



June 21, 2021

VIA ELECTRONIC FILING

Adam J. Teitzman
Office of Commission Clerk
Florida Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Blvd.
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0850

Re: Docket No. 20210015-EI - Petition for rate increase by Florida Power Light & Company.

Dear Mr. Teitzman,

On behalf of Intervenor Florida Rising, I have enclosed the testimony of Karen Osses. Please file these documents in Docket No. 20210015-EI. Please contact me if there are any questions regarding this filing.

/s/ Bradley Marshall

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that a true copy and correct copy of the foregoing was served on this 21st day of June 2021, via electronic mail on:

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DATED this 21st day of June, 2021.

/s/ Bradley Marshall
Attorney

BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In re: Petition for rate increase)
 by Florida Power & Light) **DOCKET NO. 20210015-EI**
 Company)

DIRECT TESTIMONY

OF KAREN OSSES

ON BEHALF OF

FLORIDA RISING

June 21, 2021

1 **Q. Please state your name.**

2 A. Karen Osses.

3 **Q. Where do you live?**

4 A. 9800 Sheridan St., Apt. 305, Pembroke Pines, FL 33024.

5 **Q. What organization are you a member of?**

6 A. Florida Rising.

7 **Q. How long have you been a member of this organization?**

8 A. For three years.

9 **Q. What is your source of income?**

10 A. I am currently unemployed, but the week of June 21st, 2021, I will begin working as a Field
11 Manager for Florida Rising, where I will investigate the reasons why some of our members
12 choose not to get vaccinated.

13 **Q. Are you a customer of FPL? If so, for how long?**

14 A. Yes, for four years.

15 **Q. What do you think of FPL?**

16 A. I think that FPL takes advantage of its customers. Paying the electricity bill is very
17 expensive but it's a necessity, without which you can't survive. We have no choice about how
18 much we pay for electricity, and FPL doesn't care why people can't afford its bills sometimes.
19 FPL has no connection with or empathy for its customers. We shouldn't have difficulty paying
20 our FPL bills because electricity, like water, is a necessity, which should be affordable and
21 clean because everyone is paying for and affected by the emissions of the energy industry.

22 **Q. How much does your FPL bill usually cost each month?**

23 A. I pay between \$150-180 each month.

24 **Q. How do you feel about the current price you are paying for your utilities?**

25 A. My FPL bill is expensive. It's already hard for me to pay rent for my apartment. Even if I

1 wanted to save money by going solar, I couldn't invest in solar panels, both because it's too
2 expensive and I'm a renter.

3 **Q. Based on information provided by FPL, the base rate for electricity is projected to**
4 **increase by about 20%. How would this rate increase impact you?**

5 **A.** A 20% increase is a lot. Recently we had just a one percent increase in our local sales taxes,
6 and that turned out to be expensive for me. With my light bill going up by 20%, I would have
7 to spend less on food, clothing and other things I use every day. I don't have a choice to not
8 pay for power because it's essential, and thus, I would have to change my budget to spend less
9 on other necessities and maybe even try to get a second job.

10 **Q. As a Floridian, are you concerned about climate change?**

11 **A.** Of course. Not only as a Floridian, but as a human I'm worried. My community will be
12 disproportionately harmed by climate change because we don't have money to storm proof our
13 homes. Nor can members of my community afford to just fly to another state when a hurricane
14 comes. Many people in my community don't even have time to worry about climate change
15 because they are already busy providing the daily necessities of their families. The saddest
16 thing is that the poorest people will be the most negatively affected by climate change.

17 **Q. Based on information provided by FPL, part of this rate increase will pay for new or**
18 **upgraded methane gas power plants. Do you believe this will have an impact on the**
19 **climate?**

20 **A.** Yes. FPL describes this type of energy production as "clean" or "natural" even though it
21 contributes significantly to climate change. Methane is 28 times more potent at trapping heat
22 in the atmosphere than carbon dioxide. Now is the time to stop unnecessary emissions because
23 climate change is already affecting my community, as it's hotter every year. In addition, the
24 emissions from these gas plants, usually located in communities of color or in low-income
25 communities, worsen air quality in the surrounding areas, which increases cases of respiratory

1 illnesses. We need to know the consequences of the gas plants because FPL is confusing people
2 into believing that they are clean even when they emit greenhouse gases and other air pollutants
3 that impact the climate and human health. FPL should invest only in solar or other forms of
4 renewable energy that don't produce harmful emissions.

5 **Q. In light of that, how do you feel about contributing your own money to those projects,**
6 **through your FPL bill?**

7 **A.** I don't want to pay so that FPL can harm my health. Emissions from the plants in which
8 FPL plans to invest will decrease air quality and will lead to further climate change, the impacts
9 from which threaten my safety. It doesn't make sense to have to contribute to climate change
10 and at the same time pay for health insurance. The emissions from gas plants and climate
11 change that they cause put the health and safety of my community in danger.

12 **Q. What is the mission of your organization?**

13 **A.** The mission of Florida Rising is to build multiracial movements with individuals from
14 historically marginalized communities to seize power and govern to advance social, economic,
15 and racial justice. Florida Rising fights to seek justice for and advance communities of color.
16 We want to inform the people we represent about matters that affect their well-being.

17 **Q. How is the purpose of your organization being served by participating in this**
18 **proceeding?**

19 **A.** By participating in this proceeding, Florida Rising is fighting for economic justice for its
20 members, the majority of whom are living on low incomes. Many of our members cannot
21 afford to pay the increase in the base rate, especially because many already have difficulty
22 paying their current bills. Besides, the pandemic has caused monetary instability for many
23 members of Florida Rising. It would not be just to force our members to pay more for
24 electricity, a necessity of survival, particularly now. Also, by participating in this proceeding,
25 we are promoting social and racial justice by protecting the health and safety of our

1 communities by seeking to prevent emissions that affect air quality and contribute to climate
2 change, which disproportionately harms communities of color.

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