



June 21, 2021

VIA ELECTRONIC FILING

Adam J. Teitzman
Office of Commission Clerk
Florida Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Blvd.
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0850

Re: Docket No. 20210015-EI - Petition for rate increase by Florida Power Light & Company.

Dear Mr. Teitzman,

On behalf of Intervenor Florida Rising, I have enclosed the testimony of MacKenzie Marcelin. Please file these documents in Docket No. 20210015-EI. Please contact me if there are any questions regarding this filing.

/s/ Bradley Marshall

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that a true copy and correct copy of the foregoing was served on this 21st day of June 2021, via electronic mail on:

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DATED this 21st day of June, 2021.

/s/ Bradley Marshall
Attorney

BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In re: Petition for rate increase)
 by Florida Power & Light) **DOCKET NO. 20210015-EI**
 Company)

DIRECT TESTIMONY
OF MACKENZIE MARCELIN
ON BEHALF OF
FLORIDA RISING

June 21, 2021

1 **Q. Please state your name.**

2 A. MacKenzie Marcelin.

3 **Q. Where do you live?**

4 A. 1444 NW 14th Ave., Apt. 1210, Miami, FL 33125.

5 **Q. What organization are you a member of?**

6 A. Florida Rising.

7 **Q. How long have you been a member?**

8 A. I've been a member for about 3 years.

9 **Q. What is your position in the organization?**

10 A. I am the Climate Justice Organizer for Miami-Dade County.

11 **Q. What is your source of income?**

12 A. My job at Florida Rising.

13 **Q. Are you a customer of FPL? If so, for how long?**

14 A. Yes. I've been a customer for about 3 years.

15 **Q. What do you think of FPL?**

16 A. FPL is a large monopoly that is allowed to run wild. It focuses on maximizing profits and
17 maintaining its power structure. FPL deceives the public by claiming to act in the best
18 interest of its customers and misrepresenting the extent to which it actually invests in energy
19 efficiency and clean energy, like solar. In its commercials, FPL shows rows and rows of solar
20 panels and talks about how "green" it is. In reality, FPL still relies on natural gas for about
21 70% of its energy generation. FPL also has a hold on elected officials. During Florida
22 Rising's anti-disconnection campaign last year is when I really saw the lobbying power from
23 FPL. Even though FPL was disconnecting people from power, often a necessary good to
24 survive, elected officials mostly sided with FPL. Rather than act in the interest of the people
25 they are supposed to represent, elected officials in Florida most often act in the interest of

1 FPL.

2 **Q. How much does your FPL bill usually cost each month?**

3 A. It is about \$80-100.

4 **Q. How do you feel about the current price you are paying for your utilities?**

5 A. Fortunately, I personally can pay my bill each month. However, that is not the situation
6 for many members of Florida Rising who struggle each month to pay their electric bills. FPL
7 customers pay way more than they should for electricity because FPL has built more
8 expensive power plants than are actually needed and because it refuses to provide customers
9 with meaningful energy efficiency aid to help them lower their usage and monthly bills. FPL
10 actually has some of the lowest energy efficiency in the entire country compared to other
11 utilities, which forces FPL customers to use more energy due to old homes or appliances, and
12 therefore allows FPL to build more expensive power plants that we all have to pay for.

13 **Q. Based on information provided by FPL, the base rate for electricity is projected to
14 increase by about 20%. How would this rate increase impact you?**

15 A. My financial situation is tight at the moment. Rent is extremely expensive in Miami. If I
16 had to pay 20% more on my electric bill, I would have to recalculate my budget and make
17 trade-offs in spending, meaning I would be forced to spend less on other necessities. Such an
18 increase would be a significant strain on my already limited checkbook.

19 **Q. As a Floridian, are you concerned about climate change?**

20 A. Yes. I am extremely concerned about climate change impacts like increasing
21 temperatures, sea level rise, and more frequent and intense hurricanes. A named tropical
22 storm already developed before the official start of hurricane season, and the National
23 Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration recently predicted another above-normal hurricane
24 season. I am particularly concerned because Black, Brown, and Indigenous people,
25 communities that Florida Rising represents, will have to face the worst impacts of climate

1 change, to which the energy industry has significantly contributed. By paying for fossil fuel
2 power, communities of color are paying the system that actively harms them. Communities
3 of color have little voice in deciding how much they pay for electricity and where power
4 plants are located, meaning they are disproportionately saddled with energy burdens they
5 cannot afford and increased pollution from living closer to contaminating power plants.

6 Additionally, these communities are often the last to get relief during “natural” disasters.

7 **Q: Based on information provided by FPL, part of this rate increase will pay for new or**
8 **upgraded methane gas power plants. Do you believe this will have an impact on the**
9 **climate?**

10 A. Yes. These plants will emit greenhouse gases, which will worsen our
11 atmosphere and further warm our planet. Methane is a particularly dangerous greenhouse gas
12 because it traps heat much more effectively than carbon dioxide. Even though gas plants may
13 have lower carbon emissions than other forms of fossil powered electricity, the processes of
14 fracking that gas and getting it to Florida leaks lots of methane. Our dependence on gas is
15 already way too high, and with all these emissions FPL shouldn’t get to increase it more.

16 **Q: In light of that, how do you feel about contributing your own money to those**
17 **projects, through your FPL bill?**

18 A. It is disheartening because FPL will force me to pay for fossil fuel generation that will
19 disproportionately affect the communities that Florida Rising represents. I have no choice but
20 to give FPL this money—I need to power my computer and wifi for work, and air
21 conditioning to make it through our summers. When FPL continues to put our money into
22 bad fossil fueled projects, we are forced into contributing to climate change disasters that
23 FPL is worsening. FPL essentially is allowed to do what it wants, while we FPL customers
24 don’t have a choice or say in how FPL invests our money in the energy system.

25 **Q. What organization are you speaking on behalf of?**

1 A. Florida Rising.

2 **Q. Where is your organization located?**

3 A. 10800 Biscayne Blvd, Suite 1050, Miami, FL 33161.

4 **Q. How many members does your organization have?**

5 A. We have well over a thousand members.

6 **Q. Approximately how many members are FPL customers? How do you know?**

7 A. A majority of Florida Rising members are FPL customers because most our member base
8 lives in the tri-county region, consisting of Palm Beach, Broward, and Miami-Dade counties,
9 all of which are serviced by FPL.

10 **Q. Is your organization a customer of FPL? If so, for how long?**

11 A. Yes. It has been for quite some time at its Broward County office, 1142 W. Sunrise Blvd.,
12 Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311.

13 **Q. How does your organization view FPL?**

14 A. Florida Rising views FPL as a corporation looking out for its own interests, not
15 the interests of the people of the State. Because of its strong lobbying team, one of the largest
16 in the state, FPL has a great influence over Florida's Legislature. FPL's interests are its own,
17 not those of its paying customers. The company has spent billions of dollars on unnecessary
18 investments in fossil-fuel infrastructure, from which FPL expects to reap profit. Even though
19 it continues to significantly contribute to climate change, FPL has not adequately responded
20 to hurricane disasters in low-income communities and communities of color. FPL does not
21 adequately provide low-income communities and communities of color with customer
22 service or energy efficiency offerings to help them lower their energy usage and electricity
23 bills. FPL's electricity disconnections disproportionately burden low-income communities
24 and communities of color. As an example of how it has disproportionately burdened frontline
25 communities with pollution, FPL did not listen to the voices of Florida Rising members

1 during the construction of the Dania Beach generating units, ignoring the community's
2 concerns about its impacts and overall disapproval of the project.

3 **Q. Usually, how much is your organization's monthly FPL bill?**

4 A. It varies, but about \$100 per month.

5 **Q. How does your organization feel about the current price it pays for utilities?**

6 A. Any price—it doesn't matter the amount—is too high if it contributes to the climate crisis
7 or to high energy burdens of low-income communities or communities of color.

8 **Q. How would FPL's proposed rate increase impact your organization?**

9 A. Florida Rising would have to divert money away from projects that empower
10 marginalized communities in order to pay more to a company that is making climate change
11 worse. The rate change would reduce our budget for our advocacy work that serves our
12 mission.

13 **Q. How would FPL's proposed rate increase impact the members of your organization?**

14 **How do you know?**

15 A. Many Florida Rising members, the majority of whom are working-class people,
16 would not be able to afford paying a 20% increase in their electricity bill. Because FPL's
17 bills are already expensive for people, the rate increase would put a financial strain on
18 members, who would have to make trade-offs in their budget and face the risk of
19 disconnection. High bills disproportionately burden low-income communities and
20 communities of color, who often live in energy inefficient homes and lack FPL's assistance
21 in making their residences more energy efficient. As average temperatures rise due to climate
22 change, members will be forced to use more air conditioning and therefore will have pay
23 even more each month for electricity. Because electric utility bills are already too high, FPL
24 should be looking for ways to lower electric bills, not increase them. I know that many
25 Florida Rising members will not be able to afford the increased rate because I talk with

1 Florida Rising members on a regular basis. Members have called me when they received
2 disconnection notices and told me about the stress they felt in trying to prevent such
3 disconnection. Other members were disconnected without warning. In the past year, Florida
4 Rising has given out many gift cards to members facing energy insecurity.

5 **Q. Is your organization concerned about climate change?**

6 A. Yes. Florida Rising members disproportionately live in coastal areas, making
7 them vulnerable to sea level rise and flooding from hurricanes and climate change. Policies
8 on sea level rise in South Florida have been geared more toward affluent communities near
9 the water, like Miami Beach, instead of communities like Homestead, home to a large Latinx
10 population, and North Miami, where a large Haitian population resides. However, each
11 community that Florida Rising serves, no matter its distance to the water, faces different
12 issues relating to climate change. For example, in Opa-locka, an inland city, many residents
13 have older homes that are more vulnerable to storm damage. The communities we serve
14 often lack tree cover, which contributes greatly to urban heat effect, exacerbated by rising
15 temperatures. Florida Rising members often live in energy inefficient homes and likely can't
16 obtain rooftop solar because it is expensive and/or because they are renters. There is also
17 inequity in climate disaster response, as people of color are often the last to receive disaster
18 relief from the government. Florida Rising has a Climate Justice team that helps the
19 communities we serve with hurricane preparedness, such as through checklist distribution
20 and weatherization assistance. Florida Rising advocated for a Climate Justice Accountability
21 Task Force in order to hold county officials accountable for their climate goals. We also
22 work to prevent utility disconnections and recently tried to pass a bill that would have
23 assisted people in utility debt. Florida Rising aims to empower the communities that will be
24 most negatively impacted by climate change to lead the movement in responding to climate
25 change. If such communities are not adequately involved in the decision-making process

1 regarding climate policies, then we risk perpetuating the same system that disproportionately
2 harms these communities. Our organization's members are already disproportionately
3 impacted by the negative effects of climate change and will become increasingly more so as
4 its effects intensify.

5 **Q: Does your organization believe that FPL's investment in new or upgraded methane**
6 **gas power plants will have an impact on the climate?**

7 A. Yes. These plants will produce unnecessary greenhouse gas emissions, which
8 will amplify global warming. Temperatures are rising, and storms continue to worsen.
9 Construction of such gas plants is unacceptable because they would be open for decades, and
10 the time is now to stop fossil fuel generation.

11 **Q: How does your organization feel about contributing its own money to those projects,**
12 **through its FPL bill?**

13 A. Florida Rising does not want to pay any amount of money that will further contribute to
14 climate change, which disproportionately harms communities of color.

15 **Q. What is the mission of your organization?**

16 A. Florida Rising is dedicated to building broader multiracial movements with
17 individuals from historically marginalized communities to seize power and govern to
18 advance social, economic, and racial justice.

19 **Q. How is the purpose of your organization being served by participating in this**
20 **proceeding?**

21 A. By ensuring a fair, just, and reasonable rate in this proceeding, Florida Rising
22 advances economic justice for its members. Florida Rising's participation in this proceeding
23 will help communities seize power because they will engage in this proceeding, have their
24 voices heard, and take more control over energy systems that historically have economically
25 harmed and negatively impacted the health of communities of color and low-income

1 communities. Asthma rates, polluted sites, and disproportionate energy burdens are all
2 directly caused or influenced by the policies and system at issue in this proceeding. The goal
3 is to amplify the voices from low-income communities and communities of color to enable
4 them to benefit from a clean, affordable, renewable energy system now and in the future.
5 Participation in this proceeding will allow Florida Rising to advocate for a departure from
6 investments in fossil fuel generation and towards clean energy, electrification, and energy
7 efficiency. In this proceeding, Florida Rising can expose FPL as a bad actor in the energy
8 transition by fighting against the “recovery,” i.e., profits, from FPL’s bad investments in bad
9 gas plants, i.e., the so-called “clean-energy” centers. Florida Rising, by participating, can
10 show communities and individuals that they can do something about their high electricity
11 bills and fight back. By preventing FPL from recovering funds for such wasteful spending on
12 climate-change-causing generation, Florida Rising can promote a just transition to clean
13 energy, making sure its members’ FPL bills pay for meaningful investments that advance
14 clean energy and community interests, not FPL profits.

15 **Q. Will a substantial number of your organization’s members be substantially affected**
16 **by the Commission’s decision in this proceeding? How do you know?**

17 A. Yes. As previously mentioned, most of Florida Rising’s members reside in FPL’s service
18 territory and are customers of FPL. We know this because we know where our membership
19 lives. As to how the many FPL customers among Florida Rising’s membership will be
20 substantially affected, first, many Florida Rising members are struggling financially and will
21 not be able to pay the 20% increase. Second, Florida Rising members generally come from
22 historically marginalized communities, which have been and will continue to be exposed to
23 the worst impacts of climate change. If FPL uses the increased revenue it gains from the rate
24 change to invest in fossil fuel generation, then the communities that Florida Rising represents
25 will disproportionately face the negative consequences.

1 **Q. How is the subject matter of this proceeding within your organization’s general**
2 **scope of interest and activity?**

3 A. The subject matter is within our organization’s general scope of interest and activity
4 because we seek to empower individuals from historically marginalized communities in
5 order to advance social, economic, and racial justice. By preventing the rate change and not
6 having to pay for FPL’s bad investments in gas plants, we are working towards a more
7 equitable society because communities of color should not face higher energy burdens or
8 more severe climate change impacts. Florida Rising is advancing economic justice for its
9 members by stopping FPL from unnecessarily increasing their bills, which many members
10 already cannot afford. We are advancing racial justice by seeking to mitigate climate
11 change—which disproportionately harms Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities—by
12 pushing for a rapid but just transition away from the carbon-based energy system that is the
13 single greatest cause of climate change.

14 **Q. Why is the relief requested in this proceeding appropriate for your organization to**
15 **receive on behalf of its members?**

16 A. Many Florida Rising members survive on low incomes, and therefore individual
17 intervention in this proceeding would be cost-prohibitive. The pandemic is ongoing and jobs
18 aren’t fully back yet. The majority of our members still haven’t recovered financially,
19 especially as small businesses closed and the tourism industry suffered. This is an
20 economically insecure time for our members, not the time to add an additional expense in
21 their lives. Because most of our organization’s members cannot afford to pay FPL’s proposed
22 rate increase or intervene individually in this proceeding, the relief that Florida Rising
23 requests is appropriate to receive on behalf of its members.

24 **Q. How has your organization engaged with utility matters in the past?**

25 A. Florida Rising has participated in various proceedings at the Public Service Commission:

1 Docket Nos. 20190015-EG, 20190016-EG, 20190018-EG, 20190020-EG, 20190021-EG, *In*
2 *re: Commission review of numeric conservation goals*, Docket No. 20200219-EI, *In re:*
3 *Petition to initiate emergency rulemaking to prevent electric utility shutoffs, by League of*
4 *United Latin American Citizens, Zoraida Santana, and Jesse Moody*; and Docket No.
5 202000181-EU, *In re: Proposed amendment of Rule 25-17.0021, F.A.C., Goals for Electric*
6 *Utilities*. Outside of the PSC, Florida Rising has worked to stop disconnections during the
7 pandemic, provided emergency funding to restore power to disconnected households, and led
8 campaigns in opposition to new or expanded fossil fueled power plants in Florida,
9 particularly FPL’s expansion of its Dania Beach plant.

10 **Q. Why has it done so?**

11 A. Florida Rising’s mission calls us to advance racial, economic, and climate justice. As I
12 have explained numerous times through my testimony, energy and utility matters touch the
13 very heart of our mission, due to the disproportionate impacts the energy system has on low
14 income-communities and people of color in terms of affordability, access, and health, and the
15 direct connection of utility decisions to climate change, which further burdens these
16 communities. In past and current energy work, Florida Rising has participated to advocate on
17 behalf of low-income communities and communities of color that are over energy-burdened
18 and energy-insecure, and who are underrepresented in these PSC proceedings. FPL has
19 excluded and continues to exclude these communities from energy decision-making. Florida
20 Rising has intervened in matters so that stakeholders can thoughtfully and appropriately
21 address the concerns of these communities, who have been disproportionately harmed by the
22 energy system.

23
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25