23 They have been putting recently the electricity
24 underground in my area. A specialist from FPL came
25 out and explained the process of what they are

1 MS. PINO: Okay. Good evening, my name is
2 Gyselle Pino. I am here speaking to you today
3 because to me, reliable power is extremely
4 important. You see, I have multiple sclerosis. I
5 have had MS for 30 years, and the heat is terrible
6 for me. So if there is one thing I value most,
7 it's the ability to rely upon my power company
8 Florida Power & Light to always have power, and
9 most importantly, my air conditioning. Without the
10 air conditioning, the heat causes exacerbations,
11 and I fall into crisis, and I have to be -- go in
12 the hospital to emergency and spend days there.

13 Okay. I understand that today's meeting is
14 for a proposal that will ultimately raise our
15 bills. While this is no different than everyday
16 costs -- everything that's gone up, groceries --
17 thank you very much, sorry. And I shake because of
18 my condition too, and my leg is bothering me.

19 Everything has gone up. Groceries have gone
20 up. Insurances have gone up. So if I have to pay
21 a little bit more for FPL to continue to make smart
22 decisions and continue to upgrade their
23 infrastructure and also continue to have reliable
24 power, then I am all in for it.

25 I also have lived in Miami my entire life, 52

1 years. I have paid FPL since I am 19, when I first
2 purchased my home. I have also lived out of the
3 country, because my dad is a retired drug
4 enforcement agent. We have lived in Puerto Rico
5 and the Dominican Republic. And in those
6 countries, you cannot rely on the electricity. So
7 believe me, we are a privileged to live here and
8 have FPL.

9 I have also gone through many hurricanes,
10 Hurricane Andrew, Hurricane Wilma. I was without
11 power a week during Hurricane Wilma. We had to go
12 to a hotel with my service dog as well and my
13 husband because I couldn't even resist the heat.
14 It was terrible.

15 Also, once my -- I have an elderly mother,
16 she's 77 years old. Any time power goes off, I am
17 responsible for her. She has her CPAP, so I am the
18 one that calls FPL, that tracks it through the app.

19 Also, two weeks ago, I had to report that her
20 trees were hitting the power line, and today, FPL
21 responded. That type of service is unbelievable.
22 Not even two weeks, and they are out there cutting
23 the trees, you know.

24 And now with the underground that they are
25 looking for put, that's going to help us

1 tremendously with the power outages. So due to all
2 this work that the infrastructure needs, and also
3 all these immigrants that are coming to Miami, the
4 usage has gone up, so you guys need to expand the
5 grid. I am in for it 100 percent. So I am all for
6 it, okay. Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

8 MR. TRIERWEILER: We will have Leslie, Daniel
9 and then Gilbert Cabrera.

10 PUBLIC COMMENT

11 MS. VEIGA: Good evening, members of the
12 Public Service Commission, Office of Public
13 Counsel, and others on the dais. My name is Leslie
14 Veiga, and I am here on behalf of Citrus Health
15 Network. We are a nonprofit federally qualified
16 health center and community mental health center
17 that has been serving the south Florida community
18 for more than 45 years. And to the gentleman's
19 question, we do not have any FPL staff on our
20 board.

21 Among our services are several 24-hour
22 programs for individuals with mental illness and
23 individuals experiencing mental health crisis.
24 Access for reliable power is not just a matter of
25 convenience in these programs, as well as our

1 clinics and other locations, it is a matter of
2 safety for our patients and staff.

3 Over the years, and especially during critical
4 emergency events such as hurricanes, FPL has
5 demonstrated a commitment to service reliability,
6 communication and swift restoration efforts that
7 have directly supported our ability to care for our
8 clients and the meet community needs.

9 On a personal note, as an FPL customer myself,
10 I appreciate having a utility that provides
11 dependable power on a daily basis, works quickly to
12 resolve the odd outage and provide the updates on
13 my phone via the app, and dispatches crews to
14 restore service immediately following major storms.

15 In addition to reliability of service, FPL is
16 also a good corporate citizen in our community. As
17 an example, we had the opportunity to work with FPL
18 three years ago during their Power to Care on two
19 community service projects. One was a
20 beautification effort for the outdoor recreational
21 area of our residential program for teenagers in
22 Broward County. Their team came in and volunteered
23 and repainted our basketball court, planted flowers
24 and put up a new volleyball net.

25 A few weeks later, another team of volunteers

1 came out to do a living space refresh for a small
2 apartment building for adults with disabilities
3 that we manage, by updating landscaping, putting
4 down pavers and building two new benches. Both
5 projects brought joy to our clients brightening
6 their days and their stays with us.

7 We appreciate that FPL has demonstrated a
8 clear long-term commitment to quality and service
9 reliability, as well as the strong presence of
10 benefiting the community. Thank you all for your
11 time and consideration and to your continued
12 stewardship of essential services in our state.

13 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

14 PUBLIC COMMENT

15 MR. BOGARDUS: Good evening. Thank you for
16 the opportunity to speak. My name is Daniel
17 Bogardus, and I have lived in south Florida all 27
18 years of my life, and I am a business owner running
19 a warehouse equipment company, a design consulting
20 company and a real estate property owner and
21 manager, where I manage several industrial
22 properties around south Florida.

23 Earlier in my career, I had the opportunity to
24 intern at Florida Power & Light for six months.
25 That experience gave me an inside look at how FPL

1 engages with both residents and businesses, not
2 just to deliver electricity, but to help customers
3 lower their energy usage and overall costs.

4 From what I learned, I have personally used
5 FPL's energy survey programs and was able to cut
6 down my own energy bills, as well as those of my
7 tenants by at least somewhere around 10 to 15
8 percent. These are significant savings to any
9 business, and it's facilitated by FPL. These
10 services are offered at no additional cost and are
11 easily accessible on-line.

12 Reliable power is essential to any home and
13 business, especially essential for many of our
14 tenants who operate heavy machinery and warehouse
15 equipment that can't afford interruption. Any down
16 time means delayed operations and, in some cases,
17 damaged goods or equipment.

18 FPL's efforts to upgrade their infrastructure
19 made a noticeable difference. All these
20 improvements help keep our service efficient and
21 reliable, which, in turn, keeps our businesses
22 efficient and reliable.

23 I also think it's important to recognize that
24 FPL serves over 12 million people across the state.
25 With that kind of reach, even small improvements in

1 efficiency or reliability can have a large-scale
2 impact. It's one of the reasons, despite rising
3 demand and increasing costs, FPL consistently ranks
4 one of the lowest costs of electricity provider,
5 not only in Florida, but nationwide. And that
6 matters to small businesses like mine, which are
7 already navigating a high cost economy.

8 And just like any business, FPL faces rising
9 costs and operational challenges. They are not
10 exempt from inflation, fuel price increases, labor
11 demand and the need for digital infrastructure, but
12 unlike a regular company, FPL is required to go
13 through this public hearing process, and is limited
14 to how much they can increase rates.

15 And I understand this level of accountability
16 is important, and that's why I chose to be here
17 today. The public's input matters.

18 As both a customer and someone who has seen
19 the company as an intern, I believe FPL is trying
20 to strike a responsible balance between reliability
21 and long-term investment in Florida's energy
22 future.

23 Thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you for your
25 testimony.

1 We have one quick question, sir.

2 MR. BOGARDUS: Sure.

3 MR. LUEBKEMANN: Just a brief question. Does
4 your small business list FPL as a client on your
5 website?

6 MR. BOGARDUS: I believe they do.

7 MR. LUEBKEMANN: Okay. Thank you very much.

8 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Do you mind moving the
9 microphone?

10 PUBLIC COMMENT

11 MR. CABRERA: Yes.

12 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

13 MR. CABRERA: My name is Gilbert Cabrera. I
14 am going to be brief. I have been a resident of
15 Miami-Dade County for the past 35 years. I am here
16 in support of the proposed rate increase, which is
17 essential for us to invest in the necessary
18 infrastructure upgrades. I also believe that it
19 will ensure reliability, high quality services for
20 our community.

21 It's important to understand that Florida
22 population is rapidly increasing. Just last year,
23 more than half a million people moved to the state
24 from other countries and from other areas, and FPL
25 needs a sufficient capacity to provide reliable

1 electricity to the customers.

2 I also believe that this increase is a
3 necessary step to ensure that FPL have the funds to
4 be deal with the current electricity demands, and
5 also to invest in their technology and human
6 resources to be able to supply electricity needed
7 in the state.

8 Thank you very much.

9 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

10 MR. TRIERWEILER: MacKenzie Marcelin,
11 Christopher Arriaza and Madison Paez.

12 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: After Madison Paez, we are
13 going to take a quick seven-minute break, just to
14 give the court reporter a break.

15 PUBLIC COMMENT

16 MR. MARCELIN: Hi, everyone. My name is
17 MacKenzie. I am staff of Florida Rising and also
18 an FPL customer.

19 You know, to -- clearly Florida Rising is an
20 intervening party in this rate case, and I just
21 wanted to make this clear. This request is a
22 crisis of unchecked corporate greed.

23 Our first time intervening was in FPL's 2021
24 rate increase, so just off of COVID-19, when folks
25 were experiencing -- everyone was experiencing a

1 health and economic crisis, FPL decided to request
2 an increase, the largest in Florida, at nearly five
3 billion. That was approved.

4 Last year, after the storms hit, you know,
5 many hit Florida, while communities across the
6 state were recovering, FPL asked for another
7 billion. That was approved. And now they are
8 asking for the largest increase in U.S. history at
9 nearly 10 billion.

10 At every turn, if FPL can drain customers
11 pockets, they will. This is where the PSC, you
12 all, step up and check that, right, because what
13 will happen next?

14 We have to think about the customers, and we
15 all, you know, a lot of folks mentioned, you know,
16 right, 12 million -- FPL's 12 million customers,
17 right, and, you know, they are asking for 10
18 billion in the rate increase, and yet, you know,
19 when it comes to these public hearings, there is
20 only seven.

21 And truly, I just wanted to say that there is
22 not enough -- not enough service hearings, not
23 enough voices being shared. Are we even reaching,
24 you know, one percent of the customers, you know,
25 letting them know about this rate increase?

1 hear a sensible reason that is actually prudent in
2 public benefit, or that is actually logical, at
3 least to my ears. I think we fail to consider that
4 corporate consolidation has created monopolies in
5 every single sector. A few companies control
6 materials, driving up prices while maximizing
7 profits, and I think this is another example of
8 that.

9 Housing costs explode because developers and
10 investment firms treat homes as commodities but not
11 shelter. Health care, education, utilities, every
12 essential service has been captured by profit
13 maximizing corporations, and this is no different.

14 Citizen abomination make their violence seem
15 natural. They make 17-year-olds think inheriting
16 debt and depravation is normal. They make families
17 think that choosing between groceries and air
18 conditioning is something that is just something we
19 have to do is normal. And FPL is demanding nine
20 billion, I believe, dollar rate increase over four
21 years. The largest in United States history. For
22 a typical household, this means an additional
23 \$11.52 per month in 2026, rising to \$18.57 more in
24 2027. That is \$360 more over two years, a
25 22-percent increase, while they collected \$18

1 billion in revenue last year.

2 FPL claims our bills stay below the national
3 average, but this is statistical deception. Only
4 two of Florida's 27 largest counties have wages
5 above national average, and when local wages lag
6 behind, comparing our bills to national rates is
7 seemingly meaningless.

8 That's all I have to say. Thank you.

9 PUBLIC COMMENT

10 MS. PAEZ: Good evening. My name is Madison
11 Paez. I am a resident of Miami-Dade County, and
12 speaking in my capacity as a member of Power U
13 Center for Social Change, a longtime so-called
14 customer of FPL's monopolized services.

15 I am here to urge you this evening to reject
16 FPL's proposed rate hike. FPL has already raised
17 bills by over \$400 annually in the past five years.
18 Now they want to increase rates again by another
19 \$10 billion over the next four years. That's
20 hundreds more every single year for millions of
21 people across our state.

22 Does the PSC expects elderly neighbors on
23 fixed incomes to ration electricity like medicine?
24 Do you expect students in schools to sit through
25 class in heat because their district cannot afford

1 high utility bills? Do you expect people in
2 hospital care to bear the cost of corporate profits
3 just to keep the lights on?

4 FPL is demanding an 11.9 percent return on
5 equity, well above the national average. So to me,
6 this proposal has nothing do with improved service
7 and everything to do with profit.

8 I could spend this next two minutes dissecting
9 the contradictions of FPL's argument, but I am not
10 here to convince you, because I ultimately
11 understand how this process works. What I am here
12 to do is to put this on the public record, because
13 tuck trust is built or, instead, broken by
14 decisions like this when Floridians are watching
15 and we are keeping track.

16 Reject this rate hike because you don't work
17 for FPL, you work for the public. Both the people
18 in this room and those who weren't made aware of
19 this hearing reside in one of the 36 counties where
20 a hearing will not be held but stand to be impacted
21 by your decision.

22 Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: All right. We are going to
24 go ahead and take a seven-minute break. When we
25 return, we are only -- not even actually a quarter

1 of the way through the names that are on the list.
2 I just want to be fair to everyone who is here
3 tonight. I know some folks drove a distance to be
4 here, so I want to take -- after the break, I want
5 to take the comments down to a minute-and-a-half,
6 potentially further down from there, depending on
7 where we go. I want to be reasonable of the time
8 giving everyone the opportunity to be able to
9 speak.

10 Let's go ahead and take a seven-minute break
11 and we will be back.

12 MR. TRIERWEILER: After that quick break, we
13 are going to start with Darrel Mezadieu, Carcia
14 Raymonvil and Jonathan Ross.

15 (Brief recess.)

16 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: All right. If you don't
17 mind go ahead and find your seats so we can get
18 started here.

19 All right. So as you find your seats, we are
20 at 90 speakers total, right. As you guys heard
21 before, we are only about a quart of the way
22 through, maybe a little less than that.

23 If you have written comments and for some
24 reason you don't get through them because they are
25 longer than the time allotted, feel free to send an

1 email. In the green paper that was handed out at
2 the beginning it's still there in the lobby, will
3 give you instructions on how to submit your
4 comments, right, so they will be in the record.

5 I don't want anyone to feel that they are
6 being cut off. Unfortunately -- again, I want
7 everyone else, everyone here in the room to be able
8 to speak, and we have a lot of speakers here.
9 Again, I want to be reasonable on the time.

10 So we are going have a minute-and-a-half per
11 speaker. Our light system has not been exactly
12 cooperating the way we want it to, so we are going
13 to have a verbal system, so don't be startled by
14 the noise, and I will certainly start to turn you
15 down when we get close to the time. But, again,
16 just take time and consideration as you provide
17 your comments.

18 The only other thing that I would suggest is
19 please talk about the customer -- your customer
20 experience with FPL. I know sometimes we are going
21 off in a little bit of a tangent, and I understand
22 that to be a little bit difficult to do. That's
23 fine. But let's try to keep it to the customer --
24 your experience with FPL has in customer.

25 From there, let's go ahead and get started.

1 Walt, I'm ready when you are.

2 MR. TRIERWEILER: Darrel Mecadien (ph) -- it
3 looks like we may have lost some, Darrel, and then
4 Garcia and Jonathan Ross on deck.

5 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Sir, you are recognized
6 when you are ready.

7 PUBLIC COMMENT

8 MR. MEZADIEU: Okay. Hello, everyone. Thank
9 you. My name is Darrel Mezadieu. I am Florida
10 resident and a member of Power U Center for Social
11 Change.

12 I am from the working class family of that
13 pays FPL. I think that the rate increase on
14 Floridians FPL bills will be unjust and shouldn't
15 be enacted, especially since us, as customers,
16 haven't been receiving the best of services.

17 Throughout the years, people in our
18 neighborhoods have been hit by random short
19 blackouts, or have had their homes completely lose
20 power for a short time. That could detrimentally
21 impact families who rely on their electricity to
22 maintain their health and life. My family relies
23 on having AC because the recent increases in heat
24 have negatively impacted our health such as -- and
25 that's unfair to us consumers. As customers with

1 three showers a day and sleeping on the tile floor
2 with no blankets for comfort to stay cool for over
3 a week due to no power. Although, FPL had their
4 workers and trucks out the minute the streets were
5 safe to do so, my neighborhood and other minority
6 diverse communities were last on the list to get
7 power turned on, while other communities further
8 down south and west had their power turned on
9 within two days.

10 There is difficulty paying bills for many
11 people, and often fall behind to pay their
12 electricity bill while budgeting carefully. The
13 quality of life between the balance of cost of
14 living and minimum wage does not match. Applying
15 pressure on the people who simply cannot meet is
16 not humane, and is just simply wrong. No one
17 should choose between heat safety and hungry in
18 order to pay their bill.

19 I am asking FPL to stop the hike -- the rate
20 hikes. We need officials to hold FPL accountable
21 in inhumane practices. Cutoffs during the hottest
22 season is wrong and is just disappointing. To
23 implement -- and to implement protections for
24 low-income households.

25 Thank you.

1 MR. TRIERWEILER: Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

3 MR. TRIERWEILER: Before we hear from
4 Jonathan, Jonathan come on up, let me get Crismeili
5 Elseblo, Antonio Ruggs and Adrian Brockington,
6 please, standing by.

7 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you. Before you go,
8 if you don't mind minimizing the clapping, I want
9 to make sure that Mr. Trierweiler has the ability
10 to say the names out loud and the audience can hear
11 them. So I understand your emotion to get the
12 point. I want to make sure that we are efficient
13 with our time.

14 So go ahead, Mr. Ross, you are recognized.

15 PUBLIC COMMENT

16 MR. ROSS: Good afternoon, Commissioners. My
17 name is Jonathan Ross. I moved down here in 2004
18 with a project manager and manufacturing
19 engineering degree to work for a Miami-based
20 Johnson & Johnson company, at the time they were
21 the first ones who were given the MDA program for a
22 drug, so when I moved down here, I knew three
23 things, I knew Walt Disney World, I knew hurricanes
24 and I knew FPL.

25 2004, that's when we got hit from about four

1 or five hurricanes, and I absolutely knew nothing
2 about hurricanes moving down from Cincinnati, Ohio,
3 and it was FPL who was there when the lights were
4 out. So sometimes the power is working good, it's
5 when the power is not working good, so I learned
6 how to adapt and adjust.

7 Five years later I was laid off, and as an
8 entrepreneur, FPL became my constant source of
9 power. I am buying a house, became an entrepreneur
10 and finding myself as a company, and that company
11 has kept the lights on and has gotten me through
12 what I call Hurricane COVID, where everything
13 was -- we were stuck in the house. So I am here
14 not only to support the price increase because I
15 also feel that when you fail to plan, you plan to
16 fail.

17 FPL has a 10-year vision, a 10-year plan to
18 expand solar for clean energy. They prepared their
19 houses for storm and for future references. As an
20 engineer, I respect systems that think ahead, but
21 as a Floridan, I value companies that build for
22 what's next, not just for what's now, and that's
23 worth the investment.

24 Thank you.

25 MR. TRIERWEILER: Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

2 PUBLIC COMMENT

3 MS. ELSEBLO: About afternoon. My name is
4 Crismeili. I am a member of Power U Center for
5 Social Change. My mom is an FPL customer and a
6 resident of Miami.

7 I am here to speak out against the proposal
8 rate hike. I hear my mom and grandma talk about
9 the increase of the FPL prices. Their exact words
10 were, I don't know how we are going to be able to
11 afford 200 or \$400 more as we already can't
12 maintain rent.

13 And we -- me only, I cannot help because I
14 have no job. I am 17, and I am still in school.
15 The best I can do is come here and give a speech.
16 I care because I know my family is not the only one
17 being affected by the FPL's prices. I see many
18 friends and families struggle to keep their light
19 bills on. If most of us can't afford it now, what
20 makes you think we will be able to afford it today
21 or tomorrow.

22 We need to see more green spaces, affordable
23 bills and free air conditioning for those who can't
24 afford it. Therefore, I am saying that we reflect
25 FPL's proposal.

1 Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

3 MR. TRIERWEILER: Antonio.

4 PUBLIC COMMENT

5 MR. RUGGS: Good afternoon. My name is
6 Antonio. I am a part of the Power U Center for
7 Social Change, and I am up here to represent my
8 grandmother who cannot be here today.

9 So my grandmother is an FPL client, consumer,
10 she pays for the household that I live in. I am
11 here to express my opposition to the suggested rate
12 increase. My grandmother struggles with FPL prices
13 as the head of the household while storms and
14 hurricanes, so she relied on my mother and her
15 siblings to help them through those times. Mostly
16 their money goes to FPL bills.

17 And during the summer, my mom and my aunts it
18 won't be much for me and my cousins on the AC
19 because the prices will go up. We don't often --
20 we don't have it on often due to the seven people
21 living in the house. We -- so we often rely on
22 portable or plug-in fans, which don't do much.
23 This is very important -- and this is a very
24 important issue, because my grandmother can't pay
25 the FPL bill alone, and the increase will make it

1 worse.

2 I am requesting that public commission deny
3 FPL's request rate increase. Fair prices,
4 community investment and renewable energy and
5 safeguards for low-income families.

6 Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

8 MR. TRIERWEILER: Thank you.

9 Adrian Brockington is next, and then we will
10 hear from Jamal Victor and Maria Claudia Schubert
11 Fontes and Sebastian Caicedis.

12 PUBLIC COMMENT

13 MR. BROCKINGTON: Good evening, gentlemen and
14 ladies. My name is Adrian Brockington. I am a
15 retired Major in the United States Army, I retired
16 here in Florida in 2013.

17 Living in various parts of Florida, I have
18 seen disparages with regards to energy and services
19 by the Florida Power & Light. I noticed that when
20 I was living in very influential areas, that when
21 we had storms, services was provided and restored
22 immediately.

23 Now that I currently live in the city, I am a
24 teacher ROTC instructor in Miami. I chose to live
25 here in Miami. I have seen that days go by when

1 customers are not receiving the services that they
2 need to in expedient times as other areas.

3 With regards to the rate increases, you as the
4 Florida Public Service Commission, you have the
5 power to speak to one of the monopolies here in
6 Florida to ask them to look within, to look about
7 changes within the way that they do things, their
8 services. Ask them to look at what are they doing
9 to make services better where energy is affordable
10 by all individuals, because we know that, you know,
11 with regards to rate increases, and things like
12 that, we need to start looking at consumers instead
13 of political influences and such.

14 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

15 MR. TRIERWEILER: Thank you.

16 PUBLIC COMMENT

17 MR. VICTOR: Hello. My name is Jamal Victor.
18 I am a Power U member and a FPL customer, and my
19 household has experienced blackouts even if it's
20 stormy or a clear sunny day, and it really affects
21 -- it really affects my auntie who is disabled who
22 sleeps on an air mattress bed, when it happened,
23 the bed deflate and she feels uncomfortable. And I
24 call FPL, right, multiple times for this issue, but
25 when they do send somebody, they do a descent half

1 job and we pay the full price.

2 Why should we pay more for -- why should we
3 pay more for people who do descent jobs instead of
4 FPL focusing on the customer quality, which is
5 already poor, and I feel like they should mostly
6 focus on that instead of us paying them more for
7 the rates.

8 And that's all I have to say. Thank you for
9 your time.

10 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

11 Sir, we have a quick question. Commissioner
12 Fay.

13 COMMISSIONER FAY: Yeah, you just mentioned
14 that you have outages even when it's not raining
15 outside, there is not a storm outside?

16 MR. VICTOR: Yes.

17 COMMISSIONER FAY: Is that rare, or is that
18 common?

19 MR. VICTOR: Common. It would happen every
20 few weeks. Sometimes it happens consistently, and
21 it's usually around nighttime, after around 12:00.

22 COMMISSIONER FAY: Okay. And you reach out to
23 the utility, and they typically send somebody out?

24 MR. VICTOR: Yes.

25 COMMISSIONER FAY: Okay. Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

2 MR. VICTOR: You are welcome.

3 MR. TRIERWEILER: Maria, and then we have
4 Sebastian.

5 PUBLIC COMMENT

6 MS. FONTES: Hello, my name is Maria Claudia,
7 and I am with Catalyst Miami. I wanted to
8 introduce a letter into the record which has been
9 signed by organizations across Florida. These
10 organizations represent thousands of Floridian
11 households who would be negatively impacted by this
12 proposal. I can give it later.

13 This proposal is coming at a time when the
14 cost of living in Florida is getting higher and
15 higher. Floridians pay some of the highest rents
16 and property insurance rates in the nation. In
17 Miami-Dade, a quarter of households are
18 experiencing an energy burden above 11 percent,
19 which means that these households are spending more
20 than 11 percent of their income to keep the lights
21 on.

22 A recent study on the interactions between
23 heat and energy affordability, those conducted by
24 UF, reflected dangers that indoor temperatures can
25 have on households as people are exposed to high

1 energy costs and experience poor energy efficiency.

2 When households are confronted with high
3 energy bills, they are forced to make challenging
4 tradeoffs. Over the past few years, we have been
5 seeing high demand of funds in our summer months.
6 In Miami-Dade and Broward, we have seen the
7 departments pause the program because they are
8 running out of funds to keep up with the amount of
9 applicants.

10 Currently, we don't know what the future for
11 LIHEAP will look like, but we know that there is
12 high demand for this program. Although, for some
13 people the base rate increase might not seem like
14 a large increase month-to-month, this rate increase
15 doesn't consider all the other costs that will also
16 be passed down to the customers. If the price of
17 natural gas fluctuates, another hurricane impacts
18 the state, it's customers that are forced to pay
19 this on top of the base rate. At a time when --
20 cannot sustain this increase.

21 Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you. If you want to
23 leave your letter, we will enter that into the
24 record after we conclude.

25 MR. TRIERWEILER: If you would pass it up

1 here. We don't need to see it right now. A member
2 of the staff will take it and it will become part
3 of the permanent record.

4 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Awesome. Thank you.

5 MR. TRIERWEILER: Thank you. That's Exhibit
6 2.

7 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Exhibit 3.

8 MR. TRIERWEILER: Is it 3?

9 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Yeah.

10 MR. TRIERWEILER: Thank you.

11 (Whereupon, Exhibit No. 3 was marked for
12 identification.)

13 MR. TRIERWEILER: Sebastian? No Sebastian.

14 Ellis Adger. Javier Vega and Arlene Peterson.

15 PUBLIC COMMENT

16 MR. ADGER: Good evening, I had a written
17 statement, so I will just have to pass it up.
18 Basically I bring a little bit different twist. I
19 have been a customer for at least 47 years, but I
20 am also a proud retiree of the company, and I have
21 seen exactly how it works.

22 I was one of the ones out there, several
23 people have mentioned Hurricane Andrew, and we were
24 out there working long hours during the
25 restoration, and I know what it takes to do those

1 kinds of things as a power company.

2 Also, I am very appreciative of the
3 infrastructure improvements that FPL has done
4 throughout the years. My neighborhood has very few
5 outages. They are very brief when they occur. And
6 so I just wanted to say that I am very proud of
7 what the company has done.

8 And I understand that you have a decision to
9 make as to whether or not the rate increase is
10 granted, but you understand what it takes for a
11 utility to thrive, to provide for its customers.

12 So with that thank you very much for letting
13 meal talk.

14 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you. Do you want to
15 enter that -- the remarks into the record?

16 MR. ADGER: Yes.

17 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Again, we will go ahead and
18 do that at the end.

19 (Whereupon, Exhibit No. 4 was marked for
20 identification.)

21 MR. TRIERWEILER: Javier.

22 PUBLIC COMMENT

23 MR. VEGA: I will try to be brief. Javier
24 Vega. I have a grocery distribution business in
25 Miami.

1 In the grocery business, it's a penny
2 business, so price increases and decreases to me
3 are very sensitive to. I cringe when I see, you
4 know, is a vendor increasing my prices.

5 So speaking here today, I hesitate to even say
6 that I am in favor of a rate increase, because it's
7 not in my DNA idea just to pay more for stuff.
8 Most of us hate paying more for stuff. What I can
9 say is I understand the rate increase, because it's
10 justified and logical based on FPL's continuous
11 investment, as well as the quality of service that
12 FPL provide.

13 In my business, FPL service is crucial because
14 an interruption in service does not only cause my
15 business to pause, but it can cause in inventory to
16 spoil.

17 At home, FPL just laid out piping in my whole
18 neighborhood, including the side of my house, to
19 eventually bury the power lines. That's got to be
20 a very expensive project, and I appreciate that,
21 that they are burying the power lines. I mean, for
22 years, the other side of the street, you know, when
23 the hurricane passed by, their lines are buried and
24 their power was on immediately, and mine, you know,
25 with cables, like most of us, would, you know, we

1 had to suffer onward. Now they are making an
2 effort to bury them, and I appreciate that.

3 So I am seeing that invest in my neighborhood,
4 and so the last four years, since FPL's last
5 increase, it was 2021, those four years the grocery
6 business we have seen prices skyrocket, everything
7 around us, so I think -- I accept the reasonable
8 increase for FPL, and I think most reasonable
9 people should accept a reasonable increase for FPL.

10 Thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

12 Quick question.

13 MR. LUEBKEMANN: Thank you, Mr. Vega. You
14 talked about the very tight margin in the grocery
15 business, and you talked about a reasonable
16 increase.

17 MR. VEGA: Yep.

18 MR. LUEBKEMANN: Do you have a sense of what a
19 reasonable increase would be?

20 MR. VEGA: Basically the cost -- the increased
21 costs, you know, it costs -- labor has gone up
22 drastically. I am sure FPL is paying their
23 employees more. And just so you have to take that
24 into consideration situation. Everything costs
25 more. The trucks that they buy costs more. The

1 electricity, the copper, all the materials cost
2 more, so that's going to go into the pricing, and
3 you have to make a profit after that as well. So
4 that's, I think, reasonable is your cost plus
5 whatever margin they normally work with, whatever
6 it is.

7 MR. LUEBKEMANN: If you encountered a
8 30-percent increase in your input costs, would that
9 be significant to you?

10 MR. VEGA: Yeah. Yeah.

11 MR. LUEBKEMANN: Are you aware that FPL is
12 proposing to raise residential rates by 30 percent
13 in the next four years?

14 MR. VEGA: I think -- I think if it's
15 reasonable -- I am aware. And if it's reasonable,
16 for example, if their costs went up 27 percent, and
17 they have to increase it by, you know, to
18 30 percent, then I think it's reasonable.

19 MR. LUEBKEMANN: Thank you, Mr. Vega.

20 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

21 MR. TRIERWEILER: After we here from Arlene
22 Peterson, we have Jerry Libbin, Paula Hopkins and
23 Margarita Moore.

24 PUBLIC COMMENT

25 MS. PETERSON: Good evening, Commissioners.

1 My name is Arlene Peterson. I am the Executive
2 Director of a nonprofit in Miami that has been
3 around for 52 years, called The Wow Center. It's
4 dedicated to serving adults, young and aging with
5 developmental disabilities. We provide meaningful
6 day experiences through workforce, life enrichment,
7 education and just a collaborative environment.

8 I am simply here to share our experience with
9 working with Florida Power & Light over the years,
10 several decades. My personal experience has seen
11 that they have been a strong community partner with
12 us.

13 First, our service has been reliable. We have
14 a campus with several buildings. I live six
15 minutes away, so I also have reliable service at my
16 home. If it goes out, it's quick, and we have
17 communication as far as when service, you know,
18 could be expected.

19 During our recent campus expansion, which will
20 allow us to serve an additional 200 individuals,
21 FPL has been working with us closely to relocate
22 several power poles that have been critical to our
23 construction and our timeline. This is land that
24 is extending our ability to serve our mission.

25 In particular, their project managers,

1 contractors, local team, they were proactive,
2 responsive, helping us understand the project and
3 how to make this an efficient and effective and
4 safe process.

5 So I am very grateful for their partnership as
6 well as their volunteer programs with Power to
7 Care, and we are grateful that that they see our
8 vision for serving our community.

9 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

10 PUBLIC COMMENT

11 MR. LIBBIN: Good evening. Jerry Libbin.
12 Reside in Miami Beach, a city of 80,000 plus
13 permanent residents. We attracted 15.9 million
14 unique overnight visitors last year to Miami Beach.
15 It's super important that we are able to provide
16 ongoing reliable energy to those businesses in
17 Miami Beach to provide the service to those
18 visitors, residents and the governmental agencies,
19 particularly our first responders, during the time
20 of emergency and storms.

21 No one has talked about tonight the fact that
22 FEMA is looking at potential significant cuts.
23 NOAA \$1.6 billion in cuts. And I think we have
24 heard in education about the three Rs, reading
25 writing and arithmetic. I think Florida Power &

1 Light has responsibility for the three Rs as well.
2 I would talk about resilience, reliability and
3 readiness. And that readiness is a component where
4 they may have even more stressors this year as we
5 are on the cusp of hurricane season right now.

6 I had the privilege of serving as a Miami City
7 Commissioner for eight years, and for 14 years as
8 President and CEO of Miami Beach Chamber of
9 Commerce. I can tell you the businesses and
10 residents rely on the ability for consistent
11 reliable energy. The cost of one day of being shut
12 down to business in those 15 million residents and
13 our tourists is astronomical.

14 So we are in support -- or I am in support. I
15 am not longer employed by either of those. I not a
16 commissioner. I retired from the Chamber of
17 Commerce. And I would encourage as a commission to
18 look at the three Rs, in particular concerned about
19 their ability to be ready to handle the storms that
20 are coming up this year. And thank you for your
21 attention.

22 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

23 MR. TRIERWEILER: Paula.

24 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Is that Ms. Hopkins?

25 MR. TRIERWEILER: Margarita.

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PUBLIC COMMENT

MS. MOORE: My name is Margarita Moore, and I am a family law attorney in Miami-Dade County. I have been a lifelong resident of Miami-Dade County, and I am here to support the reasonable increase by FPL.

I -- in my own personal residence, I have had great service by FPL. We have power lines that are touching landscaping, and they will come out right away if you call them to cut the landscaping. As well as I think that there is something that no one has mentioned. Our legal landscape has changed.

Most of our hearings now, and I do a lot of litigation, are on Zoom, are electronic hearings, and we need to have reliable power that's consistent to be able to actually have the administration of justice work at this time. A lot of criminal hearings are on Zoom. A lot of civil hearings are on Zoom, and a lot of depositions are now conducted on Zoom. And without reliable power, it would really infringe on our ability, and that's really a post COVID issue that we have. So if a reasonable increase is necessary to continue to provide reliable, consistent service, I support that.

1 Thank you so much. Thank you for your time.

2 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Great. Thank you.

3 MR. TRIERWEILER: Hilmon Sorey, Gus Cabrera
4 and Keith Kulynych.

5 PUBLIC COMMENT

6 MR. CABRERA: Hi. Good evening. My name is
7 Gus Cabrera, and I would like to ditto what
8 Mr. Jimenez said about two hours ago regarding
9 FPL's support for housing initiatives. I am in
10 favor of the petition that is before you.

11 Having been -- having worked with live local
12 projects that are aimed at providing and solving
13 housing affordability in Florida, by opening up
14 parcels that are currently not available, or
15 haven't been available for housing, I appreciate
16 FPL's investment in expanding their network and
17 bringing power to those sites to solve for that
18 affordability issue and helping developers. So I
19 have seen no indication of any neighborhood
20 preference on their part in that regard.

21 I also want to offer one quick thing. I think
22 there was some commentary earlier on data centers.
23 What's driving data centers from my perspective,
24 and I have kind of done a little bit of amateur
25 dive in that. What's driving the data center

1 development has a lot to do with artificial
2 intelligence, right.

3 Artificial intelligence has the potential to
4 increase our quality of life considerably, help us
5 learn faster, help us take care of ourselves, but
6 it requires a tremendous amount of power, by an
7 order of magnitude of two, the chips that govern
8 artificial process, artificial intelligence,
9 require a tremendous amount of power.

10 So I am very much in support of FPL's
11 innovation and investment in that innovation to
12 solve to that and deliver that and increase that
13 capacity in those situations, and I thank you very
14 much. Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

16 MR. TRIERWEILER: After we hear from Keith, we
17 want to hear from Seth Stegelmann, Sherwood DuBose
18 and Laura Garcia.

19 PUBLIC COMMENT

20 MR. KULYNYCH: Good afternoon. Thank you all
21 for your time tonight.

22 Keith Kulynych. I have been a resident of
23 Miami for the past 20 some years. I have watched
24 the practices that FPL provides improve. Whether
25 it's the landscaping, making sure that the routine

1 outages that I experienced when I first moved here,
2 the quality of the service has increased year by
3 year that I have been here.

4 I have also been an architect for 17 years,
5 and in the construction industry for the past five.
6 As an architect, I got to learn the parameters as
7 to how FPL designs for the resiliency. I have
8 watched them improve those practices, communicate
9 better to us as a community. As several other
10 people have stated to us earlier, they are very
11 willing, and they have a special major projects
12 division that works with the developers on the very
13 complex projects, so that when we are working on a
14 project like the new stadium or the teapot terminal
15 in Ft. Lauderdale, the neighborhoods that are
16 around don't experience issues. It's a well
17 crafted, a well-planned heavy coordination.

18 If our local municipalities, as other people
19 have said it, are as coordinated as FPL was in
20 working with the utilities, it would make the
21 development practices much better overall.

22 So I really applaud the efforts that FPL has
23 made, particularly that one division that I have
24 worked closely with. When I need something, I
25 reach out to them. When my neighbors have had

1 issues with their power lines, I have reached out
2 to those people. And whether it was a major
3 project or a single family resident, they were
4 always willing to make the extra effort, and I
5 applaud their efforts. So thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

7 MR. TRIERWEILER: Seth Stegelmann.

8 PUBLIC COMMENT

9 MR. STEGELMANN: Hello. My name is Seth
10 Stegelmann, and I work as a construction project
11 manager in the cruise industry, and I wanted to
12 take some time to express my gratitude to FPL for
13 getting shore power to Port Miami this past year.
14 I know there was a lot of work put into the effort
15 to make this possible, and I want to highlight this
16 of initiative as a great success.

17 For those who may not be aware, I would like
18 to give a brief overview of the impact. Cruise
19 ships are a 24/7 operation, even when there is a
20 zero count of passengers aboard, the crew continues
21 working tirelessly to turn over a ship. This
22 includes everything from food and beverage
23 operations, to laundering the sheets, to security
24 operations, and everything in between.

25 In order for these operations to continue, the

1 ships must have a continuous source of provider.
2 Typically, this means continuing to burn fuel that
3 emits greenhouse gases while in port. However,
4 while at Port Miami, the ships are able to connect
5 to Florida Power & Light's grid and eliminate the
6 need to continue burning fuel. The ability to use
7 the grid helps tremendously in lowering the carbon
8 footprint that these ships create.

9 Most cruise lines have goals of being net zero
10 in the coming years, with many of them targeting
11 net zero goal by to '50. Having shore power
12 available for the ships to connect while in port is
13 a major key for the ability to meet these goals.
14 These are goals that benefit the health of our
15 environment and would not be possible without FPL's
16 collaboration with the cruise industry and the
17 ports served by FPL.

18 I look forward to FPL continuing to partner
19 with the industry and other ports throughout
20 Florida in order to make a more sustainable
21 environment for future generations.

22 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

23 MR. LUEBKEMANN: Mr. Stegelmann --

24 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: We have just a quick
25 question.

1 MR. LUEBKEMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

2 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Sure.

3 MR. LUEBKEMANN: Mr. Stegelmann, were you
4 previously employed by FPL as a senior engineer?

5 MR. STEGELMANN: Yes, I was.

6 MR. LUEBKEMANN: For about nine years?

7 MR. STEGELMANN: Yes.

8 MR. LUEBKEMANN: Thank you.

9 MR. TRIERWEILER: Sherwood DuBose, Laura
10 Garcia and after we hear from Laura, we would like
11 to hear from Joseph Padron, Alexandra Hughes and
12 Randy Suarez, please.

13 PUBLIC COMMENT

14 MS. GARCIA: Good evening. My name is Laura
15 Garcia and I work with construction company. Just
16 to tell you that --

17 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Move the microphone just a
18 little closer, sorry. Thank you.

19 MS. GARCIA: I was saying that I work with
20 construction company that also family buildings, I
21 have been with FPL for -- I mean, since 2014. And
22 just to tell you that their service with the
23 passing over the years, they have created a special
24 department for major projects that have made our
25 life, you know, not only for developers, but for

1 the communities, they are always available. They
2 are always open solutions for many problems that we
3 face and provide the power -- I am sorry --

4 I mean, FPL has also improved not only for us,
5 but for customers. They now look at -- every
6 single project has more than one source of power,
7 so if, for any chances, one section goes off, they
8 can be from another location.

9 I mean, in construction industry, as many of
10 the other industries in the world, every cost has
11 increased, and we know that as the costs increase
12 for us, they increase for them. So it's reasonable
13 that in certain times of -- in time, the pricing
14 goes up and so on the standpoint from developer, as
15 customer, I support you guys. So that's it.

16 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

17 MR. TRIERWEILER: Joseph, and then we will
18 hear from Alexandra Hughes and Randy Suarez and
19 Fred Christian.

20 PUBLIC COMMENT

21 MR. PADRON: Good evening, Commissioners,
22 Joseph Padron. I am an electrical engineer. I am
23 in the infrastructure development business.

24 I am here to support FPL in this rate
25 increase. As a long-term resident of Miami-Dade, I

1 have seen and witnessed, as an engineer, watching
2 all of the infrastructure and really seen the
3 improvements in reliability. It's been fantastic
4 to see from an engineering perspective the
5 improvements that we had in my community.

6 As it comes to their programs, I would like to
7 thank FPL for their commitment to EVs. Their
8 program for electric charging at home pretty much
9 convinced me to adopt EV, so that's a great
10 program.

11 You know, FPL, at the end of the day, is a
12 fantastic utility to work with. In the
13 infrastructure business that I am, when we build
14 major infrastructure projects, it requires a lot of
15 demand, a lot of load, and having a partner like
16 FPL has been fantastic to be able to finish these
17 development projects on time to deliver to our
18 customers.

19 So with that respect, it's been fantastic to
20 work with FPL. It's great to have a partner in
21 that utility space, so that's it. Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

23 MR. TRIERWEILER: Thank you.

24 All right, I am losing my touch here.

25 Normally when I say someone's name, it's like one

1 of those game shows, come on down. So if I call
2 your name, go ahead and make your way to the front
3 so we know that, A, you are here, and, B, that you
4 are ready to speak, please.

5 Alexandra Hughes. That's what I thought.
6 Randy Suarez. Thank you.

7 PUBLIC COMMENT

8 MS. HUGHES: Hello.

9 MR. TRIERWEILER: Oh, there you are.

10 MS. HUGHES: I'm right here. I am short.

11 MR. TRIERWEILER: Thank you.

12 MS. HUGHES: Okay, I strongly oppose FPL's
13 proposed rates increase. This isn't just about a
14 bill, it's about survival. Food and electricity
15 are nonnegotiables, and yet this increase would
16 force families to choose between keeping their
17 lights on or feeding their children, which are
18 basic human rights that should not be monopolized
19 or exploited.

20 I have spoken with mothers who sit in their
21 cars and libraries with their kids just to cool off
22 in the AC because they can't afford to in their
23 home. That's the reality that commissions, this
24 commission, must face. And all of this while
25 federal support is shrinking, SNAP benefits have

1 been reduced, food pantries are low on food,
2 Medicaid eligibility is in flux, and federal
3 funding to states is being cut, leaving local
4 governments and nonprofits with less to support the
5 people.

6 When I turned to FPL for help, I was told I
7 could only apply once per year. Now add to that
8 the proposal to eliminate property taxes in the
9 state of Florida by 2026, a move that would wipe
10 out 77 percent of Miami-Dade County's operating
11 budget as they are now living in Cava has warned,
12 this. Means fewer public services and nonprofits
13 like mine have even fewer grants and partnerships
14 to rely on to help struggling families.

15 This isn't just unaffordable. It's risky. It
16 threatens the financial stability of families,
17 small businesses, churches, daycares and the very
18 nonprofits that fill the gap when public programs
19 fall short, the risk increasing homelessness, food
20 insecurity and community decline.

21 And let's be honest, this room should be
22 packed, but it's not because this hearing wasn't
23 widely publicized to the other side. That's
24 failure of public notice. People can't fight what
25 they don't know.

1 And to those who keep saying about reliable
2 power, let's be clear, solar generators, power
3 storage and community microgrids are reliable too.
4 What's unreliable is a monopoly that raises rates
5 at will while families suffer. Reject this rate
6 increase. Stand with the people, not for the
7 profit.

8 Thank you.

9 MR. TRIERWEILER: Thank you.

10 Randy Suarez, Fred Christian, Dalhia Perryman.

11 PUBLIC COMMENT

12 MR. SUZREZ: Hi. Good evening, Commissioners.
13 My name is Randy Suarez. I am here in favor of the
14 rate increase from FPL. I am born and raised in
15 Miami-Dade County. Me and my family have been FPL
16 customers for the last 40 or 50 years.

17 FPL, for us, provides great customer service.
18 They also have a great user-friendly app that helps
19 me and my wife monitor our consumption, so we are
20 appreciative of that.

21 But I am most impressed with their responsive
22 time any time there is a power outage. This is
23 particularly important to me since I have an
24 elderly mom who depends on medical equipment that
25 needs to be running, and any time that we call FPL

1 with a storm outage, they quickly come and take
2 care of the problem.

3 Even from a cost benefit perspective, being
4 storm ready is important. Any time there has been
5 a hurricane and my power has been out for an
6 extended period, I am happy to spend \$40 or \$50 a
7 day on gas to run my generator, so the sooner I get
8 my power back up and running, the sooner I am
9 paying the regular \$8 a day, so that's important to
10 me.

11 I think it's reasonable considering the
12 inflationary pressures over the last four years to
13 have a small increase to make sure that our
14 infrastructure is ready, and for it to be
15 high-performing. So that's pretty much all I got
16 to say. The first gentleman that spoke really
17 resonated with me, so that's about it.

18 Thank you so much.

19 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

20 MR. TRIERWEILER: Frank Christian.

21 PUBLIC COMMENT

22 MR. CHRISTIAN: Good afternoon, ladies and
23 gentlemen -- or evening, ladies and gentlemen of
24 the Public Service Commission. It's an honor to be
25 here. Fred Christian, Founder and CEO at Impact

1 Media, Incorporated, hash tag Impact.

2 I am here to speaking not just for myself
3 today, but for the community at large, and I have a
4 question for you. We have bad crisis in this
5 county Miami-Dade and in South Florida, it's called
6 a rent crisis. We also have of a wage crisis, and
7 I advocate for health care -- also peoples wages
8 and stuff like that. This increase for people who
9 are senior citizens and disabled persons, like
10 myself, could potentially be an unfair burden it
11 could cost them depending on how much you have
12 raised it to cause them to lose their homes.

13 Right now, we have an eviction crisis. Right
14 now we have rent crisis, and a wage crisis, and we
15 are also facing health care costs, et cetera. We
16 need electricity to stay on. I am diabetic, I am
17 asthmatic and I have high blood pressure.

18 I went through Hurricane Irma where I lived
19 and six buildings had no power. I want to thank
20 you guys at FPL for doing a lot better job than you
21 did with Irma. I appreciate what you did. We have
22 had outages, but you get to them right away. That
23 was six days, which was unacceptable in a senior
24 community right after the incident in Hollywood.
25 Please, we need to keep the lights on for people.

1 I need the AC. Lots of people need it. My senior
2 community do. They depend on it to breath.

3 I have a friend in downtown Miami, she has one
4 lung missing and her family struggles with bills.
5 They can't afford the AC either. None of us can.
6 So please, remember everyone when you do these and
7 take this and understand that we the working
8 people, we the disabled, we the working poor, we
9 are the backbone of the community. We are the ones
10 that hold it up, so please remember us when you do
11 what you do. Take us into consideration.

12 Thank you all. God bless.

13 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

14 MR. TRIERWEILER: Dahlia Perryman, William
15 Quinlan and Z Spicer.

16 PUBLIC COMMENT

17 MS. PERRYMAN: Wow, he is considerably taller
18 than I am.

19 Good evening, everybody. I appreciate your
20 time. I really do. There was a gentleman that I
21 did taxes for one time, I don't know why he came to
22 my mind tonight, but he did. The man had four
23 jobs, and my boss came to me, because I had given
24 him some services that he needed, and said, you
25 shouldn't be doing that because a real man could

1 meet his obligations with one job.

2 Full disclosure, I have worked for FPL, for a
3 very short time I did, and I don't do this
4 standing, in case anybody is wondering. I am not
5 asking for you not to make profit. What I am
6 asking for is that you just keep in mind the people
7 who are working multiple jobs, who are business
8 owners, who have disabilities, who are just any
9 circumstances.

10 Two years ago, I was paying FPL bills in two
11 different locations. I had a medical crisis, the
12 power went out and I ended up with a deposit of
13 \$500 during that time. I could barely afford it
14 while working multiple jobs.

15 Like I said, I am a business owner, small
16 business owner. I believe companies should make a
17 profit. I believe in what FPL does. I love FPL.
18 All I am asking is just remember there is some of
19 us, it takes a little bit more to take care of the
20 debt that's associated with paying for our basic
21 necessities.

22 Thank you very much.

23 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

24 MR. TRIERWEILER: William Quinlan and then Z
25 Spicer, Rachel Prestipino and Curt Keiser.

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PUBLIC COMMENT

MR. QUINLAN: Hi, everybody. My name is William Quinlan. I am born and raised in Miami, I am a resident. I am a clean energy advocate. I would describe my experience that I admit that my service is reliable, like Mr. Luebkeermann said, Florida Rising, at the onset set of this hearing, that the storm outage surcharges, they definitely work. FPL has very ample reserve margins, well in excess of 20 percent, so lights for me, they do stay on. I have two points that I would like to make.

First, I sympathize with your role in this rate petition. The energy is really, really hard to forecast. We are looking possibly at the end of federal support for clean energy generation, but maybe less demand from fewer electric cars, the end of LIHEAP, home electrification subsidies, maybe higher natural gas prices, right, we have more L&G exports, but the oil and gas drillers can't get the steel for their tubes because of all the tariffs.

So all that leads me to say that I think we should be a little bit more conservative with our projections at the outset. We should approve less in advance while the facts of the world make

1 themselves known to us. FPL doesn't have any
2 mechanisms for cost recovery after-the-fact. They
3 do this for storms. They do this for fuel. They
4 do this for environmental compliance. So I think
5 that we should be a little bit more humble with our
6 ex ante decisions that are, you know, we can let
7 ex-post accounting clean things up.

8 And this particularly reflects, I would say,
9 also the benchmark capital funds that FPL is asking
10 for. If the stock market goes down, why should one
11 Fortune 500 company be an outlier because of its
12 regulatory modes?

13 I have more comments, but I guess I will
14 submit those in writing of you. Thank you so much.

15 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

16 MR. TRIERWEILER: Thank you.

17 Z.

18 PUBLIC COMMENT

19 MS. SPICER: Good evening. On one side of
20 this issue, we have people who are super happy
21 about the quality of an app, and on the other side,
22 there are people like me, that are begging you to
23 use the power that you have to keep us alive.

24 We have very few chances to address the
25 affordability crisis that we are facing. You can

1 live in a studio apartment. You can choose not to
2 have a car and get on public transit and, you know,
3 buy as few groceries as possible to feed yourself,
4 but there is so little that he that we can do
5 without electricity. And those of us that are here
6 today to ask that this rate increase not be passed
7 are here because we don't have the opportunity to
8 speak up about the issues that we are facing
9 regularly. This is, you know, the first time in
10 four years that we are able to talk about the cost
11 of utilities, and ask again, beg you to choose to
12 do the right thing, and to help out the average
13 Floridan and the average customer who has decided
14 between groceries, medical care, all of these
15 things, to continue surviving in this state.

16 Right now, I live with four roommates, and
17 this summer, already we had to buy blackout
18 curtains. Two of my roommates got window AC units.
19 We have fans running all day, and our house is
20 still sitting at 85 degrees.

21 Researchers have shown that the affects indoor
22 heat will kill you over time. That's what
23 happening to my roommates and I, we are dying. And
24 we are not able to pay for a new AC unit or crank
25 up the air because we don't have the money to do

1 as a percentage of their income than anyone else in
2 the country. So while both of those things are
3 true, there is no such thing as a fair and
4 reasonable rate increase. It's simply not in the
5 public interest.

6 After Hurricane Irma, I didn't have power for
7 at least two weeks. I remember having to sleep
8 under wet towels just to bring down my body heat
9 enough to fall asleep, and that was rough. The
10 reality is that for a lot of people in Miami-Dade,
11 they are dealing with that kind of heat indoors
12 even when the power is on and there is no storm,
13 like the speaker who just came before me. And
14 that's because summers are getting hotter and
15 hotter, and that's because utility companies like
16 FPL are investing in fossil fuels instead of
17 renewable energy, it's warming our planet, that's
18 an undisputable fact.

19 This proposed increase will cost households at
20 least \$200 a year, and most of my friends and
21 neighbors cannot afford that kind of increase,
22 especially those with fixed incomes. Living in
23 Miami-Dade right now, we are dealing with the
24 highest housing cost in the country, the lowest
25 wages. We are about to get our Medicaid, our SNAP

1 and our Medicare benefits cut, and now you are
2 going to raise our utilities bills too. Enough is
3 enough.

4 Working class people who keep the city
5 running, they are leaving, especially those in
6 tourism, service industry and health care, they are
7 leaving in droves because of cost increases like
8 this.

9 And listening to some of the commercial
10 ratepayers here today, you would think that you all
11 were such great corporate citizens, but if you
12 would like to know how to save some money, I
13 suggest to stop spending millions of dollars a year
14 playing politics, backing shadow candidates,
15 backing solar -- net metering and anything that
16 doesn't serve your shareholders' interests. So if
17 you need any more cost savings suggestions, I am
18 available and feel free to contact me.

19 Commissioners, please reject this increase.

20 PUBLIC COMMENT

21 MR. KEISER: Good evening. I am Curt Keiser,
22 I am a Cooper City resident. I am a 35-year FPL
23 customer. I am the city engineer for the local
24 municipality and I am the director of the public
25 utility. I am going to piggyback on what the

1 previous speaker said.

2 I deal with FPL's operations every day and I
3 don't believe approval or denial of this proposed
4 rate increase will be the difference of providing
5 reliable power or not. I believe they need to make
6 an exhaustive effort to reduce costs before they
7 are awarded another rate increase. There are
8 plenty of opportunities, and here are a few:

9 I think they should stop paying all political
10 campaign contributions, piggybacking on what she
11 just said. All right. I don't know -- you know,
12 they have to support both sides, I don't know what
13 that's getting anybody, except for it's getting
14 them favor with the candidates that they will
15 support these rate increases.

16 Stop advanced sponsorship of events. They
17 don't need to be participating. It's not related
18 directly related to power.

19 Stop TV commercials. They are monopoly. They
20 are a monopoly in this service area, why do they
21 need to advertise on TV, other than to garner favor
22 with customers so when they are up here for these
23 rate increases, everybody supports it. It does
24 nothing to provide electrical power or help during
25 hurricanes.

1 are for a hurricane. I am born and raised in
2 Miami. There is a few gringos that are still here,
3 and I have been through Hurricane Betsy. I have
4 been through Andrew and all the other ones. We
5 haven't had a Cat 5 since Andrew, and Andrew was
6 devastating.

7 I worked for the Beacon Council, which is the
8 economic development organization for Miami-Dade
9 County. And that amount of time, you know, over
10 80 percent of the businesses in Miami-Dade are
11 small businesses, they have less than 10 employees.
12 So we are not talking major corporations here. And
13 if they cannot get funding after that hurricane,
14 they are out of business. And we are talking tens
15 of thousands of jobs that would stop right now.

16 We need to be better prepared. We have not
17 had a Cat 5 hurricane since 1992. And the one
18 thing that scares me as a resident here, and as a
19 person that's caring about our economy, is that we
20 have a Cat 5 and it's going to create more problems
21 than I think anybody has stated here yet.

22 From the other perspective, why is it
23 important to support businesses? Well, businesses
24 as at least one municipality in Miami-Dade, their
25 taxes support -- they gave 35 percent of the budget

1 of at least one municipality in Miami-Dade County.
2 If you take away that 35 percent, the residents are
3 going to be having to cough up additional -- make
4 up that 35 percent in tax -- ad valorem taxes, or
5 they won't have services to the level they have
6 now.

7 Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

9 MR. TRIERWEILER: And is that Mr. or
10 Ms. Negron. I butchered that first name, okay, not
11 here.

12 Stephanie Romero.

13 PUBLIC COMMENT

14 MR. NEGRON: That's me, I think.

15 MR. TRIERWEILER: Oh, is that you? I am
16 sorry.

17 MR. NEGRON: I think you misspoke my first
18 name.

19 MR. TRIERWEILER: Yes.

20 MR. NEGRON: So by training, I always see
21 things in two ways, thing I control and things I
22 don't control.

23 Things I control is, in this case, since I
24 have been living in Miami for 35 years, I moved
25 from another country, and what I have seen is

1 inflation is low, high, depending on what you are
2 doing. But the fact is that inflation is a fact
3 and it comes through. Now, it's -- I don't have
4 control over that.

5 Now, what I have control over is making sure
6 that whenever it hits me, I can control the part
7 that belongs to me, which is the consumption. And
8 I have -- what I have done in my house and go and
9 all the proper measures to bring down the
10 consumption at home. And I think it's part of the
11 education we have to have, and I -- inflation is a
12 matter of fact.

13 The state of Florida is blessed by the fact
14 that a lot of people is moving here and the
15 infrastructure is huge. It needs to grow. There
16 is no other way. There is no other way that you
17 can provide distribution, you can provide
18 generation, without investment.

19 Now, is this a proper investment? That is the
20 call in your case when you go to the details, but I
21 support that there needs to be an -- there is a
22 growth in the economy and there is a growth in the
23 state of Florida. I definitely support that this,
24 a company like Florida -- Florida Power & Light,
25 needs to be up-to-date to that growth.

1 Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

3 MR. TRIERWEILER: After we hear from Stephanie
4 Romero we would like to hear from Catarina
5 Hernandez, Reverend Beyssa Buheel and Gianna Hutton
6 Gonzalez.

7 PUBLIC COMMENT

8 MS. ROMERO: Hello, my name is Stephanie. I
9 would like to take a moment to share a little bit
10 about my journey with FPL, and my experience with
11 community partnership.

12 So I began my career with Florida Power &
13 Light in 2019 through the FIU-FPL student
14 partnership as a customer service representative
15 taking phone calls and help customers with their
16 day-to-day challenges. That role quickly became a
17 foundation for my personal professional
18 development.

19 Over time I was offered the opportunity to
20 become a team lead, and eventually I stepped into
21 the role of supervisor, at the same time I was
22 pursuing a dream I held very close to my heart of
23 becoming a nurse. Balancing my leadership role at
24 FPL and demands of nursing school is no easy task.
25 Eventually I closed the chapter with FPL, and I am

1 proud to say I have been a nurse at Jackson
2 Memorial Hospital for almost a year.

3 Working in customer service at FPL played a
4 huge part in shaping the nurse I am today. The
5 skills I developed at Florida Power & Light,
6 including patience empathy, teamwork and leadership
7 are the same ones I rely on every single day as a
8 nurse. I want to take a moment to emphasize and
9 recognize the importance of community partnership.

10 FPL is more than just a workplace. It's a
11 company that leads with purpose. The commitment to
12 education, growth and flexibility that I experience
13 firsthand is a reflection of how FPL deeply invests
14 in its people and the communities it services.

15 Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

17 MR. TRIERWEILER: Catarina.

18 PUBLIC COMMENT

19 MS. FERNANDEZ: Hi, thank you guys so much for
20 allowing us the opportunity to speak, and speak to
21 you in person. I know it doesn't come around super
22 often, and really appreciate you guys being here
23 and hope that you do it more often.

24 I am here to talk today about, like, my
25 experience. I grew up in a household hold with a

1 single parent and my mom had to be very mindful
2 about her energy usage. I was raised with that
3 mentality, that every dollar counts. Turn the
4 lights off all the time. Turn the air off when you
5 are not using it and we don't 100 percent need it,
6 and that's why I feel very weary about the rate
7 increases to already quite high bills here in the
8 midst of affordability crisis that we are facing,
9 not just here in Miami, but in all the majorly
10 populated cities across Florida.

11 I think there is a lot of issues about turning
12 the basic necessity to a work profit endeavor. I
13 think that's a conversation for a different day.
14 But if this is how it's going to be, then we are
15 going to need to rely on you, the PSC, to be able
16 to regulate people like FPL to make sure that we,
17 as consumers, are treated with dignity and not as
18 dollar signs, which I oftentimes feel like.

19 I challenge you guys the next time you come, a
20 little three-minute walk to your office or is you
21 are in your car and it's, like, the 30 seconds
22 before, like, the AC, like, really kicks in to
23 just, like, sit there and sit how hot it is, and
24 now imagine having to go home to that heat and
25 cook, or have your children do their homework.

1 That is the reality of what many residents in
2 Miami, or across the state, are going to have to do
3 if this rate increasings through.

4 So I urge you guys to think about the stories
5 that you heard today from residents, because there
6 has been a lot of business owners, a lot of
7 developers and I think a couple of businesses are
8 great, I love cupcakes, but I also think about
9 people who are up here begging you to save their
10 lives and saying that they will die if their bills
11 go up any higher.

12 So please, act in the best interest of the
13 people, and thank you again so much for the
14 opportunity to speak.

15 MR. TRIERWEILER: Reverend.

16 PUBLIC COMMENT

17 REVEREND BUHEEL: Good evening. I am
18 Reference Beyssa Buheel, and in my capacity and
19 experience in working with congregates, and as a
20 hospice chaplain, there is a lot of individuals who
21 this rate increase will affect. There is
22 individuals who do not have enough money right now
23 to turn on the AC, all right. And if we do these
24 proposed hikes, a lot of people are going to die.

25 There is this polarized sensation of right and

1 wrong right now, and this trickles down to what we
2 are talking about. Why are we having lobbyists?
3 Why are we paying money to campaigns? We need to
4 think about all human beings, all right.

5 And, yes, the company has to make profit, but
6 we also have moral imperative, all right. There is
7 a lot of people that the heat is going to affect,
8 disabled people, elderly people, people with
9 chronic illnesses, people who are on medical
10 devices. Do we really want that on our conscious?
11 Can we actually justify CEOs making so much more?
12 What is happening with us?

13 All right. So I have been working with
14 individuals, and I see them day-to-day, where it's
15 either they don't turn on the AC.

16 Thank you for your time, and please take a
17 moment to reflect.

18 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

19 MR. TRIERWEILER: Gianna, and after we hear
20 from Gianna, we would like to hear from Maria Cruz,
21 Jose Gonzalez and Berenice Yanez, please.

22 PUBLIC COMMENT

23 MS. GONZALEZ: Hi. Good evening. My name is
24 Gianna Gonzalez, and I am from Palmetto Bay.

25 So I am here today, and I am going to start

1 off by saying that it's a privilege to be here, one
2 I don't take lightly. I barely made it here. I
3 drove an hour after work because I am speaking on
4 behalf of my mom who cannot be here. She's a
5 full-time teacher, a single mother, a caretaker of
6 my grandmother, who we live with, and she, alone,
7 pays our Florida Power & Light bill each month.

8 And the reality is that many families like
9 mine simply don't have the time or resources to be
10 here tonight, even though the outcome of these
11 hearings will affect them deeply, and that is due
12 to how few of meetings there are, despite Florida
13 Power & Light being the largest service provider.

14 And in the interest of my family and all
15 others that are like mine who aren't here today, I
16 am urging you to deny the Florida Power & Light's
17 proposed \$10 billion rate increase. And this would
18 force thousands of families like mine to pay
19 significantly more each year, which cannot be in
20 the mind that -- many have said here before -- in
21 the time of an affordability crisis.

22 And for my family, it involves making really
23 tough decisions regarding the quality of medical
24 care of my grandmother, who is currently in a
25 long-term health, or nursing facility, that

1 Medicare doesn't fully pay for, what type of care
2 we can provide for her; what type of food we can
3 buy; how much food we can buy; the gas that my
4 mother has to spend getting to and from work, et
5 cetera. And those are really tough and personal
6 decisions that cannot be in the mind or taken
7 lightly.

8 And the responsibility, as you know, is to
9 provide safe, reliable and affordable utility
10 service, and ensure those rates. And I just want
11 to say we deserve better than short-term fixes and
12 long-term costs. Please deny this rate increase.

13 Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

15 PUBLIC COMMENT

16 MS. CRUZ: Good evening. My name is Maria
17 Lievano Cruz, and I am the Vice-President of GLC
18 Real Estate. It's a real estate consulting firm
19 that works with the developers across Florida on
20 transit oriented developments, work force housing
21 and industrial projects.

22 Over the last 10 years, I have worked with FPL
23 on a variety of projects, big and small, and I have
24 always found their team to be responsive,
25 collaborative and focused on solutions.

1 Most recently, I have been involved in a
2 large-scale redevelopment project in Miami-Dade
3 County that required the relocation and demolition
4 of old electrical infrastructure to make way for
5 new workforce housing units.

6 At first glance, this utility work alone
7 seemed overwhelming, but when we engaged with FPL's
8 external affairs team, they immediately helped us
9 map out a clear coordinated plan that allowed the
10 developer to move forward efficiently and on
11 schedule.

12 What stood out to me the most is not just
13 their professionalism, but their recognition of the
14 importance of this project, how it would help
15 address the critical needs of affordable housing
16 solution. In my experience, FPL has consistently
17 been a reliable and engaged partner in advancing
18 projects that benefit the public. I fully support
19 their continued role in helping communities like
20 ours grow in smart and sustainable ways.

21 And I thank you for the opportunity to speak
22 today, and also I thank you for your service for
23 doing this. I think it makes a huge difference.
24 Thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

1 MR. TRIERWEILER: Thank you.

2 PUBLIC COMMENT

3 MR. GONZALEZ: All right. Good evening. My
4 name is Jose Gonzalez.

5 I heard various speakers talk about Hurricane
6 Andrew. I started my career with Miami-Dade County
7 in 1991, at the Building and Zoning Department, and
8 Hurricane Andrew was my first hurricane that I ever
9 dealt with. And for those who were around, it was
10 quite a doozy, right? And those that spoke about
11 Category 5, it was a destructive hurricane.

12 And working with FPL during that time was my
13 first interaction with them. Their dedication to
14 restore the power -- and back then, we talked about
15 two weeks. We spent two months without power
16 during Hurricane Andrew. And the fact that our
17 infrastructure today is much better is a result of
18 the investment that it took to get there.

19 My next interaction with them was when I left
20 the County to go work and develop Dolphin Mall. It
21 took a lot of infrastructure to build a second
22 substation to complete that mall. People don't
23 realize how much infrastructure everything that
24 powers us requires, and it requires investment and
25 money on that.

1 And the last project I worked on that was
2 Brightline. I am happy to be one of the founding
3 executives of the company that established the line
4 from Miami to Orlando. FPL was one of the first
5 ones to step up and say, we want to be it your
6 partner to help bring reliable transportation to
7 Florida.

8 It took a lot to bring Brightline to fruition,
9 and if it wasn't for FPL -- we moved transmission
10 lines. We did all sorts of creative and possible
11 infrastructure that we wouldn't have been able to
12 have done without them.

13 So I truly support this rate increase because
14 our infrastructure needs it, and our community
15 grows with that. And the investment in our
16 community is the reason they need the
17 infrastructure to be paid for back by the rate
18 increase. So thank you and I support the increase.

19 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

20 MR. TRIERWEILER: Next up is Berenice Yanez,
21 and then Jada Campbell, Eric Elkenberg and Jose
22 Cueto.

23 Is Berenice here?

24 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Is Berenice Yanez here?

25 MR. TRIERWEILER: Jada Campbell.

1 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: So it's potential getting
2 to this number that some folks have not been sworn
3 in. So if you have not spoken yet and you did not
4 get sworn in initially when we started and you are
5 planning to speak, and I have your name here on
6 these papers, do you mind standing up so that we
7 can take an oath to be sworn in?

8 Please raise your right hand.

9 (Whereupon, Chairman La Rosa administered the
10 oath.)

11 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Excellent. Great. Thank.

12 All right. You can continue with the official
13 business.

14 MR. TRIERWEILER: Jada Campbell? No.

15 Eric Elkenberg.

16 Jose Cueto.

17 PUBLIC COMMENT

18 MR. CUETO: Hi. Good evening. Good evening,
19 Public Service Commission. My name is Jose Cueto,
20 and just until recently, I served as the Director
21 of the Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department, and
22 also the Deputy Director of the Miami-Dade
23 Department of Transportation and Public Works. And
24 in those capacities, I understand the importance of
25 capital improvements and infrastructure and

1 investment in capacity as that's required to
2 provide service for the needs of our residents and
3 of this community.

4 I am here to share my experience on two
5 projects, one of which was already spoken by about
6 by Mr. Bagué, FPL Clean Water Recovery Center,
7 which treats 15 million gallons of wastewater every
8 day to service the Turkey Point facility in South
9 Dade.

10 That facility addressed a number of needs for
11 this community. It reduced our reliance on
12 freshwater resources. It also helped Miami-Dade
13 County a meet its regulatory requirements under the
14 ocean outfall statute, and in work with FPL and
15 their team of engineers and their scientists during
16 that time, I was impressed by their
17 professionalism, their commitment to the mission
18 and getting that job, which is the largest reuse
19 facility in the state of Florida, across the finish
20 line, something that we are very proud of as a
21 water professional, I am very proud of as a
22 resident of Miami-Dade County.

23 The other experience I would like to share
24 with you very briefly is the work that we did with
25 FPL for the South Dade Transit Operations Center.

1 This is a state-of-the-art facility intended to
2 power 100 articulating buses in South Dade that are
3 going to run-up and down the south corridor of the
4 smart program, the County's transit program. If
5 not for FPL, that facility would have been
6 impossible.

7 The minute we told FPL we needed 10 megawatts
8 of power, they did not bat an eye. They said,
9 absolutely. We have it for you, and they were able
10 to deliver on time and in an incredible way to be
11 able to power those buses and provide that transit
12 service.

13 In short, FPL, in my opinion, and in my
14 experience, has not only been a utility provider
15 they have always been a true partner. I feel
16 fortunate to live in a place where our electrical
17 needs are provided by folks like FPL. I am very
18 supportive of this rate increase.

19 Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

21 MR. TRIERWEILER: Mary Stephens, Pierre
22 Rutledge and Paul Camacho.

23 Mary.

24 PUBLIC COMMENT

25 MS. STEPHENS: Good evening. Thank you for

1 the opportunity to speak. Mary Stephens.

2 I reject this hike on behalf of myself, many
3 seniors who live on very tight incomes, many, many
4 thousands of poor people that live here.

5 I have heard a lot of the people speak tonight
6 and say wonderful things. We love you guys. We
7 appreciate FPL. We wouldn't be here without you.
8 We appreciate you so much, and you do so many
9 wonderful things. However, you are for-profit.
10 You make a lot, a lot of money, and you don't need
11 to increase your prices. You are making profits.

12 It's my understanding that you are asking for
13 a rate hike of over 11 percent. The national
14 average for rate hikes is nine percent. So that
15 just doesn't seem right if you are a really good
16 company.

17 My electricity does go off just to share it.
18 It's not that big a deal. But my electricity on my
19 electric clocks goes off at least once a month. I
20 don't know why. I live in west Broward.

21 My daughter's electricity was off for at least
22 two weeks after the hurricane in Miami, in her
23 neighborhood. She was, forked to go stay at a
24 hotel.

25 I don't like you using a lot of natural gas.

1 You are heating up the world. You are contributing
2 to climate warming, and you are adding methane to
3 the environment. We don't need that. We need
4 solar. If there is now possibility, we need wind.
5 We are making it hotter and hotter by using natural
6 gas.

7 Keep in mind the things that are going on
8 today. Higher flood insurance. Higher house
9 insurance. Higher car insurance. Higher taxes.
10 The inflation, the cost of everything. We need a
11 break. If the company is as profitable as I am
12 understanding, let's give the citizens a bit of a
13 break right now, because it's a really tough time,
14 and many of us are thinking we may be laid off,
15 because times may be tough pretty soon.

16 So thank you very much for your consideration,
17 and I am hoping that we will not have a rate hike.
18 Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

20 PUBLIC COMMENT

21 MR. CAMACHO: Good evening, ladies and
22 gentlemen of the board -- of the Commission. My
23 name is Paul Camacho. I am the President of the
24 Westchester Miami-Dade Business Council, also known
25 as the Chamber of Commerce.

1 For those of you that are not aware,
2 Westchester is the between the Palmetto Express
3 Lane to the Florida Turnpike from Main Street to
4 Miller. We have a large mom and pop community of
5 businesses, and a number of them have reached out
6 to me a numerous of times with power outages of
7 their business that they will lose thousands of
8 dollars in meat, thousands of dollars in supplies
9 in their freezers. And I have reached out to the
10 district rep for my community, and they have always
11 been there. They have helped take care of the
12 situation quickly as possible.

13 And if you allow me, I am also a person that
14 pays a light bill every month, and I really don't
15 want to pay more, but if I have to, to live the way
16 that I live comfortable, or have the ability -- I
17 have a 92-year-old mother-in-law at home, she needs
18 her medications, her breathing machine, and the air
19 conditioning on.

20 And people talk about profit. Everybody is in
21 business to make a profit. However, they are
22 entitled because it's not just the electricity that
23 the consumer receives at home, it's equipment. It
24 is posts.

25 In my community, they have changed over

1 60 percent of the wooden poles to concrete, and
2 they have always done a great job, and I appreciate
3 that you guys take into consideration the increase,
4 the rate increase that they are requesting.

5 I thank you very much. God bless you all.

6 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

7 MR. TRIERWEILER: Luz Weinberg, Krystal
8 Rodriguez and Camilo Mejia.

9 PUBLIC COMMENT

10 MR. RUTLEDGE: Commission, I think we may have
11 gotten out of order.

12 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Yeah, just state your name.

13 MR. RUTLEDGE: Good evening. My name is
14 Pierre Rutledge. I am the President of the 100
15 Black Men of South Florida. Our national
16 organization of 100 Black Men of America is the
17 preeminent mentoring organization in this country.

18 I am a lifelong resident of Miami-Dade County,
19 born and raised. I left here for four years, went
20 to college and came back. So I am invested in this
21 community.

22 But I got on to something years ago called
23 budget billing, where no matter how much energy I
24 used, or electricity I used, my bills are just the
25 same, particularly during times like this. But

1 today I come to you -- tonight I come to you to
2 speak on behalf of something I haven't heard here,
3 I have heard about me. I heard about us. But what
4 about them?

5 We represent 51 young men who are between the
6 ages of sixth grade and 12th grade, high school
7 graduation, who we mentor year-round. A couple
8 years ago, we got into a situation where we felt
9 that things were changing in America and we needed
10 to start teaching and exposing our kids that we
11 mentor to STEM.

12 Nobody came to help. We went to the colleges
13 and universities, Florida International
14 University's Medical School came and volunteered.
15 FPL has been a great partner in our STEM
16 advancement in terms of our youth. The parent
17 company, NextEra, has been a great partner in our
18 endless missions. Ultimately it's your choice, but
19 I am here tonight to talk about them, the children,
20 who benefit from collaborations and relationships
21 like we have with FPL and NextEra.

22 I will end with this: Here's the good news,
23 yesterday we were informed that our STEM grant team
24 will be competing nationally in the national STEM
25 competition in New Orleans next week. That's the

1 good news. That's the good public/private
2 partnership that we have had with FPL and NextEra.

3 Like I said, ultimately, you make the
4 decision. I am not talking about me. I am not
5 talking about us. I am talking about them, the
6 kids who benefit from the programs and the return
7 on investment that this corporation has.

8 Thank you, and thank you for your time.

9 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you, Mr. Rutledge.
10 Congratulations to your students.

11 MR. LUEBKEMANN: Just a quick --

12 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Mr. Rutledge, real quick
13 question.

14 Go ahead.

15 MR. LUEBKEMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

16 Mr. Rutledge, great work on all that you are
17 doing with your organization. I just wanted to
18 clarify for the record, does 100 Black Men of South
19 Florida receive money from FPL?

20 MR. RUTLEDGE: Yes, but here's the caveat,
21 it's not actually cash money. It's in terms of
22 volunteering. They provide bodies to come and
23 teach and expose our kids to whether it's STEM,
24 whether they volunteer in our Thanksgiving food
25 drive or our Christmas shopping spree.

1 Governor appointed transportation official, a small
2 business owner for large construction projects and
3 a customer myself.

4 My name is Luz Weinberg. I am CEO of
5 GlobComm. It is a small construction impact
6 mitigation firm -- I promise I will be two minutes,
7 Mr. Chair -- and I launched that firm on my own in
8 2016 after I worked on both the Port of Miami
9 Tunnel and critical safe center, two very complex
10 projects in downtown Miami. I, since then, have
11 exclusively only worked in large-scale complex
12 construction projects, and I want to tell you about
13 my partnership with FPL and the excellence that
14 they provide.

15 These projects require a whole lot of
16 energizing, a whole lot of power and a whole lot of
17 cooperation and coordination. I will list just a
18 couple of my current projects, that includes the
19 Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, the Miami branch.
20 We are remodernizing, is the word, our vault in the
21 branch of Miami, which is in Doral. I have gotten
22 the Bal Harbour Shops expansion, that's a \$500
23 million of expansion of four additional buildings.
24 I have got the 12-acre Esplanade at Adventura on
25 the former Sears site. That's a beautiful mixed

1 retail facility. And most recently, the 13-acre
2 project in North Bay Village, also mixed use
3 residential and retail. And 126-acre project in
4 the City of Miramar, complete mixed use. Basically
5 we are building a brand new city. That's a whole
6 lot of power.

7 And each time I have called FPL, and we don't
8 always agree, sometimes it takes a few calls, but I
9 will tell you what they are, they are professional,
10 they are responsive and eventually we reach a
11 resolution for our issues, and I am at this now for
12 15 years.

13 In the City of Aventura, I served as
14 Commissioner and Vice-Mayor for 10 years, and
15 through several hurricanes, including Katrina and
16 Irma. And their response was always topnotch.
17 They are a responsible municipal partner.

18 I also served as the Governor's appointee on
19 the Expressway Authority, and we worked very
20 closely with FPL in energizing our highways and
21 lighting our roadways. Again, a very reliable
22 municipal partner.

23 Personally, of course, I enjoy the
24 communications with me, but when I am home and I
25 get a text that there is a temporary outage, I get

1 a text that tells me when I can finish cooking my
2 grandson's favorite pasta dish or when I can finish
3 blow drying my hair, but it's always quick and
4 efficient. So they are -- in this digital age, I
5 find them to be a model information partner that
6 always works with us.

7 So overall, my testimonial speaks like my
8 resume, that's because not only in my personal
9 life, but in my businesses, in my construction
10 projects, in my very large construction projects
11 and my public service to this great state of
12 Florida, FPL has been a very, very good partner.

13 Thank you so much for your time.

14 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

15 MR. TRIERWEILER: Krystal.

16 PUBLIC COMMENT

17 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Long day, Commissioners, isn't
18 it? Well, I thank you for your time Commissioner
19 Fay, Graham, La Rosa, Clark and Smith, for hearing
20 us today, and I speak as a concerned resident, the
21 daughter of hard-working parents, and a voice of
22 the countless Floridians who will be directly
23 impacted by this proposed FPL rate hike. If
24 passed, the average electric bill could rise by
25 \$200 a year. That's not just a number. That's

1 grocery money, gas and medicine.

2 In my household, we stretch every dollar.
3 This hike would hit us hard, and now with LIHEAP
4 federally frozen our most venerable are left
5 without a safety net.

6 Chairman, I ask you this rhetorical question:
7 What happens when the people who talked about
8 needing oxygen or a CPAP machine can't afford their
9 bill now? Small businesses will suffer too.
10 Rising energy costs means higher prices for
11 everyone. And clean energy still out the window,
12 as FPL depends on natural gas. Meanwhile, we are
13 facing record breaking heat. Turning off the AC
14 shouldn't be a survival strategy.

15 Let's also talk about access, shall we? No
16 Creole interpretation today in Miami. And in the
17 website, the Public Service Commission and the FPL
18 should have had this in the first page, barely
19 accessible. If this is such an important issue,
20 why weren't we informed?

21 FPL's return on equity is 11 percent, and the
22 national average just nine. They pay you guys over
23 100 K, and FPL is paying your workers 62 K way
24 below the living average in Florida.

25 So -- people to afford pearls -- that was of a

1 joke, and so for that, a hike shouldn't be an
2 incentive to work better. You should already be
3 working at that.

4 And for those of you who were in favor, it's
5 two -- are you well aware that you are paying 2 K
6 for your flooded homes and coming back to your
7 flooded home be charged more for electricity. I
8 will say no. Commissioners, can you say that too?
9 Protect our people, our health and our green
10 future.

11 Thank you.

12 MR. TRIERWEILER: After Mr. Mejia, we have
13 Jenneva Clauss, Jorge Delgado and Taylor Neverman.

14 PUBLIC COMMENT

15 MR. MEJIA: Good evening, Commissioners.
16 Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

17 I have been a 30-year customer of a monopoly,
18 and I am here to urge you to reject the rate
19 increase. People in Florida already have some of
20 the highest -- faced with the highest energy burden
21 in the country. Families are forced to make
22 impossible decision between keeping the lights on
23 and paying for food, medicine or rent, many living
24 paycheck to paycheck, and another hike will just
25 exacerbate that situation for a lot of people.

1 Since 2021, FPL bills have already risen
2 sharply, some as much as 60 percent. You said
3 30 percent earlier, but you had to add an equity
4 component to that. For people who live in less
5 than weatherized homes, public housing, old
6 housing, neighborhoods without a tree canopy, the
7 heat is much worse. When you get to lower income
8 families, the heat is just much worse, and this
9 rate hike comes at the worst possible time for us.

10 The Trump Administration is proposing to
11 eliminate the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance
12 Program, LIHEAP. Actually, we are almost out of
13 funds, and the hot months just started, and we are
14 almost out of money for them, and there is no funds
15 for next year. That's a life line for over six
16 million people in Florida who struggle to pay their
17 bills. This is only going to make things worse.

18 You have been tasked to ensure safety,
19 reliable and affordable utility service, not to
20 guarantee record profits for monopoly utilities.

21 Lastly, clean energy versus reliable energy.
22 Seriously, is that the question before us tonight?
23 How about clean lawns or polluted lawns?
24 Heatstroke or no heatstroke, cardiovascular
25 disease, liver disease. All these conditions have

1 been connected to exposure to long-term extreme
2 heat, which is exactly what low-income families
3 will be exposed to if you increase the rate for
4 electricity.

5 And that's the question here. It's life or
6 death for a lot of people. This is not a metaphor.
7 This is not a figure of speech. This is life or
8 death. That's the question before us tonight.

9 Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

11 After Ms. Clauss, let's take a quick
12 five-minute break for the court reporter, a few
13 minutes.

14 PUBLIC COMMENT

15 MS. CLAUSS: Hi. My name is Jenneva Clauss.
16 I am a resident who has only ever reluctantly paid
17 FPL, not the other way around, like some other
18 speakers.

19 I was so happy to read that the Florida Public
20 Service Commission is committed to making sure that
21 Florida's consumers receive essential services in a
22 reasonable and reliable manner. Thank God for
23 that, because that means that you will reject this
24 asinine and unethical rate hike, which would be the
25 largest in the country's history. As you have

1 heard, FPL doesn't need this rate increase to
2 improve their services, or continue their services.

3 People who are on fixed incomes are the ones
4 that will be hurt by this. My utility bills went
5 up with the last rate rise a few years ago, and I
6 have to brace myself as the hotter months come.
7 It's already hot outside, and my utility bill is
8 over \$200. When it gets hotter, it will be over
9 \$300, which I can already not afford. I can't
10 imagine paying more, and that that's with
11 consistent outages, and also with the power line
12 outside of my apartment catching on fire and
13 putting residents at risk.

14 The idea that FPL would need to raise their
15 rates after they had over \$8 million to spare to
16 lobby and work against renewable energy in the
17 state, and even more millions to run a sham
18 candidate to unseat an incumbent in our county is
19 very shameful. Us, the residents, aren't buying
20 it. You are here to protect us. I really hope you
21 do that. As a hostage, consumers from a monopoly
22 company's greed, this is a decision that should not
23 be taken lightly.

24 I just want to share one story about my
25 neighbor who is 89 years old. I visit her often,

1 and one time when I visited to her, she was in
2 tears because she was having to decide on whether
3 or not she could pay her cell phone bill or her FPL
4 bill and keep her energy on. Her cell phone was
5 her only way to connect with her family and have
6 rescue in case of an emergency as an 89-year-old
7 living alone. People shouldn't have to be forced
8 to make those choices.

9 I heard before that folks wanted to hear about
10 actual consumers and us, as customers, experience.
11 I think that that can be summed up by some of the
12 customer reviews on Yelp, which has 1.3 stars for
13 FPL. And one of the customers describes FPL as
14 blood sucking.

15 So that's how we already feel paying the rates
16 that we do right now. Please do not approve this
17 rate hike. We need for you to protect us and make
18 sure that we can stay cool and safe and healthy in
19 our homes.

20 Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

22 It's 9:19. Let's take a five-minute break and
23 we will reconvene here at 9:24. Thanks.

24 (Brief recess.)

25 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: All right. If you don't

1 mind, grabbing your seat, we will go ahead and get
2 started and pick up where we left off.

3 The next person up is Jorge Delgado. Is Jorge
4 Delgado here?

5 Next up is after that is Taylor Neverman.

6 PUBLIC COMMENT

7 MS. NEVERMAN: I am here.

8 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Excellent. You are
9 recognized when you are ready.

10 MS. NEVERMAN: Yes. Hello. I am Taylor
11 Neverman. I am a Miami-Dade resident, FPL
12 customer. I am also a Tallahassee native. I have
13 want to echo the comments opposed. I know I
14 empathize with these drive from Leon County to
15 Dade. It's rough. But would we love to see you
16 more often. We have way better Cuban food than
17 Gordos, so please come on down.

18 Miami residents like myself and others, we
19 work hard for our money. From extreme heat to
20 hurricanes, we take care of our families and our
21 neighbors. I think that's why it feels so -- to be
22 here just a few years after the last rate hike
23 fighting to stop FPL from making even more money
24 off of an essential utility what we all need.

25 I find it interesting that so many of the

1 comments today in support of this increase are from
2 commercial customers who often are paying lower
3 rates than residential customers like myself.
4 Maybe I would be this excited with paying more
5 money as I was already paying lower money on my
6 electric bills.

7 As many others have said, the heat only
8 getting worse in Miami County. A study from the
9 University of Miami just revealed that many folks
10 in Miami-Dade live in the homes that are hotter on
11 the inside than they are on the side. It's too
12 expensive to run the AC, and their health and homes
13 bear the results.

14 As a communications manager at a local
15 nonprofit, I hear from our community members day in
16 and day out who are struggling just to get by. We
17 are all grateful for reliable energy that gets back
18 quickly after storms. What does it matter if you
19 can't turn on the lights in the first place -- you
20 can't afford to turn on the lights in the first
21 place?

22 As our state regulators, it's your job to
23 ensure fair prices from private companies like FPL.
24 They are making record profits off of us for what
25 is an absolutely necessary service, but they are so

1 desperate for that money to raise our rates to
2 fight these extreme measures, why are their profits
3 going up as well?

4 On behalf of myself and the nearly half a
5 million Miamians who are one emergency away from
6 falling into poverty, I ask you to reject this rate
7 increase. It will only make FPL richer and us
8 poorer.

9 Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

11 MR. TRIERWEILER: Roxanna Bolivar, Marcelo
12 Bolodores and Nicole Crooks.

13 Roxanna.

14 PUBLIC COMMENT

15 ms. bolivar: Hi. Good evening. I just
16 basically came to speak on FPL's quality of
17 service.

18 My experience with FPL is in commercial
19 aspects. I am a construction manager for a large
20 developer in south Florida. We are also
21 international developers and throughout the whole
22 country.

23 I have been working with this company for 11
24 years, and I have been working closely with FPL
25 during that tenure in large developments, from all

1 different types of scales, luxury, urban,
2 low-income housing, and they provide an excellent
3 service.

4 These systems are complex. They are always
5 also having to manage how they maintain service
6 from the area, and what that impact is to other
7 customers, not just in what you are trying to plan
8 for your new housing developments. So there is a
9 lot of little intricacies in that. They have been
10 always excellent.

11 There is a large volume of construction
12 software right now. You can see it as you drive
13 down 836. It's crane city. I can tell you that
14 they work tight. We work with one project manager.
15 He handles most of our projects. And the guy works
16 long ass hours, which you get on a private sector.
17 We don't get that from the public sector. Public
18 sector checks out at five o'clock, goes home and
19 doesn't pick up his phone at night and on the
20 weekends.

21 So there is always a little bit of two sides
22 to a story. It was nice to be here in this setting
23 and hear others speak about their impacts, and I am
24 sure you have some tough decisions to make, but as
25 far as quality of service, FPL has my vote.

1 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

2 MR. TRIERWEILER: Marcelo.

3 PUBLIC COMMENT

4 MR. BOLODORES: Good evening. My name is
5 Marcelo Bolodores. I am a resident of Miami-Dade.
6 My family has been an FPL customer for 20 years. I
7 just want to say first off, I can't blame FPL if I
8 had a \$9 billion raise on the line, I would also
9 get my friends to come out and vouch for me.

10 That being said, I am here today urging you to
11 oppose the rate hike. I am concerned that this
12 rate hike will lead to increased difficulties in
13 paying bills, leaving people and families on fixed
14 incomes with difficult choices to be made.

15 Electricity should be accessible and
16 affordable for everyone, especially in today's
17 society, as well as the constantly increasing risk
18 of heatstroke and illness duration the summer
19 months each year. Not everyone is able to make the
20 adjustments the rate hike would necessitate, and
21 these increases would be felt as a disproportionate
22 level for our most vulnerable communities.

23 I also want to emphasize and point out that a
24 lot of the residents who would feel these increases
25 the most do not have the same privilege and

1 flexibility to come out to these meetings and be
2 heard and voice their concerns.

3 So I just want to say, please prioritize the
4 needs of consumers over investors, and to please
5 consider those who do not have the ability in their
6 lives to be here tonight. Oppose the rate hike.

7 Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

9 MR. TRIERWEILER: After we hear from Nicole,
10 we would like to hear from LaCriscia Fowlkes,
11 Shaniya Taylor and Jocelyn Sandigo, please.

12 PUBLIC COMMENT

13 MS. CROOKS: All right. Hi, everyone.

14 I am here to oppose the rate hike. My name is
15 Nicole Crooks, and I think it is important to think
16 about them. So when I talk about them, I talk
17 about the children. I talk about the elders. And
18 when we think about the rate increases and how they
19 will impact them and us, we think about how no
20 electricity means spoiled food, uncomfortable
21 sleep, a lot of overheated bedrooms, increased
22 mold. And these are some of the choices that
23 people have to make when they are forced to make
24 decisions about what to pay.

25 Last week, I took one of our elders to the

1 grocery store, and was disheartened because she
2 needed to choose between getting water and food and
3 toilet paper, right. And so increases like this
4 impact people who are low-income on a more
5 significant basis.

6 We are -- a lot of people are coming up and
7 cheerleading and have the ability to pay more,
8 right. But when you are making six figures, it's a
9 lot different than when you are barely bringing
10 home \$12,000 a year, and your rent costs almost
11 \$1,000 a month.

12 And so I am grateful that we are having this
13 hearing. I am disheartened that the translation is
14 not adequate for everyone who is here; that the
15 number of opportunities for people to speak is
16 limited. We live in the sunshine state, and so I
17 am not really certain why we can't use solar power
18 to power our electric bills.

19 Now, in closing, one of the things that I do
20 want to say is that if -- and it seems as though
21 several people are very excited about the rate
22 increase, and that's fine, right. I know that
23 there are a lot of cheerleaders with their own
24 ulterior motives, but if that's the case, I think
25 it should be a tiered system, and for people who

1 are unable to pay the increase, when we think about
2 the fact that a lot of the predatory payday loans
3 are taken out for people to be able to pay for
4 utility bills, that's a problem. People can't get
5 from out from underneath that.

6 So if there needs to be an increase, and it
7 seems as though tonight there have been a lot of
8 people who would like that, I say they shoulder it,
9 but not those who are least able to.

10 Thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

12 PUBLIC COMMENT

13 MS. FOWLKES: Hi. I am LaCriscia Fowlkes. I
14 grew up in rural Virginia, and I worked in a co-op
15 with our electric system. That's how I understood
16 what was actually being put into the business,
17 right. So I do understand that. And I also had 14
18 to 20 days without electricity during December,
19 January and February in Virginia. Very different
20 being here in Miami and hurricane season. So Irma
21 and Martha, whatever, both had me without
22 electricity for over 14 days. I understand it, but
23 -- and I also understand who works for your company
24 and what all those positions carry.

25 I looked at Glassdoor, and the lowest pay rate

1 in your organization -- excuse me, in FPL's
2 organization is making \$43,000, if that's correct,
3 right? That's not enough to live in the state of
4 Florida. And I say that as a working person who is
5 working five jobs right now. I work for
6 nonprofits. I have my own company that I am trying
7 to build, and I want to be in a physical location
8 for my company, but I can't do that when it comes
9 to paying rent, paying all these bills, and making
10 sure I keep up with what I have to in the business
11 piece of my life, right.

12 So I will say that even though the government
13 is telling us we are not in a recession, I have
14 been in a recession for a year-and-a-half in my
15 bank account. I don't know about nobody else, but
16 I know that the struggle being a single person here
17 in south Florida is killing me, and it is killing
18 me because I live in a building that is HUD, right.

19 HUD numbers just came out and said the cost of
20 living in Florida is at this level. In March, I
21 got my notice to say my rent is increasing in June.
22 I just signed my lease in December. So where is
23 this extra money coming from?

24 I need you to understand, I represent a family
25 that grew up working class poor, I have been at the

1 poverty line as an adult. I don't desire to stay
2 here, but some of these increases that are
3 happening right now in this economy that we know is
4 bad and is not in the right position that we should
5 be in.

6 Give this a little more time, because we need
7 a little more time to catch up, because the rates
8 in which we are being paid here in south Florida is
9 not at the standard it should be to have a descent
10 cost of living.

11 So thank you for your time and consideration.

12 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

13 PUBLIC COMMENT

14 MS. TAYLOR: Hello, everyone. My name is
15 Shaniya Taylor, and I am a resident of south
16 Florida and I am also a college student. And I am
17 asking you to say no to the FPL rate hike. I know
18 as young people like myself are already struggling
19 to pay bills, and if this were to go up, these
20 young people will continue to suffer to meet ends
21 meet while FPL already make billions of profits.
22 It's unfair and unnecessary. What we need is clean
23 energy, but not at the cost of making life hardier
24 for working families.

25 When I se land developers, businessmen and

1 women, people who work professionally with FPL who
2 have the privilege of a relationship directly with
3 FPL say they are in favor of this rate increase,
4 honestly my blood boils. They have never had to
5 choose between their light and food, AC or heat
6 stress or medicine and light bill. They do not --
7 us, the working class people, because if they did,
8 they would stand against this rate -- I am sorry,
9 this FPL rate hike.

10 Thank you so much for listening to me, and I
11 hope you guys say no and listen to us, the people,
12 because we are here to -- I am sorry. It just
13 makes me so angry. Young people are coming out.
14 Two weeks ago, I am in the heat outside knocking on
15 peoples door to inform them that their bill is
16 going up. Young people -- I am in college, why
17 should I have to worry about this? It doesn't make
18 sense. I am in the heat knocking on every single
19 door telling them, hey, your bill is going up.
20 Nobody knows this is happening. We need to -- you
21 guys -- us.

22 Thank you.

23 MR. TRIERWEILER: After we hear from Jocelyn,
24 we would like to hear from Monique Simon. It looks
25 like Gustavo Arana and Jane Jackson.

1 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Madam, you are recognized.

2 PUBLIC COMMENT

3 MS. SANDIGO: Hello. I am Jocelyn Sandigo.

4 Just to let you know, I am a student and MDC
5 Homestead. I come from a very poor area. Most, if
6 not all of the people there, were at some point
7 homeless. That includes me. And I promise you,
8 that if you raise those rates to a record breaking
9 nine billion, they will go right back to being
10 homeless.

11 And I saw so many people here who were -- who
12 want this bill, like, who want these rates to
13 increase like that. And one thing I saw in common,
14 they all have fancy suits, elegant dresses. They
15 were all developers, landowners, business owners.

16 If y'all knew what it was like to have to sell
17 your jewelry to scramble just so you could pay your
18 light bill, if y'all knew what it was like to have
19 to choose between the water and your light or your
20 internet and your light. And by the way, my mom
21 works a job where she needs her phone, so skipping
22 out on a cell phone bill isn't an option. If y'all
23 knew what it was like to see your mom, or even
24 yourself, grow gray hairs because you are crying
25 over the stress of that, you guys would not be

1 standing by this.

2 I am sorry, but y'all need to have some
3 empathy, because that is not okay, and quite
4 frankly, I think that if you -- if you have a shred
5 of humility within you guys, you would stand
6 against this. Saying yes to these record breaking
7 raises is saying yes to record breaking levels of
8 homelessness.

9 PUBLIC COMMENT

10 MS. JACKSON: Yes. Good afternoon. My name
11 is Jane Jackson. I am a single mother of seven
12 boys, one girl. I bust my ass every day at
13 Starbucks where you all go and drink and eat from,
14 and I want y'all to know, we all know Ron DeSantis
15 put y'all in this panel. So what's going to happen
16 to us after we walk out the door? We already got
17 ideals. But if you are human with morals and
18 respect with your elders, because some of y'all
19 probably already elders and some of you are not,
20 but if you get to be that elder, don't wait until
21 that time come.

22 How can y'all sit up here and have a mother
23 and father, and then people got to choose?

24 See I stand and fight for the elders, because
25 I pray to God I be that elder one day. I am not

1 there yet. I am not young either, but I am in the
2 middle, and I am a speaking voice for those who are
3 not here.

4 You are never put it on the radio. You never
5 put it on the TV. You never put it out there in
6 the newspaper. I know that because more people
7 would have been in here to fight against this.
8 It's not right, because when I have to turn -- my
9 son turns on the AC and I tell him turn, that damn
10 AC off because I can't afford to pay \$300 or \$400 a
11 month. My rents is 1,500, Section VIII cost me
12 that. But I got a lot of other bills that I have
13 to pay, and I have to tell my child, you can't have
14 that AC on. The sun is too hot out there, and it's
15 doing nothing but making the house hotter, so turn
16 it off now. And you guys you ladies -- you ladies
17 and gentlemen sitting up there like y'all don't
18 understand where we coming from, you better get it
19 now or never.

20 And Ron DeSantis, you got family too, you
21 behind all -- you behind all of this. You are.
22 And I hope you listening, because all these people
23 sitting up here have to do what you tell them to
24 do. But at the end of the day, if you know it's
25 the wrong thing, you shouldn't be doing it.

1 Do what's right by the people, because you are
2 the people. And don't forget where you come from
3 because you just don't know how Ron DeSantis could
4 set you up too.

5 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Ms. Jackson, thank you for
6 your testimony.

7 MS. JACKSON: Yes. Thank you for letting me
8 preach.

9 MR. TRIERWEILER: Gus Arana.

10 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: You are recognized, sir.

11 PUBLIC COMMENT

12 MR. ARANA: Thank you, guys, for your time,
13 and I am going to keep it brief.

14 I am here as a thankful father and I am a
15 thankful husband. Most recently, we had a -- and
16 this is -- I am going to tell you a little brief
17 story about my last interaction with FPL.

18 A couple of weeks ago, while we were having --
19 was it Easter? It was Easter at home. We were
20 having a bunch of family over. You know, we had a
21 big blowup, one of those bouncy houses, a bunch
22 much kids over, a bunch of fun. All of a sudden,
23 guys, light goes out.

24 As you may know, like it would happen in your
25 homes, it happened in mine, all hell breaks out,

1 right. There is no light, you know, there is --
2 the music is out, you know, everyone was starting
3 to go outside. My texts are go off left and right
4 with all the neighbors. Hey, what's going on?

5 Everyone starts reaching out to FPL. At that
6 point, 10 minutes have passed by, I reached out to
7 a couple of family members that I thought might
8 have a better idea that live nearby, hey, what's
9 going on? Do you guys have electricity? Oh, by
10 the way we live in Westchester. And within the
11 next three minutes, light comes back on. FPL saved
12 the day.

13 That happens, ladies and gentlemen, every time
14 we switch the light on. They save the day. Thank
15 you, especially to FMU, and to you guys that are
16 here, to FPL to have these lights on and be able to
17 have this.

18 Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

20 MR. ARANA: I am in favor, by the way.

21 MR. TRIERWEILER: All right. We got just four
22 more, and I am proud of the way y'all kept it
23 together. Let's finish strong.

24 We have Angeline Alvarez, Marlen Oria, Julio
25 Ponce and Laura Gonzalez.

1 Angeline.

2 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Madam, you are recognized
3 when you are ready.

4 PUBLIC COMMENT

5 MS. ALVAREZ: Good evening. My name is
6 Angeline Alvarez, and I am a resident of
7 Miami-Dade.

8 Florida is in the -- of climate change. Every
9 year we endure stronger hurricanes, and it costs
10 while corporate giants like Florida Power & Light,
11 FPL, rake high profits at our expense. This is
12 just business as usual. It's betrayal of the
13 people they claim to serve.

14 FPL is Florida's largest investor-owned
15 utility, and is one of the biggest greenhouse
16 polluters in the state. Over 70 percent of our
17 energy come from methane gas. Yes, natural gas,
18 but let's be real, there is nothing natural about
19 fueling climate disasters.

20 Fossil fuels -- the most extreme weather
21 that's hitting our communities harder than ever,
22 and who suffers the most? Low-income communities
23 and communities of color. The same that struggle
24 with high utility costs. But instead of
25 transitioning to clean energy, FPL keeps investing

1 in fossil fuels. Now we have the record-breaking
2 \$9 billion rate increase -- the biggest in U.S.
3 history, by the way -- forcing Florida families to
4 foot the bill for their greed.

5 We need to build energy resilience, solar
6 power, battery storage, where our grid doesn't
7 buckle under every storm. The Florida Public
8 Service Commission, you, has a choice, to stand
9 with people or stand with the monopoly.

10 All the states, Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, South
11 Dakota and New Mexico produce over 50 percent of
12 their energy with renewable resources. Meanwhile,
13 Florida is only 8.3. We are the sunshine state.
14 We have the resources to be one of the biggest
15 states in the nation to use renewable energy, so
16 what is stopping us?

17 We need affordable clean energy. We demand
18 climate justice, and we demand the Florida Public
19 Service Commission denies FPL's rate hike.

20 Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

22 MR. TRIERWEILER: Marlen.

23 PUBLIC COMMENT

24 MS. ORIA: Hi. My name is Marlen Oria. I
25 retired from FPL two years ago, and because I am

1 retired from FPL, I worked there as an engineer, as
2 a manager, I can attest to FPL's quality of service
3 for many years. So I understand what goes into it
4 and because, you know, instead of disqualifying
5 what I have to say, I think, because I was an
6 employee, it's not that I am tainted as much as I
7 get to see exactly what goes into what we -- when
8 FPL when -- I say we, because, you know, once you
9 have been with a company, you identify, you see the
10 quality and the benefits behind what happens, so I
11 am definitely for this.

12 I see why we need it. I understand it, and
13 sometimes it's hard to explain to people, because,
14 you know, when you ask for an increase, it's never
15 a good thing. I had to put a roof on my house.
16 That was never a good thing, but sometimes we have
17 to do what we have to do.

18 But I just -- look at the numbers. Look at
19 what FPL is presenting. I have worked in every
20 department at FPL pretty much. I understand what
21 goes into these things, and I understand the ethics
22 and the work behind the people that do it. So I
23 just ask you to consider that.

24 Thank you so much for letting me speak.

25 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

1 PUBLIC COMMENT

2 MR. PONCE: After almost four hours, can I
3 just say ditto?

4 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: No, we will make you work.

5 MR. PONCE: My name is Julio Ponce. I am the
6 Executive Director of the Hialeah Housing
7 Authority. We own and operate over 2,800 public
8 housing, affordable housing, market rent, plus we
9 do 5,600 Section VIII vouchers, so I am on the side
10 that I give to the needy and the most vulnerable
11 population we have, and I am in support of this,
12 and I am going to tell you why. It's quality.
13 It's infrastructure.

14 The worst call I can get is one of my
15 buildings with 100 units of elderly housing is out.
16 First thing I do is text the Mayor in case the
17 media calls. This is what's going on. So I
18 immediately -- the service and the response that
19 FPL has done throughout to the years, and we have
20 come a long way since 1992, as a lot of people
21 stated here. And so it's the infrastructure.

22 A lot of people say about the rated increase,
23 and they talked a lot about profit. That's all I
24 ever hear today. But nobody has talked about is
25 all those workers who are out up busting to give us

1 the service that we deserve, requiring three
2 percent, or five percent increase every year, they
3 require health insurance to be able to have to the
4 quality.

5 One of the problems we have today is that we
6 don't have quality workers. To be able to have
7 those quality workers, we need to have insurance,
8 and pensions, and 401(k)s. All of that costs
9 money.

10 And everybody talks about profit and all of
11 that. My -- I run \$159 million budget. I have 240
12 employees, so I am not big, but I am not small
13 either. So I know what it takes to maintain good
14 employees, so I am here for, because I know the
15 cost of running an operation. I know the response.
16 To me, customer service is the most important
17 thing, so I am all for it.

18 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

19 MR. PONCE: And thank you guys for your
20 service.

21 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

22 MR. TRIERWEILER: Laura Gonzalez.

23 PUBLIC COMMENT

24 MS. GONZALEZ: Good evening. My name is Laura
25 Gonzalez, and I am here to urge the Commission to

1 reject the rate hike. We can have reliable power
2 and not have this hike. I don't believe FPL, as I
3 don't believe any big company in a capital system
4 when we say we need to compromise.

5 Additionally, as a teacher, a proud teacher at
6 MDCPC, who works in a Title I school where I have
7 so many students who parents or themselves, since
8 so many of my kids work, have to make difficult
9 money choices every day. I know this hike rate is
10 not a benefit to them, and not addressing the
11 economic needs of the public is irresponsible,
12 shortsighted and unethical.

13 Last week, I asked that there be more hearings
14 at feasible times to hear more from the day-to-day
15 people throughout Florida who need the most
16 representation and speaking time. Not companies.
17 Not representatives of them, or developers.

18 Thank you for your time.

19 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

20 Okay. Is there anyone that signed up to speak
21 that we missed? I don't see any here that were not
22 present.

23 Okay. Seeing none. Again, thank you,
24 everyone, for coming out today, and thank you for
25 staying, for those that stayed the entire time. I

1 know sometimes it's a little bit of a marathon.
2 It's certainly worth to hear what everyone's
3 opinion is, and I appreciate that.

4 We have got to take care of a little bit of
5 business here. There were two items that were
6 asked to be put in the record. Do we have those
7 officially? Yeah, I think they are both letters
8 Exhibit 3 and Exhibit 4.

9 MR. SPARKS: Yes, I marked them as Exhibits 3
10 and 4.

11 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: All right. If there is no
12 objection, go ahead and show those entered into the
13 record.

14 (Whereupon, Exhibit Nos. 3 & 4 were received
15 into evidence.)

16 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Commissioners, any other
17 additional thoughts or comments?

18 Again, thank you all for coming out today, and
19 thank you for the facility. It was extremely
20 helpful. I know some of the folks here today
21 stayed a little bit later than was expected, but we
22 really appreciate the university and the college
23 for helping us out today and getting us all squared
24 away. Certainly great for the community to be able
25 to come here and host it. So thank you guys.

1 If there is no further business before us, see
2 that this meeting is adjourned. Thanks.

3 (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
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same has been transcribed under my direct supervision;
and that this transcript constitutes a true
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I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not a relative,
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DATED this 16th day of June, 2025.



DEBRA R. KRICK
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