

BEFORE THE
FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of:

In re:

DOCKET NO. 20250011-EI

Petition for rate increase by
Florida Power & Light Company.

_____ /

PROCEEDINGS: SERVICE HEARING

COMMISSIONERS
PARTICIPATING:

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

DATE: Friday, June 6, 2025

TIME: Commenced: 1:00 p.m. Central
Concluded: 2:30 p.m. Central

PLACE: Gulf Coast State College
Student Union East Room 232
5230 West Highway 98
Panama City, Florida

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

PREMIER REPORTING
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA
(850) 894-0828

1 APPEARANCES:

2 JOHN BURNETT and MONICA BARNES, ESQUIRES, 700
3 Universe Boulevard, Juno Beach, FL 33408-0420; appearing
4 on behalf of Florida Power & Light Company (FPL).

5 WALT TRIERWEILER, PUBLIC COUNSEL, OFFICE OF
6 PUBLIC COUNSEL, MARY A. WESSLING and AUSTIN WATROUS,
7 ESQUIRES, c/o The Florida Legislature, 111 West Madison
8 Street, Room 812, Tallahassee, FL 32399-1400, appearing
9 on behalf of the Citizens of the State of Florida (OPC).

10 BRADLEY MARSHALL and JORDAN LUEBKEMANN,
11 ESQUIRES, Earthjustice, 111 S. Martin Luther King Jr.
12 Boulevard, Tallahassee, FL 32301; appearing on behalf of
13 Florida Rising, Inc. (Florida Rising), League of United
14 Latin American Citizens of Florida (LULAC), and
15 Environmental Confederation of Southwest Florida, Inc.
16 (ECOSWF).

17 SHAW STILLER, ESQUIRE, FPSC General Counsel's
18 Office, 2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard, Tallahassee, FL
19 32399-0850, appearing on behalf of the Florida Public
20 Service Commission (Staff).

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

2 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Good afternoon, everybody.
3 Welcome, and thank you for attending this customer
4 hearing -- customer service hearing. This is part
5 of the Florida Power & Light Company request for a
6 rate increase. Today's service hearing is an
7 important part of the process and dedicated to
8 hearing from you, the customers.

9 My name is Mike La Rosa. It's a privilege to
10 be the Chair of the Florida Public Service
11 Commission. Along with me are my fellow
12 Commissioners. I am going to give them a few
13 seconds to say hello.

14 COMMISSIONER CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

15 I am Gary Clark. Let me just say first and
16 follow most, it's good to be home today after a
17 tour around the state, it's certainly a privilege
18 to be back in the Panhandle where I believe some of
19 the best folks in the world live.

20 Thank you for being here taking time out of
21 your schedule to be a part of this hearing today.
22 We look forward to your testimony, to the things
23 that you have to share with us about the service
24 that you receive from Florida Power & Light. So
25 thank you again for being here.

1 COMMISSIONER PASSIDOMO SMITH: Good afternoon,
2 everyone. I am Gabriella Passidomo Smith. I just
3 want to take the time to thank y'all for being
4 here.

5 Also, I like to put a plug in. I know it's
6 difficult for some of your friends and neighbors to
7 get out in the middle of a workday to come and
8 voice their comments to us about FPL, so they are
9 absolutely welcome to submit written comments to
10 us. We will read those just as if they were here
11 today, you know, they might be working, or where I
12 wish they were, maybe they are at the beach on this
13 beautiful day and enjoying that, so they should.
14 So they still have their opportunity to have their
15 comments be heard to us. Just write in and we will
16 read those.

17 Thank you.

18 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Good afternoon,
19 everybody. My name is Art Graham, and I am glad
20 you are all here this afternoon, and I ditto what
21 my other two colleagues said about the fact that
22 you guys are here. We are willing to listen to
23 you. And unlike Gary Clark, I have a drive ahead
24 of me, so as soon as we get done.

25 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Excellent. Thank you.

1 Commissioner Fay will be here shortly.

2 As you see, there is a monitor to my right, to
3 your left, that is translating from English to
4 Spanish. So if you need assistance with that,
5 obviously, please take a look and obviously
6 translating live into Spanish.

7 Let's go ahead and get us officially started.
8 Staff, will you please read the notice?

9 MR. STILLER: By notice issued May 14th, 2025,
10 this time and place has been set for a customer
11 service hearing in Docket No. 20250011-EI. The
12 purpose of the service hearing is set forth more
13 fully in the notice.

14 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Great. Thank you.

15 Let's go ahead and take appearances. We will
16 start with Florida Power & Light.

17 MS. BARNES: Good afternoon, Monica Barnes
18 appearing on behalf of Florida Power & Light, and I
19 would also like to enter an appearance for John
20 Burnett, General Counsel.

21 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Office of Public Counsel.

22 MR. TRIERWEILER: Walt Trierweiler, Public
23 Counsel. And I would like to make an appearance
24 for Ali Wessling and Austin Watrous for the Office
25 of Public Counsel.

1 Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Great. Thank you.

3 LULAC.

4 MR. MARSHALL: Good afternoon. Bradley
5 Marshall on behalf of the League of United American
6 Citizens of Florida, better known as LULAC, the
7 Environmental Confederation of Southwest Florida,
8 better known as ECOSWF, and Florida Rising.

9 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you, counsel.

10 And thank you all, again, for participating
11 today. Again, an important part of the process is
12 us to hear about your customer experience with FPL.
13 In August, there will be a more technical hearing.
14 We encourage you to follow along and watch through
15 our website. That will give you better insight of
16 how we analyze evidence and how we make decisions
17 as a commission on what's before us.

18 In addition to your comments, as what was
19 noted earlier today, if you don't get to finish
20 your comments for some reason, or if there is
21 additional comments you would like to submit into
22 the record, you can go ahead and do so. There is a
23 green pamphlet that was handed out as you walked
24 in. There is more on there. Of course, there is
25 more information on our website. Once you submit

1 that, that will become part of the official record
2 just as good as if you were speaking before us, and
3 gives us the ability to review that.

4 If you have any questions, billing questions
5 regarding Florida Power & Light, they do have folks
6 here that are able to assist you. Just make that
7 note or comment in your statements today.

8 If you have any questions about the rate case
9 process, questions specific to us from the
10 Commission, just make that note, and we also have
11 staff that is here that will be able to better
12 answer your questions.

13 We are going to go ahead and allow the parties
14 and opening statement. They know the protocol. We
15 have been doing this now for almost two weeks.

16 Let's go ahead and start with FPL.

17 MS. BARNES: Thank you. Armando Pimentel,
18 President and CEO of Florida Power & Light, will
19 deliver opening remarks.

20 MR. PIMENTEL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and
21 Commissioners. My name is Armando Pimentel. I am
22 the President and CEO of Florida Power & Light
23 Company. We are here because we have asked the
24 Public Service Commission for new base rates
25 beginning in 2026. Let me begin by thanking all of

1 our customers who have taken time to be here today.
2 We are honored to serve you.

3 I am proud of the 9,000 FPL employees who work
4 hard every day to reliably power Florida, but we
5 can always do better, which is why your feedback is
6 so important to us.

7 FPL's mission is to deliver reliable
8 electricity every day while keeping bills as low as
9 possible. We know we have encountered many
10 challenges impacting our customers here. However,
11 we have improved reliability of northwest Florida
12 by 63 percent since 2019, and typical residential
13 customers now pay \$21 a month less in real dollars
14 than they paid before joining the FPL family. This
15 is the result of prudent investments and a culture
16 of continuous improvement.

17 By operating the most efficient utility in
18 America, we save typical customers roughly \$24 a
19 month. The modernization of FPL's power plant
20 fleet has also yielded significant fuel savings for
21 customers.

22 Our investments in smart grid technology
23 helped avoid 2.7 million outages just last year,
24 including more than 800,000 during Hurricanes Debby
25 Helene and Milton. That's what our rate request is

1 good about, continuing these prudent investments
2 for reliable resilient service, and technology
3 while keeping bills as low as possible.

4 It's been four years since our last rate
5 request. Florida is growing fast. Florida's
6 growing power demand and delivering the outstanding
7 service that our customers expect will require
8 significant new investment. Even with the proposed
9 increase, typical bills are expected to stay well
10 before the national average.

11 While we work hard to keep bills low, we
12 recognize some customers face challenges. Our
13 Vice-President of Customer Service, Dawn Nichols
14 and her team, are always here to help, and they are
15 here today. They can answer all of your questions,
16 including questions on the many programs that we
17 have for energy efficiency and for bill assistance.

18 At FPL, customers always come first. Three
19 years ago we started holding community advisory
20 meetings here in northwest Florida to get feedback
21 from customers and community leaders. We have
22 incorporated a lot of that feedback already, but we
23 will never stop asking for additional feedback.

24 We have let our customers know about these
25 hearings today so that they can share their

1 experiences with the company. We want to hear
2 about what we do well, and more importantly, we
3 want to hear about things we can improve.

4 So thank you for participating, and thank you
5 for the opportunity to serve you.

6 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

7 Office of Public Counsel.

8 MR. TRIERWEILER: Thank you, Chairman,
9 Commissioners.

10 Good afternoon. My name is Walt Trierweiler,
11 and I am the Public Counsel for the state of
12 Florida. The Office of Public Counsel, sometimes
13 known as OPC, was created 51 years ago by the
14 Florida Legislature to give customers an effective
15 voice in these proceedings.

16 Today, I want you to know that the Office of
17 Public Counsel actively opposes FPL's proposed rate
18 increases for 2026 and 2027. The theme for this
19 case is affordability. And we argue, with the
20 assistance of eight nationally renowned expert
21 witnesses, that these proposed rates, the increases
22 and the Tax Adjustment Mechanism will result in
23 unfair, unjust and unreasonable rates for you.

24 I am not going to take the time to tell you
25 all the things that my wonderful team is doing back

1 in Tallahassee to resolve this case in your favor,
2 but I do want you to be confident in the extensive
3 discovery my office has conducted with FPL, the
4 hundreds of hours my team has devoted to studying
5 thousands of pages of documents and responses from
6 FPL, and the depositions that we have taken of
7 FPL's witnesses to identify reductions that should
8 be made to FPL's requests.

9 I also want you to be confident that your
10 voice is a valuable part of this rate increase.
11 Thank you for coming. These rate increases have
12 not yet been decided, and these Commissioners, who
13 have been conducting virtual and in-person customer
14 service hearings all over the state, from Miami to
15 Pensacola, are here to listen to you today. So
16 please share your thoughts as clearly and
17 persuasively as you can, because your sworn
18 testimony will be considered today by the customers
19 -- I mean, by the Commission and the parties, both
20 now and in the future, when the Commission sits
21 down to examine all of the evidence before them to
22 approve only that portion of FPL's rate increases
23 that are reasonable, prudent and in the public
24 interest.

25 I invite you to share the details of your

1 experiences as a customer of FPL, and to share the
2 personal impacts that these proposed rate increases
3 will have upon you, your family, your friends, your
4 business and your employees.

5 Do be mindful of time, and also be mindful
6 that -- it's nice to be back here in the Panhandle,
7 and even if you are feeling passionate, that one of
8 the things that marks those of us from the
9 Panhandle is the grace under pressure and the
10 courtesy that we show, and remember that you are
11 trying to persuade people today. So be open,
12 honest. Deliver your message as quickly and as
13 efficiently as you can, and we will get through
14 this process in a positive manner.

15 Thank you, again, for participating today. We
16 look forward to hearing from you.

17 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

18 LULAC.

19 MR. MARSHALL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

20 Good afternoon, everyone. Florida Rising,
21 LULAC and ECOSWF are associations of mostly
22 residential customers and are in this case because
23 many of their members cannot afford FPL's \$9.8
24 billion requested rate hike. Too many Floridians
25 are already unable to afford their electric bills,

1 especially since FPL's last rate increase in 2021.
2 Access to affordable electricity becomes more and
3 more crucial every year as summers continue to rise
4 with brutal temperatures and the need for air
5 conditioning.

6 For 2023, the latest year for which we have
7 complete data, FPL's actual residential bills were
8 averaged \$170 a month, \$36 higher than the national
9 average monthly bill. That made FPL the tenth
10 highest bill in the country among large
11 investor-owned electric utilities. Today, even as
12 FPL asks for this rate increase, the preliminary
13 data shows the average FPL residential customer is
14 already paying over \$400 more per year for
15 electricity than in 2021.

16 And by bills, we mean the amount that
17 customers actually pay on average at the end of
18 each month. Not a hypothetical bill based on a
19 hypothetical usage that FPL uses to make bill
20 comparisons that do not reflect real world usage.

21 We agree with the Office of Public Counsel
22 that FPL has not shown any of need for their
23 requested increase, and believe that this case is
24 not about need but about increasing profits.

25 We understand that as Floridians, storm

1 recovery is extremely important to everyone, and
2 some may believe that this rate increase will aid
3 FPL in getting the lights back on after a storm,
4 but that is not what the money in this case is for.
5 Supporting this increase actually means supporting
6 increased profits for FPL well above the national
7 average for utilities.

8 Finally, as a quick housekeeping matter, I
9 know that FPL may have reached out to some of you
10 and asked you to come support their request today.
11 You might be involved with an organization that
12 receives funding or association dues from FPL or an
13 affiliate, or that features FPL among your board of
14 directors, or they may even be a client of yours.
15 That's perfectly all right, but that is relevant
16 information for the record. In the interest of
17 holding an efficient hearing, I just ask that you
18 go ahead and disclose that in your testimony so
19 that I don't have to take up more time asking you
20 follow-up questions about those connections through
21 cross-examination.

22 With that, thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank
23 you all for being here today. We look forward to
24 your testimony.

25 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Great. Thank you. We will

1 go ahead and move on to customer testimony.

2 Again, as was referenced earlier, your
3 testimony could be subject to cross-examination,
4 meaning a question from either one of us
5 Commissioners or one of the parties here today.
6 That's not intended by any means to be
7 intimidating, just intended to clarify the record
8 or just clarify a comment that was made so that
9 it's better understood.

10 If you signed up today and you do plan on
11 speaking, do you mind standing up and raising your
12 right hand to take a quick oath?

13 (Whereupon, Chairman La Rosa administered the
14 oath.)

15 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Excellent. Great. Thank
16 you. You may have a seat.

17 To make sure that all of your neighbors have
18 an opportunity to speak today, we are going to
19 limit the comments to two minutes. There will be a
20 light system that's on the podium that will go
21 green, yellow in 30 seconds, and eventually start
22 blinking red and beep. I am not trying to cut you
23 off by any means, but just to let you know that
24 your time is coming to an end. Please finish your
25 thought and then finish from there, again, just

1 trying not to necessarily cut you off, but I want
2 to make sewer everyone has an opportunity to speak
3 today.

4 The Public Counsel will be helping me out with
5 calling the names. So we will call two or three
6 names as a time. As you hear your name, please
7 start to proceed to the front, have a seat maybe in
8 the front row. Then when it's your turn to speak
9 then, obviously, the podium will be yours. So
10 again, I want to make sure that we are effective
11 and efficient, and that's kind of the process I
12 will work, but I think we are ready to get started.

13 Mr. Trierweiler, I like to normally start with
14 elected officials. I think we have one on the
15 list. If there is any other elected official, just
16 maybe identify yourself and feel free to come on up
17 to the front, but, Walt, it is -- you are up.

18 MR. TRIERWEILER: Mark McQueen, please.

19 PUBLIC COMMENT

20 MR. MCQUEEN: Yes. Thank you so much. I
21 appreciate, Chair La Rosa, thank you so much,
22 Commission, for being here. Welcome to northwest
23 Florida.

24 I am Mark McQueen, Superintendent for Bay
25 District Schools, and I am coming to you not to

1 talk about rates, because that's a decision that
2 you have to make, and you are going to have to --
3 it's a weighted decision. I do not envy that
4 responsibility, but certainly you need to look at
5 what it takes to provide reliable service to these
6 customers and, certainly, as Bay District Schools
7 as a customer.

8 I share this with you, because in Bay District
9 Schools, we are looking at how do we ensure that we
10 are maximizing education opportunities. When power
11 goes out, education stops. And that is absolutely
12 critical because time is everything for education.

13 What we have experienced this past year is 18
14 outages that have taken place because of a variety
15 of reasons, weather events, accidents, or what have
16 you, or maybe even equipment has gone down. But at
17 the end of the day, I never had to close a school,
18 and the reason I never had to close a school is
19 because of the responsiveness that I had from
20 Florida Power & Light.

21 We have two individuals that have been
22 supporters of making sure that education within Bay
23 County is taking place and our schools are resumed
24 after a power outage. I really want to thank Mr.
25 Boyett and Reggie for helping us in that regard.

1 I also have seen and witnessed a lot of
2 upgrades that have taken place in Bay County with
3 after Hurricane Michael in particular, but it
4 continues on even to this day with better
5 transmission lines, better transformers and a more
6 reliable service. And again, it correlates to what
7 we are striving do in Bay County, and particularly
8 Bay District Schools to make sure we have no
9 interruptions of education.

10 To that end, I want to thank Florida Power &
11 Light for their commitment and what they have done
12 to pour into our classrooms through their
13 foundation, and that foundation has been
14 extraordinary in helping invest in our teachers and
15 our students through makeovers in our classrooms to
16 include helping our teachers as they would come
17 back to the school and to be able to perform what
18 we are being asked to do each and every day; to
19 produce an educated citizen; to have an educated
20 workforce; to have folks that are going to be
21 sitting in your position one day to help find out
22 what life looks like for the state of Florida.

23 I do want to thank you for this opportunity to
24 come before you. I am just going to keep my
25 comments brief, but thank you so much for this

1 opportunity to share the impact that power has on
2 education.

3 Thank you, sir.

4 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you. A quick
5 question.

6 Commissioner Fay.

7 COMMISSIONER FAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

8 So a quick question just, so I understand it,
9 the scope you mentioned, 18 outages.

10 MR. MCQUEEN: Yes.

11 COMMISSIONER FAY: How many schools are under
12 your --

13 MR. MCQUEEN: We have 35 schools in the Bay
14 District School system, 28,000 students.

15 COMMISSIONER FAY: Okay. And then most of
16 those outages would be weather related or --

17 MR. MCQUEEN: Weather related. There was an
18 accident. There was an automobile accident that
19 took out a transformer that impacted Tommy Oliver
20 Stadium, in fact, and we had a scheduled soccer
21 event taking place in there. They were able to
22 replace that transformer and we did not have to
23 cancel that event.

24 COMMISSIONER FAY: Okay. So other than this,
25 there are no outages otherwise, either storm or re

1 lated related, they are just --

2 MR. MCQUEEN: Oh, it could have been equipment
3 failure. It could have been electrical storms that
4 have taken place, but again, they responded as soon
5 as we made the call to those two points of contact,
6 they responded immediately, and we had no
7 cancellation of schools as a result of that.

8 COMMISSIONER FAY: Okay. Great. Thank you
9 for your testimony.

10 MR. MCQUEEN: Yes, sir.

11 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

12 MR. MCQUEEN: Thank you.

13 MR. TRIERWEILER: All right. As Public
14 Counsel, I normally read these names, however, I am
15 going to turn this over to the junior member of my
16 office, Austin Watrous, who's traded the snowy
17 northlands of west Michigan for the sugar beaches
18 of beautiful Panama City. And whenever he is not
19 working, he runs over here to you your beautiful
20 community. So if you haven't run into him,
21 probably will, so I thought I would just turn it
22 over to him.

23 MR. WATROUS: Thank you for that introduction.
24 Again, my name is Austin Watrous, and thank you all
25 for being here.

1 The first customer we would like to introduce
2 is Summer Thomas. On deck, we will have Cory Brown
3 and Zacarias Sanchez.

4 PUBLIC COMMENT

5 MS. THOMAS: Good afternoon, Commissions. My
6 name is Summer Thomas, and I am a business customer
7 of FPL through several organizations, Elite Realty,
8 Grace & Glory Christian School and Chipley Women's
9 Club. I appreciate the opportunity to speak today.

10 From a business perspective, I understand how
11 challenging it is to manage rising costs. It's a
12 reality we are all facing, whether it's labor,
13 materials, insurance or essential services, but I
14 also understand that dependable electricity is
15 isn't optional. It's critical in keeping our
16 operations running and our community functioning.

17 At Elite Realty, I regularly contact FPL's
18 customer service to assist with inspections, new
19 service connections and to help our clients with
20 power related needs. I have consistently been
21 impressed with the responsiveness and
22 professionalism of the FPL team. The ability to
23 rely on prompt service is not just convenient, it's
24 essential in the fast-paced real estate
25 environment.

1 At Grace & Glory Christian School, power
2 outages are more than a temporary inconvenience.
3 They impact the ability to operate safely. Under
4 state regulations, utilities must be functioning
5 for us to care for and educate students. Even a
6 short outage can disrupt learning, force early
7 dismissals or create compliance issues.

8 While my businesses doesn't rely on inventory,
9 I can see how other local operation would suffer
10 during outages, through lost revenues, spoiled
11 goods or even frustrated customers. That's why I
12 view the rate increase as an investment in
13 stability, safety and smart infrastructure.
14 Strengthening the grid and improving response time
15 benefits all of us, businesses, families, schools
16 alike.

17 I recognize that I am not the one making the
18 difficult decision. That responsibility will lie
19 solely with the Commission, but I wanted to take a
20 moment to share how FPL impacts me directly, and to
21 speak from my personal experience as a longtime
22 business customer and community member. Thank you
23 for your time and for considering the broad impact
24 on our businesses, schools and communities.

25 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

1 MR. WATROUS: Thank you.

2 Next up is Cory Brown.

3 PUBLIC COMMENT

4 MR. BROWN: Good afternoon, everyone. Thank
5 you for this opportunity.

6 As you said, my name is Cory Brown with Think
7 Real Estate. I am an agent, but I am also an agent
8 relation manager for the company. And so one of my
9 functions for Think Real Estate is to take care of
10 agents. So I am not here on behalf of the rate
11 increase but to talk about the responsiveness of
12 Gulf -- FPL.

13 So I reach out to FPL again as part of agent
14 relations, one of my main tasks is to make sure
15 agents have what they need to help their business,
16 it can be anywhere from answering questions on
17 contracts to making sure they have the right energy
18 drink in the refrigerator, and so in our parking
19 lot there were several dark spots. I am not sure
20 if it was from equipment failure or from what, but
21 there were several dark spots. And being a larger
22 guy, I don't worry about safety as much, but many
23 of our agents do, and so the conversation was had
24 about how the parking lot is dark in some areas.
25 Even though Think Real Estate is open from 8:00 to

1 5:00, our agents work when they can, so it can be
2 late at night, early in the morning, and so the
3 parking light safety issue was there.

4 So I called FPL, and they then tracked down
5 the light situation. The lights were being billed
6 on a separate issue, they were able to track it
7 down really quickly, but then they to send someone
8 out to fix it and they did correct.

9 So this may seem small, but the agents, myself
10 truly appreciate it, so much so I went up to the
11 office around 8:30, nine o'clock, took pictures,
12 sent them a group text and said, guys, we are all
13 good. We are good to go. The agents, they love
14 it. It was great.

15 And so again, this may seem small, but this
16 was, like, a two-day process. I was thinking it
17 was going to be a few weeks, but FPL responded very
18 quickly, and I surely appreciate it, so thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Awesome. Thank you.

20 MR. BROWN: Do you have any questions? No.

21 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

22 MR. WATROUS: Next we have Zacarias Sanchez.

23 PUBLIC COMMENT

24 MR. SANCHEZ: Good afternoon. My name is Zack
25 Sanchez, and I agree Commissioner Clark. We have

1 the best place in the area, don't we?

2 I am going to be brief, my guy stole the
3 thunder, but when he can't get it done, he calls
4 me, so if I get it, it's bad.

5 I was born and raised here, I have seen it go
6 from Gulf Power to FPL. I own a real estate
7 company so we transfer services over for customers.
8 I am a real estate developer, a property manager,
9 so I deal with FPL all the time, every day. And so
10 while there are some nuances with the call center,
11 my opinion that could probably improve a little
12 bit.

13 I will say that the local employees of boots
14 on the ground that when we get somebody local to
15 get on the issue, it's solved immediately and it's
16 great. I can't speak highly enough of what they do
17 for the area, and so I just want to echo that, that
18 the local employees, that when it comes to
19 operations in the customer service, they do a
20 phenomenal job.

21 So as far as rate increases, that's above my
22 paygrade. I don't know their P&L, so that's for
23 y'all to decide, but I just want to echo for what
24 we pay, I feel like we get the customer service for
25 it, wanted to say thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

2 MR. WATROUS: Thank you.

3 Next we have Tim Prather, and on deck we have
4 Ross Clemons and Patrick Chapin.

5 PUBLIC COMMENT

6 MR. PRATHER: Good afternoon, Commissioners.
7 My name is Tim Prather. I live here in Panama
8 City.

9 I am here as a dad, but also as someone who
10 works with many families in our community,
11 including those who are most in need. For every
12 family, reliable power is about safety and
13 stability. For families on a tight budget, a power
14 outage isn't just an inconvenience, it can mean
15 losing a full refrigerator of groceries or not
16 having a cool place for kids on a hot day.

17 I have lived here my entire life. I have seen
18 a real improvement in reliability, and I remember
19 when power outages were to be expected. We had
20 crews to fix it, but we were clearly reacting to
21 issues instead of preventing them, but that's
22 changed. Power outages are more and more rare,
23 even with our storms. That just didn't happen --
24 excuse me, that didn't just happen. It's a result
25 of constant proactive work, upgrading the

1 equipment, strengthening poles and preparing for
2 storms before they arrive. I know I am thankful
3 every day I drive around town and see the new
4 concrete poles, it makes me feel confident in the
5 system and the reliable power, that's something we
6 can count on.

7 Hurricane Michael taught us a hard lesson
8 about what's at stake. That memory is exactly why
9 this continued investment is so important. That
10 work is never truly done, our community is growing
11 and our system needs continuous investment to keep
12 up and stay strong against future storms.

13 I know one -- I know no one likes the bill to
14 go up. I don't either. But I also know the cost
15 of equipment like transformers, and utility poles,
16 and labor, and everything else has to do with power
17 has increased significantly with everything else in
18 the past few years.

19 This increase isn't just for upkeep, it's
20 for -- essential upgrades, so that we don't lose
21 the progress that we have made. We can't afford to
22 not do it. For me, it's a practical choice. It's
23 a small price to pay for the security of knowing
24 our lights will stay on.

25 We count on FPL to provide a critical service,

1 and I think we can do our part and give them the
2 resources they need to continue providing it in a
3 meaningful way.

4 Thank you.

5 MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman?

6 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Quick question.

7 MR. MARSHALL: Good afternoon. Are you
8 affiliated with the Bay Education Foundation?

9 MR. PRATHER: I am.

10 MR. MARSHALL: Are you the President?

11 MR. PRATHER: Incoming President.

12 MR. MARSHALL: Incoming President. And FPL
13 donates to that organization?

14 MR. PRATHER: The foundation does, yes, sir.

15 MR. MARSHALL: Great. Thank you.

16 PUBLIC COMMENT

17 MR. CLEMONS: Chairman, Commissioners, I am
18 Ross Clemons. I am a customer three times over,
19 residence, for-profit business, Clemons & Pierce
20 downtown, and I am also the Executive Director of
21 the Panama City Rescue Mission.

22 I am a happy customer in my residence and my
23 for-profit business, but the real concern for me is
24 as Executive Director of the Rescue Mission. When
25 I came on board a couple years ago, we were

1 struggling financially and how much we were paying
2 for utilities was an issue. So I reached out to
3 their office and they collaborated with me. They
4 arranged to have an energy audit that came through
5 and reviewed all of our property, and they
6 recommended some changes that would help us get our
7 rates down. They collaborated with us in that
8 process, and we were able to reduce our rates by
9 executing the tasks from their energy audit.

10 So I am a happy customer. My rates went down.
11 We get great service. Honestly, I want the rates
12 to be whatever they need to be to continue to
13 enable FPL to resume services after storms.

14 Thank you.

15 MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman?

16 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Quick question.

17 MR. MARSHALL: In addition to energy
18 efficiency upgrades, have they also helped
19 financially contribute to the --

20 MR. CLEMONS: The board member is a --

21 MR. MARSHALL: Okay.

22 MR. CLEMONS: -- yes.

23 MR. MARSHALL: Great. Thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

25 MR. CLEMONS: Thank you.

1 MR. WATROUS: Next we have Patrick Chapin.

2 PUBLIC COMMENT

3 MR. CHAPIN: Yes, Patrick Chapin. Thank you
4 for having me. I live here in Panama City Beach,
5 live, and work in Panama City. I serve as the
6 President of Bay County Chamber of Commerce.

7 I will answer your question now, yes, we
8 are -- have great support from our friends at
9 Florida Power & Light, and appreciate their both
10 support financially and leadership. However, I am
11 not here representing our membership. I am here as
12 a customer in both residential and commercial.

13 Over the past decade or so, I have had
14 multiple experiences to work with the utility --
15 utility providers in Winter Park, Florida, where
16 the city runs its own electric utility.
17 Reliability response times are, frankly, invisible.

18 In Jamestown, North Carolina, where my family
19 still owns a home, power outages occur way too
20 often, and seemingly with no real reason. In
21 contrast, my experience with Florida Power & Light
22 here in Bay County has been outstanding. Outages
23 have been rare, and when they do occur, response is
24 swift. This reliability is more than a
25 convenience, it's a necessity, especially for

1 businesses. Every minute without a power can mean
2 lost revenue.

3 Speaking as someone who leads a nonprofit
4 organization, I can say that of all the bills I
5 receive, the Florida Power & Light bill is the one
6 I worry least about. In the last two years, our
7 property insurance has gone up 40 percent, the cost
8 of providing group insurance for our employees is
9 about 25 percent. Those are the real challenges
10 for a lot of people in this community.

11 So while I never like to see costs rise, I do
12 understand, as others have said, that given
13 inflation, tariffs and the rising cost of
14 materials, like poles and wires, utilities are not
15 immune.

16 In closing, I believe most of us understand
17 the importance of investing in the infrastructure
18 to preserve the reliability we have come to expect
19 from FPL. As both a business and residential
20 customer, I can say that dependable power is
21 essential, and I have experienced firsthand the
22 difference it makes. If a modest increase supports
23 continued reliability and rapid response, I feel it
24 is both reasonable and necessary.

25 Thank you very much for the opportunity to

1 speak today.

2 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

3 MR. WATROUS: Next we have Philip Horvath,
4 followed by Jacqueline Flynn and Richard Williams.

5 PUBLIC COMMENT

6 MR. HORVATH: Thank you, Commissioners, for
7 allowing me to come to speak. My name is Philip
8 Horvath. I am a father, obviously, I bring my
9 sidekick wherever I can, a husband, a customer both
10 in the residential setting as well as in the
11 commercial setting as a pastor of a community
12 church in Chipley, Florida, as well as the
13 President of the Chamber of Commerce board, which,
14 again, we do have a great partnership with FPL in
15 that regards.

16 My personal experience, particularly as a
17 father, because I am a husband and a residential
18 customer, my wife works at home, and so when the
19 power goes out, what does she do with our four kids
20 and what -- how does she entertain them, how does
21 she accomplish her work because she works remotely?
22 FPL has been super responsive. I do not remember a
23 time where FPL has not responded to turning our
24 power back on within a couple hours.

25 We are very blessed and fortunate, every

1 interaction that I have had with the call center in
2 finding out how long it's going to take to get our
3 power turned back on has been a very positive one.

4 FPL, in our community helps, us do many
5 things. And it's amazing to see what they can do
6 and how they can help support some of the events in
7 our community.

8 From the Chamber perspective, we recently had
9 a past due bill, which when we got on the phone
10 with the call center, FPL's call center did an
11 amazing job in helping us get that resolved, so
12 thank you for that.

13 And so whatever FPL needs to be able to
14 continue to provide service in rural Florida, I am
15 behind. And I know it costs money, and it's not
16 easy, and there is a lot of bills that are going up
17 in my household, but we will find ways to make ends
18 meet.

19 So thank you guys for allowing me to be here.

20 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

21 MR. MARSHALL: Quick clarifying question. The
22 great partnership, they are on the Chamber board
23 and put money no the Chamber?

24 MR. HORVATH: As well as many other
25 organizations in the community.

1 MR. MARSHALL: Great.

2 MR. HORVATH: Because we are rural, we always
3 have various partners, so yes.

4 MR. MARSHALL: Thank you.

5 MR. HORVATH: Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Pastor, thank you for your
7 comments. We were enjoying your comments, we were
8 really hoping to hear from your son, though.

9 MR. HORVATH: Well, he likes the air
10 conditioner at night, so we definitely get
11 frustrated when the power goes out.

12 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thumbs up for good.

13 MR. HORVATH: That's right. That's right.

14 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

15 JUNIOR HORVATH: I get to talk then.

16 MR. HORVATH: No.

17 MR. WATROUS: Thank you.

18 Next is Jacqueline Flynn.

19 PUBLIC COMMENT

20 MS. FLYNN: Hello, and thank you for letting
21 me come and speak. I am not good at speaking, so I
22 apologize for the nerves.

23 I am Jacqueline Flynn. I work at United Way
24 Northwest Florida as the Director of Finance. We
25 do have a representation from FPL on our board of

1 directors, and you will be hard pressed to find
2 anywhere in the community where they do not assist
3 financially. They are a great community partner.
4 But I am not here on behalf of United Way of
5 Northwest Florida. I am here on behalf of me and
6 my family.

7 I was recently told the best way to grab
8 somebody's attention is by telling a story, so I
9 will grab your attention hopefully.

10 January 21st, 2025, we had the strangest
11 weather in Florida. It snowed five inches at my
12 home. And trust me, I went outside to measure it.
13 Whereas, it was beautiful, and it was fun to play
14 in when the sun was shining, the night of the 21st
15 was not fun.

16 My mother is a medically dependent oxygen
17 dependent person. She has COPD Stage 4, so she is
18 on oxygen 24 hours a day. We were prepared for the
19 weather to affect power, for it to go out. We were
20 quite nervous that we were going to have that
21 experience, and we were going to sit in a cold
22 house all night long.

23 What I wasn't prepared for is that the moment
24 that I put in a ticket, there would be a truck
25 shining its lights three houses down from me. What

1 I wasn't prepared for is when the power went out
2 again, within two minutes, there was another truck,
3 and another truck. These were linemen who were
4 outside my home in freezing cold weather, in the
5 dark, working throughout the night to make sure
6 that my neighborhood had power, that my mother had
7 oxygen, and that does not go unnoticed.

8 I don't have power outages. I don't fear that
9 when I go to work in the day that my mom is going
10 to lose power for hours on end, and that we are
11 going to have to struggle. That's a service and a
12 dependability that I have come to expect from FPL.

13 So whereas I can't tell you what to do with
14 the rate increases, or keeping them the same, what
15 I can tell you is that there has become an
16 expectation of the service that we already receive,
17 and I don't want to lose that service, because it
18 is great service, and I just want to thank you for
19 hearing me.

20 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

21 MR. WATROUS: Next we have Richard Williams,
22 and on deck we have Thomas Lee and Gina Littleton.

23 PUBLIC COMMENT

24 MR. WILLIAMS: My name is Richard Williams. I
25 am the Executive Director of Opportunity Florida.

1 We are a 10-county rural development organization.
2 Yes, they are on our board, as you will find most
3 other boards. In fact, I sit on several other
4 boards that they have representatives on. We have
5 several other utilities that are on our board as
6 well, as well as local governments and private
7 sector entities.

8 Our area is growing. We are experiencing a
9 level of growth here in northwest Florida that we
10 have never seen before. And one of the things that
11 we have learned from other parts of the state is if
12 you do not stay ahead of the curve in terms of your
13 utilities and your infrastructure, it will come
14 back to haunt you. The cost of replacing that, if
15 you get behind, is going to be significantly
16 higher, and you will never catch up. We want to
17 make sure that that doesn't happen here as we
18 continue to grow.

19 I was a participant in the Advanced Technology
20 Development Leadership Program out at Texas
21 Christian University. I heard from somebody out in
22 the midwest that lost a major project, a major job
23 creation project in a rural area that would have
24 been huge for them. One of the reasons they lost
25 it was because their utility could not get them the

1 infrastructure they needed in time.

2 We don't have that problem right now, and I
3 would encourage you, as you are looking at this
4 rate increase, as you are looking at this case,
5 please take that into consideration. We needs t
6 make sure as we move forward that we have got the
7 infrastructure in place that we have got to have
8 for the growth that's coming.

9 And on the other side of that, we also have a
10 tremendous need for workforce housing. We have
11 worked with FPL, we worked with other utilities as
12 we tried to solve that problem. And part of that
13 cost of these utilities we understand that, but
14 it's also the infrastructure that you need to have
15 in place. And one of the things that we have found
16 in some of our rural areas that's stopping us from
17 getting the workforce housing that we need is we
18 have got to improve that infrastructure, and
19 continue to do so, and we know that FPL is working
20 to make that happen, so thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

22 MR. WATROUS: Next we have Thomas Lee.

23 PUBLIC COMMENT

24 MR. LEE: Good afternoon. Thank you for the
25 opportunity today.

1 I am here on several hats. I serve as the
2 Director of Florida Panhandle Technical College in
3 Chipley, Florida. I also have am a residential
4 customer Holmes County with Florida Power & Light.
5 Yes, Florida Power & Light is -- does have
6 representation, as several have said, on our
7 foundation board. I also sit on the Economic
8 Opportunity Council in Washington County. They
9 have representation on that as well.

10 I have worked at -- I have been a residential
11 customer since 2009. I served as the Assistant
12 Director and Director since 2011 at the Technical
13 College.

14 When I found out about this, I felt like I
15 wanted to come and describe my experiences.
16 Obviously, my experiences started back when it was
17 Gulf Power, and it's transitioned to Florida Power
18 & Light.

19 After Hurricane Michael, we were only out -- I
20 really thought coming through that, I thought we
21 would be out for a significant amount of time. I
22 was only out of power for three days, and we live
23 in a fairly rural area.

24 Whether it's a small issue like my nightlight
25 going out, getting a fast response from Florida

1 Power & Light to get that fixed, about rarely, in
2 the last five years rarely did we have any power
3 outages. And if we do, about 80 percent of the
4 time that's from an automobile accident.

5 I echo what Mr. McQueen said at the school, we
6 have not, outside of snowmageddon and Hurricane
7 Michael, we have not had to close school, send
8 people home due to an extended outage. Yes, have
9 we had outages, but they were managed very quickly
10 and promptly. And that's good, because of the way
11 we are funded at the school we are funded on hours.
12 So if students aren't there, they are not hours,
13 that hour is not turned into the Department of
14 Education, we don't get funded for that. I
15 appreciate the reliability that we have seen from
16 them on that.

17 They also, in the time I have been there, like
18 the other gentleman mentioned, we have perimeter
19 security lighting around the campus that had been
20 there, I don't know what time it was put in, but it
21 had grown outdated, really didn't cover the area,
22 so I worked hand-in-hand with them. They came in.
23 They gave us recommendations. We were able to
24 upgrade that to LED lighting, low demand billing,
25 explained to us how we could save money with that.

1 I, like anybody else -- I know I am out of
2 time -- I like to spend as little as possible, but
3 at the end of the day, having a stable, reliable
4 grid system requires investment in infrastructure.
5 And I know that isn't cheap. Everybody takes it
6 for granted until it's not there. So I would
7 rather see a proactive approach.

8 Thank you for your time. Any questions?

9 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

10 MR. WATROUS: Next we have Gina Littleton, and
11 on deck we have Declan McGurk and Brittany Tucker.

12 PUBLIC COMMENT

13 MS. LITTLETON: Good afternoon. I am Gina
14 Littleton. I am the President and CEO of the
15 United Way of Northwest Florida. The United Way is
16 proud to partner with FPL, and through that
17 partnership, the work of the United Way has
18 benefited our community in a multitude of ways, but
19 that is a different did speech.

20 I have two FPL board members, and their
21 leadership has helped our organization grow and
22 serve more people and expand our services, but I am
23 not here on behalf of the United Way. Today I come
24 to you as a community member and an FPL customer.

25 I live in a neighborhood in Panama City called

1 The Cove. It's an old neighborhood. I believe it
2 was built in the '20s, the 1920s, as military
3 housing for Tyndall, and the infrastructure in our
4 neighborhood was also from the 1920s.

5 We moved into our home in 2017, and every time
6 a butter fly flapped its wings too close to the
7 power lines, the power went out. It was old. It
8 was defective and was frustrated. If you thought a
9 butterfly wing wasn't due reason for a power
10 failure, I am sure you can imagine how well we did
11 in Hurricane Michael. I think our power lasted
12 about 20 minutes into the storm, and was out for
13 quite a while after as we all recovered, while Gulf
14 Power, FPL, Alabama Power and light and Georgia
15 Power, among many others, worked 24 hours a day
16 seven days a week to repair the estimated 1.7
17 million power outages that Michael caused across
18 the southeast.

19 But the repairs from Hurricane Michael would
20 were far further than just the immediate needs of
21 restoring power. Well into 2019 and beyond, FPL
22 continued to work in our neighborhood to tighten
23 lines, replace old poles and transformers, and
24 increase the overall resiliency of our power
25 supplies. Post Michael, I can count on less than

1 one hand the number of times we have lost power.

2 Furthermore, when FPL is working in my area, I
3 get a notification letting me know to either expect
4 a brief outage, why it is happening, or because
5 something has been reported and they are just
6 letting me know that they are in route or working
7 on it with an estimated return time of service.
8 The communication is incredibly helpful, timely and
9 accurate. This means knowing what is coming. It
10 means I can plan for expectations. My husband also
11 works from home, and it means I can tell my kids
12 when they can charge their iPads.

13 Additionally, FPL offers an app that helps us
14 look at our energy usage and efficiency. As a
15 nonprofit executive and parent of two children,
16 money, as you can imagine, is tight. Being able to
17 pay attention to how we are utilizing our power
18 gives us power and helps us financially plan month
19 to month.

20 I think the reason I am most grateful for FPL
21 is how rarely I have to worry about FPL. My power
22 is on, I am communicated with, and they have given
23 me the tools I need to manage my household
24 efficiency and effectively.

25 You guys have to make the decision about a

1 rate increase, not me, but I have come to expect a
2 level of service that I don't want to lose.

3 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

4 MR. WATROUS: Next we have Declan McGurk.

5 PUBLIC COMMENT

6 MR. MCGURK: Hi, I am Declan McGurk. I am a
7 northwest Florida resident, and, yes -- I am a
8 northwest Florida resident and an FPL customer.

9 Last night, I went to the Pensacola hearing.
10 I didn't speak because this is, like, a very new
11 thing for me, and I was very nervous so -- but a
12 lot of people from my community came out to speak.
13 And everyone poured their heart out on this mic,
14 and it really inspired me to come down and give it
15 a shot myself.

16 There were other people that came out and
17 spoke last night that explicitly or implicitly were
18 in support of the rate hike, as my -- as this
19 representative from ECOSWF and LULAC and Florida
20 Rising has already pointed out many times, that
21 almost all of these individuals do have some
22 financial incentive to have a good relationship
23 with FPL, but I don't want to talk about that too
24 much. Instead I want to talk about their
25 arguments, because though don't make a lot of sense

1 to me.

2 First, a lot of people have -- a lot of these
3 organizations have mentioned that they are from
4 local communities or in the community, they talk to
5 people, and that they hear how much people support
6 and like FPL, but I want to ask the Commissioners,
7 please consider if that were true, why is everybody
8 here who is in support of FPL only representing an
9 organization? Now, they say they are here as a
10 resident, but they all also have organization
11 affiliation. Where are just the regular people,
12 the people at that are just customers that are
13 coming and saying, we love FPL, we are fine with a
14 rate hike? That don't have that.

15 Last night, we had 36 speakers. Only one of
16 them was in support of the rate hike that was not
17 representing any organizations, and he was a former
18 employee of FPL, so kind of take that as it is.

19 The second argument, the one I hear more
20 often, and it comes in many forms, essentially that
21 FPL is a good power company. FPL turns the lights
22 back on, they invest in infrastructure, and they
23 are good during storms. I am not denying that
24 those are good things. These are also just
25 expectations of a power company. They don't really

1 show signs of going above and beyond. We already
2 pay FPL, and they take a profit that's above
3 national average.

4 If I am paying a power company that's above
5 national average, I am going to expect these
6 things. That's not necessarily going above and
7 beyond. And I don't see any reason to then go
8 farther above the national average, like they have
9 asked to receive 11.9 percent.

10 So, Commissioners, please when you sit down
11 and are considering all of these, and we have heard
12 all these testimonies from people from the
13 organizations, take into consideration where are
14 the just regular people that are in support of FPL?
15 And also are they really doing a great job, or just
16 are they doing the only job because they are the
17 monopoly on the power utilities in northwest
18 Florida?

19 Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you for your
21 comments.

22 MR. MCGURK: No questions?

23 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

24 MR. WATROUS: Next we have Brittany Tucker,
25 and on deck we have Patricia Denge and Arthur

1 Cullen.

2 PUBLIC COMMENT

3 MS. TUCKER: Good afternoon. I would like to
4 begin by echoing prior sentiments, that I do not
5 envy the responsibility that each of you carries in
6 making this decision. Thank you, Declan for
7 preempting the speech, it was very humbling.

8 As someone who does not work at a nonprofit
9 that benefits from FPL and is not financially
10 incentivized in any way, I would like to add that
11 as a customer, it means a lot to me to support a
12 company that supports my community. It's a civic
13 tax that we all pay in one way or another. And
14 while I believe the businesses are entitled to
15 their profits, I am grateful of that FPL choose to
16 reinvest theirs in our community.

17 I am here to speak as an FPL customer who
18 values renewable energy and proactive innovation.
19 I personally have solar panels on my home, and I
20 can speak firsthand to the ease of connecting to
21 the grid. The billing is straight forward, and
22 simple, and the support throughout the process made
23 it clear that FPL does not accommodate clean
24 energy, they are encouraging of it.

25 I have lived in my home since March of 2022,

1 and through hurricanes, heavy storms and even a
2 snowstorm, something I never thought I would have
3 to say in Florida, my power has not gone out for
4 more than a few moments. Beyond the quality of
5 service, I appreciate that FPL isn't only
6 supporting residential solar customers like me,
7 they are investing heavily in solar themselves.
8 And I see that not as more of a trend, but a
9 commitment to the future.

10 Let me be clear that this proposed increase
11 will not -- my family. Like many families, we
12 already absorbed inflation in or parts of life,
13 groceries, transportation, health insurance,
14 housing, you name it. This adjustment from FPL is
15 a part of that same reality, and we will also
16 absorb it the same way that we absorbed inflation
17 in every other area.

18 Thank you, again, for your time in making an
19 important but difficult decision.

20 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

21 MR. WATROUS: Next we have Patricia Denge.

22 PUBLIC COMMENT

23 MS. DENGGE: Thank you, Commissioners, for
24 hearing me today. My name is Patricia Denge. I
25 live in the downtown area of Chipley.

1 In the interest of full disclosure, I
2 volunteer several hours a week working with seniors
3 in a nonprofit, the Washington County Council on
4 Aging. I am the president of their board of
5 directors, and a representative of FPL does serve
6 on our board as well.

7 In the last 12 years, I have been a
8 residential customer of three different electric
9 companies in Florida, FPL in Boca Raton for several
10 years, Talquin Electric in Havana, Duke Energy in
11 Lloyd, and now again FPL in Chipley. And having
12 experienced the service of other companies, I can
13 say without pause how much I appreciate FPL for
14 their commitment to being a great community
15 partner, particularly here in rural northwest
16 Florida, just as they were in Boca Raton.

17 Here's what I see. They are visible in the
18 community. They are investing in and working
19 diligently to enhance infrastructure and preserve
20 power grid. They are replacing power poles, as
21 been mentioned. A couple weeks ago, they were out
22 in front of my house trimming trees away from power
23 lines, storm hardening our area against the
24 hurricanes that we know are inevitable in Florida.

25 They aren't just doing, as I have experienced

1 with other companies, one and done repairs and
2 being reactive to disasters. They are looking
3 ahead year-round to what changes and improvements
4 can be made to increase the resilience of our
5 communities and responding to extreme weather
6 events particularly.

7 We all know about the energy audits, the
8 weatherization programs, the rebates for replacing
9 old appliances for energy efficient ones. All of
10 that is programs that are very beneficial,
11 particularly to the senior population that I work
12 with because they don't necessarily have the
13 resources to do those things.

14 And while nothing is free, these are programs
15 that FPL puts back into the community, just among
16 other things. They are consistent in the provision
17 of reliable service, and what makes life better for
18 the least of these makes life better for all of us.

19 I personally carefully budget my finances to
20 accommodate changes in prices over which I have no
21 control. I don't have any control over the gas
22 pump. I don't have any control over the gallon of
23 milk. But I make adjustments as necessary to
24 provide for the things that I need and use.

25 And I use their app. I find that to be

1 incredibly helpful in monitoring my own energy
2 usage. I utilize the budget billing program so
3 that I can have consistency on a monthly basis and
4 be able to anticipate my expenses, and, you know, I
5 find that the value for the cost of essential
6 services provided by FPL to be exceptional, and I
7 want them to continue, and even if that means a
8 slight increase across Florida, I think it's
9 appropriate and necessary.

10 Thank you. Any questions?

11 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: I think we are good. Thank
12 you very much.

13 MR. WATROUS: Thank you.

14 Next we have Arthur Cullen, and on deck we
15 have Jason Alves and Irvin Clark.

16 PUBLIC COMMENT

17 MR. CULLEN: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and
18 Commissioners.

19 To the comments from the Office of Public
20 Counsel, we do have wonderful weather here, but we
21 also get great difference in our allergies, so I
22 have lost my voice due to the allergies here.

23 I am a local to Panama City my entire life.
24 And as you have heard, Hurricane Michael destroyed
25 our community, and I am extremely grateful for

1 those that came from all over the country and all
2 over North America to help restore power to our
3 community. I am extremely grateful.

4 When the change from Gulf Power to FPL
5 happened, I think to say that our community was
6 apprehensive would be an understatement, because
7 Gulf Power had been here for such a long time, but
8 FPL came in and made promises to our community.
9 And not only did they make promises, but they
10 showed us their work. And they came in and they
11 kept their promises they made, not just
12 improvements to their service, but major
13 improvements to our infrastructure.

14 You can drive all around Panama City and Bay
15 County today and see wood telephone poles that are
16 now concrete. You can see areas of our community
17 where power lines are going underground. And I
18 think that's an investment that we are all grateful
19 for, and that we know that we will need living here
20 in Florida.

21 I, too, live in The Cove, as the lady who
22 spoke before me. Prior to FPL being here, when one
23 of the old trees would fall over, not only would
24 you worry about how long it took, you would hear
25 the sound of generators turn on, because it would

1 be quite a while before we got our power turned on.

2 I would just like to say I am extremely
3 grateful for their service to our community. And
4 sir, to answer your questions, I do serve on
5 numerous boards here in our community, but I would
6 like to personally share a story with you.

7 After a storm, I was Chairman of the Board of
8 the Boys & Girls Club here. We served 400 kids a
9 day in our clubs. Three of our four clubs were
10 destroyed after Hurricane Michael. I am proud to
11 say that we were the first organization serving
12 kids back open after the storm because, we knew our
13 kids needed a place of normally, and their parents
14 needed to go to work.

15 One of the board members that serves with me
16 on that board is an FPL employee. He was a former
17 kid, a Boys & Girls Club kid. Every night during
18 the aftermath of that storm, he called me to make
19 sure that our clubs were okay and that things were
20 moving forward.

21 A person before me shared that they just
22 served on boards. This board member knows what
23 it's like being a Club kid, and truly made a
24 difference for our board and the kids that we
25 serve. And I want to tell FPL, thank you for

1 allowing your employees to serve on our local
2 boards.

3 On a personal note, I am single and I don't
4 have any children. I usually make a joke, not that
5 I know of, but I won't do that here. But my mom
6 passed away three years ago, and I became the
7 primary caretaker for my twin bother who has
8 cerebral palsy. And though I might have more
9 flexible income than most, I watch my pennies
10 pretty closely, and I see this increase as an
11 investment in our community. It is small for me.
12 I know it's large for others. But we must continue
13 to make investments in our infrastructure to see
14 our community to be able to withstand what's before
15 us in future storms.

16 To the speaker before me that asked about the
17 regular people, I would just like to make a comment
18 to each and every one of you. First of all, I hope
19 that each of you serve in your communities where
20 you live. The word that comes before board member
21 is usually volunteer. I will repeat that. The
22 word that comes before board member to local boards
23 is usually volunteer, and I would consider each and
24 every one of us regular people.

25 Thank you very much for your time. Thank you

1 for your travels, and I pray your safety as you
2 return home. Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

4 MR. WATROUS: Thank you. Next we have Jason
5 Alves.

6 PUBLIC COMMENT

7 MR. ALVES: Good afternoon, Commissioners. My
8 name is Jason Alves, and I am a residential FPL
9 customer also living in The Cove. I am here today
10 to share my experiences with FPL.

11 I think a recurring theme that we have heard
12 is quality of service. I am pleased with the power
13 reliability, level of service, service and overall
14 responsiveness to FPL. To illustrate kind of my
15 points, you know, I would like to share two quick
16 examples.

17 You know, last year I had concerns about some
18 tree limbs near my overhead power lines. I
19 contacted FPL, and within a couple of days someone
20 reviewed my concern. And although it was
21 determined the limbs were on private property and
22 they were not able to assist, they did provide some
23 helpful suggestions to alleviate my concerns.

24 And more impressive is recently, there was a
25 ground transformer that I identified and notified

1 for there were some concerns with it. And
2 literally the next day, I mean, this is amazing,
3 the next day, it was repaired. It was fixed. Lock
4 on it and everything, so kids can't get in. That
5 is -- that's impressive. That's not one person.
6 That's, like, a whole team communicating, you know,
7 you have got the generator involved, the ground
8 crew, and that just goes to show the quality and
9 they care.

10 You know, a big thing is technology. I
11 actively use the phone app, and I am impressed with
12 the kind of data and information available, you
13 know, it says current use, projected usage, energy
14 analyzer usage, history, bill comparison, it's all
15 there at your fingertips. So all of that allows me
16 to make important decisions about my energy usage.
17 I also appreciate that auto bill pay, because you
18 got two little kids and you can imagine life is
19 crazy.

20 Something y'all probably are aware of,
21 Florida's economy is quite impressive. I am not a
22 native Floridian, even though I claim Florida as my
23 home now. I am from Georgia. But, you know, if
24 Florida were an independent country -- y'all
25 probably know this -- we are ranked 15, we have the

1 15th largest economy in the world. The world. So
2 I think that's amazing.

3 So given that FPL services more than half of
4 Florida, I understand the reasoning behind the
5 requested rate increase. You know, on the FPL
6 website, they have got projected bill adjustment
7 calculator allowing customers to input the usage
8 and see the impact. I think that level of
9 transparency is appreciated.

10 So in closing, a robust, reliable energy
11 infrastructure and enhanced technology are
12 essential to Florida forward into the future.
13 Thank you have for your time allowing me had to
14 speak.

15 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

16 MR. WATROUS: Next we have Irvin Clark, and on
17 deck we have Mary Frank Sheesley and Alex King.

18 PUBLIC COMMENT

19 MR. CLARK: Thank you for the opportunity to
20 address this very esteemed body. My name is Irvin
21 Clark. I represent me. I live in the great city,
22 Go Noles, 2025 Woodville about a year. I live
23 in -- and I got good news for you, I have never had
24 to call Florida Power & Light. Never had to call
25 you. I have lived in two other states prior to

1 coming here.

2 I have been here almost eight years here, and
3 you don't know what you don't know until you live
4 somewhere else, and I won't name those states, but
5 I can say this, I was impressed 10 days after
6 Hurricane Michael, shortly after I got here, the
7 power was back on when they said it would be weeks.
8 And other places I have been, the ice would happen
9 and you would be without. And that's just, wow.
10 That's very enlightening when you have been
11 somewhere and you got to call people and you got to
12 beg people, and you got to figure out that there is
13 a pecking order in order for you to get your basic
14 service back on when you pay hard earned money for
15 it.

16 I love this state. I am a native Floridian.
17 I was out of the state for 26 years. It's been a
18 blessing, an absolute blessing to live back here.
19 And I see, I see Harley-Davidson motorcycle riding
20 guy, like to let my hair blow in the wind, I know
21 you probably don't believe that, but eyebrows do
22 blow in the wind. We have great reliable services.
23 My lights never went on off during the snow and
24 ice, and I can appreciate that, because I have been
25 other places, and I see how frustrating things can

1 be, and I have never had those things with Florida
2 Power & Light. So I welcome the increase, because
3 it's just a cans of doing business.

4 Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Quick question.

6 MR. MARSHALL: Quick question. Are you on the
7 board of United Way?

8 MR. CLARK: I am sorry?

9 MR. MARSHALL: Are you on the board of the
10 United Way?

11 MR. CLARK: I am on the board of United Way.

12 MR. MARSHALL: And FPL is on that board as
13 well, and gives money?

14 MR. CLARK: There is representation from
15 across the service area, yeah.

16 MR. MARSHALL: And including FPL?

17 MR. CLARK: Sure. Yeah.

18 MR. MARSHALL: Great. Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

20 MR. WATROUS: Next we have Mary Frank
21 Sheesley.

22 PUBLIC COMMENT

23 MS. SHEESLEY: I appreciate --

24 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Pull the mic down.

25 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Help is on its way.

1 MS. SHEESLEY: I appreciate you having given
2 us the opportunity to speak here today.

3 All of the numbers I am going to give you I
4 got off the Florida Power & Light's own website.
5 They charge 17 cents per kilowatt hour. Now, I
6 didn't like having to pay them so much money for
7 energy that I like in my home, so I had solar
8 panels put on my house. I like them very much, and
9 if you give -- or produce excess energy from your
10 solar panels, they only pay three to four cents
11 back to us when we have -- give them extra energy.
12 I mean, we don't even get half of the amount they
13 charge for 17 cents is what they charge per
14 kilowatt hour, but we only get three to four cents
15 back when we give them extra energy. That is not
16 right.

17 And according to their website, the company
18 has 2,000,300 square-foot offices in downtown
19 Tallahassee. On the third floor of the building,
20 the company operates an exclusive invite only
21 lounge where the company's lobbyists interact with
22 invited Florida law makers. I am guessing most of
23 you were invited to go there. I certainly wasn't.
24 Anybody in the audience? No.

25 Their revenue is 18.37 billion. This was in

1 2023, and in 2000 -- now, according to the
2 information I got today on this green sheet, it
3 says that their last rate increase was in 2021.
4 That is not true. In 2023, they had three rate
5 increases. So I don't understand why they would
6 put information like that on that green sheet when
7 it's not true.

8 Their operating income is 6.59 billion, and
9 this is in 2023. Again, the revenue was \$18.37
10 billion. I wonder where they get that from? Us
11 customers.

12 So, therefore, I beg you, do not give them the
13 rate increase. They do not deserve it. Any
14 questions?

15 Oh, I wanted to let you know that I have lived
16 in Minnesota. I grew up in Minnesota, and we had a
17 huge hog operation, we had 200 sow herd, raised
18 over 10,000 head of hogs a year, so those little
19 baby pigs needed electricity.

20 I also taught at Frankfurt International
21 School in Oberursel, Germany, and I taught up at
22 the University of West Georgia in Carrollton,
23 Georgia. I had never had any problems with any of
24 the electricity except after Hurricane Michael
25 here, and it was like a week to 10 days before I

1 got electricity. So, yes, they needed to get more
2 problems solved, and I think they did. However,
3 they do not need a rate increase. They do not need
4 it, and I beg you don't give it to them.

5 Any questions?

6 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: None from up here. Thank
7 you very much.

8 MS. SHEESLEY: Thank you.

9 MR. WATROUS: Next, we have Alex King, and on
10 deck we have Deborah Brown and Allen Burgturf.

11 PUBLIC COMMENT

12 MR. KING: Good afternoon, Commissioners of
13 the Florida Public Service Commission. I would
14 like to thank you for the opportunity to provide
15 remarks today. My name is Alex King, and I am the
16 Port Director for the Panama City Port Authority
17 located here in Panama City, Florida.

18 As one of Florida's deep water seaports, our
19 port handles over 200 million tons of cargo
20 annually to and from markets located throughout
21 northwest Florida and are handling. This cargo
22 activity supports over 10,000 direct, indirect and
23 induced jobs in our community in northwest Florida,
24 and this delivers a \$1.6 billion economic impact to
25 our community in the state.

1 As part of that, we support two heavy
2 manufacturing industries on the port, which are
3 sitting right across the U.S. 98 is our west
4 terminal where these two industries are located.
5 Both of those industries employ several hundred
6 people in the oil and gas industry. They also
7 depend on reliable power to run the plants.

8 Our partnership with formerly Gulf Power, now
9 Florida Power & Light, has enabled the port to
10 invest in projects to support our shippers and
11 increased cargo activity based on these following
12 investments that I would like to share with you.

13 We were able to install shore power
14 infrastructure and technology to increase the speed
15 and reliability of our port container cranes. We
16 have been able to expand infrastructure to handle
17 long-term growth and refrigerated cargoes, and we
18 have been able to expand the port's bulk terminal
19 to handle growth in biomass wood pellet exports
20 that are produced right here in northwest Florida,
21 50 miles up in Cottondale. Without the service and
22 the partnership and the staff and the reaction from
23 Florida Power & Light, our port would not be --
24 that would be one of the manufactures of our port
25 not be in the position it is today to help power

1 global trade in northwest Florida.

2 We appreciate the partnership with Florida
3 Power & Light, and I think it's very important to
4 note that the Florida Power & Light accounts,
5 operations, engineering and industrial development
6 personnel are very important to the port's current
7 and long-term growth plans.

8 We are expanding our terminals. We are
9 expanding our capabilities with more modern
10 equipment, and we are doing that to create jobs,
11 invest and expand our port and ensure that we are
12 able to offer the services to our customers, to our
13 industrial partners and to our community.

14 We strongly encourage Florida Power & Light,
15 because it's dependent on the port's long-term
16 success, to continue the delivery of reliable and
17 economically priced power which is critical to
18 supporting our long-term growth, our shippers and
19 our customers that utilize our port.

20 Thank you for the opportunity to make remarks
21 today. Any questions?

22 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: I don't see any. Great.
23 Thank you very much.

24 MR. KING: Thank you.

25 MR. WATROUS: Next we have Deborah Brown.

1 PUBLIC COMMENT

2 MS. BROWN: Good afternoon. My name is
3 Deborah Brown. I am a resident of Washington
4 County, and have been for 62 years. I have lived
5 at the same residence for 40 years.

6 I am the founder of Positive Living Solution,
7 a private company for mental and behavioral health
8 that serves Washington, Holmes, Jackson and Bay
9 County.

10 Additionally, I am the founder of a nonprofit
11 organization, Positive Empowerment, serving the
12 same areas, Washington, Holmes, Jackson Counties.

13 I also serve on a board director for Second
14 Chance here in Bay County that serves the
15 population with traumatic brain injuries. The
16 Positive Empowerment organization serves vulnerable
17 communities such as youth, the elderly, and those
18 with intellectual disabilities as well as mothers
19 without support.

20 So, yes, Florida Power & Light do support the
21 nonprofit organizations, and so I do come
22 representing those nonprofits, as well as a private
23 citizen representing my community. Because of
24 Florida Power & Light, those nonprofit
25 organizations exist and is able to do the work

1 which we have missioned ourselves to do, and so we
2 do appreciate Florida Power & Light's contributions
3 to the nonprofit organizations. And I should hope
4 that they would continue to provide sponsorship.

5 In my community, Florida Power & Light is a
6 positive presence. They have done a wonderful job
7 of providing and updating a much needed wiring,
8 poles, clearing of lines and improving the lighting
9 in our communities.

10 Additionally, they have served our communities
11 by improving the efficiency and economic
12 availability to the community, free services such
13 as weatherization, and coming into the home
14 inspecting the insulation and letting the consumer
15 know if their insulation was sufficient to carry
16 the energy needed for the home. Additionally
17 providing information for upgrades that could be
18 done to reduce cost of the electricity in their
19 homes.

20 So, yes, I promote and I sponsor and I stand
21 for Florida Power & Light to have the increase
22 necessary to do the job that they have commissioned
23 themselves to do.

24 Thank you so much, Office of Public Counsel,
25 Florida Public Service Commission, for this

1 opportunity to speak.

2 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

3 Any questions? Seeing none, thank you very
4 much.

5 MR. WATROUS: Thank you.

6 Next we have Allen Burgturf, and on deck we
7 have Mitch Hilkemeyer and Ginger Littleton.

8 PUBLIC COMMENT

9 MR. BURGTORF: It's officially Allen Burgtorf.
10 I wish my mother had married a Jones or a Smith.
11 That didn't happen, so thank you though.

12 Again, my name is Allen Burgtorf. I live in
13 Rosemary Beach, Walton County. Our family now
14 stretches five generations across this great state,
15 including our daughter, who represents the future
16 we are all working for. With my wife letting me
17 lead the way, we are the co-founders of Ohana
18 Institute, an innovative K-12 school in Walton
19 County. And Ohana Solutions, a nationally
20 recognized education company.

21 I am speaking, though, as someone whose family
22 known FPL for generations. My grandmother was part
23 of the founding families of Pompano Beach in 1908.
24 And it was there, in Pompano, that my family built
25 a career with FPL. My father worked for them for

1 many years, and I remember that as a young boy
2 going down and watching him, spending time with him
3 in the customer service office, where he would
4 spend great time with the neighbors and friends
5 addressing and troubleshooting issues and go well
6 beyond and above what they were trying to do to
7 help those families.

8 My niece and nephews father worked as a
9 lineman for FPL, part of a generation that carries
10 forward the legacy of reliability, resilience and
11 responsiveness.

12 But for what sets Florida Power & Light apart
13 for me is it's not just a utility, but they are
14 truly a technology company that happens to deliver
15 electricity. The mindset drives the deep
16 investment in education that I see every day. They
17 support STEM learning, career pathways, workforce
18 development and teacher professional development,
19 partnering with schools to help the students build
20 the skills needed for a modern tech-driven economy.

21 It is this forward-thinking approach that
22 reflects the values and the visions that we need in
23 Florida for our future. Very few operate with the
24 kind of vision and value driven that I have seen
25 FPL do in education.

1 That's why our family supports the proposal
2 for the rate adjustment. It's not simply about the
3 cost. It's about preserving, strengthening a
4 modern, innovative utility that serves as a
5 national example. That revolution doesn't happen
6 by accident. It takes discipline, hard work and
7 determination over decades to get there.

8 Thank you for your time and considering what
9 our five generations of families support for a
10 company that continues to lead, in my opinion, with
11 a real purpose.

12 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Quick question. Go ahead.

13 MR. MARSHALL: Quick question. Has FPL
14 partnered with Ohana?

15 MR. BURGTORF: Oh, absolutely. We do a lot of
16 work with a lot of school districts, and we bring
17 in a lot of teachers, and thanks to FPL's support,
18 and many, many others were able to really do really
19 some innovative things for teachers.

20 MR. MARSHALL: Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

22 MR. WATROUS: Thank you.

23 Next we have Mitch Hilkemeyer.

24 PUBLIC COMMENT

25 MR. HILKEMEYER: Hello. So my name is Mitch

1 Hilkemeyer. I am a project executive with Burke
2 Construction. Even though do I have a residential
3 account with you and Scintilla Electric, I am here
4 today to talk about your commercial accounts and
5 the quality of service, and not necessarily the
6 rate increase.

7 We have been delayed on jobs in Florida
8 because we cannot get our engineering services
9 stuff through FPL quick enough. This has happened
10 in many places in Florida, and we need something to
11 track from when we make contact with FPL to track
12 all the way through your engineering department, to
13 when it's completed, to when we know we can accept
14 services, because communication through the
15 commercial accounts can be lacking.

16 Now, I arrived in Panama City about two years
17 ago, and the Eastern District of FPL has been the
18 best I have ever worked for, or worked with. I
19 have traveled this whole country working for many
20 different energy providers, but I would really like
21 to thank the communication in the Eastern District
22 provides us, especially Reggie Kennedy and a guy
23 names Shane Boyett that I have never met, but has
24 jumped into speeding for us.

25 But if this rate increase goes through, I

1 would really like to see some type of internet --
2 something on the internet to where we can track
3 what is going on with our jobs, if that can be
4 available; because there are energy providers that
5 do provide us some type of contact, even if it's
6 just random emails in where our accounts and stuff
7 for new services, but FPL provides us nothing like
8 they do with the residential side, so I would like
9 to so that changed.

10 Thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Quick question, if you
12 don't mind, sir.

13 Commissioner Fay.

14 COMMISSIONER FAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

15 Just so I can get clarity. You are saying on
16 one side, on the residential and the commercial --

17 MR. HILKEMEYER: Excuse me, I didn't here
18 that.

19 COMMISSIONER FAY: On the residential or
20 commercial, they don't, in your opinion, don't
21 respond quick enough, but then you mentioned a
22 specific area and team that was very responsive.

23 MR. HILKEMEYER: Yes. It's the Eastern
24 District here that covers Panama City has been
25 great. The engineers, we reach out to, there is --

1 Reggie Kennedy is actually on some of these emails,
2 he must be able to manage his email really well,
3 because there are on-site meetings that will take
4 place, and Reggie will send an email, like, two
5 weeks later making sure that everything was taken
6 care of on those on-site meetings.

7 COMMISSIONER FAY: So when you communicate
8 with them, they are responsive, but you just feel
9 that maybe there could be an expedited way for the
10 actual paperwork for you to be done?

11 MR. HILKEMEYER: And for us to be able to not
12 have to reach out to try and call the engineer and
13 see where the new service is at.

14 COMMISSIONER FAY: Okay.

15 MR. HILKEMEYER: Or where it's at in
16 engineering, or if it's came out of engineering and
17 we are waiting on the construction side to send
18 somebody out to install it.

19 COMMISSIONER FAY: Okay. Great. Thanks for
20 that clarification.

21 MR. HILKEMEYER: Thank you.

22 MR. WATROUS: Ginger Littleton.

23 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Ms. Littleton, were you
24 here when we swore everybody in?

25 MS. LITTLETON: I was.

1 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Okay. Excellent.

2 MS. LITTLETON: I am just short, but I was
3 there.

4 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: That wasn't how I viewed,
5 but thank you.

6 PUBLIC COMMENT

7 MS. LITTLETON: Hi. I am Ginger. I was on
8 the school board for 13 years here in Bay District
9 Schools, so some of what I am going to speak to you
10 about is my experience. I did say I was short, but
11 I didn't accommodate that, okay. Better?

12 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Perfect.

13 MS. LITTLETON: Make sure you can hear,
14 because I don't want you to miss anything.

15 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: No, loud and clear.

16 MS. LITTLETON: Okay. So a lot of what I am
17 going to say has do with my experience, which is in
18 schools. As a matter of fact, a number of years
19 ago, we had a shooter in the school board room,
20 somebody may remember, and I hit him with my purse.
21 So what I tell you today is true, and it's not
22 filtered, and I mean what I say, and I say what I
23 mean. So if I scare you, it's okay, I don't have
24 my purse today, so you are fine.

25 What we do in the school system is we wait.

1 We never raise taxes unless we damn sure have to,
2 okay, and that is painful. And we get lots and
3 lots of feedback, a lot of it not very pleasant,
4 because we did raise taxes. But what we fail to
5 think about is if we don't do it ahead of time, we
6 end up with bigger problems later down the road.

7 We had schools that were falling apart. We
8 had gutters that were falling off and rotting, and
9 we still turned a blind eye because we didn't want
10 to put a bigger burden on the public. And what we
11 did was we put a bigger burden on the educational
12 system, and we didn't do our job, because what we
13 taught our children was that you are not really
14 that important. Taxes are very important, and you
15 are just going to have to suck it up and do the
16 best you can. That's Ginger's analysis of how
17 things work.

18 You used the term profitability, that they
19 want the money for -- and they want it for profits.
20 I don't know how you guys do business, but unless
21 you have profits, you can't do to the kind of thing
22 that was just being asked, unless you have profits
23 you can't plan and execute for the future. And you
24 know, sitting right there, that our future is
25 impacted by climate, and you know that it's going

1 to get us. Maybe not here, maybe not there, but
2 somewhere in Florida it's going to get us. And if
3 we don't invest now, down the line we are all going
4 to get screwed. There is no question about it, you
5 know what I am talking about.

6 I, as now the bread winner, my husband is
7 beginning to suffer from dementia, and I just
8 recently took over the books because it was
9 becoming a challenge. So I pay my cable bill. I
10 pay the insurance, the homeowners insurance. And
11 then, for the first time, because I am just getting
12 started, I get my power bill. It was \$183. I
13 thought I had just died and gone to heaven. That
14 was a big -- everything in my house depends on
15 power. For crying out loud, \$183, throw me in the
16 briar patch. I was so -- I was thankful, so
17 thankful.

18 So I am asking you to consider, not this
19 request, but what that request will mean down the
20 line, because it's going to get worse. We are
21 going to have more needs, and if we don't meet them
22 up front with profits, we are all going to be in
23 trouble down the line.

24 Profits help them maintain what we have, they
25 help improve what we have and they help plan and

1 prepare for the future. So don't say profitability
2 like it's a dirty word, because it ain't so.

3 Any questions? Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

5 MR. WATROUS: Next we have Lorraine Lechnar.

6 PUBLIC COMMENT

7 MS. LECHNAR: I am Lorraine Lechnar, and I
8 hope your eyes haven't grazed over by now.

9 I am just speaking for myself, okay, but I was
10 at the hearing, I guess, about four to five years
11 ago, when actually it was Gulf Power then had a
12 rate increase, and it was, like, eight percent for
13 a homeowner, and actually it was supposed to -- I
14 thought was supposed to be eight percent for small
15 businesses, but ours was 13 percent increase. But
16 it was explained at that time that this was going
17 to be over a period of new investment for future
18 investment in order to get sustainable power in
19 Florida. And I said, wow, that really sounds like
20 a good idea, even though those were kind of big
21 increases.

22 So here we are now four years later, and I
23 haven't heard, I mean, I am sure you know about it,
24 whether there was increases in sustainable power in
25 Florida, but if there is, having that be kind of

1 counter to a rate increase, but anyway, set that
2 aside, I know nothing about it. But I do know now
3 that you are asking for a 13.8 percent increase in
4 the first thousand kilowatt hours, 12.4 percent for
5 those additional, and non-fuel, 9.5. And I guess I
6 am just wondering what happened to that last plan
7 that we paid for in, I guess, '21? I mean, what do
8 we have to show for it if we are making this kind
9 of investment now, what, to do the same thing?

10 I mean, I don't see the result, I guess, of
11 the sustainable power implementation with that in
12 mind. That's the first question. And if no one
13 wants to address it, I guess that's fine.

14 But at any rate, the second thing is Venice,
15 Florida, has had two rate increases -- two rate
16 decreases in the last couple of months, and that's
17 FPL, so I don't understand that either. I mean, I
18 don't quite understand how all this rate thing is
19 working and what we are actually getting for our
20 money.

21 But at any rate, I only speak for myself, and
22 if anyone can answer those questions, I am here to
23 listen, but if not, no one else to answer.

24 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: No, ma'am. Thank you for
25 the testimony. The intention is we are here to act

1 more like judges as we are taking in information,
2 so not necessarily us Commissioners here to respond
3 to questions. There are folks from FPL and from
4 the agency here that if you have a specific
5 question for one or the other, they would be happy
6 to help you answer those questions.

7 MS. LECHNAR: Well, I was very unsuccessful
8 last time, and we understand the 13 percent on
9 small business, but I spent lot of time trying to
10 find the answer to that question and track that
11 cost increase and I was totally unsuccessful,
12 understanding that was Gulf Power, okay, but
13 anyway, thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

15 All right. Is there anyone else here in the
16 audience that either signed up to speak that maybe
17 we skipped over or intended to speak but did not
18 sign up?

19 Ma'am, do you mind, as you approach the
20 microphone, do you mind just stating your name, and
21 we can -- ma'am, you did -- I am sorry, ma'am, you
22 did just speak earlier, did you not?

23 MS. SHEESLEY: I did speak earlier, but I
24 wasn't -- I didn't write everything down that I
25 wanted to say. What I would like to --

1 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Ma'am, just to be fair to
2 everyone that's here, and I know a lot of folks
3 that have spoken have left, I don't normally allow
4 folks to come back up and readdress after they have
5 had an opportunity to speak. We do have cards that
6 can be filled out, and you can provide anything and
7 everything you want to provide as written
8 testimony, and that's as you being able to speak
9 there from the microphone.

10 MS. SHEESLEY: What I wanted to say was since
11 FPL charges 17 cents --

12 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Ma'am, I understand --

13 MS. SHEESLEY: -- I need to have more money
14 from them for my solar panels when I give them
15 excess energy, and not only four cents per hour
16 when they get 17 cents.

17 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: I understand, ma'am. I
18 understand 100 percent. Thank you.

19 All right. Is there anyone else in the
20 audience that we skipped over? Not seeing any,
21 Commissioners? Any further business?

22 All right. Well, thank you to the parties. I
23 know that this process has been long, right. We
24 started well -- it's been two weeks now that we
25 have traveled throughout the state. Thank you to

1 the customers for coming out and speaking with us
2 today. Again, this is, I mentioned early on, this
3 is an extremely important part of this process,
4 being able to hear your testimony and your
5 experience with the company.

6 Thank you to Gulf Coast State College,
7 beautiful campus, beautiful real estate right off
8 of the ocean. Giving us an opportunity to be able
9 to host these meetings is a big part of being able
10 to plan and execute an effective and efficient
11 meeting, so we couldn't do it without great
12 partners out in the community, so thank you guys
13 for hosting us, allowing us to invade a little bit
14 of your territory and invite us in.

15 So if there is no further business before us,
16 thank you all. I will go ahead and call this
17 meeting adjourned. Thanks.

18 MR. MARSHALL: Thank you.

19 (Proceedings concluded.)

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1 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

2 STATE OF FLORIDA)
3 COUNTY OF LEON)
45 I, DEBRA KRICK, Court Reporter, do hereby
6 certify that the foregoing proceeding was heard at the
7 time and place herein stated.8 IT IS FURTHER CERTIFIED that I
9 stenographically reported the said proceedings; that the
10 same has been transcribed under my direct supervision;
11 and that this transcript constitutes a true
12 transcription of my notes of said proceedings.13 I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not a relative,
14 employee, attorney or counsel of any of the parties, nor
15 am I a relative or employee of any of the parties'
16 attorney or counsel connected with the action, nor am I
17 financially interested in the action.18 DATED this 16th day of July, 2025.
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DEBRA R. KRICK

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