

## Florida PSC Commissioner Brown Named to Blue Ribbon Task Force



Commissioner Julie I. Brown

FPSC Commissioner Julie Brown has been appointed to the Southern States Energy Board Blue Ribbon Task Force, a partnership project with the U.S. Department of Energy, to help strategize an electric energy policy and regulatory framework in Puerto Rico.

Commissioner Brown's extensive work with Florida utilities' pre- and post hurricanes and her experience on national energy committees made her an ideal candidate for the Task Force, comprised of members from a diverse group of organizations. Commissioner Brown was appointed by Puerto Rico Governor Ricardo Rosselló Nevaes, Senate President Thomas Rivera Schatz, House Speaker Carlos "Johnny" Méndez Núñez, and SSEB.

*"The FPSC actively works with Florida's electric utilities to continue improving storm preparation, restoration, and grid reliability," said Commissioner Brown. "I am honored to share Florida's experiences, including our utilities' best practices, that will assist Puerto Rican officials as they develop their future energy plan."*

Task Force goals include: (1) work with Puerto Rico's Governor and Legislature to establish a reliable, affordable, and sustainable electric grid for the Commonwealth; and (2) develop a policy and legal regulatory framework to possibly privatize Puerto Rico's energy grid system.

Commissioner Brown serves on the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners' Committee on Gas, Subcommittee on Nuclear Issues–Waste Disposal, and its Presidential Natural Gas Access and Expansion Task Force to help expand natural gas service in neglected and rural areas. She also serves on the NARUC-U.S. Department of Energy Natural Gas Infrastructure Modernization Partnership, facilitating investments in natural gas infrastructure modernization and repairs to natural gas distribution pipeline networks.

## Florida PSC Promotes Lifeline Awareness Week



The FPSC participated in National Lifeline Awareness Week, Sept. 10–14, 2018 to remind low-income consumers that Lifeline Assistance (for phone or internet) helps you stay connected to family, friends, and community and emergency services. Lifeline information was available at FPSC outreach events in several Florida communities and is also available online.

Making communications services more affordable for low-income consumers, the federal Lifeline program provides a \$9.25 monthly discount. The Lifeline benefit can only be used toward phone (landline or wireless) or internet (broadband), but not both. One discount is allowed per household. Lifeline customers must recertify their program eligibility every year.

*"In this day and age, it's very difficult to function without a phone," said Chairman Art Graham. "We want consumers to know that if they already participate in an approved federal assistance program, they probably qualify for Lifeline and can easily apply for their discount."*

To participate in Lifeline, consumers must have an income at or below 135 percent of the federal Poverty Guidelines, or they (or someone in their household) must participate in one of these federal assistance programs:

- ◆ Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly known as Food Stamps
- ◆ Medicaid
- ◆ Supplemental Security Income
- ◆ Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8)
- ◆ Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefit
- ◆ Tribal Programs (and live on federally-recognized Tribal lands)

More information on program eligibility, rules, and key messages is available on the Federal Communications Commission's website.

## September is National Preparedness Month

Hurricane Season has reached the half way mark (June 1–November 30), and this September is following its historic active pattern. So, during **National Preparedness Month**, it's important to remind Floridians to *Be Prepared!* Sponsored by the Department of Homeland Security, the year's NPM theme is:

*"Disasters Happen. Prepare Now. Learn How."*

Access the FPSC's Hurricane House to help prepare your home and family for storms.



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