

Charlie Smith

From: Charlie Smith on behalf of Records Clerk
Sent: Monday, June 17, 2024 8:00 AM
To: 'barb@baconwayne.com'
Cc: Consumer Contact
Subject: RE: Reject Duke Rate Hike Docket #20240025

Good morning Barbara Wayne,

We will be placing your comments below in consumer correspondence in Docket No. 20240025, and forwarding them to the Office of Consumer Assistance and Outreach.

Best regards,

Charlie Smith II

Office of Commission Clerk
Florida Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Blvd.
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0850
850-413-6770

PLEASE NOTE: Florida has a very broad public records law. Most written communications to or from state officials regarding state business are considered to be public records and will be made available to the public and the media upon request. Therefore, your email message may be subject to public disclosure

From: barb@baconwayne.com <barb@baconwayne.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 16, 2024 5:41 PM
To: Records Clerk <CLERK@PSC.STATE.FL.US>
Subject: Reject Duke Rate Hike Docket #20240025

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Florida PSC members:

Please do not rubber-stamp Duke Energy's rate increase. Instead, reject their latest greedy grab at Florida residents' wallets.

The Florida PSC should be looking out for the Florida consumer, specifically by:

- **Demanding fair pricing** for Florida residents instead of escalating profit margins for giant investor-owned utility companies. In 2023 the average return on equity for utilities was 9.71%. Duke is currently authorized more than 10%. They want 11.15%. This is atrocious for a monopoly. Only you can rein them in.
- **Encouraging conservation and fair demand side management** by promoting rate structures that charge more for businesses that consume very large amounts of energy and have the highest impact on the grid, causing major capital outlay that is borne by consumers. Residential consumers are already subject to a minimum bill, which amounts to a financial penalty we pay for reducing Duke's costs through conservation and solar generation.

- **Discouraging any rate restructuring that will ultimately lead to flat rate pricing** which is regressive and shifts the heaviest burden of building and maintaining the grid onto Florida families and low-income residents.
- **Adopting policies and authorizing rates that promote actual diversification of energy sources** available to consumers, especially renewables. Duke’s version of “community solar” is a marketing scheme to make more profit off the backs of consumers who cannot install or cannot afford their own solar. True community solar is an installation that is owned by a community, not by an investor-owned utility who is charging a premium to fund what they should already be doing.
- **Supporting net metering.** Net metering helps residents afford solar installations, which in turn relieves some pressure from the grid. Rooftop solar, particularly in Florida, must be a part of the solution for energy diversification and conservation. Large, utility-scale solar farms need land – a scarce commodity. But we have plenty of roofs. Homes and businesses that install solar are already connected to the grid, so they don’t require additional infrastructure. Adopting policies that encourage and reward rooftop and distributed solar installations is the easiest and most cost-effective thing you can do to facilitate a positive energy future for Florida’s citizens.
- **Inquiring about the latest innovations** in energy management for consumers. Duke Energy has some interesting projects in North Carolina that they don’t seem to be replicating in Florida. Among them are Power Pair and EV Charger Solution. Why not in Florida?
- **Pushing back on misleading rhetoric.** Duke and other utilities tout their consumer assistance programs (e.g. Share the Light) which are administered by agencies such as United Way. Duke only contributes 50% to their fund. It is a matching scheme that starts with donations by the public – then Duke matches them up to \$500,000 per year. Eligibility criteria to receive assistance are dangerous – making eliminating food and medicine the easier choice. The application process is blocked weekly due the scarcity of funds. Customers who make it through the process may get one-time help to correct their arrears billing situation. So, when Duke tells you they are helping residents in need afford their bills, please understand that this is very far from meaningful relief for people suffering financial hardship. It sounds more like a boot in the face than a hand up.

This rate hike will disproportionately affect Florida households who are already struggling with increasing costs, and whose electricity bills will continue to escalate as longer and hotter summers boost consumption. Please do not let the greed of a giant company who makes billions in profits eclipse the needs of the Florida residents you were appointed to serve.

Thank you,

Barbara Wayne
 1207 Deer Run Dr
 Winter Springs, FL 32708