

Collin Roehner

From: Collin Roehner
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 3:33 PM
To: 'Beatrice Balboa'
Subject: RE: Florida Power & Light Co. (FPL) proposed electrical rate increase activities?!

Good afternoon Ms. Balboa,

We will be placing your comments below in consumer correspondence in Docket No. 160021-EI and forwarding your comments to the Office of Consumer Assistance and Outreach.

Sincerely,

Collin D. Roehner
Commission Deputy Clerk I
Office of Commission Clerk
Florida Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Blvd.
Tallahassee, Florida, 32301
(850) 413-7123

From: Ruth McHargue
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 3:12 PM
To: Collin Roehner
Cc: Randy Roland
Subject: RE: Florida Power & Light Co. (FPL) proposed electrical rate increase activities?!

[I believe this goes with docket 160021](#)

From: Collin Roehner
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 2:46 PM
To: Ruth McHargue
Cc: Angie Calhoun
Subject: FW: Florida Power & Light Co. (FPL) proposed electrical rate increase activities?!

Please see the e-mail below. Please let us know whether this needs to be entered in CMS as consumer correspondence, and what docket it should be placed in.

Sincerely,

Collin D. Roehner
Commission Deputy Clerk I
Office of Commission Clerk
Florida Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Blvd.
Tallahassee, Florida, 32301
(850) 413-7123

From: Beatrice Balboa [<mailto:beatricebalboa@gmail.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 1:24 PM

To: Collin Roehner

Subject: Florida Power & Light Co. (FPL) proposed electrical rate increase activities?!

I was reading the latest news media article(s) regarding the latest Florida Power & Light Co. (FPL) proposed electrical rate increase activities throughout the State of Florida with great interest. Please review and implement an action plan to thoroughly address this extremely troubling issue. Media reports continue to underscore the ongoing significant rate increase requests throughout the State of Florida, despite an increasingly faltering economy impacting senior citizens living on fixed incomes disproportionately. In addition, there are some significant environmental and financial issues with the FPL rate increase:

xxx

Sierra Club also criticized the \$3 billion 515-mile Sabal Trail pipeline slated to be completed this year. It will transport fracked gas to central Florida and then to FPL's South Florida plants.

The pipeline's construction threatens local waterways and wetlands and the fragile limestone surrounding the Floridan Aquifer, one of the largest freshwater aquifers in the world, the Sierra Club and others contend.

"There's absolutely no justification for making families and businesses pay more of our hard-earned money just so FPL can line its shareholders' pockets and pollute our air and water in the process," said Sierra Club Florida Chapter Director Frank Jackalone.

Sierra Club Florida Chapter Chair Mark Walters said, "The PSC is supposed to make sure our energy sources are safe, reasonable and reliable. Instead, they've chosen to let FPL leave us vulnerable to price spikes when investments in solar and energy efficiency are proving to be safer and cheaper in states across the country."

Floridians made it clear in November that they want more solar by voting down Amendment 1, a failed multi-million dollar attempt by FPL and other Florida utilities to mislead voters and hobble solar growth in the Sunshine State, Sierra Club officials said.

"FPL should take full advantage of our state's clean energy potential instead of stubbornly building out dirty, unnecessary gas plants and pipelines that increase pollution and electric bills," Walters said. "Renewable energy technologies are smarter, more cost-effective and safer than fossil fuels. FPL needs to stop propping up its stockholders at the expense of our communities and our natural resources."

xxx

Please coordinate, collaborate and cooperate on Federal, State and/or local jurisdictional levels in addressing these concerns potentially impacting adversely the public's health, safety, finances, policies, trust, confidence, and quality of life issues. Thank you for your time in this matter and hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Beatrice Balboa

1010 South Ocean Boulevard, Apt. 1008

Pompano Beach, Fl 33062-6631



Sierra Club challenges nearly \$1 billion electric rate hike

Associated Press • Published: January 17, 2017 6:59 PM CDT • Updated: January 17, 2017 6:59 PM CDT

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — An environmental group is challenging a rate hike for Florida's largest electric utility.

The Sierra Club on Tuesday asked the state Supreme Court to reject an \$811 million hike that was approved last year for Florida Power & Light. FPL has about 4.8 million customers in the state.

FPL initially wanted a \$1.3 billion hike but scaled it back during settlement negotiations. The hike was approved by the Florida Public Service Commission and part of it took effect this month.

Company officials said the higher rates will help pay for improvements, including a new natural gas plant.

But Sierra Club officials maintain state law required FPL to present "substantial evidence" to prove the gas plants were needed. They assert the company never showed if it considered options such as solar.

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0 Comments



Sierra Club files Florida Supreme Court suit to block FPL rate hike



Susan Salisbury

Updated January 17, 2017 | Filed in [Florida Power & Light](#), [Florida Power & Light Co.](#), [Florida Public Counsel](#), [Florida Public Service Commission](#), [Florida Retail Federation](#), [FPL](#), [FPL base rate increase](#), [Sierra Club](#), [Uncategorized](#).



FPL's Riviera Beach plant is among those fueled by natural gas.

Sierra Club filed a lawsuit Tuesday in the Florida Supreme Court to block Florida Power & Light's rate hike for an energy plan that the environmental group says "bilks millions of customers and further locks the Sunshine State into an over-reliance on financially risky, climate-disrupting gas."

On Nov. 29, the [Florida Public Service Commission](#) unanimously approved FPL's \$811 million base rate increase following a settlement between the company and three customer groups. The rate increase took effect this month.

Prior to the rate increase's approval, Sierra Club had submitted nearly 6,000 comments to the commission from Floridians who said the rate increase posed an economic hardship for them. The commenters also stressed that there's no need for the gas-burning power plants in Florida.

Tuesday, FPL issued a statement calling the Sierra Club "an extreme group which takes extreme positions."

The Sierra Club objects to FPL's reliance on natural gas, which is used to produce about 70 percent of its electricity, while using solar energy to produce less than 1 percent. It asserts that the Florida Public Service Commission violated Florida law in approving the rate increase.

Sierra Club officials said Florida law states that utilities may raise rates only after the PSC agrees that the increase is prudent and necessary to continue providing reliable, affordable power. To comply with Florida law, FPL was required to present the PSC—and the public—with substantial evidence to prove the gas plants were needed and were the least-cost option before building the plants or asking to raise customers' rates to cover the costs.

FPL spokeswoman Sarah Gatewood said in a statement Tuesday:

"The Sierra Club is an extreme group that takes extreme positions, so while we are disappointed, we're not surprised at the actions taken today by this Washington-based lobbying group. Apparently they're more interested in generating headlines and donations than working with the cleanest electric company in Florida and the only electric utility in the Southeast United States to already be in compliance with the EPA's 2030 Clean Power Plan today.

"Rather than recognizing our innovative approach to running our business and the resulting significant benefits for all customers, including 1,200 megawatts of cost-effective new solar right here in Florida over the next four years, this out-of-state group is instead moving forward with more frivolous, expensive litigation that will cost all Floridians – not just FPL customers, but all Florida taxpayers," Gatewood said.

"After a nearly year-long process that included more than 30 witnesses, countless hours of cross examination by attorneys for all parties, including the Sierra Club, and hundreds of thousands of pages of evidence, FPL and the Office of Public Counsel, which represents all customers, as well as other major customer stakeholder groups, reached a fair settlement that is clearly in the best interest of all of FPL's customers – and the Florida Public Service Commission unanimously agreed.

"The settlement supports billions of dollars in planned investments to continue improving FPL's electrical infrastructure, which is already one of the cleanest and most reliable in the U.S., while still keeping typical customer bills lower than they were in 2006 through 2020. We look forward to demonstrating those benefits yet again," Gatewood said.

Sierra Club also criticized the \$3 billion 515-mile Sabal Trail pipeline slated to be completed this year. It will transport fracked gas to central Florida and then to FPL's South Florida plants.

The pipeline's construction threatens local waterways and wetlands and the fragile limestone surrounding the Floridan Aquifer, one of the largest freshwater aquifers in the world, the Sierra Club and others contend.

"There's absolutely no justification for making families and businesses pay more of our hard-earned money just so FPL can line its shareholders' pockets and pollute our air and water in the process," said Sierra Club Florida Chapter Director Frank Jackalone.

Sierra Club Florida Chapter Chair Mark Walters said, "The PSC is supposed to make sure our energy sources are safe, reasonable and reliable. Instead, they've chosen to let FPL leave us vulnerable to price spikes when investments in solar and energy efficiency are proving to be safer and cheaper in states across the country."

Floridians made it clear in November that they want more solar by voting down Amendment 1, a failed multi-million dollar attempt by FPL and other Florida utilities to mislead voters and hobble solar growth in the Sunshine State, Sierra Club officials said.

"FPL should take full advantage of our state's clean energy potential instead of stubbornly building out dirty, unnecessary gas plants and pipelines that increase pollution and electric bills," Walters said. "Renewable energy technologies are smarter, more cost-effective and safer than fossil fuels. FPL needs to stop propping up its stockholders at the expense of our communities and our natural resources."

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[SteveinWPB](#)

17 hours ago

Thanks to the Post for reporting this matter. It is a shame that the Sunshine state is only fueled by one percent solar. Another shame that greedy utilities like FPL get to push through price increases for projects that damage our state.


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THE BUZZ

From the staff of the Tampa Bay Times

Sierra Club files lawsuit to try to stop FPL rate hike



Mary Ellen Klas, Times/Herald Tallahassee Bureau

Tuesday, January 17, 2017 6:02pm

The Sierra Club asked the Florida Supreme Court Tuesday to block a \$811 million rate hike by Florida Power & Light over the next four years, arguing that regulators violated state law when they failed to determine if a billion-dollar expansion of gas-powered power plants are needed.

The Florida Public Service Commission in November unanimously approved a settlement agreement reached by FPL and various consumer groups to raise utility bills by \$400 million beginning in January, to be followed by \$411 million in rate hikes in the next three years.

The Florida chapter of the Sierra Club and AARP opposed the settlement, arguing that if the utility giant stopped fighting the expansion of rooftop solar and other alternative forms of energy, its customers would save money and FPL could wean 70 percent of its fleet from its dependence on climate-change-inducing fossil fuels. AARP argues that the company should not be guaranteed excessive profits at the expense of customers.

The commission did not address any of the opponents' concerns and instead touted the agreement as good for the customers and good for FPL.

"The settlement ... produces rates that are fair just and reasonable and in the public interest," said PSC Chair Julie Brown. She commended FPL for "smart, prudent decisions" that have led to the lowest rates in the state.

But the lawsuit claims that the PSC failed the principle goal of its oversight of electric utilities: determining if the rate increases are the most prudent, least-cost option facing FPL and ruling out other low-cost options, such as solar or energy efficiency. FPL relies on gas for 70 percent of its electricity generation and Sierra Club and other environmental groups argue that the company has tried to suppress conservation and competition from rooftop solar because it makes a profit off of building new plants, but can't profit off conservation or competition.

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FPL responded with a statement that "Sierra Club is an extreme group that takes extreme positions," but did not address concerns about its excessive reliance on fossil fuels and attempts to suppress conservation.

"The PSC is supposed to make sure our energy sources are safe, reasonable and reliable," said Sierra Club Florida Chapter Chair Mark Walters in a press release. "Instead, they've chosen to let FPL leave us vulnerable to price spikes when investments in solar and energy efficiency are proving to be safer and cheaper in states across the country."

The group had submitted nearly 6,000 consumer comments to the commission from Floridians who said the rate increase posed an economic hardship for them. They said that many customers believed there is no need for the gas-burning power plants in Florida and urged the commission to reject the rate hike to finance the new gas turbines.

"FPL should take full advantage of our state's clean energy potential instead of stubbornly building out dirty, unnecessary gas plants and pipelines that increase pollution and electric bills," Walters said. "Renewable energy technologies are smarter, more cost-effective and safer than fossil fuels. FPL needs to stop propping up its stockholders at the expense of our communities and our natural resources."



Under the settlement, FPL agreed to invest in 1,200 megawatts of utility-scale solar expansion — which must be approved by the commission with a cost-effectiveness test — and to eliminate the practice of the natural gas hedging, which had resulted in millions of dollars in losses and enormous expense for customers.

Here is FPL's response from spokesperson Sarah Gatewood:

The Sierra Club is an extreme group that takes extreme positions, so while we are disappointed, we're not surprised at the actions taken today by this Washington-based lobbying group. Apparently they're more interested in generating headlines and donations than working with the cleanest electric company in Florida and the only electric utility in the Southeast United States to already be in compliance with the EPA's 2030 Clean Power Plan today. Rather than recognizing our innovative approach to running our business and the resulting significant benefits for all customers, including 1,200 megawatts of cost-effective new solar right here in Florida over the next four years, this out-of-state group is instead moving forward with more frivolous, expensive litigation that will cost all Floridians – not just FPL customers, but all Florida taxpayers.

After a nearly year-long process that included more than 30 witnesses, countless hours of cross examination by attorneys for all parties, including the Sierra Club, and hundreds of thousands of pages of evidence, FPL and the Office of Public Counsel, which represents all customers, as well as other major customer stakeholder groups, reached a fair settlement that is clearly in the best interest of all of FPL's customers – and the Florida Public Service Commission unanimously agreed. The settlement supports billions of dollars in planned investments to continue improving FPL's electrical infrastructure, which is already one of the cleanest and most reliable in the U.S., while still keeping typical customer bills lower than they were in 2006 through 2020. We look forward to demonstrating those benefits yet again.



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