

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

BEFORE THE
FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of:

DOCKET NO. 20210015-EI

Petition for rate increase
by Florida Power & Light
Company.

_____ /

PROCEEDINGS: SERVICE HEARING

COMMISSIONERS
PARTICIPATING: COMMISSIONER ART GRAHAM
COMMISSIONER ANDREW GILES FAY
COMMISSIONER MIKE LA ROSA
COMMISSIONER GABRIELLA PASSIDOMO

DATE: Thursday, July 1, 2021

TIME: Commenced: 2:00 p.m.
Concluded: 3:54 p.m.

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

REPORTED BY: ANDREA KOMARIDIS WRAY
Court Reporter

PREMIER REPORTING
112 W. 5TH AVENUE
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA
(850) 894-0828

1 APPEARANCES:

2 WADE LITCHFIELD, JOHN BURNETT, MARIA MONCADA
3 ESQUIRES, Florida Power & Light Company, 700 Universe
4 Boulevard, Juno Beach, Florida 33408; KENNETH A.
5 HOFFMAN, ESQUIRE, 134 W. Jefferson Street, Tallahassee,
6 Florida 32301; RUSSELL A. BADDERS, ESQUIRE, Gulf Power
7 Company, One Energy Place, Bin 100, Pensacola, Florida,
8 32520, appearing on behalf of Florida Power & Light
9 Company (FPL).

10 BRADLEY MARSHALL and JORDAN LUEBKEMANN,
11 ESQUIRES, Earthjustice, 111 S. Martin Luther King Jr.
12 Boulevard, Tallahassee, Florida 32301; CHRISTINA I.
13 REICHERT, ESQUIRE, Earthjustice, 4500 Biscayne
14 Boulevard, Suite 201, Miami, Florida 33137, appearing on
15 behalf of Florida Rising, Inc., League of United Latin
16 American Citizens of Florida, and Environmental
17 Confederation of Southwest Florida.

18 THOMAS JERNIGAN, MAJOR HOLLY BUCHANAN, CAPTAIN
19 ROBERT FRIEDMAN, SERGEANT ARNOLD BRAXTON, EBONY PAYTON
20 and SCOTT KIRK, Federal Executive Agencies, 139 Barnes
21 Drive, Suite 1, Tyndall AFB, Florida 32403, appearing on
22 behalf of the Federal Executive Agencies.

23

24

25

1 APPEARANCES CONTINUED:

2 JON C. MOYLE, JR. and KAREN A. PUTNAL,
3 ESQUIRES, Moyle Law Firm, 118 North Gadsden Street,
4 Tallahassee, FL 32301, appearing on behalf of Florida
5 Industrial Users Group (FIPUG).

6 JAMES W. BREW and LAURA W. BAKER, Stone Law
7 Firm, 1025 Thomas Jefferson Street NW, Suite 800 West
8 Washington, DC 20007, appearing on behalf of Florida
9 Retail Federation (FRF).

10 WILLIAM C. GARNER, ESQUIRE, Law Office of
11 William C. Garner, 3425 Bannerman Road Unit 105, #414,
12 Tallahassee, Florida 32312, appearing on behalf of The
13 Cleo Institute Inc.

14 GEORGE CAVROS, ESQUIRE, 120 E. Oakland Park
15 Boulevard, Suite 105, Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33334,
16 appearing on behalf of Southern Alliance for Clean
17 Energy (SACE).

18 KATIE CHILES OTTENWELLER, ESQUIRE, 838 Barton
19 Woods Road, Atlanta, Georgia 30307, appearing on behalf
20 of Vote Solar.

21

22

23

24

25

1 APPEARANCES CONTINUED:

2 RICHARD GENTRY, PUBLIC COUNSEL; CHARLES
3 REHWINKEL, DEPUTY PUBLIC COUNSEL; PATRICIA A.
4 CHRISTENSEN and ANASTACIA PIRRELLO, ESQUIRES, OFFICE OF
5 PUBLIC COUNSEL, c/o The Florida Legislature, 111 West
6 Madison Street, Room 812, Tallahassee, Florida
7 32399-1400, appearing on behalf of the Citizens of the
8 State of Florida (OPC).

9 SUZANNE BROWNLESS, BIANCA LHERISSON, SHAW
10 STILLER and JENNIFER CRAWFORD, ESQUIRES, FPSC General
11 Counsel's Office, 2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard,
12 Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0850, appearing on behalf of
13 the Florida Public Service Commission (Staff).

14 KEITH HETRICK, GENERAL COUNSEL; MARY ANNE
15 HELTON, DEPUTY GENERAL COUNSEL, Florida Public Service
16 Commission, 2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard, Tallahassee,
17 Florida 32399-0850, Advisor to the Florida Public
18 Service Commission.

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

I N D E X

WITNESS:	PAGE
TRACEY GALLOWAY	25
SCOTT ELLER	29
RANDALL VITALE	31
DESTINI SMITH	34
JOHN BOND	36
CHRISTOPHER HODGKINS	39
AMY WORKOWSKI	41
ALISSA FARINA	42
GERRY SEAMENS	45
GABRIELA IBARRA	48
STEPHANIE SEJNOHA	49
ROBERT WILLIAMS	52
LUIS MATA	56
WILLIAMS PENNEY	56
CRISTIAN GONZALEZ	58
NICOLE MARTINEZ	62
DODIE KEITH	63
DORIS BERRIZ	66
GUSTAVO CABRERA	67
JEANNIE JACOBSON	69
ERIC EIKENBERG	71
MANUEL PUCCINI	73
ANDY KOEBEL	75
JEFFREY MORGAN	76
TED GREER	77
SCOT SHANE	80
CHARLES MACAULAY	82
ROBERT SURIS	84
MITCH MONGELL	86
BILL SHERWOOD	87
E. DAVID WILLIAMS	90
JOHN CARR	94
TIMOTHY CARNAGO	96
SANTRA DENNIS	100
HERMAN YOUNGER	101
ALISSA SCHAFFER	104

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

2 COMMISSIONER FAY: Good afternoon. I'd like
3 to welcome everybody to the customer service
4 meeting for Florida Power & Light and Gulf Company
5 rate case. This hearing is an important part of
6 the process and we look forward to hearing from the
7 customers today. My name is Andrew Fay and I'll be
8 chairing this meeting today.

9 Just real quickly, want to mention that we
10 are -- we, at the Commission, continue to keep our
11 thoughts and prayers for those in Surfside and wish
12 the best for them.

13 Staff counsel, read the notice.

14 MR. STILLER: By notices issued on June 3rd
15 and 4th, 2021, this time and place has been set for
16 a customer service hearing in Docket No.
17 20210015-EI.

18 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you.

19 I'm going to walk through a few things about
20 today's hearing just to give everybody a better
21 idea of how we'll move forward. Just to -- to
22 start, basically, the -- the hearing, itself, is
23 designed for the customers to provide their
24 feedback, as we've said. And, in August, there
25 will be a technical hearing for the Commission

1 which will discuss the substance and the evidence
2 in this case.

3 If you would like to speak to a F- -- an FPL
4 or Gulf customer service representative, a
5 representative can be reached by calling
6 (833)407-2007.

7 In addition, Curt Mouring, from our accounting
8 and finance division here at the Commission, can be
9 reached by e-mail at cmouring@psc.state.fl.us, and
10 that's c-m-o-u-r-n-i-n-g [sic]. You can also reach
11 out to the Commission at (850)413-6427, as we have
12 technical staff available.

13 This is an official hearing today, so it will
14 be transcribed and become part of the record.
15 Please recognize that your comments are subject to
16 cross-examination, and that you may be asked
17 questions by the parties related to your comments.

18 Just -- just for those calling in -- the
19 customers today -- just a few points I wanted to
20 bring to your attention. So, if you can, make sure
21 to keep your phone on mute and only speak when it
22 is your turn to speak and do so, so we don't have
23 feedback on our line.

24 If, for some reason, we do have feedback on
25 your line, we -- we will have to disconnect you and

1 you can call back in, and make sure your line is
2 muted at that time.

3 We also ask that you please do not use the
4 speaker function. It causes feedback and can be
5 difficult for us to hear what -- your comments.
6 And we want to make sure we're able to hear those
7 and retain them for the record.

8 And if you did- -- if you do get disconnected
9 accidentally, instead of interjecting when you get
10 back on the line, please just wait and we'll make
11 sure to come back to you at the end so you're able
12 to provide your comments to the Commission. We
13 will not -- we will not leave you out; we just
14 don't want our current speakers interrupted when
15 they're going through their comments.

16 Just a reminder, these are proceedings that
17 we -- we expect those to behave accordingly and to
18 be courteous to -- to those who are involved in
19 this -- this hearing.

20 And finally, just recognize, if there are
21 comments that you want to provide to the Commission
22 in addition to what you've presented here today, we
23 do have the ability to submit them via mail or
24 e-mail for us to review and -- and take into
25 account into the -- the docket.

1 We want to make you feel as comfortable as
2 possible. So, whether you want to submit your
3 comments verbally or in writing, we can -- we will,
4 as a Commission, ensure that they are reviewed in
5 this docket.

6 With those directions, let's start and go
7 ahead and take appearances from the parties.
8 First, Florida Power & Light.

9 MS. BARNES: Good afternoon. I'm Monica
10 Barnes appearing on behalf of Florida Power & Light
11 Company and I'd also like to enter an appearance
12 for Russell Badders and Wade Litchfield.

13 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you.
14 Office of Public Counsel.

15 MS. CHRISTENSEN: Good afternoon. My name is
16 Patti Christensen with the Office of Public
17 Counsel. I'd like to put in an appearance for
18 Richard Gentry, the Public Counsel, Charles
19 Rehwinkel, and Anastacia Pirrello. Thank you.

20 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you,
21 Ms. Christensen.

22 Florida Rising, LULAC, and ECOSWF.

23 MR. LUEBKEMANN: Good afternoon,
24 Mr. Commissioner. Yes, this is Jordan Luebke
25 for Florida Rising, LULAC, and ECOSWF. I'd like to

1 also enter an appearance for Bradley Marshall.

2 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you.

3 Any parties for FEA?

4 FIPUG.

5 SACE.

6 FRF.

7 Vote Solar?

8 MS. OTTENWELLER: Hi, yes. Good afternoon,
9 Mr. Commissioner. Katie Chiles Ottenweller with
10 Vote Solar and I'd like to also enter an appearance
11 for Bill Garner with the CLEO Institute. Thank
12 you.

13 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you.

14 Walmart.

15 The Larsons.

16 MR. SKOP: Yes. Good afternoon, Commissioner
17 Fay. Nathan Skop entering an appearance on behalf
18 of Daniel and Alexandria Larson. Thank you.

19 COMMISSIONER FAY: Thank you, Mr. Skop.

20 FAIR.

21 MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good
22 afternoon. Robert Scheffel Wright appearing on
23 behalf of Floridians Against Increased Rates, Inc.
24 I'd also like to enter an appearance for my law
25 partner, John Thomas LaVia, III. Thank you.

1 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you.

2 Appearances from staff?

3 MR. STILLER: Shaw Stiller for Commission
4 staff. I'd also like to enter an appearance for
5 Suzanne Brownless and Bianca Lherisson.

6 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you.

7 MR. HETRICK: Keith Hetrick, General Counsel
8 for the Commission, entering also an appearance for
9 Mary Anne Helton, the Deputy General Counsel.
10 Thank you.

11 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you.

12 We'll now allow the -- the parties present to
13 provide a -- just a brief opening statement. We'll
14 start with Florida Power & Light.

15 MS. BARNES: Thank you, Commissioner.
16 Christopher Chapel, vice president of customer
17 service, will provide opening remarks on behalf of
18 FPL.

19 MR. CHAPEL: Thanks, Monica, and thank you,
20 Commissioners, and thank you to all of our
21 customers who have taken the time to be with us
22 today.

23 Before I begin, I would really like to extend
24 our thoughts and prayers to the families affected
25 by the horrible tragedy in Surfside, Miami. At

1 times like this, we are reminded that our customers
2 are our friends, our neighbors, and our families.
3 Our hearts are broken.

4 As Monica said, my name is Christopher Chapel
5 and I'm the vice president of customer service for
6 FPL. FPL is a regulated energy company. This
7 means the Public Service Commission oversees our
8 rates and operations to ensure we deliver safe and
9 reliable service at fair prices. We're here today
10 because we're asking for new base rates beginning
11 in 2022.

12 I am proud to be part of the team that
13 provides you with America's best energy value;
14 electricity that's not just clean and reliable, but
15 also affordable. That doesn't mean we can't be
16 better, which is why your feedback is so important
17 to us.

18 Fundamentally, our mission is to provide you
19 with excellent service at affordable rates. Your
20 electricity is cleaner and more reliable than ever.
21 It's also affordable. The rates you pay are well-
22 below the national average. Our typical
23 residential customer bill is lower today than it
24 was 15 years ago.

25 This is the result of FPL's consistent and

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

6 We're standing by our proven track record and
7 promising an even better tomorrow, a more
8 resilient, sustainable energy future that all of us
9 can depend on. Our smart investments have
10 increased generation efficiency and dramatically
11 improved reliability. In fact, we've been the most
12 reliable utility in Florida for the last 15 years.

13 And we've improved our storm preparedness and
14 mobilization. As a result, we've dramatically
15 improved our restoration times, but it's been five
16 years since our last rate request. Florida is now
17 the country's third-largest state and the world's
18 17th-largest economy.

19 FPL is growing, too. We now serve more than
20 11 million Floridians. And though we've invested
21 billions of dollars every year to support Florida's
22 growth and to continuously improve your service,
23 many of these investments are not included in
24 current rates.

25 So, we've asked the PSC to approve a plan that

1 would phase in new rates starting in 2022. Please
2 keep in mind that the proposed increase is spread
3 across millions of customers and over a four-year
4 period, so even with the proposed rate increase,
5 typical residential bills will continue to remain
6 well-below the national average.

7 And, importantly, the plan will allow us to
8 make proven investments in infrastructure, clean
9 energy, and technologies that benefit our customers
10 and our growing state.

11 While we work hard every day to keep bills
12 low, we also recognize that some of our customers
13 face challenges. To this end, we partner with
14 dozens of assistance agencies to distribute LIHEAP
15 and Care to Share funding to help customers who are
16 struggling to pay their bills.

17 And during the COVID pandemic, we received
18 approval from the PSC to create a number of unique
19 programs that provided approximately \$75 million in
20 assistance to customers.

21 As we always have and always will, we are here
22 to support our customers. In fact, as Commissioner
23 Fay said, we have employees available right now to
24 help. You can contact them at (833)407-2007. In
25 closing, we are committed to serving you today,

1 while always looking over the horizon so we're
2 ready to meet your energy needs tomorrow.

3 We're looking forward to hearing from you. We
4 want to hear what we do well. To that end, we've
5 asked customers who have said they value our
6 service to share their thoughts today, but more
7 importantly, we want to know where we can improve.

8 So, thank you for your participation and thank
9 you for the opportunity to serve you.

10 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you,
11 Mr. Chapel.

12 Office of Public Counsel.

13 MS. CHRISTENSEN: Good afternoon, again. My
14 name is Patricia Christensen and I am with the
15 Office of Public Counsel. We're an office with the
16 Legislature set up to represent you, the ratepayers
17 of Florida Power & Light and Gulf Power.

18 We are investigating FPL and Gulf Power's rate
19 request in this matter. To help us, we have hired
20 experts in accounting, depreciation, cost of
21 capital, and other regulatory matters. We will try
22 to get the best results for you, the customers,
23 that we can.

24 Today, we are here to hear from you, the
25 customers, about your experiences with Gulf and

1 FPL, good or bad. And we thank you for taking the
2 time to attend this hearing and give your input.

3 Good afternoon.

4 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you,
5 Ms. Christensen.

6 Florida Rising.

7 MR. LUEBKEMANN: Thank you, Mr. Commissioner.
8 Thank you also to all of the customers who have
9 made the time to speak today. Good afternoon. My
10 name is Jordan Luebkekmann and I represent Florida
11 Rising, the League of United Latin American
12 Citizens of Florida, and the Environmental
13 Confederation of Southwest Florida in this
14 proceeding.

15 These organizations have missions spanning
16 environmental conservation, economic and civil
17 rights, and environmental and climate justice, but
18 all three are in this case to oppose FPL's attempts
19 to raise rates by 20 percent, or 40 percent for
20 Gulf customers if FPL's and Gulf rates remain
21 separate.

22 This rate increase is completely unnecessary
23 to provide for grid reliability. Instead, the hike
24 allows FPL to increase their profits and pay for
25 unneeded fossil-fuel gas plants and overbuilt

1 transmissions upgrades among other needless
2 expenses.

3 We have been listening and know that many of
4 you have noticed service crews working on their --
5 on your storm -- on storm hardening your
6 transmission lines and restoring power after
7 hurricanes. Those activities are not paid from the
8 \$6.5 billion in additional rates that FPL is
9 seeking in this docket. FPL doesn't need to charge
10 you one cent more to pay for that work.

11 We've also heard that you, like us, understand
12 the need to swiftly develop clean energy in
13 Florida, but again, FPL could build all the solar
14 that this state needs without raising rates right
15 now.

16 Furthermore, when FPL talks about reliability,
17 it's important to understand -- or it's important
18 to remember that this is a company that has
19 disconnected over half a million households during
20 the pandemic just for not being able to keep up
21 with their bills. What is reliability if you can't
22 afford to keep the lights on?

23 By raising rates by 20 percent, or 40 percent
24 for Gulf customers if rates remain separate, how
25 many more Floridians will be unable to afford their

1 bills? That's why we're -- we will be asking that
2 FPL's rate hike be denied.

3 Thank you, again, for all being here to share
4 your experiences.

5 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you.
6 Vote Solar.

7 MS. OTTENWELLER: Thank you, Commissioner.

8 Good afternoon. My name is Katie Chiles
9 Ottenweller and I'm here on behalf of Vote Solar.
10 We've jointly intervened with the CLEO Institute.
11 These are two non-profits that are working towards
12 an affordable, clean, equitable, and resilient
13 energy system that works for all Floridians,
14 especially those who are most vulnerable.

15 In the past year, Floridians faced a global
16 pandemic, economic recession and record-breaking
17 hurricanes worsened by climate change. We're here
18 because we believe that FPL can and must do better
19 by its most vulnerable customers and that clean
20 energy solutions exist to solve today's problems.

21 We know you have a lot going on. To all the
22 customers calling in, we want to say thank you for
23 taking the time and we look forward to hearing your
24 comments. Thank you.

25 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you.

1 Mr. Skop, with the Larsons.

2 MR. SKOP: Yes. Good afternoon, Commissioner
3 Fay. My name is Nathan Skop. As an attorney and
4 former Public Service Commissioner, it's my
5 privilege to represent the Larsons in the FPL rate
6 case. The Larsons are residential -- FPL
7 residential customers living in Palm Beach County
8 who are concerned about the significant rate impact
9 of the proposed FPL rate increase.

10 The FPL rate increase represents the largest
11 electric rate increase in Florida's history. FPL
12 has the burden to demonstrate that their request is
13 fair, just, and reasonable. FPL should be allowed
14 to recover the prudent additions made to rate base
15 since the last rate request and settlement, but
16 whether that requires a rate increase is a matter
17 of a -- a matter of discussion.

18 It is important to understand, however, that
19 the FPL claims about having lower bills than other
20 electric utilities does not provide the legal basis
21 for the Florida Public Service Commission to
22 increase FPL rates; likewise, having reliable
23 service is expected from a regulated utility as
24 part of the regulatory compact.

25 In 2009, the Florida Public Service Commission

1 denied the majority of the largest rate increase,
2 at the time, from FPL of \$1.3 billion. FPL claimed
3 that terrible things would happen and they would
4 not be able to continue providing reliable service
5 or making an investment. Of course, none of that
6 came to fruition. FPL is it very financially
7 healthy and continues to provide excellent customer
8 service to FPL customers.

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

14 Return on equity, or ROE, is one of the many
15 contested items in the FPL rate case. In FPL's
16 rate case, FPL is requesting a mid-point ROE of
17 11.5 percent. FPL has a very strong balance sheet
18 and it's financially healthy.

19 In sharp contrast to the FPL request, on
20 May 4th, Florida Public Service Commission approved
21 the Duke rate case settlement with a mid-point ROE
22 of 9.85 percent. That set a new benchmark for the
23 electric utilities in the state of Florida.

24 With a much stronger balance sheet than Duke,
25 it's difficult to understand how FPL can justify a

1 mid-point ROE that would be 165 basis points above
2 the ROE benchmarked that was previously approved by
3 the Florida Public Service Commission on May 4th.

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

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

16 Thank you for your time.

17 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you.

18 FAIR.

19 MR. WRIGHT: Oops -- thank you, Mr. Chairman.

20 I was waiting for my video to kick on.

21 Before I continue, I want to say that I add my
22 own personal prayers to those -- to those of
23 everyone who are praying for the people affected
24 by -- and the families affected by the tragedy in
25 Surfside.

1 My name is Robert Scheffel Wright. I was born
2 in Miami. I go by "Schef." I have worked on
3 energy matters in Florida for more than 40 years,
4 including service in Governor Bob Graham's energy
5 office as well as seven years on the Public Service
6 Commission staff before I became an attorney.

7 This afternoon, I am proud to represent
8 Floridians Against Increased Rates, Inc., a Florida
9 non-profit corporation, and our hundreds of members
10 who are FPL customers. On behalf of FAIR, I thank
11 everybody here for being here to tell the
12 Commissioners what you think.

13 I want to be clear about one thing from the
14 outset. From the viewpoint of our members, FPL
15 customers, FAIR wants a healthy FPL, but our
16 position is that FPL should have enough money, not
17 too much. It is FPL's duty and responsibility, it
18 is FPL's job to provide safe and reliable service
19 at the lowest possible costs.

20 FPL has thousands of good, hardworking people
21 out there who keep the lights on, and we salute
22 them. However, the evidence in this case will show
23 that FPL's request -- which, by the way, is by far
24 the largest in Florida history -- would give it way
25 more money than it needs to do its job.

1 Put politely, FPL's request is unreasonable
2 and unfair. The unfairness is simply this: FPL
3 does not need the extra \$1.1 billion of customer
4 money that they want next year and they don't need
5 all of what they're asking for in 2023, '24, and
6 '25 either.

7 Even if FPL were to get no rate increase at
8 all next year, they could pay all their expenses as
9 projected in their filings in this case, they could
10 pay all of their thousands of employees every
11 dollar they project they're going to pay them, they
12 could pay all their interest, they could recover
13 all costs associated with their existing and
14 projected investments for 2022, and still have well
15 over \$2 billion in profits left over.

16 While it's true that a lot of FPL's
17 investments weren't included in the rates when they
18 were set four years ago -- five years ago, it's not
19 true that they're not covered. They're more than
20 covered. FPL has covered all of its costs and
21 earned earnings at the very top of its authorized
22 range for the last three years.

23 And it's worse than that. FPL wants to use up
24 value that you customers create using what they
25 call a reserve surplus mechanism to pad their

1 profits even more, up to an extra billion-and-a-
2 half dollars of your value, your created value,
3 over the next four years.

4 FAIR and our witnesses have filed and will
5 present detailed evidence demonstrating that FPL
6 does not need this rate increase, and we will work
7 hard to prevent them from getting anything they
8 don't need.

9 Tell the Commissioners what you think. Thank
10 you for being here and thank you for your
11 attention.

12 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you,
13 Mr. Wright.

14 Now, we'll get into the customer-testimony
15 portion of the hearing. We're going to allow each
16 customer three minutes to provide public comment to
17 ensure we get to everybody today. This customer
18 hearing might run long, but we're going to make
19 sure everyone has the opportunity to -- to speak.

20 I'll call your name when it's your turn to
21 speak, but I'll also list out three names ahead of
22 time just to let you know when you'll be up next.

23 And if you have signed up online, you have
24 already checked the affirmation and the oath that
25 you're providing the truth, and so, you're sworn

1 in. So, unless told otherwise, presume you're
2 sworn in. And for those who are not, we will -- we
3 will let you know and swear you in at the time that
4 your testimony is provided.

5 Just remember that this is being tran- --
6 transcribed and part of the official record. And
7 as I go through the names, if any of the legal
8 counsel for the parties have any questions, please
9 just speak up and we'll make sure either the
10 parties and/or the Commissioners, if they have
11 something -- a question, we'll make sure they have
12 the opportunity to ask that question.

13 With that said, we'll go ahead and begin
14 the -- the public-testimony part of the hearing.
15 The first three names that I have are Tracey
16 Galloway, Alissa Schafer, and Ada Perea.

17 Ms. Galloway, are you on the line?

18 MS. GALLOWAY: Yes, Tracey Galloway is on the
19 line.

20 COMMISSIONER FAY: You're recognized.

21 MS. GALLOWAY: Good afternoon. My name is
22 Tracey Galloway and I'm the CEO of Community
23 Cooperative located in Fort Myers, Florida. We're
24 a human-service agency focused on assisting those
25 with food and housing insecurity, Meals on Wheels

1 being one of our largest programs.

2 Florida Power & Light has been a wonderful
3 partner to our community and particularly the
4 vulnerable population that we have served during
5 COVID. Typically, our major interactions with FP&L
6 are during natural disasters.

7 We are immensely grateful for the continued
8 financial support that we received through
9 sponsorship and special projects, and not just the
10 financial support from FP&L, but the employee
11 participation at our events and volunteer services,
12 which means as much as the dollars that are
13 received. The advocacy and human participation
14 help shine a great light on the good work that we
15 do.

16 One of the key projects that we host is the
17 annual Florida Power & Light hurricane-preparedness
18 bags, a wonderful project with FP&L employees who
19 pack and deliver hurricane-preparedness bags
20 provided by FP&L to our Meals on Wheels clients,
21 all of who are elderly shut-ins.

22 This project has been going on for several
23 years now and I believe we've delivered about 2,000
24 hurricane kits. And it's one of the most feel-good
25 projects that we do with a corporate partner and

1 the most important, as, in addition to the food
2 that is provided through these bags, it's helping
3 to raise awareness with our elderly clients about
4 the impending hurricane season each year.

5 I would go on record to say that your Fort
6 Myers southwest region of FP&L has the best
7 community outreach and customer service around. We
8 have had several instances in the course of the
9 last 18 months where it has been an imperative
10 power issue at our campus facility, either due to
11 on-site construction or issues from beyond our
12 property. When we have no power, we cannot prepare
13 the food for those in need in our community, which
14 is about 200,000 meals per year.

15 Charlotte Miller and her team are outstanding
16 stewards of FP&L customer service and are
17 continually spot-on ensuring that we are taken care
18 of with whatever power-issue needs we have. And
19 it's not just one or two employees; every person we
20 encounter goes above and beyond to assist with
21 anything that we need.

22 On a personal note -- and I am an FP&L
23 customer as well -- I do want to make a -- a
24 statement regarding a recent issue that we had at
25 our home. Recently, we were in the midst of a

1 family crisis with the death of a significant
2 family member, and arrived home the night before a
3 very serious and grave decision had to be made
4 concerning our family member to find serious power
5 issues stemming from the transformer on our street.

6 I reached out to FP&L in desperation, as we
7 were having serious volt-ed issue -- voltage issues
8 in our home. I explained our situation and asked
9 if there was any way that we could get bumped up to
10 a faster turnaround for the service issues that we
11 were having. And after explaining the gravity of
12 our personal situation, we had a truck at our house
13 within two hours that evening and a temporary wire
14 run so that our power could be restored.

15 Everyone from the phone operator to the two
16 gentlemen that arrived at our home to repair the
17 issue were the nicest and most-helpful
18 professionals. It made a very difficult time in
19 our lives a little less stressful because FP&L has
20 employees who care. And that, to me, has much --

21 COMMISSIONER FAY: Ms. Galloway?
22 Ms. Galloway?

23 MS. GALLOWAY: -- importance as it is -- yes.

24 COMMISSIONER FAY: Ms. Galloway, if you could,
25 wrap it up. The -- the bell --

1 MS. GALLOWAY: I'm done.

2 COMMISSIONER FAY: -- that you hear on these
3 calls is signaling the three minutes. So, I'll
4 allow you a few more seconds, but please wrap it
5 up.

6 MS. GALLOWAY: Yes -- no, that was it. I was
7 just saying it made our lives a little less
8 stressful because FP&L has employees who care.

9 Thank you so much --

10 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great.

11 MS. GALLOWAY: -- for your time.

12 COMMISSIONER FAY: Yeah, thank you for your
13 comments.

14 MS. GALLOWAY: Bye-bye.

15 COMMISSIONER FAY: Alissa Schafer. Alissa
16 Schafer.

17 Ada Perea. Ada Perea.

18 Scott Eller, Randall Vitale, and Destini Smith
19 will be next.

20 Mr. Eller, are you on the line?

21 MR. ELLER: I am, sir.

22 COMMISSIONER FAY: You have three minutes.
23 You're recognized.

24 MR. ELLER: Excellent. Thank you very much.
25 Again, my name is Scott Eller. I live in Cocoa

1 Beach, Florida, have been an FP&L customer for the
2 better part of 20 years.

3 Wasn't until recently, in the last ten years,
4 that I really noticed FP&L and the -- the
5 contribution they're making to our community here
6 both in our grid and making improvements;
7 specifically that -- that matter to me, is I
8 remember living here and going through several
9 hurricanes over the last 20 years. And definitely
10 the last ten years, our time of down -- downtime
11 was definitely diminished.

12 And use of the FPL app was amazing. That way
13 we didn't have to pick up a phone and call and --
14 and tie up their lines. I could just use the app
15 and find out, you know, when and if I will -- or
16 when our power is going to be restored.

17 And I also appreciate what they're doing for
18 clean energy, the solar -- with solar farms that
19 they're putting all over the place. I think that's
20 very, very forwarded-thinking.

21 And almost -- the most important thing to me
22 is the efforts they have in the community,
23 specifically their philanthropic efforts. I sit on
24 a number of boards. I am involved in a number of
25 non-profits around the Space Coast here, and I

1 think every single one has been touched by FPL in
2 some sort of philanthropic, volunteer, or monetary
3 donation that -- they definitely have roots in the
4 county, and -- and I appreciate all the work they
5 do to help -- to help everyone, you know, under
6 their care.

7 And, personally, everything else -- all --
8 all -- everything else is getting more expensive; I
9 don't see why FP&L shouldn't raise their rates.
10 It's been quite awhile. I think it's a nominal
11 rate and I'm all for it.

12 So, that's my time. Thank you.

13 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you for you
14 comments, Mr. Eller.

15 Randall Vitale.

16 MR. VITALE: Good afternoon, Commissioner Fay
17 and other Commissioners. My name is Randall
18 Vitale. I'm a resident of Fort Lauderdale and a
19 lifelong Floridian, born and raised in Miami, and
20 I've lived in Fort Lauderdale since 1999 and have
21 been paying my own FP&L bill since I moved here in
22 1999. My parents were paying it before that, when
23 I was growing up, but I've always been very pleased
24 with the level of service and consistency that
25 Florida Power & Light has provided.

1 I didn't really have to think too much about
2 it growing up, obviously, other than with
3 hurricanes when we were impacted by Hurricane
4 Andrew. And then my first 20 years in Fort
5 Lauderdale, condo living and townhouse living, you
6 know, was kind of someone else's problem, but about
7 a year ago, we bought a house, my wife and I, in
8 Fort Lauderdale, and it was a short sale, and we
9 were having issues with overgrown vegetation and
10 landscaping.

11 And once we trimmed it back, we noticed that
12 there was a wire dangling. And we've got a
13 four-year-old at home and we were really anxious
14 about it because, you know, here we are, first
15 house and we're seeing a dangling power line and
16 we're not sure what to do.

17 So, immediately called the customer service
18 line and Florida Power & Light quickly sent out a
19 team to check on it. They told us everything would
20 be fine, made us feel very comfortable, were very
21 kind to my son. And found out that it was not an
22 active line, fortunately, but they went ahead and
23 tied it back anyway so that it would be no longer
24 dangling, making it look safe and, you know, more
25 esthetically pleasing in our backyard, now that we

1 could actually see it after trimming back the
2 vegetation.

3 And, you know, the kindness they showed my
4 son, just kind of letting him see the truck and
5 their hats and everything, was really just --
6 showed me the -- the character and the values that
7 the organization has.

8 I know you've already heard about all the good
9 they do in the community. I echo that.

10 I know that the app is great. I echo that as
11 well.

12 And I see them -- just recently in the last
13 several months, have been hardening a lot of the
14 power lines in our community. And that makes me
15 feel really good about future storms. Obviously,
16 we're in Florida. We're going to be dealing with
17 storms. And I know power hardening is a big,
18 important factor in getting things back and up and
19 operational.

20 So, overall, my experience with Florida
21 Power & Light has been very positive, continues to
22 be very positive, and I wanted to call in today to
23 say that. So, thank you, Commissioners for all the
24 work you do. And that will conclude my comments.

25 COMMISSIONER FAY: Thank you for your

1 comments.

2 Next is Destini Smith.

3 MS. SMITH: Yes, this is Destini. I am a new
4 and loyal FPL customer, and I also work as a
5 family-support specialist in low-income communities
6 here in Miami. And I see residents struggle to pay
7 their FPL bills constantly with the current rates.

8 And with -- FPL is actually is the seventh-
9 highest -- has the seventh-highest IOU rate in the
10 nation; is ranked 51st out of 52nd in terms of
11 energy efficiency. And these current rates are
12 causing our residents to struggle, and an increase
13 would only harm these communities most.

14 These are hardworking families and, despite
15 their best efforts, no avail can be found. FPL has
16 been harsh during the pandemic with these families.
17 Many laid off and struggle to make rent, moms with
18 newborn babies, seniors taking care of their
19 grandchildren for Virtual School -- I've seen it
20 all. And they have received notice after notice of
21 power shut-offs in the midst of the pandemic and in
22 economic crisis. This has been one of the hardest
23 things to deal with in supporting them.

24 I will say that there are programs available,
25 which we are thankful for, in terms of assistance

1 for individuals' light bills, like LIHEAP and Care
2 to Share program, as a representative from FPL
3 mentioned earlier, which has been definitely
4 helpful for many, as well as other advocacy
5 programs; however, many of our residents have been
6 turned away due to a lack of funding and the
7 process takes months to receive funds, even if they
8 are approved. Despite the evidence of assistance
9 needed, many are still turned away.

10 And so, high energy bills result in a
11 difficult tradeoff between paying -- paying for
12 energy bills or other necessity such as food,
13 medical care, or shut off AC to cut costs. So,
14 these families are really having to wrestle in
15 those tensions. And we should not have to put
16 people in possession -- in this kind of position to
17 decide between these necessities.

18 Electricity is a necessity. And with such
19 high heat in Florida, families that I work with,
20 and even including myself, we're at a huge health
21 risk due to this injustice because, if we are
22 without AC, individuals can really have some
23 serious health issues.

24 And so, these actions will dis- --
25 disproportionately affects black and brown, low-

1 income communities the most. And so, therefore,
2 these are my comments to propose a denial of this
3 rate increase.

4 Thank you.

5 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you for your
6 comments.

7 Next up, we'll have John Bond, Christopher
8 Hodgkins, and Amy Workowski.

9 John Bond, are you on the line?

10 MR. BOND: I am here.

11 COMMISSIONER FAY: You have three minutes.
12 You're recognized.

13 MR. BOND: Thank you. Good afternoon, ladies
14 and gentlemen. My name is John Bond and I live in
15 Cape Canaveral, Florida. I am a small-business
16 owner as well as a multiple-account holder with
17 FP&L for the last -- about 36 years.

18 I live my life trying to be as objective as I
19 possibly can. I also think that if everybody did
20 same -- did the same, life in this country would be
21 a lot different; however, that is not why I'm here.

22 After a number of these sessions, I'm assuming
23 that you've heard a lot of reasons why any pending
24 increase is not necessary, including a bunch from
25 their-rates-are-already-too-high arena.

1 Let me state that nobody wants a price
2 increase, but I also understand why it might need
3 to happen. I have a lot -- I have experienced a
4 lot in the years since I settled in Florida. I've
5 been through countless hurricanes, tropical storms,
6 droughts, floods. When we do lose power, for
7 whatever reason, the FP&L crews do their best to
8 get us back online. They work very hard for long
9 hours, and I don't believe a lot of people give
10 them the deserve- -- the respect that they deserve.

11 After a hurricane, the linemen, instead of
12 tending to their own needs at home, are working on
13 ours. My hat's off to them. For FP&L, all of that
14 costs money. Between these events, there is a lot
15 of maintenance occurring: trimming trees, replacing
16 poles, and upgrading just about everything in
17 sight.

18 There are a lot new neighborhoods, shopping
19 centers, warehouses, rocket builders, and much more
20 that need energy. With all of the new residents
21 coming to Florida, my professional background
22 taught me that concurrency is extremely expensive
23 and certainly not optional.

24 I have been here -- I mentioned that I've been
25 here for 36 years. Over those years, even with all

1 the previous points, I've seen a remarkable
2 decrease -- decrease in outages and brownouts.
3 More importantly, when the power does go out, it is
4 a much, much shorter time before it is restored.
5 The installed technology can pinpoint an outage
6 down to a single residence, which allows for a
7 quicker response.

8 I admit to being a news junkie and have kept
9 up with stories about FP&L. I also see the crews,
10 for many years, out hardening the entire system --
11 I believe that's the proper terminology. None of
12 that work is inexpensive, and the cost of ma- --
13 for materials just keeps going up.

14 Americans, and specifically Floridians, want
15 alternative energy, and FP&L delivers. I did some
16 research and found out that solar will be
17 approximately 15 percent of the energy produced by
18 2028.

19 This is all well and good, but there are also
20 debilitating limitations to solar. And I wish more
21 people understood that storing that much energy is
22 simply not feasible -- at least not yet. So, other
23 fuels will be necessary until sometime in the
24 hopefully-near future as storage is reasonable.

25 In the meantime, natural gas is a product

1 which is clean and plentiful and the -- and I think
2 that all the coal plants are now gone. The net is
3 all the things that I've mentioned as well as
4 research and tech -- tec- -- R and D takes a lot of
5 money, a lot of it. I believe the quality --

6 COMMISSIONER FAY: Mr. --

7 MR. BOND: -- of service --

8 COMMISSIONER FAY: -- if you could, wrap up
9 your comments, please.

10 MR. BOND: Okay. I'm almost done.

11 I believe the quality of service to be second
12 to no other industry, and that's saying a lot. I
13 believe that FP&L is an excellent steward of the
14 community.

15 Thank you. And I hope that I've helped in
16 some way small way to help in the decision process.
17 Have a good day.

18 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you for your
19 comments.

20 Next up is Christopher Hodgkins.

21 MR. HODGKINS: Good afternoon my name is
22 Christopher Hodgkins. I'm the chief executive
23 officer of the Port of Miami Tunnel.

24 We have been a partner with FPL since we broke
25 ground over 14 years ago. And for all of us, it's

1 been very important that our partnership continues
2 to be a positive one. We are the only tunnel that
3 goes under the ocean in the state of Florida.

4 We're 120 feet below sea level and we serve Port
5 Miami, the cruise capital of the world and a place
6 where the cargo keeps on increasing and increasing.

7 So, in our -- in our tunnel, we rely heavily
8 on the importance of -- of power that's reliable,
9 power that's reliable from FPL. We have gates --
10 what we call our flood gates. We're one of the
11 first projects to take sea-level rise into account,
12 but those gates that go down, once we go into code
13 Yankee for a hurricane -- they seal the tunnel from
14 water, and those are electrically powered.

15 So, it's so important for us to have reliable,
16 dependable energy with folks that know how to --
17 and believe in operational excellence, like FPL.
18 So, not only are our flood gates electrically
19 powered, but our digital messaging boards, our
20 gates, our infrared sensors, our over-height
21 detectors -- all of this requires that we have
22 dependable power, dependable power that we can rely
23 on from FPL.

24 So, as we all know, no one likes a rate
25 increase, but it's so important for us to have

1 someone like FPL continue their excellent service
2 in response.

3 You know, we're right on the bay. So,
4 whatever happens in regards to what's going on in
5 the weather, we're the brunt of all that. And
6 despite all of issues that we've had over six years
7 with hurricanes, or no matter what it is, FPL has
8 been at our side, giving us dependable power and
9 reliable service that's so important to keep that
10 tunnel open.

11 Thank you very much.

12 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you for your
13 comments.

14 Next up is Amy Workowski.

15 MS. WORKOWSKI: Hi. Hi. I'm Amy Workowski
16 and I am from Daytona Beach, Florida. Daytona
17 Beach sits in the -- obviously, in the center of
18 the state. And we have been the brunt of the many
19 hurricanes that have come our way, and we are the
20 hub of the FPL truck substation right at the
21 Daytona International Speedway. They -- they come
22 here and wait to see where they need to -- where
23 they need to go.

24 We are very blessed to have FPL come into our
25 communities and wait to see where they can go to

1 help keep businesses open. Quality of service is
2 second to none. Our business community depends on
3 FPL to keep their doors open.

4 Not only is, as many people have said, FPL is
5 a wonderful community partner, but most
6 importantly, they care about their customers.

7 I will not echo -- I cannot echo enough what
8 everybody else has said, but we -- the Daytona
9 Beach business community, as well as the
10 residential customers, are here for FPL through and
11 through, as well as they are for us.

12 So, thank you very much.

13 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you.

14 Next three up will be Alissa Farina, Gerry
15 Seamens, and Gabriela Ibarra.

16 Alissa Fari- -- Farina.

17 MS. FARINA: I'm here.

18 COMMISSIONER FAY: You're recognized.

19 MS. FARINA: Okay. Hi. My name is Alissa
20 Farina. I'm speaking as a private citizen, not on
21 behalf of any employer. I'm a Miami-Dade resident,
22 FPL customer -- don't really have a choice -- and I
23 live in downtown Miami, Florida.

24 There are two things FPL needs to be doing to
25 support its customers and neither is solved by this

1 rate increase: do everything possible to
2 decarbonize its fuel mix as quickly as possible and
3 address the energy burden of low-income
4 individuals.

5 The world is in a climate crisis and fuels
6 used to generate electricity are the major
7 contributor. In Miami, we're already seeing
8 increased flooding due to climate change. Out
9 west, there are a growing number of wildfires,
10 which are made more common and more likely due to
11 climate change.

12 In 2018, my best friend lost her father to
13 cancer, and then their house burned down in the
14 California campfire, along with all their
15 possessions. There are thousands with
16 heartbreaking stories like this across the country,
17 and that number will grow the longer we emit
18 greenhouse gasses like methane from natural gas,
19 and continue to drive the climate crisis.

20 FPL does need to invest in solar and green
21 hydrogen -- I am supportive of that; however,
22 according to a recent report by the Southern
23 Alliance for Clean Energy, in order to be carbon-
24 neutral by 2035, FPL needs to invest even more than
25 they are already planning in solar storage and

1 energy efficiency.

2 Instead, this rate case calls for expanding
3 natural-gas use and opening a new power plant in
4 2022 that will put methane into the air for another
5 40 years.

6 Secondly, 17 percent of Miami-Dade households
7 live in poverty and 37 percent are asset-li- --
8 asset-limited, income-constrained, but employed.
9 7 percent of workers in Miami-Dade are still
10 unemployed and recovering from the pandemic. These
11 people live paycheck to paycheck, have little room
12 for budget changes.

13 According to a report from the American
14 Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy, Miami's
15 low-income residents pay close to 7 percent of
16 their annual income to FPL, and this rate increase
17 demands more.

18 Access to electricity is a basic necessity and
19 this rate increase disproportionately targets low-
20 income Miamians, especially our black residents, of
21 which, 29 percent of households have a high energy
22 burden, paying over 6 percent of their annual
23 income to FPL.

24 Some census tracts in Miami's historic black
25 neighborhoods even pay up to 15 percent of their

1 annual income to FPL already without this rate
2 increase.

3 It is my understanding that this rate increase
4 does not propose an expansion of its energy-
5 efficiency initiatives to help these residents who
6 are already cross-burdened and struggling due to
7 the pandemic.

8 So, in sum, this rate increase as currently
9 proposed will have negative impacts in both the
10 short- and long-term. FPL should move rapidly
11 toward renewable energy and not invest more in
12 methane and natural gas, but further burdening low-
13 income residents should not be viewed as a
14 necessary evil on the path to progress.

15 Thank you.

16 COMMISSIONER FAY: Thank you for your
17 comments.

18 Gerry Seamens, up next.

19 MS. SEAMENS: Yes, I'm here.

20 COMMISSIONER FAY: You're recognized.

21 MS. SEAMENS: Thank you very much. Thank you
22 for letting me speak to you today. My name is
23 Gerry Seamens and I live in Fort Myers, Florida.
24 I'm a retired senior citizen.

25 I resided in a condo community until about a

1 year and a half ago when I moved to a single-family
2 residential neighborhood and I have had excellent
3 electric service from FPL at both locations; no
4 long-term outages and no problems during numerous
5 afternoon thunderstorms. Even during the COVID
6 out -- lockdown, I had no issues when everybody was
7 at home using extra power.

8 My neighborhood has underground utilities, but
9 a main road leading to the subdivision provides
10 service using aboveground utility poles. Trees
11 were trimmed along this road to prevent contact
12 with the utility lines. They are also installing
13 some new poles and equipment throughout the area in
14 preparation for the busy hurricane season we are
15 expecting.

16 I understand FPL has the lowest bills in the
17 state and will continue to have the lowest, even if
18 the rate increase is approved. It is my
19 understanding the increase will be approximately
20 \$18 spread out over the next four years.

21 On-call service will continue to save me part
22 of this increase. As a senior living on Social
23 Security, I appreciate getting the most out of
24 every dollar. The rate increase will allow FPL to
25 continue to provide, clean, efficient, reliable,

1 and affordable service to help maintain and improve
2 their present equipment, build new and modernized
3 power plants, and keep other infrastructure
4 updated.

5 This will be critical as we face the future of
6 increasing or rising high temperatures that will
7 stress even the best of utility lines as everyone
8 increases use of their air conditioners to stay
9 cool.

10 We have seen this in the northwest of the
11 United States. We all know about the state- and
12 countrywide infrastructure concerns, mostly
13 involving bridges and roads, even in our own area.
14 We could face the future possibility of tax
15 increases to cover some of those costs.

16 I hesitate to think about the possible cost
17 and how life would be if our utilities were left
18 unimproved and without proper maintenance from year
19 to year without only a maintain-as-needed attitude.

20 As a satisfied customer, and to ensure a
21 reliable energy future, I support the rate
22 increase. And thank you, again, for letting me
23 speak today.

24 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you for your
25 comments.

1 Gabriela Ibarra next.

2 MS. IBARRA: Good afternoon. My name is
3 Gabriela Ibarra. I'm the director of development
4 for Nomi Health. Our company has national -- has a
5 national presence for COVID response both in
6 testing and vaccination.

7 Thanks to FP&L, Nomi Health was able to stand
8 up our facilities throughout Miami Dade County and
9 provide services to the community and the residents
10 of Miami-Dade County throughout the pandemic.

11 They -- thanks to their quick turnaround and
12 their engineers working throughout the night, we
13 were able to set up our facilities both at Port of
14 Miami and Miami International Airport.

15 They were able -- they -- the Florida Power
16 engineers -- Florida Power & Light engineers came
17 out, they energized our locations and, within days,
18 we were operating and servicing the community.

19 It is companies like Florida Power & Light
20 that make our jobs that much easier. Their
21 professionalism, their dedication is second to
22 none.

23 I live both in Coral Gables and in Dallas,
24 Texas. In 2020, Dallas had severe tornadoes and
25 we s- -- we had power outages for weeks on end. I

1 know that, in Florida, in Miami-Dade County in
2 particular, Florida Power & Light would never -- we
3 would never experience this, thanks to their
4 reli- -- their reliability, the grid, and their
5 planning ahead.

6 We have nothing but wonderful things to say
7 about Florida Power & Light and their service.

8 Thank you.

9 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you for your
10 comments.

11 Next three up will be Stephanie Sejnoha, Luis
12 Mata, and Jenni Craig.

13 Stephanie Sejnoha, are you on the line?

14 MS. SEJNOHA: Hi, good afternoon. Stephanie
15 Sejnoha.

16 COMMISSIONER FAY: You're recognized.

17 MS. SEJNOHA: Good afternoon, Commissioners --
18 thank you, Commissioner. Good afternoon. My name
19 is Stephanie Sejnoha and I am the director of Palm
20 Beach County's Public Safety Department located at
21 20 South Military Trail in West Palm Beach,
22 Florida.

23 Palm Beach County, the agency I work for, is a
24 customer of FP&L. As Palm Beach County's director
25 of public safety, I am responsible for ensuring the

1 safety and the well-being of our residents through
2 various programs and services offered within my
3 department, which includes emergency management,
4 animal care and control, consumer affairs, justice
5 services, victim services, and 911 program
6 services.

7 I am here today to demonstrate how FP&L plays
8 a critical role in monitoring, assessing, reporting
9 on and restoring electric and natural-gas systems
10 for Palm Beach County.

11 FP&L serves as the energy unit leader at the
12 Palm Beach County Emergency Operations Center in
13 preparing for, responding to, and recovering from a
14 catastrophic event here in Palm Beach County.

15 During and after a storm, FP&L staff are
16 located here right in our EOC, emergency operations
17 center, to provide up-to-date information on power
18 restor- -- restoration for our executive policy
19 group who makes critical decisions to safeguard our
20 residents here in Palm Beach County.

21 One of their major roles is restoring power to
22 our critical facilities here in Palm Beach County,
23 such as hospitals, police and fire stations,
24 communications facilities, water treatment plants,
25 and transportation providers.

1 In addition to our critical facilities,
2 restoring power to our residents' personal property
3 is vital to ensure we can empty all of our
4 emergency shelters, which includes special needs,
5 general-population and pet-friendly shelters, so
6 our residents can return to their home.

7 FP&L and our county staff work together to
8 protect our most-vulnerable residents by having
9 designated crews that work alongside our staff in
10 the field in restoring power.

11 Our relationship with FP&L is critical. And
12 FP&L must continue to make the investments and have
13 the resources and ability to strengthen their
14 system so, together, we can minimize the impact of
15 emergencies and disasters to ensure the safety and
16 well-being of our community.

17 That concludes my comments and I thank you for
18 the opportunity.

19 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you so much.

20 Next up is Luis Mata. Luis Mata.

21 Next is Jenni Craig. Jenni Craig.

22 The next three up will be Dennis Grady, Robert
23 Williams, and Chris Gable.

24 Mr. Grady, are you on the line? Dennis Grady.

25 Next up is Robert Williams.

1 MR. WILLIAMS: This is Robert Williams. Can
2 you hear me?

3 COMMISSIONER FAY: Yes, Mr. Williams. You're
4 recognized, three minutes.

5 MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you. Members of the
6 Florida Public Service Commission, my name is Bob
7 Williams. And let me begin by thanking you for the
8 opportunity to present to you today. I will be
9 speaking to you regarding my experience with FPL
10 from several different perspectives.

11 First, over the last 25 years, I've worked in
12 Daytona Beach, have been a homeowner in Port
13 Orange, and New Smyrna Beach. I will begin by
14 sharing my experience working with FPL in the area
15 of the community and economic development across
16 Volusia County.

17 I have served as vice -- senior vice president
18 for economic development at Daytona State College
19 and, over the last decade, a similar role at our
20 community hospital, Halifax Health.

21 Among other things, over the last 15 years, a
22 broad section of our community has been working on
23 addressing our homeless population. For many years
24 in our community, we have had homeless services for
25 families and children. What has been missing is a

1 shelter to serve chronically homeless single men
2 and women, which can be one of the most challenging
3 populations to serve.

4 After over a ten-year journey, we managed to
5 open the first-step homeless shelter to serve this
6 population. It's a been a struggle, but
7 significant progress has been made with hundreds of
8 homeless individuals receiving medical care,
9 education, jobs, and housing.

10 After the first year of operation, we
11 continued to work to improve efficiencies and
12 reduce expenses to leverage our limited financial
13 resources. It became clear that a significant
14 expense is the shelter's power bill. In the hot
15 and humid Florida climate, providing a healthy dry
16 and temperate environment for up to a hundred
17 people at a time can be challenging.

18 I'm grateful to report that, when we reached
19 out to FPL for assistance, they responded
20 immediately. They sent out one of their team
21 members to conduct an energy audit. They also
22 investigated our billing records and noticed we had
23 not registered as a non-profit. Their work to
24 eliminate and refund inappropriate taxes on our
25 bill has saved the shelter thousands of dollars.

1 Furthermore, we've continued to -- they've
2 continued to support us in our efforts to optimize
3 the power efficiency of our facility.

4 As a homeowner in Volusia County, I've also
5 experienced the excellent service and
6 professionalism FPL provides. I can't count the
7 number of times my family and neighbors have stood
8 cheering as the FPL trucks pulled up in our
9 neighborhoods to restore power after one of our
10 many hurricanes. We could always count of the FPL
11 team to respond as rapidly as possible, often
12 during continued bad weather and in the middle of
13 night.

14 I will share that my property in New Smyrna
15 Beach is not currently served by FPL. It is a
16 significant note -- to note that weekly power
17 interruptions are common on -- at that property.
18 This contrasts with my property in Port Orange,
19 served by FPL, for which power interruptions are
20 rare.

21 Still, compared to what I recently experienced
22 on a trip to Cozumel, Mexico, where power outages
23 are a daily experience, I am immensely grateful for
24 the robust utility's infrastructure throughout our
25 region.

1 I only hope that, going forward, that FPL and
2 New Smyrna can work -- find ways to partner to
3 improve service to the city.

4 In my decades-long role supporting community
5 and economic development across the region, I've
6 gained a great appreciation for the importance that
7 our utility's infrastructure provides as we work to
8 maintain and improve the quality of life for all
9 members of our community, providing a robust,
10 stable utility's infrastructure is clearly
11 essential.

12 From my layman's perspective, my perception is
13 that FPL is consistently providing a world-class
14 power service. Their continued investment --

15 COMMISSIONER FAY: Mr. Williams, you need to
16 wrap it up, please.

17 MR. WILLIAMS: -- in the distribution
18 infrastructure -- yes. I --

19 COMMISSIONER FAY: Thank you.

20 MR. WILLIAMS: Yeah, I particularly want to
21 thank FPL customer advisor Tony Tucci, who worked
22 directly with our shelter; and particularly Linda
23 Webster for meeting with us proactively and helped
24 us get in touch with the right people.

25 And, generally, FPL has -- has brought

1 tremendously-talented people to our area.

2 For this reason --

3 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you --

4 MR. WILLIAMS: -- I support the FPL request.

5 COMMISSIONER FAY: -- for your comments,

6 Mr. Williams. Thank you for your comments,

7 Mr. Williams.

8 Next up is --

9 MR. MATA: Hi, this is Luis Mata. I don't
10 know if I was skipped. I apologize. I had a
11 muting technical difficulty.

12 COMMISSIONER FAY: Yeah, Mr. Mata, if you just
13 wait, we'll -- we'll make sure we get to you at the
14 end.

15 MR. MATA: Okay. Great. Thanks.

16 COMMISSIONER FAY: Yep.

17 Next up is Chris Gable. Chris Gable.

18 Next three up will be William Penney, Cristian
19 Gonzalez, and Santra Dennis.

20 Mr. Penney, are you on the line?

21 MR. PENNEY: Yes, I am. Can you hear me?

22 COMMISSIONER FAY: You're recognized.

23 MR. PENNEY: Thank you. I'm Bill Penney from
24 Vero Beach, Florida. I heard about this quality-
25 of-service and thought I would weigh in. I

1 realized that I've been an FP&L customer for some
2 40 years and have never had an issue with their
3 service. Lights always come on. And I appreciate
4 that FP&L seems to have some of the lowest electric
5 rates in the country. As I drive around town here,
6 I observe their ongoing efforts to harden and
7 improve the system, from tree -- ongoing tree
8 trimming to replacing old power poles.

9 This really hit home in 2019 when some FP&L
10 reps visited our neighborhood and asked us to
11 participate in a program to move our power lines
12 underground. I'm always suspicious of something
13 like that, so I asked about the cost. And the
14 answer was, there is no cost other than granting an
15 easement for the underground lines.

16 Our neighborhood, which can never agree on
17 anything, was excited about all this and we all
18 agreed to participate. And I understand this
19 project will begin sometime next year. So, that's
20 very exciting to us.

21 I also enjoy, as I drive around the state,
22 seeing the big solar farms that FPL has built and
23 appreciating that these replace the old coal-
24 powered plants.

25 So, yes, I'm very happy with FP&L. Thank you

1 for allowing me to speak today, and have a great
2 afternoon.

3 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you for your
4 comments.

5 Next up is Cristian Gonzalez.

6 MR. GONZALEZ: Hey, good afternoon. My name
7 is Cristian Gonzalez, as you all know, and I'm here
8 today to speak about my experience as an FP&L
9 customer. FPL, to me, delivers reliable day-to-day
10 service that I can count on. I recently
11 experienced an outage that was significantly
12 shortened thanks to FPL's efforts to improve the
13 electric grid.

14 When the power went out, I saw FPL within
15 minutes in my neighborhood driving around. And I
16 spoke with one of them, and they plainly explained
17 to me that they were using the switches and other
18 equipment to grid -- to reroute the power around
19 get as many customers back on as soon as possible.
20 I was very impressed with the response to the
21 outage and the electric-grid devices in place to
22 enhance the outage responses.

23 Thank you guys for the opportunity to speak
24 today and share my experience.

25 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you so much.

1 Next up is Santra Dennis. Santra Dennis.

2 Next three up --

3 MS. DENNIS: Yes --

4 COMMISSIONER FAY: -- will be Eric Valderrama,
5 Nicole Martinez, Dodie Keith.

6 Mr. Valderrama, are you on the line?

7 MS. DENNIS: This is Santra Dennis.

8 MR. VALDERRAMA: Yes, this is Mr. Valderrama.

9 COMMISSIONER FAY: Mr. Valderrama, you have --
10 you have three minutes. You're recognized.

11 MR. VALDERRAMA: Good afternoon. My name is
12 Eric Valderrama, and I've been a resident of South
13 Florida and a customer for the last 30 years. I'm
14 calling today to share my thoughts and experiences
15 related to FPL's quality-of-service interaction in
16 both my personal and professional career.

17 Professionally, I work in the construction and
18 development industry. In my industry, the
19 development of new technology and implementation of
20 techniques is constantly occurring and evolving our
21 industry and regularly providing more efficiencies
22 in our daily processes.

23 I have experienced this working with FPL being
24 one of our main vendors over the years. FPL has
25 provided an increased quality of service and

1 transparency, which is reducing the industry-
2 standard time frames, despite the significant
3 increases in overall amounts of active projects in
4 the South Florida area at the same time.

5 I am also the president of the Latin Builders
6 Association, which is the largest Hispanic building
7 organization in the U.S. Our association is
8 comprised of many construction professionals who
9 work directly with FPL.

10 I can tell you FPL is constantly reaching out
11 to the community and our members specifically
12 through forums and events to get feedback on their
13 quality of service and opportunities for
14 improvement.

15 In my business, I regularly travel between
16 South Florida and Central Florida. I have
17 personally seen the amounts of investments FPL has
18 done on solar energy systems alone.

19 As an example, I've seen recent investments in
20 which FPL has constructed massive energy farms, in
21 both west Dade and leer -- and near Lake
22 Okeechobee. It's evident to me that FPL is working
23 towards being a zero-energy car- -- carbon-
24 emissions company.

25 In this day and age, response times are vital.

1 A company cannot be in -- cannot be its best
2 without continuing to invest and reinvest in itself
3 and able to provide its client the best possible
4 services.

5 And, personally, I have experienced seeing
6 advancements in storm responses. FPL gears up
7 every year in preparation for hurricane season.
8 They are visible before and immediately after a
9 storm.

10 I recall within days of the last major
11 hurricane hitting the Keys, about four years ago,
12 there was power up in many of the hardest-hit areas
13 in the Florida Keys. For our residents and
14 businesses, this is essential and also expected.

15 So, in short, I am satisfied with the quality
16 level of service FPL has provided in our community
17 and I'm hoping that FPL is looking to maintain this
18 same level quality of service in the future as well
19 as look to improve itself as necessary through
20 continual investments in infrastructure necessary
21 to support its residents and keep the lights on.

22 Thank you.

23 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you for your
24 comments.

25 Nicole Martinez --

1 MS. DENNIS: Hi, this is Santra. I tried -- I
2 said my name and I was skipped.

3 COMMISSIONER FAY: Yes, Ms. Dennis, we'll --
4 we'll come back to you.

5 Next up is Nicole Martinez.

6 MS. MARTINEZ: I'm on the line.

7 COMMISSIONER FAY: Ms. Martinez, you're
8 recognized.

9 MS. MARTINEZ: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman
10 and the members of the Commission. My name is
11 Nicole Martinez and I am a college student that has
12 been a customer of FPL my entire life.

13 I am calling because, for the last five years
14 or so, I have participated in the FPL Power to Care
15 campaign. This is a campaign which actively
16 advocates for community enhancement by hosting
17 different beautification projects.

18 Throughout these projects, FPL selects schools
19 in different underprivileged communities and
20 purchases materials which gives employees, friends,
21 and people in the community, like me, the
22 opportunity to come out on a weekend and volunteer
23 both their time and physical labor to paint, and
24 plant trees to beautify these schools and community
25 centers.

1 I have also participated in their beach litter
2 pick-up events and by painting and landscaping the
3 homes of customers who are very poor. It gives me
4 great satisfaction to see companies like Florida
5 Power & Light participating in projects of this
6 nature.

7 This company and the people that work for FPL
8 care about their customers and seek opportunities
9 to help them with tasks that they are unable to
10 perform for themselves. So, I'm very happy to have
11 been part of it and the impact it has made on my
12 community.

13 Thank you.

14 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you for your
15 comments.

16 Dodie Keith.

17 MS. KEITH: Yes, I'm on the line.

18 COMMISSIONER FAY: You're recognized.

19 MS. KEITH: Okay. My name is Dodie Keith. I
20 am a lifelong resident here of South Florida,
21 actually a second-generation. So, I've been in
22 this community for decades, as well as my family.

23 I own a business, engineering-related-field
24 business, here in South Florida with over a 180
25 employees. And we engage in all kinds of services

1 and developments here, whether it's governmental,
2 private sector, as well as working with elected
3 officials. So, we work the gamut in the
4 development industry here throughout South Florida
5 and are very proud to be -- have been here all
6 these years and had the opportunities.

7 FP&L has been a vital player with us. As you
8 know, in development, nothing gets developed
9 without power. So, over the years, we've had great
10 interactions with FP&L. And they're somewhat a
11 side partner for us in every endeavor we do,
12 whether it's a governmental or private-sector
13 project.

14 And the continued investment in infrastructure
15 and improvements and expansions in our area is
16 really vital to South Florida. As everyone knows,
17 our state is continuing to grow and at a very rapid
18 pace, be it private, residential projects,
19 commercial, industrial -- across the board, we are
20 still a very-much-growing state, and to be able to
21 keep up with those expansions and provide services
22 is extremely important, especially from an
23 economical-development point of view.

24 I do serve on some EDCs down here, some
25 economic development committees, for different

1 municipalities where we talk about different
2 opportunities and growth in our community. And it
3 is so important, not just for the new developments,
4 but to the quality of life for our existing
5 residents and our existing businesses and to be
6 able to have those expansions.

7 One of the things, in the -- beginning, I
8 really signed on when you talk about maybe things
9 that can improve. And I always -- this is
10 something I -- I champion, I guess, for -- for
11 FP&L, is your -- your commercial divisions that
12 work with your different municipalities and
13 developers and things to underground and storm-
14 harden our current infrastructure is so important.

15 And that team has always been really tight on
16 staffing and they do an excellent job with the
17 number of folks they have, but certainly, for us,
18 it's -- it's a real focus in a lot of what we do
19 for our governmental clients as well as private-
20 sector clients, is looking at how we're going to
21 take existing infrastructure and get it underground
22 and how quickly and cost-effectively we can do
23 that.

24 So, any way to add additional staffing or
25 assist that division to allow it to grow -- I think

1 it's a very big focus in -- in Florida, and in FPL
2 areas to improve and harden that -- that
3 infrastructure. And it's -- it's a real benefit to
4 all the residents and the businesses throughout the
5 whole area for -- for those improvements.

6 And I thank all the folks that have helped us
7 work through those challenges and -- and keep us
8 pushing the ball up the hill. And I certainly
9 support any -- any continued improvement and
10 continued infrastructure improvements we can do.

11 And I thank you for your time and your
12 consideration.

13 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you for your
14 comments.

15 Next up will be Doris Berriz, Patrick
16 Schearer, and Gustavo Cabrera.

17 Doris Berriz, are you on the line?

18 MS. BERRIZ: Hi, my name is Doris Berriz. I'm
19 a --

20 COMMISSIONER FAY: You're recognized.

21 MS. BERRIZ: H- -- can you hear me? Yes, I'm
22 a customer in both Melbourne Beach and Miami Beach
23 Florida. I've been doing a little research, and
24 FPL has the lowest bills in Florida and in many
25 utilities in the nation. FPL will have 30 million

1 solar panels by 2030. On June 16th, it demolished
2 its last coal power plant, becoming greener, as
3 they promised.

4 Living in two coastal areas, I can attest to
5 the excellent service FPL has provided. In Miami
6 Beach, I really never have any power outages, no
7 matter how bad the storms are.

8 In Brevard County, I'm in a very remote area,
9 and FPL has always serviced any tickets quickly and
10 efficiently. I just wanted to let you know that I,
11 like many of the other callers, are very pleased
12 with the service, and understand that, in order to
13 continue growing and improving their
14 infrastructure, they would need to raise the rates.

15 Thank you. That's all.

16 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you for your
17 comments.

18 Patrick Schearer? Patrick Schearer?
19 Gustavo Cabrerra.

20 MR. CABRERRA: Good afternoon.

21 COMMISSIONER FAY: You're recognized.

22 MR. CABRERRA: My name is -- thank you. Thank
23 you, Commissioner Fay. Thank you for the
24 opportunity to speak. My name is Gus Cabrerra.
25 I've been a -- as a resident, I've been a customer

1 of FP&L for most of my life. I've always found
2 them to be responsive and extremely customer-
3 focused, particularly in -- in -- when it comes to
4 storms and outages.

5 Professionally, I work in the construction and
6 development business. Part of my job includes
7 working with developers and builders to help them
8 achieve their projects. And so -- so, I have a
9 clear understanding of the importance of reliable
10 power and meeting project time lines.

11 In my experience, FP&L has always been a ready
12 partner to the development community, which is one
13 of Miami-Dade County's most-important economic
14 engines. I've worked with them on high-rise
15 projects within the City of Miami, and I've found
16 them to be responsive, but always willing to
17 see- -- sit and meet to ensure the projects stay on
18 track.

19 On a separate issue, South Florida,
20 specifically the City of Miami, has garnered a lot
21 of attention recently in regards to the
22 cryptocurrency industry or business, if you will.
23 This is a growing industry that requires a robust
24 and reliable electrical grid with competitive
25 pricing as well. And I think it's something that

1 I'm glad FP&L is leaning into because it's
2 something that can provide tremendous economic
3 benefit to the municipality.

4 Investment in our infrastructure is essential
5 to the future of our state and our local
6 communities. And I, you know, fully support the --
7 the services and the quality of services that FP&L
8 provides.

9 Thank you. Thank you for your time, and have
10 a good day.

11 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you for your
12 comments.

13 Next three up will be Jeannie Jacobson, Eric
14 Eikenberg, and Patrick Gonzalez.

15 Ms. Jacobson, are you on the line?

16 MS. JACOBSON: Good afternoon, Commissioner.
17 Thank you so much for letting me speak today. My
18 name is Jeannie Jacobson and I want to thank you
19 all for having me, again. I currently work in
20 health care and I'm a resident in Port St. Lucie.
21 And I've been living in Florida, my gosh, pretty
22 much all of my life.

23 I've been a customer of FPL for as long as I
24 could pay bills. And my family and I recently just
25 built a home, and I wanted to talk to you a little

1 bit about my experience in Port St. Lucie here. I
2 was working really closely with our GC builder and
3 FPL. And it was really important that, once we
4 received our inspection for FPL, that they would
5 come out in a timely manner to install underground
6 cable and to set the meter so that we could close
7 on our house as scheduled.

8 Everything worked out, scheduled on time. And
9 I was so appreciative of it because, if it had
10 delayed anything, it really would have impacted our
11 family financially and would have moved our closing
12 date. So, that's just one situation of many that I
13 have really had time with FPL where they showed up
14 for us and our community.

15 Additionally, speaking of community, I'm -- I
16 have a strong presence here in the community of
17 Port St. Lucie. And, everywhere I go, I see FPL.
18 And it's so nice to see them. There's always a
19 representative at our Chamber of Commerce events,
20 and I see them at the Jensen Beach Chamber and
21 Stuart Chamber, the EDC and St. Lucie County
22 Chamber of Commerce.

23 And being able to understand that sending an
24 FPL representative out to educate us and to stay in
25 our community is really important. So, having them

1 as a community partner has been very important.

2 Lastly, I would like to mention that, because
3 of Florida ge- -- geography, we are, of course,
4 prone to storms here. So, I know FPL has a strong,
5 robust emergency storm-restoration plan that we've
6 been so grateful for because it really -- they're
7 strengthening our grids with storm-hardening
8 programs and technology. And we know that we can
9 really count on them to restore lights in a safely
10 and quickly manner.

11 I can understand the increasing of rates. You
12 know, maybe no one wants that to happen, but it
13 really needs to be a continued investment in our
14 infrastructure.

15 In summary, I can understand that increasing
16 rates may be needed and continued investment in
17 their infrastructure. And I can attest to
18 receiving good-quality service from FPL. I'm truly
19 grateful and I agree completely that FPL's proposed
20 plan. And I thank you for your time today.

21 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you for your
22 comments, Ms. Jacobson.

23 Next up is Eric Eikenberg.

24 MR. EIKENBERG: Commissioner, good afternoon.

25 My name is Eric Eikenberg. I'm the president and

1 CEO of the Palmetto-based Everglades Foundation.
2 The Everglades Foundation is a 28-year -- -year-old
3 non-profit committed to the restoration and
4 protection of the Everglades.

5 I wanted to take a minute just to express the
6 corporate partnership that the foundation has had
7 with Florida Power & Light over the last 15-plus
8 years. They have -- they have stepped up in a
9 number of ways to support our science program.

10 We're a science-based foundation committed to
11 the variety of science issues that are facing the
12 Everglades on a daily basis, from water quantity to
13 water quality to the habitats, the endangered and
14 threatened species within the Everglades.

15 But I did want to highlight this afternoon
16 that, about six years ago, we launched what's
17 called the Everglades Literacy Program. As I come
18 to you this afternoon, we are -- we are in 26
19 school districts around Florida. This is a school
20 curriculum that was built for teachers, by
21 teachers.

22 And the whole goal here is that, for every
23 child that graduates from the Florida school --
24 whether it's public, private, or charter -- that
25 they're Everglades-literate; they understand the

1 importance of the Everglades, this -- this
2 national -- national treasure, the importance of
3 our water supply, and what water means to the
4 economy of Florida, but also to our daily lives.

5 And these schools, these teachers, these
6 administrators have really stepped up in a big way
7 and they've become champions for this. And Florida
8 Power & Light has sponsored our Champion School
9 Program now for the last number of years. They're
10 in the schools with us. They're in the community
11 with us. They've been a tremendous corporate
12 partner as we spread the -- the word, as we educate
13 people on -- on this important ecosystem right here
14 in our own backyard.

15 So, I just wanted to share with you, again,
16 this afternoon on the partnership that we've had.
17 They've been a great partner. And I appreciate the
18 time this afternoon. Thank you.

19 COMMISSIONER FAY: Thank you for your
20 comments, Mr. Eikenberg.

21 Next up is Patrick Gonzalez. Patrick
22 Gonzalez.

23 Next three up will be Manuel Puccini, Andy
24 Koebel, and Jeffrey Morgan.

25 Mr. Puccini, are you on the line in?

1 MR. PUCCINI: Yes, I am on the line. Thank
2 you for allowing me to speak today.

3 COMMISSIONER FAY: You're recognized.

4 MR. PUCCINI: Good afternoon. My name is
5 Manuel Puccini. I am an FPL customer on both
6 residential and commercial applications. I'm here
7 to speak about my current experience with FPL on a
8 current commercial application.

9 I'm a senior project manager for a commercial
10 developer. Currently, we are developing a 374-
11 luxury-apartment high-rise in downtown Fort
12 Lauderdale. Before the project could commence, an
13 existing high-voltage duct bank running beneath the
14 foundations of the new structure had to be
15 relocated.

16 Because of my professional relationships that
17 I had developed with FPL on previous projects, we
18 were able to get a project manager assigned to our
19 project and we were able to relocate this large
20 duct bank in a timely manner that avoided
21 significant delays that would have impacted the
22 critical path of our project.

23 I have worked in construction for over 30
24 years in Florida. FPL customer service has
25 improved signif- -- significantly over the years

1 and I am extremely grateful and appreciative of
2 this fact.

3 Thank you for your time today.

4 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you so much.
5 Andy Koebel. Andy Koebel.

6 MR. KOEBEL: Yes, I'm --

7 COMMISSIONER FAY: You're recognized.

8 MR. KOEBEL: Okay. My name is Andy Koebel and
9 I'm the director of operations for Bonita Springs
10 Utilities. I'm just going to speak a little bit
11 about the quality of service.

12 As a provider of -- of potable water and sewer
13 service to many homes and businesses, quality and
14 reliable service is extremely important to
15 providing that. Over the last decade or so, it's
16 been my experience that the quality -- the
17 reliability of the service has improved, the
18 duration and number of outages has been reduced
19 that we have seen.

20 If I had to pick an area to improve, it would
21 probably be restoration after a storm -- major
22 storm event, but a lot of people would probably say
23 the same thing. And there's been many hardening
24 projects that have -- either ongoing or been
25 completed that are -- should significantly help

1 with that after a major event.

2 That is the extent of my comments, so I
3 appreciate your time. Thank you.

4 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you so much.
5 Jeffrey Morgan.

6 MR. MORGAN: Hi, good afternoon. Jeffrey is
7 on the call.

8 COMMISSIONER FAY: You're recognized.

9 MR. MORGAN: Thank you. I'm a homeowner and
10 customer in Ormand Beach, Florida, previously in
11 Port Orange, both on FPL. And -- and like everyone
12 else, I'm appreciative of FPL's service and efforts
13 in and out of storm seasons, but I'd also like to
14 echo some of the other sentiments around FPL's
15 request.

16 I personally find it socially and economically
17 irresponsible to guarantee an 11-and-a-half percent
18 ROE for investors at the expense of FPL customers.
19 Returns on equity or investments should be variable
20 and associated with the company's strategy and
21 fiscal responsibility.

22 FPL investors can be informed of these risks
23 just as there is with any investment, but they
24 should not be guaranteed a return. It's not common
25 and it's unacceptable.

1 As for the rate hikes as well, these should
2 not be guaranteed through universal long-term base-
3 rate increases. Any increases should be minimized
4 through continued investments and research in
5 alternative energy resources and storage
6 optimizations for existing power generation and
7 transport, or by providing more incentive for
8 individuals and corporations to conserve energy.

9 That said, I do understand rate increases may
10 be required to ensure power generation and grid
11 reliability and sustainability, but when necessary,
12 those really need to be targeted, strategic, and
13 ephemeral.

14 Thanks for your time.

15 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you for your
16 comments, Mr. Morgan.

17 Next up, we'll have Ted Greer, Monique
18 Williams, and Scot Shane.

19 Mr. Greer, are you on the line?

20 MR. GREER: Yes, this is Ted Greer.

21 COMMISSIONER FAY: You're recognized.

22 MR. GREER: Thank you. Thank you, Commission.
23 Thank you for giving us the opportunity.

24 I am the CEO of Hope South Florida. It's a
25 non-profit faith-based organization in Broward

1 County fighting to end homelessness. And so, I
2 appreciate the opportunity to share Florida Power &
3 Light's role in helping us achieving our mission,
4 and one of the ways -- a couple of ways they -- in
5 which they do so.

6 Historically, FP&L have been supportive in
7 terms of the vulnerable population that we serve.
8 That includes homeless veterans and includes a lot
9 of children who just move into their home for a
10 first time; just move into an apartment for the
11 first time and need the assistance with getting
12 their lights on and, perhaps, those first couple of
13 months, making sure that they can budget to -- to
14 pay their bills, their light bill included in that.

15 FP&L has just been supportive of us to help us
16 help those families and veterans that we're serving
17 to -- to meet their goals in terms of their budget,
18 their required budget and expenses associated with
19 the -- keeping and maintaining a home.

20 Secondly, during hurricane season, Hope South
21 Florida is one of those organizations that is on
22 the front lines in making sure that we can protect
23 and preserve those that are experiencing
24 homelessness.

25 The last hurricane, we had a -- a tree fell in

1 front of our property. We called FP&L and the city
2 to ask for the assistance because some power lines
3 went down. We indicated the work we do and the
4 priority for us to stay in business so that we can
5 respond to the critical needs of those we serve.

6 And I will tell you, FP&L responded quite
7 quickly, to our surprise. We really were surprised
8 how quickly they arrived to get the lines back up
9 and to get our power back on so that we can serve
10 this community.

11 Lastly, COVID -- so, during COVID -- and I did
12 hear someone indicate that they had some
13 unsuccessful experience with FPL. We were quite
14 the opposite. We have asked, again, and reached
15 out to FP&L to help us with our families, who some
16 have lost their -- their income, lost employment
17 because of COVID, or laid off, particularly those
18 in the hospitality industry.

19 FP&L responded, gave us a lot of flexibility.
20 We have paid some -- I'd say close to a hundred
21 thousand dollars to FPL in the late payments, just
22 being patient with us. And over time, we were able
23 to -- to help our clients make those payments, make
24 their obligation whole.

25 So, I just want to express my gratitude and --

1 and support this initiative. Thank you.

2 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you for your
3 comments.

4 Monique Williams. Monique Williams.

5 Scot Shane. Scot Shane.

6 MR. SHANE: I'm here. This is
7 (unintelligible).

8 COMMISSIONER FAY: You're recognized,
9 Mr. Shane.

10 MR. SHANE: Oh, okay. Thank you.

11 I have been a resident of South Florida for 60
12 years. I was born down here. And FPL has been my
13 service company for as long as I can remember.

14 In 1960, there was the first hurricane that I
15 was in, with Donna. And I've been in every
16 hurricane since then. And it's -- their response
17 to getting electric back on -- which is really one
18 of the most important parts of a hurricane when
19 they come through is getting the electricity and
20 air conditioning back on -- has -- their response
21 has diminished [sic] so much over the years.

22 And I was just sitting one day watching TV and
23 I saw a commercial -- or an info-commercial or
24 something on FP&L. And, in the commercial, it
25 showed the technology that they've developed to

1 help all the residents of -- you know, anywhere
2 that they're helping, especially in South Florida,
3 after a hurricane hits.

4 They've got drones now that they can send in
5 and -- and view devastated areas without risking
6 personal life. They have these little robotic,
7 like, type animals that walk around and -- and can
8 actually fix down lines or transformers or things
9 like that.

10 So, they've done a lot in research and
11 technology that I had no idea that they did and I'm
12 just happy that they've done. And I think, now in
13 the future, with the response time and how they can
14 help devastated areas really without risking any
15 human injury is just incredible, to me.

16 And I learned on this phone call that the --
17 they haven't increased rates in four years. So,
18 they've done all that technology, all that research
19 without increasing their rates up to now. So, I --
20 I really just wanted to let people know that what
21 they're doing behind the scenes and how they've
22 prepared for the future is quite incredible.

23 So, just wanted to get that out there and --
24 thank you.

25 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you so much

1 for your comments.

2 Next will be Charles Macaulay, Robert Suris,
3 and Ray Castellanos.

4 Charles Macaulay, are you on the line?

5 MR. MACAULAY: Yes, this is Charles Macaulay.

6 COMMISSIONER FAY: You're recognized.

7 MR. MACAULAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and
8 good afternoon, Commissioners. I'm Deacon Charles
9 P. Macaulay, and I'm representing St. Martha Roman
10 Catholic Church and School. The church is located
11 in Sarasota and the school also is located in
12 Sarasota.

13 From a not-for-profit business perspective,
14 St. Martha serves slightly more than 2,000
15 households. In the church, we have five services
16 daily, Monday through Saturday, and eight services
17 on Sunday.

18 The church has electric bill of 2,800, and the
19 school, a monthly enrollment of 440, with a monthly
20 bill of around 8,500. Our AC configurations are,
21 the church has one chiller and five thermal-storage
22 plants; and the school, two chillers and 12
23 thermal-storage plants.

24 The thermal-ice-storage plants were installed
25 because of the FP&L thermal-storage rebate program.

1 This has allowed us to save a boatload of money.

2 The example of FP&L being a good samaritan
3 occurred when we had an electric-junction fire in
4 the church. While the chiller was idle, we served
5 the population from the thermal-storage tanks.
6 When we restored this casualty, our thermal-storage
7 system was dry, and thus, we needed to bring the
8 system back online during peak hours.

9 Our representative, David Heiser, was
10 successful in waiving the on- -- the operation
11 penalty. FP&L gets an "E" for excellence, in my
12 book.

13 In closing, while the rate increases are not
14 desired, it seems to me that the F- -- as FP&L
15 costs increase, these rate increases are necessary
16 for FP&L to continue not only to maintain, but also
17 continue improving the generation and transmission
18 of electricity in Florida.

19 This concludes my statement. Thank you very
20 much, Mr. Chairman.

21 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you so much
22 for your comments.

23 Next up is Robert Suris. Robert Suris.

24 Ray Castellanos. Ray Castellanos.

25 Next three up will be Mitch Mongell, Phyllis

1 Shaw, and Bill Sherwood.

2 Mr. --

3 MR. SURIS: This is Robert Suris.

4 COMMISSIONER FAY: Oh, okay. Go ahead,
5 Mr. Suris. And I apologize --

6 MR. SURIS: Okay.

7 COMMISSIONER FAY: -- if I'm pronouncing your
8 name wrong there.

9 MR. SURIS: No, no problem. Give me one quick
10 second.

11 So, my (unintelligible) for the estate
12 company. We are a multi-family developer in Dade,
13 Broward, and Palm Beach Counties. We --
14 (unintelligible) area for over 40 years and have
15 been dealing with Florida Power & Light
16 consistently since that time.

17 We -- you know, obviously, a lot of our
18 product is mid-rise and high-rise product. So,
19 it's a -- the jobs that we are required to do with
20 FP&L are pretty intensive. We also do a lot of
21 relocation of lines for sites that are being
22 redeveloped. So, it requires a lot of engineering
23 and a lot of coordination and -- and a lot of
24 cooperation from us and FP&L to -- to make these
25 things happen.

1 We have been working with Sebastian or -- Seth
2 Perez, who's our -- our planner. He's been
3 assigned (unintelligible). And I mention his name
4 in particular because ever since we've had him
5 assigned to us, we have had tremendous
6 coordination, timing, and frank- (unintelligible)
7 FPL, due to his assistance.

8 And honestly, on our end, it's like very
9 different than, in the past, where it was
10 challenging to -- to get time lines and get things
11 done when -- you know, because we didn't have an
12 assigned, per se, service planner that was focused
13 on all of our projects. In particular, we're a
14 pretty big developer. We have about 4,000 units,
15 you know, at any given time in these three county
16 areas.

17 So, I just -- you know, that's -- those are my
18 comments. We -- we -- you know, the service level
19 has incr- -- improved tremendously and we're very
20 happy with -- with FP&L. I mean, but it's been --
21 it's been fantastic.

22 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you for your
23 comments.

24 MR. SURIS: Thank you.

25 COMMISSIONER FAY: We'll go back to Mitch

1 Mong- -- Mongell.

2 MR. MONGELL: Good afternoon.

3 COMMISSIONER FAY: Mitch Mongell.

4 MR. MONGELL: Yes. Can you hear me?

5 COMMISSIONER FAY: You're recognized.

6 MR. MONGELL: Good afternoon. Thank you for
7 allowing me to voice my comments. I'm Mitch
8 Mongell. I'm the CEO at Fort Walton Beach Medical
9 Center, which includes more than six sites. We
10 operate the largest hospital in the tri-county
11 area. We have over 1,200 employees and we have
12 over 500 physicians on staff. Besides our main
13 hospital, we have two freestanding emergency rooms,
14 a rehabilitation hospital in Destin, and several
15 physician offices.

16 I've been here for over eight-and-a-half years
17 and I've worked in different states, but mostly on
18 the eastern coast of Florida. I've been very
19 familiar with power companies, including FP&L, as
20 it relates to our hospital needs and storm
21 preparedness.

22 My experience with Gulf Power has been
23 exceptional. They are a strong partner not only
24 for us, but they're also a strong partner in the
25 community we serve. Specifically, Gulf Power

1 helped our community-solutions board open and
2 expand our local homeless shelter. We have a great
3 relationship. We are both in touch before and
4 after storms and we rely on them to ensure that we
5 have credible source of power.

6 As most know, hospitals are critical during
7 times of storms, especially after the storms, and I
8 feel most fortunate to have a relationship that I
9 do with Gulf Power.

10 We are presently under major expansions and we
11 count on the reliable source of Gulf Power. Again,
12 thank you for your time for allowing me to address
13 this committee.

14 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you so much.

15 Next up is Phyllis Shaw. Phyllis Shaw.

16 Next is Bill Sherwood.

17 MR. SHERWOOD: Bill Sherwood is here.

18 COMMISSIONER FAY: You're recognized,

19 Mr. Sherwood.

20 MR. SHERWOOD: Thank you very much.

21 Probably kind of unique and unusual, I'm an
22 electrical contractor for the last 35-plus years
23 working from Pensacola to Jacksonville and
24 (unintelligible) in between. Work with --

25 COMMISSIONER FAY: Mr. Sherwood, I --

1 Mr. Sherwood, I apologize to interrupt you. Can
2 you maybe get closer to the phone? We're having
3 trouble hearing you.

4 MR. SHERWOOD: Okay.

5 COMMISSIONER FAY: Go ahead.

6 MR. SHERWOOD: It might be my phone. Can you
7 hear me now?

8 COMMISSIONER FAY: Yes, we can hear you
9 better. Thank you.

10 MR. SHERWOOD: Yeah, so, anyhow, I've worked
11 with all the different power companies, open up
12 accounts every week; probably, in the last six
13 months, about 50 accounts. They -- it reminds me
14 of the old saying: Every bad man has good in him;
15 every good man has bad in him.

16 FPL does very good with their quality. They
17 also do good on big projects and huge projects over
18 the year. They're good at that. They're very good
19 at responding in emergency situations because I'm
20 the one they (unintelligible). So, they do that
21 (unintelligible).

22 What they don't do good is -- I'm doing the 5G
23 network, and they can't keep up with quick stuff.
24 They cost us thousands and thousands of dollars
25 because the engineers out in the field can't get to

1 us in time, and so, we have to pull out generators,
2 run them 24/7.

3 Just two-and-a-half weeks ago, I had another
4 site where we had a meter bank. All we needed was
5 a meter to plug in, and the engineer -- he made us
6 drive down three hours to take a picture of it
7 before he could do anything, even though he lives
8 down there, and three hours back, okay, you're
9 good.

10 That stuff happens to us all the time. So,
11 you know, they do a lot of good, like, this -- some
12 of the ladies there are great, down in the Fort
13 Lauderdale areas, which (unintelligible), the
14 ladies are excellent. Ms. Jennifer Hunter -- same
15 thing. Excellent.

16 I don't have any problems with that end of it,
17 but the service end really, really cannot keep up
18 the service to the customers. So, I don't know how
19 y'all are going to sort through this. They need to
20 hire more people.

21 I get the same excuse every time. They say:
22 We have too many places to get to. We have been
23 given a schedule on four to six to eight weeks out
24 to have them come out and look at something so
25 simple. And I try to explain to them, the service

1 has been established for years, all we're going to
2 need is a meter, but we have to get on their
3 schedule.

4 So, all the other stuff they do -- yes,
5 they're very good at, they're excellent at it, but
6 as far as this quick stuff, they need -- they
7 really need to do something to improve it. If it
8 means a rate increase, by God, give them the rate
9 increase, in my opinion.

10 COMMISSIONER FAY: Okay. Mr. Sherwood, thank
11 you for your comments. We -- we did have a little
12 trouble hearing you, but our court reporter didn't
13 interject. We'll have the testimony to review on
14 our end.

15 MR. SHERWOOD: Okay. Thank you.

16 COMMISSIONER FAY: Thank you.

17 Next up is David Mercer. David Mercer, are
18 you on the line?

19 David Williams.

20 MR. WILLIAMS: David Williams is on.

21 COMMISSIONER FAY: Mr. Williams, you're
22 recognized.

23 MR. WILLIAMS: All right. First, I'd like to
24 thank you, Commissioner Fay and the PSC, for the
25 opportunity to speak and relay my concerns.

1 One thing I've noticed on the -- this
2 afternoon is there tends to be a false narrative
3 going around about Florida Power & Light has not
4 had a rate increase in four years. That is
5 incorrect.

6 When Florida Power & Light appears before the
7 Florida Public Service Commission, they get multi-
8 year rate increases. In 2016, they got
9 approximately the same amount of increase that
10 they're asking for today. And each year, 2017,
11 '18, 19, and 20, they had a rate increase each
12 year. In the same manner, the current requ- --
13 rate request goes through '25.

14 The key, though, to me, is the first year,
15 they are seeking a \$1-billion increase in 2022.
16 And then it goes up from there to approximately
17 15 percent over the next three years after that,
18 all the way to 2025.

19 So, in fact, Florida Power & Light does get an
20 annual increase; however, it is given every four
21 years when they make their rate request to the
22 Public Service Commission. So, folks -- so, they
23 are getting that.

24 Additionally, I wanted to talk about the -- as
25 someone else has mentioned, the -- what is it,

1 justifiable or just, reasonable, and fair when it
2 comes to a guaranteed return on equity, which
3 they've asked for at 11.5.

4 In 2016, they asked for a guaranteed return on
5 equity of 10.5, which they got. The problem with
6 the guaranteed -- the amount being very high, that
7 guaranteed amount -- businesses would love to get
8 that. I owned an insurance agency and would love
9 to get 10.5 percent return on equity -- but anyway,
10 return on equity, when you remove that or give a
11 guarantee, it removes the incentive to operate
12 efficiently.

13 Florida Power & Light has done a good job of
14 that. In fact, in 2016, the one that the -- a
15 thousand kilowatts cost \$91, approximately. Today,
16 a thousand kilowatts, approximately \$99. So, it's
17 up at \$8 over the past four years. That's --
18 that's -- that's very good, but the key is the
19 efficiency and the production or generation of
20 electricity is what has done that for them.

21 Additionally, in 2016, when Florida Power &
22 Light asked for a rate increase, they had a ten-
23 year power-plant site plan, which I assume they'll
24 be put- -- putting out again.

25 At that time, in 2016, they are -- and in

1 2021, they are using the same -- what do you want
2 to call it -- the same rationale for upgrading
3 their grid, et cetera. In other words, they have
4 the same arguments they had at 2016 for this new
5 rate increase.

6 So, it almost looks like they photocopied that
7 2016 and just -- because it went over -- it was
8 unanimously approved by the PSC. It sounds like
9 they're just rubber-stamping it and sending it in
10 again. And so, I'm concerned about that.

11 COMMISSIONER FAY: Mr. Williams, I apologize
12 to interrupt you, but if you could, wrap it up,
13 please.

14 MR. WILLIAMS: Sure. Having -- having said
15 all that, I think do think they deserve a rate
16 increase, but not the amount they're looking for.

17 And I thank the Public Service Commission and
18 I thank the individuals who are voicing their
19 opinion. Thank you.

20 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you so much
21 for your comments.

22 Next three up we will have are Alesia McPhaul,
23 Mark Quetgles, and Mary Robertson. I'm going to
24 need to swear all of you.

25 Alesia McPhaul, are you on the line? Alesia

1 McPhaul?

2 Mark Quetgles. Mark Quetgles.

3 MS. DENNIS: This is Santra Dennis.

4 COMMISSIONER FAY: Yes, who's this?

5 MS. DENNIS: This is Santra Dennis.

6 (Background noise.)

7 COMMISSIONER FAY: Hold on just one second.

8 Okay. I'm sorry. Who is this speaking?

9 MS. DENNIS: This is Santra Dennis. Is that
10 who you called?

11 COMMISSIONER FAY: No. I'm -- we're going to
12 get to you. We're on Mark Quetgles now.

13 Okay. Mary Robertson. Mary Robertson.

14 John Carr. John Carr.

15 MR. CARR: John Carr is here. John Carr is
16 here.

17 (Whereupon, John Carr was sworn in by
18 Commissioner Fay.)

19 MR. CARR: Yes.

20 COMMISSIONER FAY: You're recognized.

21 MR. CARR: Thank you. I am a resident of
22 Jupiter. And I've been a very satisfied customer
23 of FPL for over 50 years. I grew up here and
24 always been a client of FPL. The services provided
25 are nothing but exceptional.

1 I'm also a person who makes a living
2 responding to storms within FPL's service territory
3 and outside of the jurisdiction of the company
4 where they have been called in in order to help
5 restore power.

6 First and foremost, we appreciate the
7 hardening efforts that make restoration occur in a
8 shorter time frame, but beyond those hardening
9 efforts, we appreciate their quick restoration
10 times and the nearly-constant communication as to
11 when service is expected to be restored.

12 That benefit for me is, when attempting to put
13 a roof over someone's head or restore temporary
14 repairs and to accomplish almost anything necessary
15 to put workers to work restoring or repairing the
16 premises in the wake of a storm, FPL does a
17 superior job in communicating and, in a timely
18 manner, restoring any facilities that have been
19 damaged.

20 Finally, we appreciate the communication and
21 responsiveness both in planning and process prior
22 to the storm season. Even when a storm hits, we
23 appreciate the fluid relationship we have and
24 effective communication made possible by planning
25 ahead and their inclusion of all the stakeholders

1 in the planning process.

2 Being in the industry and part of a disaster-
3 resiliency task force, I understand the importance
4 of a resilient company. FPL is the one of the
5 most-important aspects of being a resilient
6 community. Whether it's from a natural disaster,
7 man-made, FPL need to be resilient as possible.
8 And we need to take that action now.

9 I trust the leadership of FPL will work hard
10 to be resilient and keep Florida residents and its
11 visitors safe during a disaster. We have nothing
12 but appreciation of all that FPL has given to our
13 communities during the storms over the past several
14 years.

15 Being prepared takes money and this is why I'm
16 asking the Commission today to please approve the
17 proposed rate hike. Thank you.

18 COMMISSIONER FAY: All right. Thank you for
19 your testimony.

20 Timothy Carnago. Timothy Carnago.

21 MR. CARNAGO: Timothy Carnago is here.

22 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great.

23 (Whereupon, Timothy Carnago was sworn in by
24 Commissioner Fay.)

25 MR. CARNAGO: Yes.

1 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you. You
2 have three minutes.

3 MR. CARNAGO: The purpose of my talk today is
4 to share with you and -- the various positive
5 experiences I've had with Florida Power & Light
6 since the mid-eighties.

7 First, I'd like to share with you that I
8 sit -- I own a condominium in Naples, called the
9 Dunes of Naples. And our community established an
10 electrical-vehicle-charging committee several years
11 ago to investigate and assess maybe the future
12 needs for our electric-vehicle-charging stations
13 within our various buildings.

14 And over the years, we've had Florida Power &
15 Light send several engineers, technical
16 representatives to all of our meetings. And Beth
17 Powers has provided our condominium with very good
18 information to help us make good decisions with our
19 transformers.

20 And second, in my local house here in Volusia
21 County, I've received very good information on
22 installing a two-phase compressor for my heating-
23 and-cooling system and the on-call service to
24 reduce my electricity rates.

25 And I've also noticed several new power-line

1 poles being installed in my area on a regular basis
2 by Florida Power & Light.

3 So, in closing, I would just like to say I'm a
4 very satisfied customer of Florida Power & Light
5 and I support their rate increase.

6 COMMISSIONER FAY: All right. Thank you so
7 much.

8 Now we're going to go back to -- two of those
9 names that we missed. So, Louis Mata, are you on
10 the line?

11 MR. MATA: I am, sir. Thank you.

12 COMMISSIONER FAY: Thank you, Mr. Mata.
13 You're recognized.

14 MR. YOUNGER: Sir -- sir, this is Herman
15 Younger. I was placed on the list, but was never
16 called.

17 COMMISSIONER FAY: Oh, Mr. Younger, we'll make
18 sure we get to you.

19 MR. YOUNGER: Thank you.

20 COMMISSIONER FAY: Mr. Mata, go ahead.

21 MR. MATA: Good afternoon. My name is Luis
22 Mata. I'm here today to speak about my experience
23 with FPL being not only 30-plus-year customer -- I
24 hadn't thought about that until prior to coming
25 on -- and I've got to tell you, I live in the urban

1 core currently, but having lived throughout South
2 Florida and Miami predominantly, I'm incredibly
3 satisfied and confident in the work that FPL does,
4 the service they provide, and -- and the rate that
5 I've consistently paid, which is -- is very
6 affordable compared to my colleagues and friends
7 throughout the country.

8 Even during bad weather -- and as we prepare
9 for the upcoming potential storm that we look at, I
10 feel confident through multiple storms, having
11 lived through Andrew and -- and you name it, that
12 FP&L is continuously improving and continuously
13 looking out for us.

14 And they're more than just a utility; they're
15 more -- more of a partner. And having just come
16 out of the pandemic, it was -- it was very
17 reassuring to see how they worked continuously
18 with -- with folks, helping them bridge and --
19 and -- and give them time to make payments and make
20 sure their electricity was on.

21 So, I've heard a lot of mis- -- nuances and,
22 quite frankly, I think they're lies, but I think
23 FPL was more than -- of a partner and a community
24 partner and always has been throughout our
25 community.

1 So, it's disappointing to hear some of the
2 things that were -- were shared earlier because I
3 know full well, full brunt, representing major
4 companies that have tenants and knowing what FP&L
5 has done -- and as a small-business owner, I
6 appreciate what they do, to make sure that I'm -- I
7 have power, that I'm connected, and -- and receive
8 excellent service through and through.

9 So, going forward, as we prepare to power our
10 port -- and I can't wait to see the industry come
11 back, our cruise industry. FPL is a great partner.
12 Going forward and driving as far west as our -- our
13 Everglades and Krome Avenue, seeing all the solar
14 panels, I'm -- I'm a huge fan and proponent of our
15 partner.

16 So, I'm just here to state that on the record.
17 And I hope that it will fall on your ears as a --
18 in a positive light. So, thank you very much for
19 the opportunity.

20 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you for your
21 comments.

22 Santra Dennis.

23 MS. DENNIS: Yes, thank you so much. My name
24 is Santra Dennis. I'm with the Miami Worker Center
25 in Miami Florida. I'm also a long-time resident,

1 born and raised, of Florida, specifically in
2 Broward County.

3 After the pandemic and the insecurities --
4 financial insecurities that Floridians have faced,
5 specifically for us who work with organized --
6 domestic workers, we organized tenants -- people
7 were still trying to recover and are actually just
8 getting back to work.

9 I don't believe that this is the time, and --
10 time at all. The timing is not right, specifically
11 on this -- this increase, this hike, on what
12 Floridians would have to pay for their electricity.

13 And that's just my comment. Thank you.

14 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you so much
15 for your comments.

16 Mr. Herman Younger next. I apologize,
17 Mr. Younger. We just want to make sure everyone
18 who hadn't had a chance yet to speak was able to
19 speak. So, you are recognized for three minutes.

20 MR. YOUNGER: Thank you. Hello, my name is
21 Herman Younger. And, as a Sierra Club organizer, I
22 have many constituents who are serviced by FPL and,
23 due to their inability to be a good actor, I am
24 deeply concerned and in total opposition of the
25 proposed 20-percent increase.

1 FPL has always been a bad actor. For example,
2 on rates, they say they're the lowest, but this is
3 completely inaccurate. And their inability in
4 truth-telling proves they cannot be trusted.
5 They're currently the seventh-highest IOU rate in
6 the nation. ACEEE reports ranked FPL 51 of 52
7 major utility companies when it comes to energy
8 efficiency -- saving energy and costs.

9 FPL states they have great customer service.
10 Then, why is it the case that FPL wants to increase
11 rates by 6.5 billion over the next four years?

12 FPL attempted to end the shutoff moratorium at
13 the height of the second waive of the pandemic, at
14 a time that 600,000 Florida customers are behind on
15 their electric bills.

16 FPL attempted to block Florida Rising, an
17 organization focused on racial and economic
18 justice, from participating in the rate case, a
19 historically white-dominant space.

20 And on being fossil-fuel leaders, FPL is
21 converting shut-down coal plants and converting
22 them to natural-gas plants, continuing to pollute
23 with natural gas.

24 These are just a few of many examples of FPL's
25 inability to put the interests of the people that

1 they serve first. Again, for these reasons, I and
2 the Sierra Club Florida, are vehemently opposed to
3 FPL's request for a 20-percent rate increase.

4 And, quite frankly, the Commission's own
5 interests are beginning to be questionable for
6 exhibiting bias in a previous hearing last week
7 when a public comment in support of the rate
8 increase was the only comment that was praised by
9 the Commission.

10 Is the decision of this case already being
11 predetermined? Is this process a just and
12 equitable one, when FPL already has a hold of the
13 Commission?

14 The white middle-upper-class privilege in this
15 hearing is astronomical. To say everything else is
16 getting so expensive, I don't see why FP&L can't
17 raise their own rates -- this isn't about simply
18 not liking a rate increase.

19 When an increase in prices in anything can be
20 the difference between obtaining food and shelter
21 for black and brown low-income communities, where
22 is your empathy? Step into the shoes of others
23 that are not white and privileged like yourself.

24 I yield my time.

25 COMMISSIONER FAY: Great. Thank you,

1 Mr. Younger.

2 I just want to make sure there are no other
3 callers on the line that were scheduled to speak
4 today that we have not gotten to.

5 MS. SCHAFER: Commissioner -- Commissioner,
6 this is Alissa Schafer. Can you hear me?

7 COMMISSIONER FAY: I'm sorry. Who is this?

8 MS. SCHAFER: Alissa Schafer. Are you able --

9 COMMISSIONER FAY: Oh.

10 MS. SCHAFER: -- to hear me?

11 COMMISSIONER FAY: Yeah. Yeah, you're
12 recognized, Ms. Schafer.

13 MS. SCHAFER: Oh, thank you so much. Good
14 afternoon, everyone. My name is Alissa Schafer and
15 I am an FPL customer residing in Pembroke Pines.
16 I'm also a local elected official serving on the
17 Broward Soil and Water Conservation District, and
18 I'm also a consultant for the Energy and Policy
19 Institute. And I am here today in my personal
20 capacity in opposition to this rate-increase
21 proposal.

22 There are many issues that have been discussed
23 already, but I'll keep my comments limited. Bottom
24 line: It is incredibly concerning to me that FPL
25 is requesting to increase their ROE, their profit,

1 at the expense of their customers while continuing
2 to invest in fossil fuel.

3 First, on ROE, while I continue -- while I
4 believe that corporations certainly have a right to
5 make a reasonable profit, FPL already has one of
6 the highest ROEs. Why, now, especially in the wake
7 of a pandemic that economically destroyed so many
8 Floridians -- why would we give FPL a free pass to
9 make it even higher?

10 Reading through FPL's documents, both in this
11 rate case and its ten-year site plan, their sales
12 are already projected to go up. Even with
13 inflation, their relative costs are projected to go
14 down.

15 They also discuss this in their filings,
16 whether we're talking the cost of capital, the cost
17 of building materials, or the cost of fuel -- of
18 course, sunshine/solar being a free fuel source --
19 that means that FPL's bottom line is going to be
20 just fine. Their executive bonuses will continue
21 to be enormous. And, meanwhile, FPL's customers
22 will just see their costs increasing.

23 We're seeing the costs of living spike here in
24 Florida; a look at rent and home prices just one
25 indicator. For a monopoly company to look at all

1 of this and say, okay, time to make even more
2 profit, to me, is incredibly disappointing and
3 callous.

4 Second, on fossil fuel, while I'm thrilled to
5 see FPL's progress on solar, its current plans
6 still forecast over 61-percent reliance on fossil-
7 fuel gas by 2030. And it remains the only utility
8 to not set an absolute carbon-emissions-reduction
9 goal. Instead, FPL uses phrases like, reducing its
10 rates or intensity.

11 Simply, we are -- we're out of time for these
12 word games and we need concrete plans. This rate
13 hike should not be approved. And I would
14 respectfully ask that the Commission hold FPL
15 accountable when it says things like clean energy.
16 We need to ensure that Florida is on a glide path
17 to no longer be desperately reliant on fossil fuels
18 for decades to come, which is the current plan.

19 And the last thing I'll say -- you know, I --
20 I appreciate that we're figuring out how to hold
21 these hearings, but I -- I found that this phone-in
22 format to be incredibly disappointing. I would
23 have -- at the very least appreciated a video
24 format. And for a company like FPL that has
25 incredible resources for community affairs and

1 marketing, they could and should have done so much
2 more to ensure comprehensive outreach to their
3 community and involving customers throughout the
4 service territory.

5 I'm glad that the actual proceedings in August
6 will be in-person; however, we know very well that
7 that's very different than these customer hearings,
8 and out of reach for most customers. So,
9 respectfully, I -- I just want to say that this
10 format left a lot to be desired.

11 Thank you.

12 COMMISSIONER FAY: Thank you for your
13 comments, Ms. Schafer.

14 Any other callers that were scheduled to
15 speak?

16 Okay. With that, we'll -- we'll close this
17 meeting, but if you have any questions, make sure
18 to reach out to anybody in our office -- which, the
19 e-mail and information are provided in the
20 notice -- or out to the utility.

21 Unless any of the Commissioners have anything
22 to address -- with that, we stand adjourned.

23 Thank you.

24 (Whereupon, the proceedings concluded at 3:54
25 p.m.)

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

STATE OF FLORIDA)
COUNTY OF LEON)

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

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

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

DATED THIS 23rd day of July, 2021.



ANDREA KOMARIDIS WRAY
NOTARY PUBLIC
COMMISSION #HH 089181
EXPIRES February 9, 2025