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August 22, 2024

**BY E-FILING**

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

**Re: Docket No. 20240099-EI - Petition for rate increase by Florida Public Utilities Company**

Dear Mr. Teitzman:

Attached, for electronic filing, on behalf of Florida Public Utilities Company, please find the Testimony of Kim Estrada.

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

(Document 7 of 18)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Beth Keating'.

Beth Keating  
Gunster, Yoakley & Stewart, P.A.  
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Tallahassee, FL 32301  
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BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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Docket No. 20240099-EI: Petition for rate increase by Florida Public Utilities Company-  
Electric Division

Direct Testimony of Kim Estrada

Date of Filing: August 22, 2024

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1 **I. Introduction**

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

3 A. My name is Kim Estrada. My business address is 500 Energy Lane, Dover,  
4 Delaware, 19901.

5 **Q. By whom are you employed, and what is your position?**

6 A. I am employed by Chesapeake Utilities Corporation (“CUC” or the “Corporation”)  
7 as Director of Customer Care Operations. CUC is the parent company of Florida  
8 Public Utilities Company (“FPUC”). As the Director of Customer Care Operations,  
9 I am responsible for leading our regulated utilities’ customer experience strategy and  
10 operations, which include all contact center operations, billing and payment services,  
11 field service management including credit and collections operations, as well as  
12 customer experience areas of focus such as strategy, systems, quality, training,  
13 workforce management and overall focus on customer satisfaction.

14 **Q. Please describe your educational background and professional experience.**

15 A. I graduated from Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, Florida, with a Bachelor of  
16 Science in Business Administration. I began my utility career over 35 years ago with  
17 a Florida investor-owned utility. I held positions progressing in responsibility,  
18 including Facility Services, Legal Services, Bulk Power and Wholesale Marketing,  
19 Residential and Commercial Marketing, Energy Technology Resource Center, New  
20 Construction, Corporate Relations/Foundation, Commercial Customer Experience  
21 and Energy Services and Customer Solutions and Business Customer Experience. I  
22 joined CUC in April 2023 as the Director of Customer Care Operations.

1 **Q. Have you ever testified before the Florida Public Service Commission**  
2 **(“Commission”)?**

3 A. No.

4  
5 **II. Purpose of Testimony**

6 **Q. What is the purpose of your testimony?**

7 A. My prepared direct testimony will cover how CUC understands customers’ evolving  
8 expectations for electric services, and I will address CUC’s efforts to develop and  
9 implement a strategy to provide excellent service to our customers and how this  
10 translates to benefits for FPUC’s customers in Florida. CUC has focused on people,  
11 processes and technology to transform our business into a best-in-class customer-  
12 centric organization. These primary improvements are in the following areas:

- 13 1. Customer Care Center  
14 2. Customer Billing and Payment  
15 3. Field Service Management  
16 4. Customer Communications  
17 5. Miscellaneous Improvements

18 In addition, while I am not sponsoring any exhibits, I am sponsoring certain  
19 information in the MFR C-7 schedule pertaining to accounts, namely 588.1, 901 and  
20 920.

21 **III. Customer Care Improvements**

22 **Q. What improvements did CUC make in the Customer Care Centers?**

1 A. In 2022, CUC implemented a new best-in-class phone platform called Five9. The  
2 Five9 platform provides operational flexibility through easy updates to our call flow  
3 options and messaging for inbound contacts. The platform allows us to blend  
4 customer contacts and deliver their call to the appropriately skilled agent via a single  
5 dashboard that drives efficiency and provides insight into customer communication  
6 channel preference and channel effectiveness. We also gained functionality in  
7 securing additional customer feedback regarding reasons for the inquiry to identify  
8 opportunities to reduce the need for customer contact. We leverage scripted options  
9 within the application to strengthen our emergency call handling further. These  
10 would include safety messaging and key questions related to electric emergencies.  
11 In addition to this functionality, we integrated our virtual call back, workforce  
12 management system, call recording, quality systems and performance dashboards  
13 into this single program. This reduces risks associated with vendor management and  
14 provides a more holistic view of the contact center's performance. By collecting the  
15 information, we can leverage additional data points for analysis to validate our  
16 initiatives and strategy.

17 **Q. Do these improvements impact FPUC's customers directly?**

18 A. Yes, all the benefits described above benefit FPUC's electric customers.

19 **Q. What plans does CUC have to improve the customer billing and payments**  
20 **systems?**

21 A. In May 2023, CUC kicked off the largest business transformation project in its  
22 history. The project will replace two existing billing and payment platforms that are  
23 at end-of-life expectancy with one streamlined system, including the customer

1 information system historically utilized by FPUC. The new system will allow the  
2 customers to experience improvements in the timing and accuracy of billing and to  
3 increase the number of customers who receive paperless bills and make electronic  
4 payments. Additionally, this foundational system provides the robust platform to  
5 allow future enhancements that could include a customer portal, customer  
6 notification and preference management, and additional self-service functions such  
7 as virtual assistant and payment arrangement enhancements.

8 **Q. What are the expected benefits of the future enhancements to the customer**  
9 **billing and payments system?**

10 A. The customer portal will allow residential and commercial customers, including all  
11 FPUC customers, to complete many functions, including viewing and downloading  
12 their bills, view usage and payment history, make payments at any time and have the  
13 ability to start and stop their service.

14 The customer notification and preference management system will allow customers  
15 to set channel and contact preferences for outbound communications for billing and  
16 payments, and marketing, which will allow the customer to control how and when  
17 the Corporation contacts them.

18 Additional expected self-service functionality includes the availability of a virtual  
19 assistant, which would be a life-like, conversational, non-transactional chatbot  
20 providing a unique, interactive and personal way for users to get answers and  
21 assistance 24/7. Other self-service improvements may include payment arrangement  
22 enhancements to expand our payment portfolio, such as digital wallet solutions, and  
23 to provide customers enrolled in auto-pay the flexibility of requesting customized

1 payment arrangements, including offering them a flexible number of arrangement  
2 days.

3 **Q. Has CUC implemented any improvements to its field service management**  
4 **system?**

5 A. As part of the aforementioned business transformation project, an improved field  
6 service management system will be implemented simultaneously. The new system  
7 will provide us with the ability to consolidate customer information, automate  
8 service order processing and exception reporting, as well as the ability to see  
9 multiple accounts associated with the same customer. This system will enable us to  
10 improve our scheduling functionality and dispatching of work orders, as well as  
11 improve our adherence to scheduled appointments. In addition to the new system,  
12 the Corporation is structuring an organization to provide an enhanced focus on the  
13 delivery of field services with a goal of improving the customer's experience. This  
14 new team structure will align field services goals with overall business objectives  
15 and strategies. This centralized focus will benefit FPUC customers by providing  
16 additional focus on planning and scheduling, and improved field service coordination  
17 including proactive service interaction communications with customers.

18 **Q. What is the staffing model for these projects?**

19 A. CUC staffed the project team with existing team members. We also partnered with  
20 IBM, a leading integrator of customer information and field service management.  
21 Under this staffing, the portion of the CUC project team and vendor expenses are  
22 capitalized as part of the project. Once the new systems are implemented, CUC team  
23 members will focus on enhancing the systems, implementing additional



1 functionality, and supporting the business units as subject matter experts (SMEs) to  
2 ensure the systems are fully leveraged to best serve our customers. The  
3 organizational structure post-go-live will include lead project team members  
4 transitioning into process owner roles within the business. These roles will drive  
5 continuous improvements by identifying process changes, optimizing current  
6 processes, and providing business-focused operational support. Additionally, team  
7 members serving on the project as SMEs in areas such as billing, payments,  
8 customer service or operations will return to a role in the business that leverage their  
9 SME expertise as well as their newly gained system knowledge from the project.  
10 These resources will be the key team members to deliver the aforementioned future  
11 enhancements. These continued enhancements are necessary in large part due to the  
12 ever-increasing expectations and demands of customers. The Corporation's  
13 continually evolving strategy focused on excellence in customer service, coupled  
14 with CUC's goal of providing customers with effortless customer experiences that  
15 meets their needs in the way they choose has been foundational to the Corporation's  
16 success.

17 **Q. How will the Corporation handle expenses associated with these systems?**

18 A. Once we take the systems live, expenses for regular operating work will be charged  
19 to expense, while expenses for work on new system enhancements will continue to  
20 be capitalized. Allocation of these costs among the business units is made based on  
21 number of customers.

22 **Q. What improvements have been made regarding Customer Communications?**

1 A. An improvement by the newly formed field service management organization, CUC  
2 is planning to provide proactive communications prior to fieldwork being done in  
3 communities by automated outbound calls, postcards and/or door hangers. Also, in  
4 partnership with the Corporation's Strategic Communications and Marketing team,  
5 we continuously refresh key messaging across multiple channels, such as websites,  
6 social media and bill messaging. The areas of focus include safety, reliability,  
7 conservation programs, storm preparation information and billing and payment  
8 services.

9 **Q. Are there any other miscellaneous improvements you would like to share?**

10 A. Yes. Two key new improvements are:

- 11 • In 2022, CUC implemented a Voice of the Customer (VOC) platform. This  
12 program allows us to gather direct customer feedback via post-call and email  
13 surveys, identify trends and develop plans to deliver improvements in the  
14 areas customers find most beneficial.
- 15 • In 2023, CUC began a new strategic focus that will enable the Corporation to  
16 focus on the customer's experience. This initiative is called the Service  
17 Excellence Strategy and it provides the blueprint for actualizing our  
18 commitment to improved customer service by focusing on the quality of  
19 service across every touchpoint. By embracing this strategy, we will elevate  
20 our service standards, encourage innovation, and consistently exceed  
21 customer expectations.

1           • Both of these initiatives allow us to leverage the gathered information from  
2           surveys and strategy research to better understand our customer's experience  
3           and draw meaningful insights that will guide future improvements.

4   **Q.   Does this conclude your testimony?**

5   **A.   Yes.**

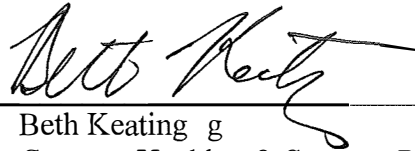
Docket No. 20240099-EI  
*Florida Public Utilities*

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I hereby certify that a true and correct copy of the foregoing filing has been served by Electronic Mail this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of August, 2024, upon the following:

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