

Antonia Hover

From: Office of Chairman La Rosa
Sent: Friday, August 2, 2024 4:06 PM
To: Commissioner Correspondence
Subject: Docket Correspondence - 20240025
Attachments: 20240025 - Duke Energy - Rep Berny Jacques.pdf

Good afternoon,

Please place the attached letter in CORRESPONDENCE – Consumers & Representatives in docket 20240025.

Thank you.



Florida House of Representatives

Representative Berny Jacques

District 59

July 22, 2024

Chairman Mike La Rosa
Florida Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Blvd
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Chairman La Rosa,

In representing House District 59, I wanted to share my concerns about Duke Energy's requested rate increase, Docket #20240025-EI. I am grateful to see that Duke has reduced their requested increase. However, I would still urge deep consideration of this proposal in light of the issues facing many across our state, some of which I will address below.

With over 120,000 households in Pinellas County at or below the poverty level, we have a situation here where these households are severely cost-burdened. This amounts to 25% of the county's households paying more than 30 percent of their income for housing and struggling to cover necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, and medical care.

On top of this, according to the Florida Chamber of Commerce, Pinellas County's inflation rate stands at 3.9%, higher than the national rate of 3.0%. With rising inflation, Floridians face decreasing purchase power, increasing interest rates and increasing prices for everyday goods. This leaves little flexibility in resident's budgets to pay for higher energy costs.

Furthermore, with more than 140,000 households in Pinellas alone that include a senior 65 years old or older, many of whom are on fixed incomes, we have a compounding situation. For some, even seemingly small changes can be the difference between remaining housed or facing homelessness.

Thank you for your consideration of these important issues.

Sincerely,

Berny V. Jacques
State Representative, District 59

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