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August 13, 2026

VIA E-PORTAL

Mr. Adam Teitzman
Commission Clerk
Florida Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0850

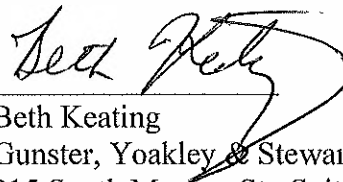
Re: Docket No. 20260026-GU – Application for Rate Increase by Florida City Gas.

Dear Mr. Teitzman:

Attached for filing, please find the Rebuttal Testimony of George Navo for Florida City Gas.

Thank you for your assistance with this filing. As always, please don't hesitate to let me know if you have any questions whatsoever.

Sincerely,



Beth Keating
Gunster, Yoakley & Stewart, P.A.
215 South Monroe St., Suite 601
Tallahassee, FL 32301

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1 BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

2
3 Docket No. 20260026-GU: Petition for rate increase by Florida City Gas

4 Prepared Rebuttal Testimony of George J. Navo

5 Date of Filing: August 13, 2026

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1 **I. Introduction**

2 **Q. Please state your name, occupation and business address.**

3 A. My name is George J. Navo. My business address is 100 Commerce Drive, Suite 200,
4 Newark, Delaware, 19713. I am employed by Chesapeake Utilities Corporation
5 ("CUC" or the "Corporation") as Controller and Assistant Vice President ("AVP") of
6 Financial Reporting.

7 **Q. Have you previously filed direct testimony in this docket?**

8 A. Yes, I filed direct testimony on behalf of Florida City Gas which I refer to herein
9 jointly as either "the Company" or "FCG."

10 **Q. Have your employment status and job responsibilities remained the same since**
11 **discussed in your previous testimony?**

12 A. Yes.

13 **Q. Are you providing any exhibits with your rebuttal testimony?**

14 A. No.

15

16 **II. Purpose and Summary of Testimony**

17 **Q. What is the purpose of your rebuttal testimony?**

18 A. The purpose of my rebuttal testimony is to respond to certain recommendations and
19 characterizations advanced by the Office of Public Counsel ("OPC") in the direct
20 testimonies of Lane Kollen and Helmuth W. Schultz, III, each filed on July 20, 2026.
21 Specifically, my rebuttal testimony addresses the following issues:

1 1. Mr. Kollen's criticism of CUC's Cost Allocation Manual ("CAM") and
2 recommendation to reduce CUC affiliate cost allocations to FCG (Kollen Direct,
3 Section V);

4 2. Mr. Kollen's adjustment to reduce common plant, net of accumulated depreciation
5 to allocate using Distrigas to all companies including parent companies.

6 3. Mr. Schultz's payroll and FTE forecast adjustment (Schultz Direct, Section VII.B);

7 4. Mr. Schultz's employee benefits adjustment associated with the payroll reduction
8 (Schultz Direct, Section VII.D);

9 5. Mr. Schultz's incentive compensation adjustment (Schultz Direct, Section VII.C);

10 6. Mr. Schultz's affiliate expense adjustment (Schultz Direct, Section VII.K);

11 7. Mr. Schultz's outside services adjustment (Schultz Direct, Section VII.I); and

12 8. Mr. Schultz's payroll tax and property tax expense adjustments (Schultz Direct,
13 Sections VII.L and VII.M).

14
15 **III. Summary of Rebuttal Position**

16 **Q. Please summarize your rebuttal position.**

17 A. OPC's adjustments to affiliate cost allocation, common plant allocation, payroll,
18 incentive compensation, and the derivative expense items should be rejected. FCG has
19 provided the necessary support and documentation for its position on these issues,
20 while OPC's witnesses present arguments with little or no support. Moreover,
21 particularly as it relates to common plant allocation, payroll, and incentive
22 compensation, approval of OPC's recommended adjustments would place FCG in a
23 very different posture than its affiliate company, Florida Public Utilities Company

1 (“FPUC), based on the Commission’s decisions on those issues in FPUC’s rate case
2 in Docket 20220067-GU.

3 Affiliate Cost Allocation (CAM):

4 Mr. Kollen’s recommendation to reduce affiliate cost allocations based on his
5 interpretation of the CAM is inconsistent with the FERC-approved modified Distrigas
6 formula and with how CUC actually allocates costs. CUC and other parent companies
7 do not function as operating business units and are not separately included in the
8 allocation factors. The modified Distrigas methodology allocates costs to operating
9 business units that own assets, incur labor costs, generate operating income, and
10 receive the benefit of corporate services.

11 Common Plant Allocation:

12 Mr. Kollen's proposed adjustment improperly modifies the Modified Distrigas
13 allocation methodology by including parent companies that are not operating business
14 units, thereby artificially reducing FCG's allocation percentage from 18.0% to
15 approximately 16.8%. Any costs that are allocated to the parent are re-allocated to the
16 business unit which would make the effective rate move back to 16.8% to 18.0%. The
17 Modified Distrigas formula is intended to allocate common plant among operating
18 business units based on gross plant, EBIT, and labor costs, and parent companies do
19 not possess separate operating metrics that justify inclusion in the allocation factors.

20 Payroll and FTE Forecast:

21 The projected 253 FTEs at year-end 2027 reflect specific, identified positions
22 supported by the direct testimonies of multiple witnesses. The 70.43% expense
23 allocation ratio reflects the expected mix of O&M and capital activities in 2027 and

1 therefore is the appropriate ratio for a projected test year as opposed to simply applying
2 a two-year average which includes transitional years.

3 Incentive Compensation:

4 Mr. Schultz's proposed full disallowance of incentive compensation should be
5 rejected. The Commission has reviewed compensation packages as a whole, rather as
6 individual subparts. As a result, it made no adjustment to exclude incentive
7 compensation in FPUC's 2022 natural gas rate case (Docket 20220067-GU). In doing
8 so, the Commission referenced similar treatment of Gulf Power's compensation
9 package as set forth in Order No. PSC-2002-0787-FOF-EI.

10 Affiliate Expense Level:

11 Mr. Schultz's comparison of the 2027 affiliate expense to the 2023 approved amount
12 is not an apples-to-apples comparison. The increase reflects the reallocation of
13 corporate service costs from the direct operating cost pool under FPL/NextEra to the
14 affiliate cost pool under CUC, which is not a duplication of costs.

15
16 **IV. Affiliate Cost Allocation and Cost Allocation Manual (CAM)**

17 **Q. Please describe Mr. Kollen's criticism of the CUC Cost Allocation Manual.**

18 A. In Section V of his direct testimony (approximately pages 39–42), Mr. Kollen argues
19 that the CAM: (1) does not adequately explain whether CUC retains costs at the parent
20 level rather than allocating them to affiliates; (2) does not include CUC in the
21 calculations of the allocation factors; and (3) does not properly reflect allocations to
22 the FPUC parent company. He relies on the Company's response to OPC Interrogatory

1 No. 161 and recommends that the Commission reduce the CUC affiliate cost
2 allocations charged to FCG, resulting in a \$597,000 reduction to net operating income.

3 **Q. Do you agree with Mr. Kollen's criticisms?**

4 A. No. Mr. Kollen misunderstands both the design of the CAM and the operational
5 structure of CUC and its regulated Florida affiliates.

6 CUC Does Not Retain Unallocated Costs.

7 As described in my direct testimony at Section VII, CUC's cost accounting policy is
8 to allocate costs to the business units that either incur the cost directly or benefit from
9 the cost being incurred. All of CUC's A&G costs are allocated to business units
10 through direct assignment or through one of three allocation methodologies: the
11 modified Distrigas formula, task-based allocation, or capital-expenditure-based
12 allocation. There is no "parent-level" residual pool of unallocated costs sitting on
13 CUC's books. All costs incurred at the CUC corporate level are either directly assigned
14 or allocated to CUC's regulated and non-regulated business units. Mr. Kollen's
15 premise is factually incorrect.

16 CUC Is Not Included in the Allocation Factors Because It Is Not an Operating
17 Business Unit.

18 Mr. Kollen argues that CUC should be included in the calculation of the allocation
19 factors alongside FCG and CUC's other operating business units. That is not how the
20 modified Distrigas formula works. The modified Distrigas formula — which is FERC-
21 approved and has been used by CUC for its regulated affiliates for many years —
22 allocates corporate costs based on three equally weighted factors (gross plant,
23 operating income before interest and income taxes, and labor costs) at the operating

1 business unit level. CUC as the parent company does not have separate operating gross
2 plant, operating income, or labor costs distinct from those of its business units. The
3 modified Distrigas formula is designed to allocate costs among operating business
4 units. CUC is not itself an operating business unit; it is the parent company whose
5 operating activities are already reflected through the subsidiaries included in the
6 formula. If CUC were separately included, the same operating plant, labor, and
7 earnings already represented by the business units would effectively be counted a
8 second time, which would distort the allocation factors.

9 FPUC as a Parent Entity Is a Legal Structure, Not an Operating Business Unit.

10 Mr. Kollen argues that the CAM should include allocations to “the FPUC parent
11 company.” FPUC as a corporate entity is the legal parent of the FPUC electric and
12 natural gas divisions but does not itself receive corporate services from CUC that are
13 separate from the services provided to the FPUC operating divisions. Allocations to
14 FPUC are effectively allocations to the FPUC operating divisions (natural gas and
15 electric), which are separate line items in the CAM and receive their appropriate
16 allocated shares. There is no separate FPUC parent-level cost bucket that should
17 receive an allocation — doing so would be double-counting.

18 The CAM is well-designed, transparent, consistent with FERC-approved
19 methodology, and consistent with prior Commission practice for CUC’s Florida
20 regulated affiliates.

21
22 **V. Allocation Percentage of Common Plant**

23 **Q. Please describe OPC witness Lane Kollen’s adjustment to common plant.**

1 A. Mr. Kollen recommends reducing common plant allocated to FCG, net of accumulated
2 depreciation, by recalculating the Modified Distrigas allocation to include parent
3 companies that are not currently included in the allocation matrix. Based on this
4 modification, he proposes a net \$406,531 reduction to rate base by decreasing FCG's
5 allocation percentage from 18.0% to 16.8%.

6 **Q. Do you agree with Mr. Kollen's adjustment?**

7 A. No. OPC witness Kollen's proposed reduction to common plant is based on an
8 improper application of the Modified Distrigas allocation methodology. Mr. Kollen
9 recalculates the allocation factors by including parent companies that are not operating
10 business units, thereby reducing FCG's allocation percentage from 18.0% to
11 approximately 16.8%. However, the Modified Distrigas formula is specifically
12 designed to allocate common assets and costs among operating business units using
13 three equally weighted factors: gross plant, operating income before interest and
14 income taxes (EBIT), and labor costs.

15 The parent company is not a separate operating business unit and does not maintain
16 independent operating gross plant, operating income, or labor costs for purposes of the
17 allocation. Including the parent company as an additional allocation recipient
18 artificially dilutes the allocation percentages assigned to the operating business units
19 without demonstrating any corresponding benefit from the common plant assets. The
20 Company's long-standing application of the Modified Distrigas methodology allocates
21 common plant among the operating entities that receive the benefits of those assets
22 and services.

23

1 **VI. Payroll and FTE Forecast**

2 **Q. Please describe Mr. Schultz's payroll and FTE adjustment.**

3 A. In Section VII.B of his direct testimony (approximately pages 73–81), Mr. Schultz
4 recommends a total payroll expense reduction of \$2,946,436, consisting of: (1)
5 \$1,586,748 for what he characterizes as an improper 70.43% expense-allocation ratio
6 (arguing the Company should use a 63.83% two-year average); and (2) \$1,359,688 for
7 what he characterizes as “known vacancies” as of May 2026. Mr. Schultz also
8 questions the increase from the 187 FTEs approved in the 2023 FCG Order to the 253
9 FTEs projected at year-end 2027.

10 **Q. Do you agree with Mr. Schultz's adjustments?**

11 A. No.

12 The Two-Year Average Ratio Is Not the Correct 2027 Test Year Ratio.

13 Mr. Schultz proposes to apply a 63.83% expense-allocation ratio based on a two-year
14 average of 2024 and 2025. That period reflects the transition from FPL ownership
15 (through the Transition Services Agreement) to full CUC operations. Using a
16 transitional-period average as the basis for the 2027 test year projection is not
17 consistent with the projected test year framework, which requires forecasting the costs
18 applicable to the test year based on known and measurable changes. The 70.43% ratio
19 reflects the anticipated allocation of payroll between expense (O&M) and capital in
20 2027, consistent with the anticipated mix of operational versus capital project activities
21 during the test year.

22

23

1 The FTE Increase Reflects Post-TSA Insourcing and Identifiable Positions.

2 The increase from 187 FTEs (approved in the 2023 FCG Order) to 253 FTEs
3 (projected at year-end 2027) reflects specific, identified positions supported by the
4 direct testimonies of multiple Company witnesses. Witness William Haffecke
5 discusses operational headcount additions; Witness Tina Barrington discusses HR-
6 related positions; Witness Abhijit Bhatwadekar discusses IT-related positions; and my
7 direct testimony at Section X discusses corporate A&G headcount additions allocated
8 to FCG (13 CUC corporate positions resulting in an effective addition of just over 2
9 FTEs to FCG through the CAM allocation). These are not speculative additions. Each
10 position is tied to identifiable operational, regulatory, compliance, or support
11 requirements arising from the post-acquisition operating model. Additionally, as
12 reflected in the Company's July 13, 2026 supplemental discovery responses, certain
13 FTE counts were subsequently reconciled to ensure consistency between reported
14 position additions and Annual Report employee information; those reconciliations did
15 not change the projected 2027 staffing requirements or the reasonableness of the
16 projected 253 FTE complement.

17 The Company's projected staffing level is not inconsistent with the operational
18 efficiencies and synergies associated with the acquisition.

19 Operational efficiencies and staffing growth are not mutually exclusive. The
20 efficiencies associated with the acquisition arise primarily from the integration of
21 systems, processes, governance, purchasing, and support functions across CUC's
22 operations. At the same time, FCG has transitioned services previously provided
23 through the TSA, expanded its customer and infrastructure base, and identified

1 additional operational, regulatory, compliance, and technology requirements. The
2 projected staffing levels reflect those identified needs and are fully consistent with the
3 realization of broader operational efficiencies.

4 The Company's recent hiring activity does not invalidate the reasonableness of the
5 projected staffing forecast.

6 Hiring activity reflects the normal process of filling vacancies, replacing attrition, and
7 staffing approved positions. The relevant issue is not how many hiring actions
8 occurred during a historical period, but whether the projected positions are needed
9 during the 2027 test year. The Company's forecast is based on identified positions,
10 operational requirements, and an appropriate vacancy assumption.

11 May 2026 Vacancies Are Not "Known" as of December 2027.

12 Mr. Schultz's \$1,359,688 reduction for "known vacancies" as of May 2026 assumes
13 that vacancies observed 19 months before the end of the test year will persist through
14 year-end 2027. That assumption is not supported. The Company's payroll forecast
15 already reflects an appropriate vacancy rate calculated to actual hiring experience, not
16 a snapshot of open positions at a single 2026 point in time. Adjusting the test year
17 payroll based on May 2026 vacancies would double-count the vacancy rate already
18 reflected in the projection.

1 **VII. Employee Benefits**

2 **Q. Please describe Mr. Schultz's employee benefits adjustment.**

3 A. In Section VII.D of his direct testimony, Mr. Schultz proposes a \$384,000 reduction
4 to employee benefits expense that is based and derived from his proposed payroll
5 reduction.

6 **Q. Do you agree with that adjustment?**

7 A. No. Mr. Schultz's employee benefits adjustment is entirely derived from his payroll
8 adjustment. As discussed in Section VI above, the Company's payroll projection is
9 appropriate for the projected 2027 test year and continues to support its position on
10 payroll expenses. To the extent the Company prevails on its payroll position — as it
11 should — the derivative employee benefits adjustment of \$384,000 should be rejected
12 with it. The Company's projected 2027 employee benefits expense reflects the cost of
13 benefit plans, health insurance, 401(k) matching, and other employee benefit costs
14 based on the projected 2027 employee complement. The Company's methodology is
15 consistent with the previous FPUC gas rate case under CUC ownership.

16

17 **VIII. Incentive Compensation**

18 **Q. Please describe Mr. Schultz's incentive compensation adjustment.**

19 A. In Section VII.C of his direct testimony (approximately pages 81–96), Mr. Schultz
20 recommends full disallowance of the \$3.8 million in projected incentive
21 compensation. He argues that: (1) incentive compensation has increased substantially
22 from the 2023 approved level; (2) plan funding is triggered by CUC financial
23 performance metrics rather than customer-benefit measures; and (3) other jurisdictions

1 (New York, Vermont, Connecticut, and prior Florida PEF and FPL rate cases) have
2 disallowed or significantly reduced incentive compensation.

3 **Q. Do you agree with Mr. Schultz's recommendation?**

4 A. No.

5 **Q. Please explain.**

6 A. Certainly, there are several reasons for my disagreement, which are outlined below.

7 Incentive Compensation Benefits Customers by Attracting and Retaining Qualified
8 Employees.

9 As I discussed in my direct testimony at Section XI, incentive compensation is a
10 necessary and important component of the Company's employee compensation
11 package. The Company's compensation philosophy — developed with the assistance
12 of independent third-party compensation specialists (Willis Towers Watson and F.W.
13 Cook). If the Commission disallows incentive compensation, the Company would
14 need to consider increasing base salaries to remain competitive, which would increase
15 overall costs to customers regardless of performance metrics. Customers benefit from
16 an appropriate balance of "at risk" pay that is only realized if Company goals of safety,
17 cost management, employee development and provision of safe and reliable natural
18 gas service are achieved.

19 The Commission Did Not Disallow Incentive Compensation for CUC's Florida
20 Affiliate, FPUC.

21 As I stated in my direct testimony, the Commission did not make any adjustment to
22 executive payroll or incentive compensation in FPUC's 2022 gas rate case (Docket
23 20220067-GU). FPUC is CUC's Florida natural gas regulated affiliate operating under

1 the same compensation philosophy and using the same third-party compensation
2 specialists. Applying a different rule to FCG in this proceeding would be inconsistent
3 with the Commission's treatment of CUC's other Florida natural gas regulated
4 affiliate.

5 The 2023 FCG Order Adjustment Was Based on the Prior Owner's Compensation
6 Structure.

7 The executive incentive compensation adjustment in the 2023 FCG Order (PSC-2023-
8 0177-FOF-GU) was based on the compensation structure of FCG's prior owner,
9 FPL/NextEra. As I discussed in my direct testimony, the Company does not believe
10 that the adjustment made based on the prior owner's compensation plans should apply
11 to the current CUC executive compensation structure. We cannot draw comparisons
12 between the executive compensation structure that existed under FCG's prior
13 ownership and the current CUC executive compensation program because we were
14 not involved in the design or administration of the prior owner's plans and do not have
15 sufficient information to evaluate the plans or their overall compensation philosophy.
16 We can only speak to the current CUC compensation structure and the governance and
17 review processes that support it (including independent third-party review).

18 Out-of-State Precedent Cited by Mr. Schultz Is Not Binding Under Florida Law.

19 Mr. Schultz indicates that there are New York, Vermont, and Connecticut decisions
20 disallowing incentive compensation. While he does not provide any citations to
21 specific orders, I assume that any such decisions from those states apply the
22 ratemaking policies of those respective jurisdictions and are not binding on the Florida
23 Public Service Commission. The Commission's own precedent as it relates to Florida

1 utilities under CUC's ownership (FPUC's 2022 natural gas rate case) has allowed
2 incentive compensation.

3 For all the above reasons, the Commission should reject Mr. Schultz's proposed full
4 disallowance of incentive compensation. The requested incentive expense reflects
5 compensation programs used throughout CUC's regulated operations, which are
6 designed to attract and retain qualified personnel. Furthermore, allowing recovery of
7 the associated expense would be consistent with prior Commission treatment of
8 incentive compensation for FPUC natural gas.

9 Company witness Matthew Everngam also addresses Mr. Schultz's reference to these
10 out-of-state decisions in his rebuttal testimony.

11 **IX. Affiliate Expense Level**

12 **Q. Please describe Mr. Schultz's affiliate expense adjustment.**

13 A. In Section VII.K of his direct testimony (approximately pages 120–126), Mr. Schultz
14 observes that the 2023 FCG Order approved affiliate expenses of \$2,477,003, whereas
15 the projected 2027 test year affiliate expenses are \$27,436,036, and proposes a
16 \$597,000 expense reduction based on the CAM issues raised by Mr. Kollen.

17 **Q. Is the comparison Mr. Schultz makes appropriate?**

18 A. No. Mr. Schultz's comparison is misleading because the 2023 approved affiliate
19 expense level and the 2027 projected affiliate expense level reflect fundamentally
20 different corporate service arrangements.

21 2023 Approved Affiliate Expense Reflected FPL/NextEra Corporate Structure.

22 The \$2,477,003 approved in the 2023 FCG Order reflected the affiliate cost allocation
23 methodology and corporate service structure of FCG under its prior owner,

1 FPL/NextEra. FPL/NextEra allocated only a subset of corporate services to FCG
2 because much of the corporate service infrastructure was maintained at the FPL
3 operating utility level rather than at the ultimate parent level. That structure is not
4 comparable to CUC's corporate service model, which centralizes A&G functions at
5 the CUC parent level for allocation to all business units.

6 2027 Projected Affiliate Expense Reflects Full Post-TSA Corporate Service Model.

7 The \$27,436,036 projected 2027 affiliate expense reflects FCG receiving corporate
8 A&G services from CUC without residual services provided through the Transition
9 Services Agreement with FPL. During 2024 and much of 2025, FCG continued to
10 receive certain corporate services through the TSA on an interim basis. As those
11 services transitioned to CUC in 2025 and 2026, and as CUC insourced the
12 corresponding functions, the affiliate cost allocation to FCG appropriately increased
13 to reflect FCG's share of the CUC corporate service costs. The projected 2027 affiliate
14 expense reflects the post-TSA corporate service structure and is a legitimate and
15 necessary cost of providing service to FCG's customers.

16 The Increase Reflects Reallocation, Not Duplication.

17 The increase reflects the reallocation of corporate service costs from the direct
18 operating cost pool (under FPL/NextEra) to the affiliate cost pool (under CUC). It does
19 not reflect a duplication of costs or an inefficient corporate service delivery model. As
20 I described in my direct testimony at Section VII, the corporate A&G functions
21 provided by CUC — including finance, legal, human resources, information
22 technology, communications, governmental affairs, corporate governance, internal
23 audit, security, and enterprise safety — allow FCG to benefit from these A&G

1 functions and resources that would be more difficult for a stand-alone utility to
2 undertake efficiently.

3
4 **X. Outside Services**

5 **Q. Please describe Mr. Schultz's outside services adjustment.**

6 A. In Section VII.I of his direct testimony (approximately pages 114–118), Mr. Schultz
7 proposes a \$508,000 reduction to the Company's outside services expense based on
8 his general framework that costs have increased excessively since the 2023 FCG
9 Order.

10 **Q. Do you agree with that adjustment?**

11 A. No. The Company's projected 2027 outside services expense reflects specific
12 engagements for legal, consulting, and audit services required to support FCG's
13 regulated operations under CUC ownership. These services include external audit fees
14 for the FERC Form No. 2 and annual and quarterly reports required by the SEC; legal
15 support for regulatory proceedings; consulting support for rate case preparation and
16 the ERP implementation; and specialized technical support. Mr. Schultz's reliance on
17 the general 82.9% O&M framework to argue for outside services reductions is
18 inconsistent with the specific, identifiable projections underlying the outside services
19 forecast. As I noted in my direct testimony, the Company's effective internal controls
20 environment and strong accounting history have allowed the external audit fee to grow
21 at a slower-than-normal pace compared to the industry average. The Commission
22 should reject the proposed \$508,000 reduction.

1 **XI. Payroll Tax and Property Tax Expense**

2 **Q. Please address Mr. Schultz's payroll tax expense adjustment.**

3 A. In Section VII.L of his direct testimony, Mr. Schultz proposes a \$404,000 reduction
4 to payroll tax expense that is based on his proposed payroll reduction addressed in
5 Section VI above. The Company believes its payroll projection is appropriate, along
6 with its projection of related payroll taxes. There is no independent basis for the payroll
7 tax reduction separate from the payroll position.

8 **Q. Please address Mr. Schultz's property tax expense adjustment.**

9 A. In Section VII.M of his direct testimony, OPC witness Helmuth W. Schultz, III
10 recommends two reductions to the Company's projected 2027 property tax expense.
11 The first is a \$2,819,027 reduction that recalculates property tax using a 63% effective
12 rate derived from 2023 data. The second is a derivative \$189,852 reduction that applies
13 the same 63% rate to OPC's proposed plant-in-service reduction of \$29,988,702. His
14 total recommended reduction is \$3,008,879.

15 **Q. Please summarize Mr. Schultz's criticism of the Company's property tax**
16 **forecast.**

17 A. Mr. Schultz's central criticism is that the Company projected 2027 property tax by
18 applying an effective rate of approximately 100% to a tax basis equal to average gas
19 plant in service, which differs from the actual years tax basis 2024 and 2025. From
20 this, he concludes the Company's method overstates expense because, in his
21 experience, the assessed tax basis is normally a fraction of plant in the 50% to 60%
22 range. He also substitutes a 63% effective rate calculated from 2023, the last year he
23 considers property taxes to bear a "reasonable" relationship to plant.

1 **Q. Is the Company's approach consistent with prior practice?**

2 A. Yes. The Company projected property tax expense consistent with the projection
3 methodology used in Florida Public Utilities Company's 2022 natural gas rate case,
4 Docket No. 20220067-GU. This is not a novel or result-driven method invented for this
5 case; it is the same approach previously presented to and reviewed by the Commission
6 for the Company's affiliated Florida gas operation.

7 **Q. What drives the increase in property tax expense?**

8 A. The increase is driven by the growth in taxable plant in service. FCG's 13-month average
9 gas plant in service grows materially through 2027 as identified, management-approved
10 capital projects are placed in service. As the taxable asset base grows, the associated
11 property tax liability grows with it. Tying the projection to plant in service ensures the
12 forecast captures this real and supported growth in taxable assets. Additionally, the
13 effective tax rate the Company calculated is significantly lower than the actual effective
14 rate for 2025 since this rate is being applied to the gas plant in service. Using 2025
15 actuals from MFR C-30 would result in an effective tax rate of approximately 1.7%. If
16 the Company had estimated its effective tax base instead, it would have used the higher
17 effective rate which would have resulted in a similar projection. The Company elected
18 to be consistent with an approved Commission methodology as the gas plant in service
19 is a known measurable item in the MFR's.

20 **XII. Conclusion**

21 **Q. Please summarize your rebuttal position.**

22 A. OPC's adjustments to affiliate cost allocation, common plant allocation, payroll,
23 incentive compensation, affiliate expense, outside services, and the derivative payroll

1 tax and property tax items should be rejected. The CUC Cost Allocation Manual is
2 well-designed, transparent, and consistent with FERC-approved methodology and
3 prior Commission practice. The 18.10% projected common plant allocation is the
4 correct application of the modified Distrigas formula to the projected 2027 test year.
5 The projected 253 FTEs and the 70.43% expense allocation ratio are appropriate for
6 post-TSA operations under CUC ownership. Incentive compensation is a prudent and
7 necessary component of employee compensation, consistent with the Commission's
8 treatment of FPUC natural gas. And the projected 2027 affiliate expense reflects the
9 post-TSA corporate service structure, not an inflated or duplicated cost. The derivative
10 employee benefits, payroll tax, and property tax adjustments fall with the payroll and
11 rate base positions from which they flow.

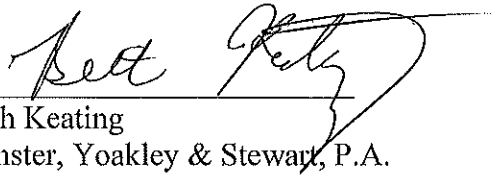
12 **Q. Does this conclude your rebuttal testimony?**

13 **A. Yes.**

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that a true and correct copy of the foregoing Rebuttal Testimony of George Navo has been furnished by Electronic Mail and/or Electronic Data Room access to the following parties of record this 13th day of August, 2026:

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