



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 League of United Latin American Citizens of Florida. I have enclosed the testimony of Mari Corugedo. Please file these documents in Docket No. 20210015-EI. Please contact me if there are any questions regarding this filing.

*/s/ Bradley Marshall*

Bradley Marshall (FL Bar No. 0098008)  
bmarshall@earthjustice.org

Jordan Luebkekmann (FL Bar No. 1015603)  
jluebkekmann@earthjustice.org  
Earthjustice  
111 S. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
Tallahassee, Florida 32301  
(850) 681-0031  
(850) 681-0020 (facsimile)

Christina I. Reichert (FL Bar No. 0114257)  
Earthjustice  
4500 Biscayne Blvd., Ste. 201  
Miami, Florida 33137  
(305) 440-5437  
(850) 681-0020 (facsimile)

***Counsel for Florida Rising, League of  
United Latin American Citizens of Florida***

**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:

<p>Thomas A. Jernigan Holly L. Buchanan Robert J. Friedman Arnold Braxton Ebony M. Payton 139 Barnes Drive, Suite 1 Tyndall Air Force Base thomas.jernigan.3@us.af.mil holly.buchanan.1@us.af.mil robert.friedman.5@us.af.mil arnold.braxton@us.af.mil ebony.payton.ctr@us.af.mil ULFSC.Tyndall@us.af.mil</p>	<p>R. Wade Litchfield John T. Burnett Russell Badders Maria Jose Moncada Ken Rubin Joel T. baker Florida Power &amp; Light Co. 700 Universe Blvd. Juno Beach, FL 33408-0420 wade.litchfield@fpl.com john.t.burnett@fpl.com russell.badders@nexteraenergy.com maria.moncada@fpl.com ken.rubin@fpl.com joel.baker@fpl.com</p>
<p>Biana Lherisson Jennifer Crawford Shaw Stiller Suzanne Brownless Florida Public Service Commission Office of the General Counsel 2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0850 blheriss@psc.state.fl.us jcrawfor@psc.state.fl.us sstiller@psc.state.fl.us sbrownle@psc.state.fl.us</p>	<p>Richard Gentry Parry A. Christensen Charles Rehwinkel Anastacia Pirrello Office of Public Counsel c/o The Florida Legislature 111 W. Madison Street, Room 812 Tallahassee, FL 32399-1400 gentry.richard@leg.state.fl.us christensen.patty@leg.state.fl.us rehwinkel.charles@leg.state.fl.us pirrello.anastacia@leg.state.fl.us</p>
<p>Jon C. Moyle, Jr. Karen A. Putnal Moyle Law Firm, P.A. 118 North Gadsden St. Tallahassee, FL 32301 jmoyle@moylelaw.com kputnal@moylelaw.com mqalls@moylelaw.com</p>	<p>James W. Brew Laura Wynn Baker Joseph R. Briscar Stone Mattheis Xenopoulos &amp; Brew, PC 1025 Thomas Jefferson St., NW Suite 800 West Washington, D.C. 20007 jbrew@smxblaw.com lwb@smxblaw.com jrb@smxblaw.com</p>

<p>Kenneth Hoffman  134 West Jefferson St.  Tallahassee, FL 32301-1713  ken.hoffman@fpl.com</p>	<p>George Cavros  120 E. Oakland Park Blvd., Suite 105  Fort Lauderdale, FL 33334  george@cavros-law.com</p>
<p>William C. Garner  Law Office of William C. Garner, PLLC  The Cleo Institute Inc.  3425 Bannerman Road  Unit 105, #414  Tallahassee, FL 32312  Email: bgarner@wcglawoffice.com</p>	<p>Katie Chiles Ottenweller1  Southeast Director  Vote Solar  838 Barton Woods Road  Atlanta, GA 30307  Email: katie@votesolar.org  Phone: 706.224.8107</p>
<p>Nathan A. Skop, Esq.  420 NW 50th Blvd.  Gainesville, FL 32607  Phone: (561) 222-7455  E-mail: n_skop@hotmail.com</p>	<p>Stephanie U. Eaton  Spilman Thomas &amp; Battle, PLLC  111 Oakwood Dr., Suite 500  Winston-Salem, NC 27103  seaton@spilmanlaw.com</p>
<p>Barry A. Naum  Spilman Thomas &amp; Battle, PLLC  110 Bent Creek Blvd., Suite 101  Mechanicsburg, PA 17050  bnaum@spilmanlaw.com</p>	<p>Robert Scheffel Wright  John T. LaVia, III  1300 Thomaswood Dr.  Tallahassee, FL 32308  schef@gbwlegal.com  jlavia@gbwlegal.com</p>

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 MARI CORUGEDO**  
**ON BEHALF OF**  
**LEAGUE OF UNITED LATIN**  
**AMERICAN CITIZENS**

June 21, 2021

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

2 A. Mari Corugedo.

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

4 A. 6041 SW 159<sup>th</sup> Court, Miami, FL 33193.

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

6 A. League of United Latin American Citizens.

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

8 A. I have been a member for about 8-10 years.

9 **Q. What is your position in the organization?**

10 A. The State Director of Florida.

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

12 A. I am an elementary school teacher.

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

14 A. Yes. I've been a customer for about 30 years.

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

16 A. FPL's prices have been increasing over the years, and the wages in Florida haven't kept  
17 up with the price of electricity. Paying FPL for electricity is expensive. The price of utilities  
18 keeps increasing when wages haven't and when affordable health care isn't an option for  
19 most people.

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

21 A. It costs about \$300.

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

23 A. The price I pay for electricity is expensive.

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

1 A. I wouldn't be able to afford it without having to spend less on other necessary goods and  
2 services. My FPL bill is already expensive as is.

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

4 A. Yes. Florida is one of the areas in our country that will be most negatively affected by  
5 climate change due to hurricane risk and extremely hot temperatures. Our nation and state  
6 have not adequately prioritized how to combat climate change. Our government leaders need  
7 to base their policies on what the science clearly shows: climate change is a danger to our  
8 future in South Florida. That means we need all of our public agencies to be making  
9 decisions with the climate in mind, including when it comes to the electricity system.

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

13 A. Yes. FPL should be investing only in renewable energy because that is the way  
14 of the future. Investing in gas plants that significantly emit greenhouse gases will hurt  
15 communities of color in the end, who are most harmed by environmental hazards, such as  
16 climate change impacts.

17 **Q: In light of that, how do you feel about contributing your own money to those**  
18 **projects, through your FPL bill?**

19 A. I don't want to pay more so that FPL can invest in gas plants, which contribute to climate  
20 change. I don't want to pay more so that climate change can further harm the communities I  
21 represent, especially since this is a company that is forced upon us.

22 **Q. What organization are you speaking on behalf of?**

23 A. The Florida chapter of the League of United Latin American Citizens.

24 **Q. Where is your organization located?**

25 A. 6041 SW 159<sup>th</sup> Court, Miami, FL 33193.

1 **Q. How many members does your organization have?**

2 **A.** LULAC Florida has over 160 members.

3 **Q. Approximately how many members are FPL customers? How do you know?**

4 **A.** About one-third of our members are FPL customers. All of our south and southwest  
5 Florida members, including all members of our chapters in Sarasota and in the metro Miami  
6 area, have FPL for their electricity provider. We know this because FPL is the power  
7 company for this area.

8 **Q. How does your organization view FPL?**

9 **A.** We don't necessarily have a negative view of their service, but we feel that the trend has  
10 been that FPL has the power to make decisions and, overall, these decisions hurt their  
11 customers. This is especially true for those customers that don't have the means to advocate  
12 for themselves. For that reason, and for the disproportionate effects from energy burden and  
13 pollution from power plants, LULAC's mission has required our organization to grow more  
14 involved in energy advocacy on behalf of our membership, as we have by providing  
15 comments or formally intervening in numerous energy dockets over several years. These  
16 companies, including FPL, continue to make decisions that put our community in a  
17 disadvantage economically and health wise, so we must continue to push back to protect our  
18 community.

19 **Q. How would FPL's proposed rate increase impact your organization?**

20 **A.** LULAC always looks to advance economic conditions for our members, and this would  
21 really put our members in an economic disadvantage. We need to bring equity to the  
22 decisions they make for communities of color, particularly our Hispanic communities.  
23 Instead, FPL is seeking to raise rates by 20%, even though this will particularly harm the  
24 Hispanic community and other communities of color that already suffer disproportionate  
25 energy burdens in Florida. Therefore, FPL's rate increase would impact LULAC Florida

1 because the organization will have to spend extra time advocating for better energy policy  
2 and economic conditions for our members, taking away time and resources from other  
3 important LULAC campaigns, such as improving education and bilingual access.

4 **Q. How would FPL's proposed rate increase impact the members of your organization?**  
5 **How do you know?**

6 **A.** Many of our members are struggling, especially after COVID-19. Many are trying to get  
7 back to their jobs, keep the lights on in their homes, and keep the food on their tables.  
8 Increasing rates is not the way to help them. Renewable energy is not affordable for them, so  
9 they often make decisions that are not the best for their families and our communities, but  
10 that is all they can afford. The difficult energy burden on our members during this pandemic  
11 is why LULAC Florida petitioned the Public Service Commission last year to suspend all  
12 disconnections for all customers that can't afford to pay their bills during this crisis. We  
13 made that petition alongside several of our individual members who were facing  
14 disconnections for COVID-19 nonpayment, and on behalf of many other members who were  
15 also struggling. Notably, that all happened before FPL announced its plans to increase rates  
16 by 20%—this rate hike will only make the effects of expensive energy bills much worse for  
17 our members.

18 **Q. Is your organization concerned about climate change?**

19 **A.** Yes, very concerned. We see that communities of color and specifically our members are  
20 underrepresented when it comes to decision-making regarding climate issues. There are no  
21 positive effects of climate change and lots of places where you see these negative issues,  
22 such as air pollution, are in communities of color. This is not a partisan-issue, this is a time  
23 for us to understand the crisis we are in.

24 **Q: Does your organization believe that FPL's investment in new or upgraded methane**  
25 **gas power plants will have an impact on the climate?**

1 **A.** Yes, this will definitely have a very negative effect on our communities and cities. It is not  
2 the way to move forward because increased emissions will lead to more air pollution and  
3 contribute to climate change, the impacts of which disproportionately harm communities of  
4 color. FPL may say gas is clean burning, but only solar panels have zero harmful emissions  
5 for the people living around them. FPL needs to understand that we need to start looking at  
6 science.

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

8 **A.** The mission of LULAC is to advance the economic condition, educational attainment,  
9 political influence, housing, health and civil rights of the Hispanic population of the United  
10 States.

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

13 **A.** We are interested in community advocacy. LULAC understands that we must not stay  
14 silent during this proceeding. We must take a stand and make our companies understand that  
15 they are putting profit before people. LULAC's intention is to create a pause, to have them  
16 understand how vital it is to make the correct decisions, especially where we find ourselves  
17 economically and with our climate. Unfortunately, we won't get to have a voice at the table  
18 unless we participate in this proceeding. FPL's decision to increase rates and invest in fossil-  
19 fuel generation will have a very negative effect on our communities and our state.

20 **Q. Will a substantial number of your organization's members be substantially affected**  
21 **by the Commission's decision in this proceeding? How do you know?**

22 **A.** Yes, our members in South Florida and Sarasota certainly will be affected by the rising  
23 rates. However, whether they are FPL members or not, all of our members will be affected  
24 because other companies may emulate what FPL is doing. We are a grassroots organization;  
25 people volunteer their time to make sure we have these conversations. The communities we

1 advocate for will be affected and they are our mission.

2 **Q. How is the subject matter of this proceeding within your organization's general**  
3 **scope of interest and activity?**

4 **A.** It is in the interest of the community and anything that has an ill effect on the community  
5 is in our interest. This will put our communities at a disadvantage. The implications of this  
6 proceeding are relevant to LULAC's mission. Because it seeks to improve the economic  
7 condition of its members, LULAC wants to decrease members' energy burdens. Because it  
8 aims to improve the health of its members, LULAC wants to prevent excess greenhouse gas  
9 emissions from gas power plants. In advancing the housing conditions of its members,  
10 LULAC seeks to prevent further climate change, which is causing more destructive  
11 hurricanes and sea level rise, both of which pose risks to members' homes. Because it aims to  
12 protect its members' civil rights, LULAC intends to give its members a voice in the decision-  
13 making process of the energy system, which directly affects members in the ways listed  
14 above. Ultimately it is the mission of LULAC to advance the condition of the Hispanic  
15 community, and we have frequently fulfilled this mission by advocating at the Public Service  
16 Commission for the well-being of our members and the broader Hispanic community. Our  
17 involvement in this rate case, to seek equitable rates and a transition away from harmful  
18 fossil-fuel powered generation, is no different.

19 **Q. Why is the relief requested in this proceeding appropriate for your organization to**  
20 **receive on behalf of its members?**

21 **A.** It will bring real change to our communities, it will bring something positive to the people  
22 of Florida. It is important that FPL understands how they could really affect our state.

23 **Q. How has your organization engaged with utility matters in the past?**

24 **A.** We have been involved in other cases surrounding electricity, most recently focusing on  
25 disconnections during the pandemic. We have intervened or been involved in the following

1 PSC matters: Docket Nos. 20190015-EG, 20190016-EG, 20190018-EG, 20190020-EG,  
2 20190021-EG, *In re: Commission review of numeric conservation goals*; Docket Nos.  
3 20200053-EG, 20200054-EG, 20200055-EG, 20200056-EG, *In re: Petition for approval of*  
4 *demand-side management plan* Docket No. 20200219-EI; *In re: Petition to initiate*  
5 *emergency rulemaking to prevent electric utility shutoffs, by League of United Latin*  
6 *American Citizens, Zoraida Santana, and Jesse Moody*; and Docket No. 202000181-EU, *In*  
7 *re: Proposed amendment of Rule 25-17.0021, F.A.C., Goals for Electric Utilities*.

8 **Q. Why has it done so?**

9 **A.** We want to make sure that we advocate in the community and ensure that we don't put  
10 people at a disadvantage for profit. Decisions made at the Public Service Commission have  
11 huge impacts on our membership and the Hispanic community. In order to fulfill our mission  
12 to advance the condition of our community, we have at times determined it was important to  
13 participate in utility or energy matters at the Commission and beyond.

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