

**Antonia Hover**

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**From:** Antonia Hover on behalf of Records Clerk  
**Sent:** Monday, March 24, 2025 11:41 AM  
**To:** 'jbaird@steer4solutions.com'  
**Cc:** Consumer Contact  
**Subject:** FW: Docket #20240032-SU  
**Attachments:** Docket #20240032-SU Opposition Letter.pdf

Good Morning, John & Elaine Baird.

We will be placing your comments below in consumer correspondence in Docket No. 20240032, and forwarding them to the Office of Consumer Assistance and Outreach.

Thank you!

*Toni Hover*  
Commission Deputy Clerk I  
Florida Public Service Commission  
2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard  
Tallahassee, FL 32399  
Phone: (850) 413-6467

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**From:** John Baird <jbaird@steer4solutions.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 24, 2025 11:30 AM  
**To:** Records Clerk <CLERK@PSC.STATE.FL.US>; Office of Commissioner Clark <Commissioner.Clark@psc.state.fl.us>; Office of Commissioner Passidomo Smith <Commissioner.Passidomo.Smith@psc.state.fl.us>; Office of Commissioner Graham <Commissioner.Graham@PSC.STATE.FL.US>  
**Subject:** Docket #20240032-SU

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Please find attached my letter of opposition for Docket #20240032-SU.

John and Elaine Baird  
241 Kettle Harbor Dr  
Placida, FL 33946  
[jbaird@steer4solutions.com](mailto:jbaird@steer4solutions.com)

DOCKET 20240032-SU

John and Elaine Baird – Opposition Letter

03/24/2025

Florida Public Service Commission  
2540 Shumard Oak Blvd.  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0850

**Subject: Opposition to EU Docket #20240032-SU**

Dear Commissioners,

We strongly oppose Docket #20240032-SU, a proposal for a privately owned, for-profit utility that is unnecessary, financially exploitative, and environmentally reckless. As residents who spoke out against this proposal at the public hearing, we demand that the Florida Public Service Commission reject this application for the following reasons:

1. **No Justification for Service** – The overwhelming majority of island residents do not want or need this service. This proposal is a Trojan horse for unwanted commercialization that will erode the very character of our island. We purchased our property in 2021 for its undeveloped “Old Florida” charm. It would be a disgrace to sacrifice that to developers’ profits.
2. **Unacceptable Financial Burden** – Private utility services impose exorbitant costs on residents, far beyond what a county-run system would require. Forcing homeowners to pay for an unnecessary system is outrageous, especially when the community overwhelmingly opposes it.
3. **For-Profit Exploitation vs. Public Accountability** – Unlike a county-run system, this private entity is designed to maximize profits at homeowners’ expense. County projects allow residents to spread costs over time; this does not. Many of us are still recovering from Hurricanes Ian (2022), Helene (2024), and Milton (2024). Forcing immediate, steep financial obligations on us is unjustifiable. We are already burdened with costly property repairs that are not covered under insurance (100% of these repairs are out of pocket)
4. **Outdated and Inefficient Technology** – The proposed system fails to incorporate modern, sustainable infrastructure. Outdated methods will result in breakdowns, inefficiency, and increased environmental risks. This condemns us to the very problem they are claiming to fix. See <https://www.wusf.org/environment/2024-10-16/tens-of-millions-of-gallons-of-wastewater-flowed-into-tampa-bay-waterways-during-hurricane-milton>
5. **Severe Environmental Consequences** – The proposed construction and operations will disrupt wetlands, harm wildlife, and threaten an already delicate water quality. This is reckless and unacceptable.
6. **Intolerable Traffic Disruptions** – Our island has only one way on and off: the ferry service operated by Palm Island Transit. Construction-related traffic already causes delays exceeding an hour. I recently experienced this firsthand due to ongoing hurricane repair work. Adding unnecessary infrastructure projects will create intolerable congestion and negatively impact residents’ quality of life.

7. **Maintenance and Emergency Failures** – The plan requires grinder pumps at each home, which will corrode in our salt-air environment. What happens when one fails at night or a holiday or weekend, or when the ferry is not operating? How will homeowners address emergencies when private ownership means slower response times?
8. **Power Outages and Operational Risks** – Frequent power outages already plague our area. A low-pressure sewer system requires electricity—how are we expected to use basic sanitation if the power goes out? Will we now be forced to install generators? Will every lift station have one? These critical concerns have not been addressed.
9. **Violation of Property Rights** – This proposal mandates a **15-foot easement on private property**. That is an egregious overreach. Our property is not large, and losing 15 feet is absolutely unacceptable. This is an infringement on private landowners' rights.
10. **Unwanted Commercial Development** – This sewer project is a clear setup for commercial expansion, increased urban sprawl, and destruction of our community's unique character. We demand transparency: **Who is pushing this project, and who stands to gain financially?** This proposal is not in the best interest of residents—it is a play for profit at our expense.
11. **Zero Public Oversight** – A privately owned utility means zero transparency. Residents will have no recourse when rates skyrocket, service fails, or maintenance is neglected. Publicly managed utilities ensure accountability—this for-profit scheme does not.

This proposal is an unmitigated disaster for homeowners, the environment, and the integrity of our community. We urge the Florida Public Service Commission to reject Docket #20240032-SU immediately.

Sincerely,

John and Elaine Baird  
241 Kettle Harbor Dr, Placida, FL 33946  
jbaird@steer4solutions.com