

Brian Schultz

From: Brian Schultz on behalf of Records Clerk
Sent: Monday, October 05, 2020 8:28 AM
To: 'vsouthard4886@gmail.com'
Cc: Consumer Contact
Subject: RE: Docket no. 20200219-EI, Stop Utility Disconnections Now. Protect FL Families During COVID!

Good Morning, Vern Southard

We will be placing your comments below in consumer correspondence in Docket No. 20200219-EI and forwarding your comments to the Office of Consumer Assistance and Outreach.

Sincerely,

Brian Schultz

Commission Deputy Clerk II
Florida Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard
Tallahassee, Florida 32399
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 e-mail message may be subject to public disclosure.

From: Vern Southard <Vern.Southard.374536219@p2a.co>
Sent: Saturday, October 03, 2020 7:30 PM
To: Records Clerk <CLERK@PSC.STATE.FL.US>
Subject: Docket no. 20200219-EI, Stop Utility Disconnections Now. Protect FL Families During COVID!

Dear Public Service Commission:

Hi, my name is Vern Southard and I live in Fort Myers. As a Florida resident and ratepayer, I am extremely concerned about the prospect of utilities taking adverse action to leave Florida families without access to electricity during the pandemic.

Families are already struggling to cope with the effects of a pandemic which has cost more than 200,000 lives and infected millions. In Florida, almost 700,000 people have been infected and more than 13,500 lives have been lost to COVID since March.

COVID disconnections present an immediate danger as families struggle to protect the health and safety by staying home and abiding by the social distancing guidelines set by public health authorities. People without electricity in their homes will have no ability to stay cool, power medical devices, communicate with others, or stay warm during the winter. Electricity is an essential good; without it, people cannot stay in their homes and must seek shelter elsewhere, amounting to an eviction. More than 1 million people in Florida could be severely impacted by utility disconnections.

It's time for the Public Service Commission to exercise its authority to ensure that Florida families are protected from disconnections during the pandemic. The PSC must issue an emergency order preventing utility companies from taking adverse action against struggling Florida families. Disconnections will exacerbate an already severe public health crisis.

Thank you for considering my comment.

Regards,
Vern Southard ■