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Public Service Commission

January 30, 2001

VIA ELECTRONIC FILING

The Honorable David P. Boergers
Secretary
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20426

RE: Docket No. RT01-67-000, GridFlorida, LLC, Florida Power & Light
Company, Florida Power Corporation, Tampa Electric Company

Dear Mr. Boergers:

Forwarded herewith is the Request for Technical Conference and Protest of the Florida
Public Service Commission in the above-captioned proceeding.

Sincerely,

/s/

Cynthia B. Miller, Esquire
Bureau of Intergovernmental Liaison

CBM:tf
Enclosures

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
BEFORE THE
FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION**

GridFlorida LLC)	
Florida Power & Light Company)	
Florida Power Corporation)	Docket No. RT01-67-000
Tampa Electric Company)	
_____)	

**REQUEST FOR TECHNICAL CONFERENCE AND PROTEST OF
THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

INTRODUCTION

The Florida Public Service Commission (FPSC) hereby requests that a technical conference of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and the FPSC be held as soon as practical to address the many detailed technical and policy issues relating to the GridFlorida filing as described in this pleading.¹ In this way, the delineation of the contours of the FERC and FPSC jurisdiction could be addressed in an open and noticed forum and set forth in a Memorandum of Understanding. The applicants have filed an application which lacks significant details on the design and makeup of the proposed GridFlorida RTO and how Florida's electric industry will be impacted. Further, the filing lacks data on the costs and benefits of developing and sustaining the RTO. We, therefore, are filing a protest.² A technical conference should provide needed details relating to the planning, operation, and oversight of the transmission grid, as well as the delineation of regulatory jurisdiction of the

¹ We note that there is FERC precedent for holding technical conferences in RTO-related dockets. Recently, the FERC held a technical conference on the New York ISO. In an order issued November 8, 2000, in the New York Independent System Operator Docket (ER00-3591-000), the FERC directed its staff to convene a technical conference to address issues.

² By filing this protest, we wish to make a stronger statement than the mere filing of comments. Also, this is clearly an area of great public importance for the FERC Commissioners themselves to address. We note that the FPSC, through this filing, is not requesting a hearing.

FERC and the FPSC. We look forward to working with the FERC in a spirit of collaboration.

Initially, the FPSC reaffirms its comments submitted on November 27, 2000, in response to the initial GridFlorida filing. We continue to believe that:

- The geographic scope covered by this RTO, if approved, should be peninsular Florida, as proposed by the Applicants.
- The FERC should adopt a more realistic schedule which includes joint consideration by both the FERC and the FPSC to ensure that actions taken will benefit all Florida ratepayers and will avoid scenarios such as those occurring in California.
- No cost information has been supplied by the applicants, and therefore, carte blanche cost recovery is not warranted.
- The filing raises significant jurisdictional issues that cannot be ignored, and these should be addressed before a final decision is reached. An active and strong state role is essential to facilitating any workable RTO in Florida and should be set out in a FERC/FPSC Memorandum of Understanding.
- The FERC should not rule out any alternative RTO model. Until cost information is supplied by the Applicants, there is no way to know if a for-profit Transco is superior to a not-for-profit Transco.
- The FPSC needs assurance that it will have full access to records of the RTO and the Market Monitor.

TECHNICAL CONFERENCE

The FPSC believes that there would be significant benefit to holding a technical conference in Tallahassee with the FERC. The purpose of this conference would be to address the many detailed technical and jurisdictional issues relating to the GridFlorida filing. It would be beneficial for the FERC staff and Commissioners to meet in Florida in order to hear from the affected entities outside of the "beltway." It would also provide an

opportunity for the two agencies to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding, in which the two agencies set out their respective oversight roles over the GridFlorida RTO.

The FPSC has extensive jurisdiction, pursuant to Florida law, but believes that the RTO raises novel jurisdictional questions that should be addressed in a technical conference.³ For example, the FPSC has specific authority under the Florida statutes to ensure the reliability of the grid in Florida. It is our understanding that the FERC does not have reliability authority.⁴ The Applicants have indicated an interest in helping delineate

³ **Florida Statutes, Section 366.04(2)(c):** In the exercise of its jurisdiction, the commission shall have power over electric utilities for the following purposes: . . . (c) To require electric power conservation and reliability within a coordinated grid, for operational as well as emergency purposes.

Florida Statutes, Section 366.04(5): The commission shall further have jurisdiction over the planning, development, and maintenance of a coordinated electric power grid throughout Florida to assure an adequate and reliable source of energy for operational and emergency purposes in Florida and the avoidance of further uneconomic duplication of generation, transmission, and distribution facilities.

Florida Statutes, Section 366.05(7): The commission shall have the power to require reports from all electric utilities to assure the development of adequate and reliable energy grids.

Florida Statutes, Section 366.055(1): Energy reserves of all utilities in the Florida energy grid shall be available at all times to ensure that grid reliability and integrity are maintained. The commission is authorized to take such action as is necessary to assure compliance. However, prior commitments as to energy use: (a) In interstate commerce, as approved by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission; (b) Between one electric utility and another, which have been approved by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission; or (c) Between an electric utility which is a part of the energy grid created herein and another energy grid shall not be abridged or altered except during an energy emergency as declared by the Governor and Cabinet.

Florida Statutes, Section 366.055(3): To assure efficient and reliable operation of a state energy grid, the commission shall have the power to require any electric utility to transmit electrical energy over its transmission lines from one utility to another or as a part of the total energy supply of the entire grid, subject to the provisions hereof.

⁴ In his October 5, 1999, testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Commerce, Subcommittee on Energy and Power, FERC Chairman James J. Hoecker, stated "while the [FERC] has authority to address discrimination in jurisdictional transmission services, it has no explicit statutory role in setting or reviewing particular reliability standards or in ensuring the security of the electrical system or the adequacy of supply. That was left largely to the industry and the States." Also, the May 17, 2000, FERC Notice of Interim Procedures to Support Industry Reliability, stated that "the Commission does not have direct responsibility over reliability matters."

these items relating to oversight and jurisdiction, and have noted the difficulty of “shifting jurisdictions.” Other issues relating to the planning and operation of the transmission grid also should be addressed. Finally, the FPSC currently has exclusive authority over the ratemaking for bundled retail transmission services, and that needs to be reconciled with the proposed FERC regulation of rates charged by the RTO. Through a technical conference, these difficult and cloudy issues may be addressed in a publicly noticed and open forum.⁵ We would suggest that a date be scheduled as soon as practical, pursuant to the statutory noticing requirements for this technical conference.

DECEMBER 15, 2000, SUPPLEMENTAL FILING

With respect to the December 15, 2000, supplemental filing, the Applicants have made little progress to “flesh out” the details of the proposed GridFlorida RTO. Taken together with the initial filing, the Applicants have provided a rough framework with little detail on how Florida’s electric industry will be impacted. An adequate supply of electricity at reasonable cost is of paramount importance to the well-being of Florida’s citizens.⁶ Due care must be taken to ensure that whatever is approved for Florida does not lead to these results. Indeed, the lessons to be learned in California that exist in Florida include the fact

⁵ Section 209 of the Federal Power Act sets out Use of Joint Boards; Cooperation with State Commissions. It states that the FERC may refer matters to a board to be composed of a member or members, as determined by the FERC, from the state or each of the states affected. The board shall be vested with the same power as is a member of FERC when designated to hold hearings. The Section also authorizes the FERC to confer with any state commission regarding the relationship between rate structures, costs, accounts, charges, practices, classifications, and regulations of public utilities, subject to the jurisdiction of such state commission and of the FERC. Also, the FERC is authorized to hold joint hearings with any state commission.

⁶ Rolling blackouts, sustained high prices, and resulting economic disruption such as are occurring in California, are not acceptable in Florida.

that there are too few wholesale competitors to facilitate a robust wholesale generating market. Plainly and simply, peninsular Florida does not currently support a fully competitive wholesale generation market. To date, Florida wholesale sales continue to be a relatively small portion of investor-owned utility sales and are predominantly conducted between Florida's utilities. As a result of legal challenges,⁷ initiated and principally supported by the Applicants in this filing, the development of merchant generation in the state has largely been restricted.⁸ Based on its current structure, the GridFlorida Transco will initially do little to foster further competition in wholesale generation markets.

The regulatory goals of ensuring safe, adequate, and reliable electric service to the public at the lowest possible cost should not be sacrificed in favor of experimenting with competition for competition's sake, particularly in light of the limited competition which currently exists in Florida under the current legal framework. It is vital to the State's economy and security that stability and affordability are maintained in the provision of electric services to the citizens of Florida. Although there is insufficient detail in the Applicant's filing, particularly the lack of any cost or benefits data, to warrant dramatic changes to the transmission services currently provided in the state, we believe that certain aspects of the filing should be supported if the GridFlorida moves forward. These would

⁷ *Tampa Electric, Florida Power Corp. and Florida Power & Light vs. Garcia, et al. vs. the Florida Public Service Commission, Utilities Commission, City of New Smyrna Beach Power Company*, 25 Fla. Law Weekly (Fla. April 20, 2000, rehearing denied September 20, 2000).

⁸ The status of wholesale generation competition is a topic being discussed by the Florida Energy 2020 Study Commission.

ensure that transmission service to retail loads is sustained. The FPSC supports, in concept and at least initially, the proposed GridFlorida requirements for:

- balanced schedules of resources and load to be provided by all Scheduling Coordinators, with incremental and decremental energy bids for all scheduled resources and quick-start units;
- the grand-fathering and allocation of physical transmission rights to transmit electricity through identified congestion areas (flowgates) to retail serving electric utilities; and
- Installed Capacity and Energy (ICE) requirements for each retail load serving utility to ensure that adequate levels of generating reserves are maintained.
The FPSC does not, at this time, support the market clearing price style of auction.

Such pricing may result in highly volatile energy prices during peak periods and may also lead to gaming and windfall profit taking. The FPSC believes that until more experience is obtained with clearing price auctions in the face of a limited number of suppliers, actual bid quotes should be used in all energy markets, including the ancillary service markets.

Further, additional work is needed in the GridFlorida proposal to ensure the development of transmission reliability measures for the RTO that will preserve and improve the current performance and operation of the system without undue discrimination between urban and rural areas. These new jurisdictional questions need to be addressed in a technical conference. The state role needs to be preserved and could be delineated in a Memorandum of Understanding.

The FPSC may explore initiating rulemaking to establish statewide policy under the Grid Bill on the issues of balanced schedules, physical transmission rights, installed capacity and energy, energy pricing, and transmission reliability. In addition, it remains unclear whether the RTO will qualify as an applicant under the Florida Transmission Line Siting Act

or have the power of eminent domain. These are issues that can only be resolved at the state legislative level. While the Applicants argue that a joint filing with a retail serving utility may mitigate this limitation, the FPSC continues to question the prudence of GridFlorida seeking FERC approval to be the primary organization responsible for transmission planning and expansion without express legal authority to carry out these charges. Moreover, this defeats the very purpose of an RTO--to achieve independence for market participants in the provision of transmission service.

The FPSC also questions whether disputes arising with regard to the Final Transmission Expansion Plan as adopted by GridFlorida can be delegated to a FERC approved dispute resolution process as outlined in the proposed Planning Protocol (Exhibit N.1 of the filing). Florida's statutes give extensive authority to the FPSC to ensure an adequate, reliable, and coordinated statewide electric grid. To the extent that the FPSC believes that inadequacies exist in the transmission expansion plans of GridFlorida, the FPSC must take action to require appropriate remedies.

The FPSC continues to be concerned that the market monitoring function, as currently proposed, may not have sufficient scope or ample authority to address market abuses. We continue to believe that enforcement may ultimately be the responsibility of the FPSC working in concert with the FERC. At a minimum, the Market Monitor should be required to report its activities to the FPSC and respond to inquiries and concerns raised by the FPSC. The FPSC should have unrestricted access to all RTO records. To the greatest extent possible, information provided by the RTO should not be held confidential. Also, the

additional layer of the market monitor may lead to additional time involved in resolution of complaints.

Finally, the FPSC believes that participation in GridFlorida by Florida's retail serving electric utilities should be purely voluntary. Utilities that do not elect to participate in the GridFlorida RTO should not be penalized through the imposition of discriminatory or higher rates. The treatment and pricing of "wheeling through" transmission services provided by utilities such as the City of Tallahassee and the Jacksonville Electric Authority have not been adequately addressed and need significant additional work.

CONCLUSION

Wherefore, the FPSC requests that a technical conference be convened in Tallahassee, Florida, in which the FPSC and FERC may work together on a Memorandum of Understanding on our roles in overseeing an RTO in Florida. Currently, the jurisdiction is muddled.

In addition, the FPSC reaffirms its previous comments in this docket:

- The geographic scope covered by this RTO, if approved, should be peninsular Florida, as proposed by the Applicants.
- The FERC should adopt a more realistic schedule which includes joint consideration by both the FERC and the FPSC to ensure that actions taken will benefit all Florida ratepayers and will avoid scenarios such as those occurring in California.
- No cost information has been supplied by the applicants, and therefore, carte blanche cost recovery is not warranted.
- The filing raises significant jurisdictional issues that cannot be ignored, and these should be addressed before a final decision is reached. An active and strong state

role is essential to facilitating any workable RTO in Florida and should be set out in a FERC/FPSC Memorandum of Understanding.

- The FERC should not rule out any alternative RTO model. Until cost information is supplied by the Applicants, there is no way to know if a for-profit Transco is superior to a not-for-profit Transco.
- The FPSC needs assurance that it will have full access to records of the RTO and the Market Monitor.

Lastly, the FPSC raises some additional concerns with, as well as states its preliminary support for, certain aspects of the filing.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

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DATED: January 30, 2001

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION**

GridFlorida LLC)	
Florida Power & Light Company)	
Florida Power Corporation)	Docket No. RT01-67-000
Tampa Electric Company)	
_____)	

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing Request for Technical Conference and Protest of the Florida Public Service Commission will be sent today by U.S. Mail to all parties on the attached service list.

/s/

Cynthia B. Miller, Esquire
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