

**Antonia Hover**

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**From:** Ellen Plendl  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 23, 2022 4:00 PM  
**To:** Consumer Correspondence  
**Subject:** Docket No. 20210015  
**Attachments:** FW FL. Power merger with Gulf power rate increases; Consumer Inquiry - Florida Power & Light Company; deplorable FPL corporate culture and attitude towards the rate-paying public in the State of Florida; Re Consumer Inquiry - Florida Power & Light Company; Consumer Inquiry - Florida Power & Light Company; FW FPL; Re Consumer Inquiry - Florida Power & Light Company; Consumer Inquiry - Florida Power & Light Company; Re Consumer Inquiry - Florida Power & Light Company

See attached customer correspondence and FPSC replies for Docket No. 20210015.

## Antonia Hover

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**From:** Governor's Office of Citizen Services <EOGCitizenServices@eog.myflorida.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 22, 2022 4:40 PM  
**To:** Ellen Plendl  
**Subject:** FW: FL. Power merger with Gulf power rate increases

Please find attached email received by the Governor's Office of Citizen Services. This email is forwarded to your office for review and any response or action appropriate.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Martha Lynn  
Office of Citizen Services  
Executive Office of the Governor

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**From:** Chris Macaulay <chrismacaulay83@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 18, 2022 11:01 AM  
**To:** GovernorRon.DeSantis@eog.myflorida.com  
**Subject:** FL. Power merger with Gulf power rate increases

FL. Power Commission: Mike Layosa, Art Graham, Andrew Fay, Gary Clark, Gabriella Passidomo who Gov. Desantis has allowed to almost double 11 Million customers electric bills through increase billing schemes including mine. Lots of Seniors and low wage workers have been affected who can not afford this but do not have the means to contact the right people. Please respond this is second email. I am about to take this to the ENTIRE media ! 720-272-7424 thx Chris

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

Please note that under Florida law correspondence sent to the Governor's Office, which is not confidential or exempt pursuant to chapter 119 of the Florida Statutes, is a public record made available upon request.

## **Antonia Hover**

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**From:** Ellen Plendl  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 22, 2022 3:06 PM  
**To:** 'Beatrice Balboa'  
**Subject:** Consumer Inquiry - Florida Power & Light Company

Ms. Beatrice Balboa  
beatricebalboa@gmail.com

Dear Ms. Balboa:

This is in response to your February 22 email to the Florida Public Service Commission (FPSC) regarding Florida Power & Light Company (FPL).

We will add your feedback and the articles you shared to our public record on Docket 20210015

If you have any questions or concerns please contact me at 1-800-342-3552 or by fax at 1-800-511-0809.

Sincerely,

Ellen Plendl  
Regulatory Consultant  
Florida Public Service Commission  
Office of Consumer Assistance & Outreach  
1-800-342-3552 (phone)  
1-800-511-0809 (fax)

## Antonia Hover

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**From:** Beatrice Balboa <beatricebalboa@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 22, 2022 2:59 PM  
**To:** Ellen Plendl  
**Subject:** deplorable FPL corporate culture and attitude towards the rate-paying public in the State of Florida  
**Attachments:** LETTER\_ FPL power bill increased a ridiculous \$116.pdf; LETTER\_ FPL bill twice as high as Gulf Power's.pdf; FPL bills 'through the roof'\_ Santa Rosa commissioners exploring way to help residents.pdf; Florida is finally realizing its potential as a solar energy pioneer \_ South Central Florida Life.pdf; FPL supports customers paying subsidies but not when it comes to rooftop solar.pdf; Hotly debated solar energy rules changes move forward in Legislature \_ WLRN.pdf; Florida Power & Light bills increase in Santa Rosa worries commissioners.pdf; Complaints resolved by Public Service Commission, FP&L reveals differing customer feedback.pdf; As Florida's rooftop solar bill comes under fire, a new amendment could ease its impact.pdf

Tuesday 22 February 2022 1500 hours

Ellen Plendl  
Regulatory Consultant  
Florida Public Service Commission  
Office of Consumer Assistance & Outreach  
1-800-342-3552 (phone)  
1-800-511-0809 (fax)

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my ongoing deepest disappointment that FPL and the FPL Corporation continues to mismanage the electrical infrastructure in the State of Florida despite given unfettered access to elected and appointed government officials and agencies in the furtherance of policies and agendas in pursuing poorly thought out sourcing of energy resources and a decidedly anti-consumer stance with the rate-paying public across the board. Ongoing investigations continue undercover that FPL will continue to extract ever larger fees and electrical rates to aggrandize their oversized ambitions by direct and indirect political arrangements in backrooms.

The attached documentation clearly indicates the lengths that FPL will continue to pursue to ensure their monolithic position in the electricity sector in the State of Florida, despite significant complaints from all walks of life from the day-to-day residents in the State of Florida. The decidedly disproportionate position that behemoths from the energy industry exert on dissipating any common good and ground that the rate-paying public seeks is on full display. Ongoing protests regarding FPL corporate culture and attitudes continues unabated with the following accompanying statements:

"I live in Pensacola. My power bill for January 2022 from Florida Power & Light was twice as high as my power bill from Gulf Power in December 2021."

"I've talked to hundreds of people in the last week. And one of the biggest issues that I hear from people about is their power bills are going up through the roof," said District 3 Commissioner James Calkins.

"In nearly all of the complaints to the Public Service Commission, the investigation ends by saying the customer was satisfied with the company's action plan.

However, all of the people who filed complaints that Channel 3 talked to on Monday said they were not satisfied with the investigation.

"That's a complete, false lie. There is no way we were satisfied with any of this," a man told Channel 3.

"That's a lie," a woman told Channel 3. "He knew I wasn't satisfied when he left."."

Please place these observations and articles in the appropriate docket to underscore the overwhelmingly calculated cold-hearted manner that these captains seem to influence the very elected/appointed representatives that should, instead, be seeking to comfort their constituents day-to-day hardships to pay for the aggrandizement of these out sized economic sectors.

Thank you for your time in these matters and hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,  
Beatrice Balboa  
1010 South Ocean Boulevard, Unit 1008  
Pompano Beach, FL 33062-6631  
USA

# **LETTER: FPL power bill increased a ridiculous \$116**

## **Letter to the editor**

This is ridiculous. My Florida Power & Light power bill increased \$116. Projected bill is almost \$300, with 13 days left on the billing cycle!

I live in a two-bedroom mobile home in the Panhandle. I only get Social Security disability due to a poor heart and PTSD times two.

— *Cheryl Durlin, Navarre*

# LETTER: FPL bill twice as high as Gulf Power's

Letter to the editor

I live in Pensacola. My power bill for January 2022 from Florida Power & Light was twice as high as my power bill from Gulf Power in December 2021.

— *Woodrow Soderlind Jr., Pensacola*

# FPL bills 'through the roof': Santa Rosa commissioners exploring way to help residents

Alex Miller, Pensacola News Journal - 3h ago

React Comments



©Gregg Pachkowski/gregg@pnj.com

From left, Kelly Hagen, Molly Harenstein, and Bree Bruni hold signs as they and others protest FPL and the higher power bills in front of City Hall prior to a Thursday, Feb. 10, 2022.

[Increased power bills](#) for Santa Rosa County residents took a front row seat at the County Commission's committee meeting Monday morning as commissioners discussed the possibility of adjusting the county's franchise fee, but several questions arose over what decisions would fall under the county's purview.



Ultimately, the commissioners tasked staff to come back to the board Thursday with more information to help navigate if, and how, the board could step in to alleviate rising rates.

[Since Gulf Power transitioned to Florida Power & Light on Jan. 1](#), residents in Santa Rosa County have been voicing their concerns to county officials over the fact their power bills have drastically increased.

## A Stupid-Simple Way To Keep Your Gutters Clean

Ad LeafFilter Partner

**The reaction in Pensacola:** [Pensacola inches closer to creating electric utility amid anger toward FPL rate increase](#)

**Rate increases greenlit:** [Gulf Power is transitioning to FPL on Jan. 1. Here's what customers need to know](#)

"I've talked to hundreds of people in the last week. And one of the biggest issues that I hear from people about is their power bills are going up through the roof," said District 3 Commissioner James Calkins.

Calkins proposed knocking the franchise fees from 5% to 4%. Franchise fees for utilities are typically imposed by a public entity because a private entity is using things like public rights of ways. In the case with Santa Rosa, it also works to generate revenue since the county will not be competing with FPL to provide service. The current rate provides about \$7.5 million for the county, and to change that there would need to be a contract renegotiation.

Calkins also promoted the idea of attempting to create more utility competition in the area, but County Attorney Thomas Dannheisser clarified that a decision like that falls outside the county's purview.

"As to competition between franchise-generating companies, the county has no jurisdiction," Dannheisser said. "That's exclusively through the (Florida) Public Service Commission."

Still, the commissioners tasked county staff with a fact-finding mission to get information about rate increases, and the feasibility of strategies to alleviate the problem.

"We need a good, solid explanation, not that FPL-executive-level. Bring it down to earth with 'Here's the long-term plan,'" said Commission Chairman Bob Cole. "Bring it down to what Bob Cole the mechanic understands, not (what) a New York City lawyer (is) asked to understand."

A large part of what the commissioners want to learn is the extent to which a change in the franchise fee would affect the price consumers pay.

"For our folks, it comes down to, 'Does it give me another gallon of gas a month? Or does it give me an extra gallon of milk a month?'" said District 4 Commissioner Dave Piech.







© Gregg Pachkowski/gregg@pnj.com

Gulf Power lineman Christian Grissom changes out a fuse along Mobile Highway after Hurricane Zeta passed through the Gulf Coast in Pensacola on Thursd

"My question for staff, and I would like to have that information brought back Thursday for public knowledge, is how much would that actually (be seen) on an individual power bill to the citizen," District 5 Commissioner Colten Wright added.

Wright stressed the idea of making a decision that is fiscally responsible and not one that is "knee-jerk" or "emotional."

"But I just want to make sure that we're not making a short-sighted decision trying to do the right thing, but having a long-term negative impact," Wright said. "That's why I just want to make sure we get all that on the table and before we move forward with some kind of vote; that we have all the facts."

District 1 Commissioner Sam Parker also took the time to recognize that there are other utility providers in the county and emphasized the fact that a change in the franchise fee should not apply solely to FPL.

Calkins said he has been in contact with representatives from FPL who told him that rates should start to naturally decrease. He said the main aim right now though, is finding a way to help constituents.

"The goal is to give the citizens relief on their bills and inflation," Calkins said. "So, that's my proposal to this board for lowering the franchise fees."

# Florida is finally realizing its potential as a solar energy pioneer

Posted Wednesday, February 16, 2022 4:55 pm

**By Matt Valle**  
**Vice President of FPL Development**

For Floridians, the promise of cost-effective and reliable solar energy from the grid started like a small ray of light peeking out of the clouds.

FPL began exploring solar technology in South Florida in the mid-1980s, believing in an exciting, new energy future.

After decades of research and planning, Floridians got their first taste of that future in 2009, when President Barack Obama helped usher in the next era of clean energy with a large-scale solar site in DeSoto County – the largest of its kind in the U.S. at the time.

That exciting start has only led to more innovation and reduced costs for large-scale solar, creating savings for customers and an opportunity for our state to shine.

Today, over 3.6 million kilowatts of clean, zero-emissions solar energy are generated for customers by FPL's solar energy centers. They are each three times as large as the historic site from 2009 and cost less to operate – producing the largest amount of solar for the lowest possible cost.

We recently added eight new solar energy centers throughout Florida, bringing the overall total to 50 solar energy centers in operation. For perspective: the clean solar energy generated from these 50 solar energy centers can power approximately 750,000 homes. In terms of carbon emissions, that's equivalent to taking more than 650,000 gas-powered cars off the road each year. This isn't just an important milestone for residents receiving that power, it's also a remarkable achievement for the state of Florida.

We are proud to help Florida pursue a cleaner energy future, and we are on track to shatter our original, bold solar goals.

The company expects to complete its “30-by-30” plan to install 30 million solar panels across Florida by the end of 2025 – five years ahead of schedule. The benefits of this 30 million solar panel network extend far beyond providing cleaner energy. They will generate approximately \$2.5 billion in fuel savings for residents, create more than 20,000 construction jobs and are expected to contribute more than \$700 million in property taxes over their lifetime for counties across the state.

Florida is on the frontlines of climate change and frequently severe weather. As the nation’s largest utility, FPL has a responsibility to continue investing in the technology and infrastructure necessary to ensure all customers benefit from clean energy – now and in the future.

Over the next four years, we plan to add another 16 million solar panels across an additional 50 solar energy centers for customers throughout the state. We will also continue to integrate battery storage technology to help bring solar energy onto the grid even when the sun isn’t shining. And, we’re researching and testing new clean energy fuels, like green hydrogen, which has the potential to someday unlock a 100% carbon-free energy future.

In addition to investing in clean technology, we’re also investing in education. The recently unveiled microgrid at Florida International University supplies backup power from a solar array in the event of a severe weather outage. Likewise, the University of Central Florida’s new microgrid control lab is providing engineering students with invaluable experience simulating and testing real-life grid control operations.

Florida has come a long way in its clean energy journey, and we believe the best part of this journey is still to come. By remaining focused on continuous improvement, and inspiring more to join this effort, together we can achieve a fully decarbonized economy where all households and businesses are powered by renewable, dependable and affordable energy.

# FPL supports customers paying subsidies but not when it comes to rooftop solar

Mary Ellen Klas, Miami Herald - 2h ago

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© Miami Herald/TNS

In a new television ad, Florida Power & Light argues that “outdated Florida laws are forcing FPL customers who don’t have rooftop solar to pay extra every month for the few who do.”

The argument — that some customers subsidize other customers — is at the heart of the utility industry’s push to change the “net metering” financial terms that have helped expand the solar power industry. The bill, [written by FPL for two legislative sponsors](#), would slash financial incentives for rooftop solar installation and impose new fees on users.



**Lisa Bonet 'Not Doing Well' After Jason's Betrayal**

Ad Living Magazine

Opponents argue that there is no data to justify the claim that non-solar customers subsidize solar users, and they argue instead that rooftop solar provides a net benefit, not a net cost. But they also point to another reason to oppose the net metering legislation in Florida: the utility industry’s own contradictions over subsidies.

As recently as October, in a rate request approved by state regulators, FPL secured three provisions that allow it to require some ratepayers to

subsidize others — including asking residential users to [pay for \\$1 billion in rate reductions for large commercial and industrial operations](#).

### [Residential customers to bear brunt of \\$1.5 billion FPL rate hike](#)

In addition, the utility companies asked for and received the right to impose another \$2 billion in subsidies from non-participants to participants in its utility-scale solar program called “SolarTogether.” And, for the first time, regulators allowed them recover about \$32 million in costs from customers with little to no monthly electricity usage, including solar users, by charging a monthly minimum fee.

Critics say those programs contradict the industry’s intense lobbying and advertising campaign to change the rules for private solar users — an estimated 90,000 customers who use “net metering” to sell excess power back to the grid and offset some of their investment for their solar equipment.

On Monday, the House’s State Administration & Technology Appropriations Subcommittee voted 10-5 in favor of [HB 741](#), sponsored by Rep. Lawrence McClure, R-Dover. The bill will be heard in the House Commerce Committee on Wednesday. The companion measure in the Senate, [SB 1024](#), must be heard by the Rules Committee.

## Schools fear impact of bill

Rooftop solar makes up less than 1% of the 10.5 million electricity customers in the state but it is one of the fastest growing industries in the nation and threatens to cut into the utility industry’s revenue stream. Critics say if the anti-net-metering legislation becomes law in Florida, it will stifle solar’s commercial potential in the state and allow the utility industry to dominate the market with large-scale solar farms, which all customers will finance.

FPL, however, is fiercely determined to [install 30 million solar panels](#) in the state by 2030, and considers its solar investment “[greener](#)” for Florida than allowing homeowners to install and finance their own systems. Passing the bill is the company’s top priority, and it has the support of GOP leaders in the Legislature, who have been the biggest recipients of the \$3.2 million in campaign contributions spent by FPL and its parent company, NextEra, this election cycle.

FPL argues that its 5.6 million customers spent \$30 million last year on “subsidies” associated with providing services to its 90,000 solar customers, and net metering must be changed because it predicts that amount will triple by 2025 as solar use grows.

Michele Drucker, the environmental chair of the Miami-Dade Parent Teacher Association, told the subcommittee Monday the school district [passed a resolution to move to 100% clean energy by 2030](#) by investing in rooftop solar. Florida schools spend over a half-billion dollars each year on electricity, and in Miami-Dade, energy costs are the biggest expense for schools after teacher salaries.

With the increased costs from the recent rate case, and rising fuel costs driven by natural gas prices, FPL is raising its costs 21%, Drucker said after the meeting.

But because the bill could undermine that investment, Drucker urged the committee to reject it or “carve out an exception for schools.”

“They’re not worried about the less than 1% solar,” she said, referring to FPL. “They’re worried about schools catching on, using the rooftops to generate clean energy.”

Thomas Brulay, a senior at MAST Academy in Miami told the committee that last year he circulated a petition to allow for power purchase agreements on school rooftops.

“With no upfront costs or costs to taxpayers, schools could lease the rooftops to solar installers to generate power for schools,” he said. “Please do not pass this bill which will prevent our school district from saving \$100 million by 2030 and deny our students the opportunity to see clean technology working in their school sites.

Marcel Borges, a student from G. W. Carver Middle School in Miami, said he traveled to Tallahassee to testify on behalf of his brother, a student at Palmetto Elementary Pinecrest who couldn’t come because “he broke his arm on Saturday.”

“I’m doing this alone but I’m speaking for the both of us,” he said. “My teacher tells me that the climate crisis will be our problem, so I ask you to help me today. Please stop this bill.”

Here’s how the FPL settlement agreement has baked subsidies into the rate base:

- Under the rate settlement, regulators allowed for lower cost increases for commercial accounts than residential accounts. Residential customers will pay \$1 billion, or 18% more, over the next four years than the state’s largest businesses, according [FPL testimony and documents submitted as part of the rate case](#).
- Requiring all users to pay a “minimum bill” of \$25 a month, including solar users who use little or no energy.

- Allowing over \$2 billion in subsidies from non-participants to participants in its utility-scale solar program called “SolarTogether.”

## ‘Minimum bill’ payments

Although [the FPL ad suggests](#) that the company supports “bills that are fair for everyone,” critics say that the company used the settlement agreement in its rate case to insert a new “minimum bill” program that would offset some of the subsidy that the company claims non-solar users pay to maintain the electricity grid.

Under the minimum bill, all users who use would be charged at least \$25 by FPL. Regulators allowed Duke Energy Florida to charge a minimum bill of \$30.

“FPL submits that adding a proposed minimum bill will ensure that customers with little to no usage fairly and reasonably contribute to the fixed costs incurred to serve them and will reduce the potential for subsidization by other customers,” said FPL witness Tiffany Cohen during the rate case last fall.

FPL argued in its documents that the “minimum base bill only applies to customers who have extremely low or zero usage, such as a seasonal resident,” and it estimates about 14,000 net metering customers would qualify for the minimum bill.

Cohen said the company expects to collect \$32 million in revenue from the minimum bill, which will “offset the amount of revenue that’s been recovered from the general body of customers.”

“The intent is to ensure that all customers contribute towards their fair share of fixed system costs,” she said.

George Cavros, an attorney with the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy, told a House committee earlier this month that the FPL testimony was evidence that the utility considers “any revenue loss from rooftop solar is negligible, and that the minimum bill provision ensures that low-use customers, like net-metered customers, are reasonably and fairly contributing to its fixed cost.”

“It begs the question, if FPL says that the minimum bill ensures that low-use energy customers, like solar rooftop customers, are paying their fair share, why are we going after them again?” he asked.

# Solar Together concerns

FPL also won regulatory approval to give \$2 billion in credits to participants in its utility-scale solar program called “SolarTogether.” Under the program, customers voluntarily pay more on their electric bills to finance solar projects and then receive credits that are expected to result in them getting a “payback” in about seven years.

Critics, which included the PSC staff, argued that the program requires the vast majority of customers who do not participate to subsidize the program expenses and take on the risk of the program without seeing the benefits. The Office of Public Counsel in 2020 called the program a “[vanity project](#)” that required all customers to and take on all risks “[which primarily benefit only a few participants.](#)”

Despite the criticism, the PSC approved the Solar Together subsidy, which will benefit commercial accounts more than residential users. The decision had the support of the some environmental groups.

## Subsidy or savings?

Raul Vergara, CEO Cutler Bay Solar Solutions in Miami, is among many solar suppliers who argue that homeowners in Florida are providing a net savings to other utility users by investing more than \$750 million into the energy infrastructure of the state, and offsetting the need for utility-financed energy generation.

He said his South Florida customers alone produce 75 megawatts of power a day. “That is the equivalent of what FPL produces out of the solar farms they have at Krome [Avenue Solar Center,]” he said. “Except my customers pay for those panels and nobody has to pay them back.”

Kim Ross of the Rethink Energy Action Fund urged legislators to reject the utility argument that solar customers are a burden on other ratepayers. She cited [the Senate staff analysis](#) that notes that one-third of FPL’s solar customers make less than \$50,000 a year in revenue and two-thirds make less than \$100,000.

“Rather than harming low-income customers, net metering is actually how low to moderate income customers get access,” Ross told the House’s State Administration & Technology Appropriations Subcommittee on Monday. She added that because “there’s nothing in this bill

that guarantees lower rates for anyone,” eliminating net metering may also not save ratepayers money.

Lisa Edgar, a former PSC commissioner who was on the commission in 2008 when it adopted the net metering rule, agreed with the investor-owned utility (IOU) industry that the rule is outdated and unfair.

“We have 1% of residential rate payers in IOU territory that have rooftop solar,” she told the House State Administration & Technology Appropriations Subcommittee. “That means that the 99% of the others are subsidizing those costs, many of whom are elderly and not in a position to make a 20-year investment into their home.”

Cavros countered that “the PSC has not made any determination about the costs and benefits of solar.”

In the face of heavy opposition from clean energy advocates and the solar industry, the House sponsor of the bill, McClure said on Monday that he was working on an amendment that gradually slashes the financial incentives for solar users, instead of imposing them all at once. The [amendment was released on](#) Tuesday morning and will be heard in the House Commerce Committee on Wednesday.

Hotly debated solar energy rules changes move forward in Legislature

## WLRN 91.3 FM | By Jim Saunders

Published February 21, 2022 at 5:00 PM EST



SOLARCITY / AP

Florida lawmakers continued to move forward Monday with key changes in rules for rooftop solar energy, drawing heavy opposition from the solar industry and environmental groups.

But as the House State Administration & Technology Appropriations Subcommittee approved the bill (HB 741), sponsor Lawrence McClure, R-Dover, said he is working on a proposed amendment to more gradually make the changes. He described that approach as taking a “glide path.”

“One could argue it (the bill) is too heavy-handed and too swift and doesn’t give rooftop solar the ability to adjust,” McClure said. “So I look forward to presenting that amendment.”

The issue, which has sparked a noisy fight throughout this year’s legislative session, deals with an otherwise wonky concept known as net metering. That involves the interplay between utilities and rooftop solar owners, including credits that utilities provide for electricity generated by rooftop solar systems.

McClure and other supporters of the bill contend that the state’s current rules result in people without rooftop solar systems subsidizing rooftop-solar owners. That argument stems, at least in part, because utilities continue to face overall costs of operating the electrical grid. Among the supporters of the bill are Florida Power & Light, which has run television ads calling for changes in net metering.

While McClure said his amendment will phase in proposed changes over a longer period of time, the bill will continue to be aimed at eliminating subsidies.

“The bottom line is rooftop solar, I believe, will be a part of our long-term solutions, but it cannot ride on the backs of the other ratepayers indefinitely,” McClure said.

But rooftop solar installation businesses argue the bill — at least before McClure proposes the amendment — would severely damage the industry. Also, opponents of the bill dispute that costs are being shifted to people who do not have rooftop solar systems.

"It's predicated on the myth that solar customers in Florida right now are raising bills on (non-solar) Florida customers, and I can tell you that's nonsense," said George Cavros, an attorney for the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy. "It's utter nonsense."

Rep. Yvonne Hinson, a Gainesville Democrat who voted against the bill, said lawmakers "can ill afford to guess at this" and should take a deeper look at whether costs are being shifted.

"At this point, I think we need a study so we can know what the heck we are talking about," Hinson said.

The Florida Public Service Commission in 2008 approved a net-metering rule, and the bill would direct the commission to make revisions, including ensuring that "public utility customers who own or lease renewable generation pay the full cost of electric service and are not cross-subsidized by the public utility's general body of ratepayers."

People who own rooftop solar systems are required to hook up to utility systems and are able to sell excess electricity and receive bill credits in return. Under the 2008 rule, monthly credits are provided at utilities' retail rates. An important part of the bill would change that to providing the credits at what are known as "full avoided cost" rates, which could reduce the amounts going to rooftop solar owners.

As the rooftop solar industry has grown in recent years, similar debates have played out in other states. The industry contends it would be hurt by the potential Florida changes because homeowners would be less likely to see financial advantages of installing

systems — a concern that a House staff analysis acknowledged.

“The bill may have an indeterminate negative impact on the revenues of private businesses that install customer-owned renewable generation systems, since customers may not purchase these systems if they cannot recoup as much of the costs through the new net metering rate design,” the analysis said.

McClure earlier made a change in the bill to allow people who have rooftop solar systems by the end of this year to keep the current net-metering rate design for 20 years. That would help people who have financed the systems.

While he did not go into extensive detail Monday, McClure indicated the upcoming amendment would phase in over a series of years the changes in rates used to determine credits. The House panel voted 9-6 along almost straight party lines to approve the bill, with Rep. Anthony Sabatini, R-Howey-in-the-Hills, joining Democrats in opposing it.

The bill needs approval from the House Commerce Committee before it could go to the full House. The Senate version (SB 1024) needs approval from the Rules Committee before it could go to the full Senate.

# FPL bills 'through the roof': Santa Rosa commissioners exploring way to help residents



**Alex Miller**

Pensacola News Journal

Increased power bills for Santa Rosa County residents took a front row seat at the County Commission's committee meeting Monday morning as commissioners discussed the possibility of adjusting the county's franchise fee, but several questions arose over what decisions would fall under the county's purview.

Ultimately, the commissioners tasked staff to come back to the board Thursday with more information to help navigate if, and how, the board could step in to alleviate rising rates.

Since Gulf Power transitioned to Florida Power & Light on Jan. 1, residents in Santa Rosa County have been voicing their concerns to county officials over the fact their power bills have drastically increased.

**The reaction in Pensacola:** Pensacola inches closer to creating electric utility amid anger toward FPL rate increase

**Rate increases greenlit:** Gulf Power is transitioning to FPL on Jan. 1. Here's what customers need to know

"I've talked to hundreds of people in the last week. And one of the biggest issues that I hear from people about is their power bills are going up through the roof," said District 3 Commissioner James Calkins.

Calkins proposed knocking the franchise fees from 5% to 4%. Franchise fees for utilities are typically imposed by a public entity because a private entity is using things like public rights of ways. In the case with Santa Rosa, it also works to generate revenue since the county will not be competing with FPL to provide service. The current rate provides about \$7.5 million for the county, and to change that there would need to be a contract renegotiation.

Calkins also promoted the idea of attempting to create more utility competition in the area, but County Attorney Thomas Dannheisser clarified that a decision like that falls outside the county's purview.

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A large part of what the commissioners want to learn is the extent to which a change in the franchise fee would affect the price consumers pay.

"For our folks, it comes down to, 'Does it give me another gallon of gas a month? Or does it give me an extra gallon of milk a month?'" said District 4 Commissioner Dave Piech.

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WEAR – Mobile-Pensacola

## Complaints resolved by Public Service Commission, FP&L reveals differing customer feedback

Olivia Iverson - 2h ago

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**P**ENSACOLA, Fla. -- The Public Service Commission continues to investigate complaints from Florida Power & Light customers in Northwest Florida.

The Public Service Commission approved Florida Power & Light's rates through 12 public hearings.

Caption: WEAR

In their first month with those rates, the Public Service Commission says they received 76 complaints from customers in Northwest Florida -- 42 from Escambia County, 23 from Santa Rosa County and 11 from Okaloosa County.



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Channel 3 read through many of them and found out most were labeled as 'improper billing.'

Those reports say the commission requires FP&L to resolve the complaint within 15 days. The company also offers a meter test and energy audit, as well as the customers' 24-month consumption history.

- **RELATED: Customers protest rate hikes outside FPL building in downtown Pensacola**
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Representative Alex Andrade recommended this complaint process to customers [when speaking with Channel 3 on Friday](#).

"If you want more supervision or more investigations done -- and you do believe that kilowatt usage isn't being calculated appropriately -- the only way to get that done is to submit that complaint to the Public Service Commission," he said.

In nearly all of the complaints to the Public Service Commission, the investigation ends by saying the customer was satisfied with the company's action plan.

However, all of the people who filed complaints that Channel 3 talked to on Monday said they were not satisfied with the investigation.

"That's a complete, false lie. There is no way we were satisfied with any of this," a man told Channel 3.

"That's a lie," a woman told Channel 3. "He knew I wasn't satisfied when he left."

Monday evening, Florida Power & light sent Channel 3 a statement saying that we did not give them enough time to review the 164-page document we sent them this afternoon.

The company went on to say that because Channel 3 didn't give them more time to review and respond, FP&L believes our story is one-sided.

Despite an investigation, those customers say they still don't understand why their bill was so high.

One of them Channel 3 contacted told us she saw their next power bill drop, but claims none of her habits changed.

The others continue to pay hundreds of dollars more, despite complaining to FP&L, the PSC, and many of Florida's top elected officials.

"I know it was kind of inconvenient for FP&L to take over from Gulf Power at the time they did, considering the economy and the overall price increase of fuel," a man told Channel 3. "But I don't think it's fair to the customers of

Pensacola that it was such a drastic increase for the majority of us."

**Channel 3 has provided FP&L's full statement:**

Unfortunately, WEAR did not provide FPL enough time to review the 164 pages of documents it emailed our team this afternoon. Despite the fact that we made a simple and reasonable request for additional time to review and respond to the collection of documents, WEAR quickly decided to move ahead with its piece and provide a one-sided story to its viewers. Telling one story tonight with a promise to publish our full response after the fact is hardly balanced journalism and a disservice to our customers in Northwest Florida.

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# As Florida's rooftop solar bill comes under fire, a new amendment could ease its impact



**Jim Saunders**

Tue, February 22, 2022, 6:00 AM · 4 min read



TALLAHASSEE — Florida lawmakers continued to move forward Monday with [key changes in rules for rooftop solar energy](#), drawing heavy opposition from the solar industry and environmental groups.

But as the House State Administration & Technology Appropriations Subcommittee approved the bill (HB 741), sponsor Lawrence McClure, R-Dover, said he is working on a proposed amendment to more gradually make the changes. He described that approach as taking a "glide path."

"One could argue it (the bill) is too heavy-handed and too swift and doesn't give rooftop solar the ability to adjust," McClure said. "So I look forward to presenting that amendment."

**Pensacola solar companies sound off:** [Northwest Florida solar industry says new bill will pull the plug on growing industry](#)

**Rising electricity bills:** [Pensacola inches closer to creating electric utility amid anger toward FPL rate increase](#)





Sun Farm Energy workers install solar energy system on a home in Escambia County on Feb. 8.

The issue, which has sparked a noisy fight throughout this year's legislative session, deals with an otherwise wonky concept known as net metering. That involves the interplay between utilities and rooftop solar owners, including credits that utilities provide for electricity generated by rooftop solar systems.

McClure and other supporters of the bill contend that the state's current rules result in people without rooftop solar systems subsidizing rooftop-solar owners. That argument stems, at least in part, because utilities continue to face overall costs of operating the electrical grid. Among the supporters of the bill are [Florida Power & Light](#), which has run television ads calling for changes in net metering.

**Pensacola power:** [What would it take for Pensacola to form an electric utility? We won't know without a study](#)

While McClure said his amendment will phase in proposed changes over a longer period of time, the bill will continue to be aimed at eliminating subsidies.

"The bottom line is rooftop solar, I believe, will be a part of our long-term solutions, but it cannot ride on the backs of the other ratepayers indefinitely," McClure said.

### **'Utter nonsense': Solar industry says bill would cause severe damage**

But rooftop solar installation businesses argue the bill — at least before McClure proposes the amendment — would severely damage the industry. Also, opponents of the bill dispute that costs are being shifted to people who do not have rooftop solar systems.

"It's predicated on the myth that solar customers in Florida right now are raising bills on (non-solar) Florida customers, and I can tell you that's nonsense," said George Cavros, an attorney for the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy. "It's utter nonsense."

Rep. Yvonne Hinson, a Gainesville Democrat who voted against the bill, said lawmakers "can ill afford to guess at this" and should take a deeper look at whether costs are being shifted.

"At this point, I think we need a study so we can know what the heck we are talking about," Hinson said.

### **Bill would change 2008 net-metering rule**

The Florida Public Service Commission in 2008 approved a net-metering rule, and the bill would direct the commission to make revisions, including ensuring that "public utility customers who own or lease renewable generation pay the full cost of electric service and are not cross-subsidized by the public utility's general body of ratepayers."

People who own rooftop solar systems are required to hook up to utility systems and are able to sell excess electricity and receive bill credits in return. Under the 2008 rule, monthly credits are provided at utilities' retail rates. An important part of the bill would change that to providing the credits at what are known as "full avoided cost" rates, which could reduce the amounts going to rooftop solar owners.

**From the opinion page:**



Sun Farm Energy workers on Feb. 8 install solar panels on a home in Escambia County.

As the rooftop solar industry has grown in recent years, similar debates have played out in other states. The industry contends it would be hurt by the potential Florida changes because homeowners would be less likely to see financial advantages of installing systems — a concern that a House staff analysis acknowledged.

"The bill may have an indeterminate negative impact on the revenues of private businesses that install customer-owned renewable generation systems, since customers may not purchase these

systems if they cannot recoup as much of the costs through the new net metering rate design," the analysis said.

**Guestview:** [Northwest Florida solar companies say new bill will pull the plug on their growing industry](#)

**Andy Marlette:** [GOP silent as FPL attacks freedom and liberty](#)

### **Amendment would phase in changes in rates that determine credits**

McClure earlier made a change in the bill to allow people who have rooftop solar systems by the end of this year to keep the current net-metering rate design for 20 years. That would help people who have financed the systems.

While he did not go into extensive detail Monday, McClure indicated the upcoming amendment would phase in over a series of years the changes in rates used to determine credits. The House panel voted 9-6 along almost straight party lines to approve the bill, with Rep. Anthony Sabatini, R-Howey-in-the-Hills, joining Democrats in opposing it.

The bill needs approval from the House Commerce Committee before it could go to the full House. The Senate version (SB 1024) needs approval from the Rules Committee before it could go to the full Senate.