1	BEFORE THE				
2	FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION				
3	In the Matter o	f:			
4	EMERGENCY COMPL EXPRESS PHONE S		DOCKET NO. 110071-TP		
5	INC. AGAINST BELLSOUTH TELECOMMUNICATIONS, INC.				
	D/B/A AT&T FLORIDA REGARDING				
6	INTERPRETATION OF THE PARTIES' INTERCONNECTION AGREEMENT.				
7	NOTICE OF ADOPTION OF EXISTING DOCKET NO. 110087-TP				
8	INTERCONNECTION, UNBUNDLING, RESALE, AND COLLOCATION				
9	AGREEMENT BETWE TELECOMMUNICATT	EN BELLSOUTH ONS, INC. D/B/A			
10		B/A AT&T SOUTHEAST			
11		BY EXPRESS PHONE			
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16	PROCEEDINGS:	AGENDA CONFERENCE			
17		ITEM NO. 3			
18	COMMISSIONERS PARTICIPATING:	CHAIRMAN ART GRAH	лм		
	FACILCITATING.	COMMISSIONER LISA COMMISSIONER RONA	A POLAK EDGAR		
19		COMMISSIONER EDUA	ARDO E. BALBIS		
20		COMMISSIONER JULI			
21	DATE:	Tuesday, June 14,	2011		
22	PLACE:	Betty Easley Conf Room 148	ference Center	101 NUL	
23		4075 Esplanade Wa Tallahassee, Flor		a .	
24	REPORTED BY:			онектиц 04162	
25	REFORTED DI:	JANE FAUROT, RPR Official FPSC Rep (850) 413-6732	porter	DILI 6	
		FLORIDA PUBLIC SER	VICE COMMISSION		

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FPSC-COMMISSION CLERK

1	PROCEEDINGS
2	CHAIRMAN GRAHAM: Item Number 3.
3	MS. TAN: Gcod morning, Commissioners. Lee
4	Eng Tan on behalf of Commission staff.
5	Item Number 3 concerns Express Phone's notice
6	of adoption of an interconnection agreement and
7	complaint against AT&T for termination of service and
8	dispute regarding promotional credits.
9	Staff's recommendation addresses Express
10	Phone's motion for summary final order and notice of
11	adoption. Express Phone has requested oral argument
12	for Issue 2. Staff recommends granting the oral
13	argument with each side allowed no more than ten
14	minutes.
15	Vicki Kaufman, representing Express Phone,
16	and Tracy Hatch, representing AT&T, are here today.
17	Mr. Armstrong, owner of Express Phone, is also here
18	today. Staff is available for any questions.
19	CHAIRMAN GRAHAM: All right. I guess it's
20	Issue Number 1, and I don't have a problem with
21	granting the oral argument and staff is recommending
22	ten minutes.
23	Can we get a motion?
24	COMMISSIONER EDGAR: I move the staff
25	recommendation on Issue 1 for oral argument, ten

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1 minutes per side.

CHAIRMAN GRAHAM: Moved and seconded. 2 Commissioner Brisé, do you have something? 3 4 Okay. All in favor say aye. (Vote taken.) 5 CHAIRMAN GRAHAM: Any opposed? 6 7 We are granting oral argument. Staff, who is going first? 8 MS. TAN: Vicki Kaufman for Express Phone. 9 10 CHAIRMAN GRAHAM: Vicki, you're up. MS. KAUFMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. 11 Good 12 morning, Commissioners. I am Vicki Gordon Kaufman; I'm with the law firm of Keefe Anchor Gordon and Moyle here 13 in Tallahassee, and I am here on behalf of Express 14 15 Phone. And with me is Mr. Tom Armstrong, who is 16 President of Express Phone. 17 Express Phone is a CLEC that has been doing business in Florida for many years, primarily providing 18 service to Lifeline customers. By way of background, I 19 just wanted to note that there are two dockets included 20 in this recommendation. One deals with the adoption of 21 an interconnection agreement pursuant to clear federal 22 law, while the other relates to a billing dispute 23 between AT&T and Express Phone. I suggest to you that 24 25 these are totally different issues and totally separate

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dockets. However, in the recommendation on the adoption, it appears to us that staff and AT&T have mixed these two issues together. We think that that is inappropriate, and it's contrary to federal law, as I am going to discuss in a moment.

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In addition, I'm sure that you will hear AT&T say that Express Phone is trying to escape its payment obligations under its interconnection agreement. Commissioners, that is not the case. You will hear in another docket, and it's 110071, the dispute between the parties. You will decide in that docket who owes who what, if that makes sense. You will decide if Express Phone owes AT&T, or you will decide if AT&T owes Express Phone, as your staff suggests, subject of an evidentiary hearing to develop those facts.

And I want you to know as a practical matter, AT&T has cut off service to Express Phone, and no doubt, though I can't say for certain, many of those customers went to AT&T. Since AT&T has already cut off service, what we would ask you to do in this case is to find that Express Phone can adopt the image access agreement and direct AT&T to allow ordering under that agreement.

I'm going to address primarily the adoption issue which we think is clearly a matter of law.

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Express Phone sent AT&T not one, but two notices of adoption pursuant to federal law. And so AT&T ignored those adoption notices, and did write back to Express Phone relating concerns that have nothing to do with the federal law or the principles of adoption.

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We filed a motion for final summary order. There are no facts in dispute that relate to the adoption. We agree with the standard your staff has set out on Page 7 in regard to what you need to find to enter a final summary order. We disagree with their conclusion, and we think those standards have been met.

Let me talk a moment about the federal law 12 and rules that relate to adoption. You probably know 13 that awhile ago the FCC changed its adoption rule from 14 allowing a carrier to pick and choose certain 15 provisions and incorporate those into the rule they now 16 have, which is called the all or nothing rule, meaning 17 that a carrier has to adopt an entire agreement, they 18 can't just pick out pertinent provisions. 19

20 When the FCC went through that rulemaking, 21 here is what they said the reason for that change was. 22 And this is the FCC. They said we conclude that under 23 an all-or-nothing rule, requesting carriers will be 24 protected from discrimination as intended by Section 25 252(i), which is the federal adoption law.

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Specifically, an incumbent will not be able to reach a discriminatory agreement for interconnection services or network elements with a particular carrier without making that same agreement in its entirety available to other carriers.

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This is the overriding purpose of the rule, to prevent the incumbent from discriminating among carriers. That's just what has occurred in this case. Express Phone has tried to adopt in its entirety an interconnection agreement of another company that has more favorable terms. There's nothing wrong with that. That's exactly what the law intends to happen.

Now, your jcb, and the reason I say this is a 13 matter of law, is to determine if the criteria for 14 adoption have been met. And if you look at the 15 implementing FCC rule on adoption that implements 16 Section 252(i), there are two exceptions to adoption, 17 two. One is the costs are greater of providing service 18 to the adopting carrier than they were to the original 19 party to the contract, and the second is that the 20 provision of service is not technically feasible. 21

Neither of those exceptions have been raised by AT&T. Neither of those exceptions is a fact in dispute. So in our view, we have met the requirement for adoption. We have complied with the letter of the

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So you are asking yourselves, well, why are we law. here, why are we having this dispute? Now, your staff and AT&T have provided some reasons outside the parameters of the federal law which states they would prevent the adoption. The first thing they say is there is a question as to whether a carrier can adopt a new agreement during the term of the current agreement. Of course they can. And, again, this goes back to the discrimination provision, and let me just give you a hypothetical. These numbers have no reality in law. Let's say that Express Phone is paying AT&T \$20 for each resold line. Another carrier is paying AT&T \$10 for each resold line. Of course, Express Phone pursuant to the law and the reason behind the law is permitted to adopt a more favorable agreement. That is what is happening here.

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And I would also point out to you that in the current agreement between Express Phone and AT&T, there is a section in the general terms and conditions, and I want to quote this to you because I think it's important, this is in the contract between the parties. It says pursuant to 47 U.S.C. Section 252(i) and 47 C.F.R. 51.809, BellSouth shall make available to Express Phone any entire resale agreement filed and approved pursuant to 47 U.S.C. 252. That's in the

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contract.

Now, your staff does cite that provision in the recommendation as one of our positions, but they don't tell you why that provision should be ignored. The provision in the contract is totally consistent with the federal law as I have described it to you.

The second reason that staff and AT&T suggest that the adoption shouldn't be permitted is because these parties have a dispute in the billing docket. It involves whether promotional credits have been appropriately credited to Express Phone. You are not here to decide that today. I will tell you that it is our position that AT&T owes us money, not the other way around. It doesn't effect whether or not there has been a valid adoption.

The third reason that staff and AT&T suggest you shouldn't permit the adoption is for reasons that they call public policy reasons. With all due respect, I think 252(i) and the FCC rule, as I have already said, give you two exceptions and only two. However, if you want, if you are inclined to consider public policy, the public policy you should consider is the one that is to prevent discrimination among carriers, and we would also have you consider the fact that AT&T has cut off service to 3,000 Express Phone customers,

most of whom were receiving Lifeline who now have fewer choices in the competitive marketplace.

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AT&T does cite some, I would call them general public interest cases, none of them are on point, and I would ask you to think about what is the public interest here. Is it the interest of the AT&T shareholders, which is the only public interest I have been able to come up with to support that argument, or is it to prevent discrimination and to provide choice in the marketplace.

Lastly, there has been an issue raised that 11 says the adoption date, the date we adopted the 12 13 agreement isn't clear. It is perfectly clear; and it is a matter of settled law in Florida. It is not in 14 dispute. Adoption of an ICA is presumptively valid 15 when the -- when AT&T, when the incumbent receives the 16 17 notice of adoption. This very Commission entered that order in the Sprint-Nextel adoption case that some you 18 may be familiar with. AT&T didn't like that result, 19 and they took it over to the Northern District and 20 appealed it, and the Northern District said the very 21 same thing. 22

23 So adoptions, contrary and with all due 24 respect to your staff, it is not when they get filed 25 with the Commission, it is when the incumbent receives

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notice. That's what you said, and that's what the 1 court said. And further I would say to you that it is 2 not Express Phone's obligation to file the notice, it 3 is the incumbent's obligation to file the notice. 4 5 Lastly, staff, as well as AT&T, attribute some highly nefarious motives to Express Phone on Page 6 14 of the recommendation. As I emphasized, we're not 7 trying to escape any payment obligation. That will be 8 sorted out by you. But it doesn't really matter what 9 our motive is, we have complied with the law, and the 10 law is clear, and we are entitled to adopt the 11 12 agreement. Now, as I said earlier, we have already been 13 shut off. So, in this case, I think the appropriate 14 thing to do would be to find the adoption valid and to 15 direct AT&T to provide service ordering under the new 16 agreement. 17 And, Chairman, I don't know where I am in my 18 19 time, but I would like the opportunity for a minute or

two of rebuttal, if that's appropriate. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN GRAHAM: AT&T.

22 MR. HATCH: Thank you, Commissioners,
23 Tracy Hatch on behalf of AT&T, Florida.

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First off, we think the staff -- we support the staff recommendation. We think staff's analysis is

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correct. But to go further and address some of the points that Ms. Kaufman raised, one of the things that she relies on is -- the core of this case really surrounds the adoption process, and whether she is .allowed to opt-in to the New Image contract. And the question arises, that is not -- and the case law supports it, that is not a completely unlimited unfettered opportunity to opt-in at any time for any reason.

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The case law in construing that provision has 10 clearly suggested there are practical limits on it. 11 12 For example, the Global NAPS case, which both sides have talked about and cited. Which basically in the 13 Global NAPS case, they arbitrated before a state 14 commission. They didn't like the result of that 15 arbitration, so they thought that they could then 16 17 escape that decision by opting into another agreement. And that agreement -- and basically the Commission said 18 no and the First Circuit ultimately said no. 19 So the 20 answer is it is not an unfettered opportunity to opt-in whenever you want to and for whatever reason. So it is 21 22 clear there are practical limits.

And as Ms. Kaufman noted, there are a substantial line of cases that essentially put onto, as interpreting that provision, a lot of public interest

standards. This Commission itself has incorporated a public interest standard in addressing the opt-in question.

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As to -- the basic question of an opt-in is are you eligible to opt-in in the first instance. If you are eligible to opt-in, then, yes, you can opt-in to any agreement that is otherwise available. But when they sent us a letter asking to opt-in in, I think, the first one was in October, ultimately in November, they were not then eligible to opt-in.

Now, Ms. Kaufman recited to you the provision in the contract that says we'll make available any contract. What she didn't cite to you is another provision in the same agreement that is the termination of the term of the contract and the termination provisions of the contract.

In the term provisions of the contract it 17 18 says you cannot opt in or you cannot open negotiations for a new agreement, you don't become eligible for a 19 new agreement until -- I think it's 270 days prior to 20 the expiration of your agreement. Essentially that 270 21 days is the nine-month clock under the federal 22 arbitration negotiation standards. And so when your 23 24 contract is coming up for renewal or termination, you can then begin the arbitration process, and opt-in is 25

in lieu of an arbitration process. It doesn't completely -- it isn't and doesn't trump everything else. And so you have to read both of those provisions in para materia in order to reach the right result.

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Ms. Kaufman's suggested result would write that provision completely out the contract. It just doesn't make any sense. Now, her contrary argument would be, well, that provision, you know, the term provision trumps, it essentially writes the opt-in provision out. And my suggestion to you is it does not; you have to read them together. Once you have an eligible window for negotiation for arbitration, that window is also applicable to opt-in, and then you can opt-in. But what they want to do is go a step further. When they are in the eligible window, and they opt-in. They want to then take that, retroactively go back and eviscerate the obligations under the old agreement, and that is the net result here. That is what they are trying to accomplish.

20 Under their existing agreement or their prior 21 agreement, assuming that the opt-in had not happened, 22 their existing agreement says if you dispute a charge 23 you still have to pay it. You can still dispute it. 24 They have failed to pay. They are in actual material 25 breach of their contract. They don't deny that. They

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owe AT&T money under their existing contract.

Now, they have a complaint pending to determine the legitimacy of their disputes. Ultimately that will be resolved, but that does not in any way essentially prevent AT&T from enforcing the terms of its contract and it has done so. It terminated them for that breach.

Now, what they want to do is essentially make that all go away with an opt-in that opts back to when they sent us a letter, in which case they were not eligible for the opt-in. And, moreover, they cannot use the new provisions to eviscerate the provisions of the old provisions.

And then the next step you have to get to is 14 15 assuming the legitimacy of the debt, do we have to 16 enter into a contract with a new carrier that owes us 17 money? I think the answer to that is no, and that is 18 why I think your staff has got its policy considerations lined up exactly. It makes no sense to 19 suggest a policy that says I just opt-out of my 20 21 existing agreement whenever I want and leave all of my debts behind and start fresh. How many times can I do 22 I will run up another tally, opt into a new 23 that? agreement, run up another tally, opt into a new 24 agreement. We will never get to the end of this. 25 And

so I think the staff's recommendation is correct in this case.

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3 CHAIRMAN GRAHAM: Ms. Kaufman. MS. KAUFMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. 4 I just have a few points that I want to make. 5 I'll try to start backwards, and I just want to 6 7 emphasize to you despite my colleague, Mr. Hatch's 8 comments, we are not trying to escape from any debt. Adoption of the agreement is not going to allow us to 9 10 escape from any debt, nor is it going to allow AT&T, if that is how the hearing ultimately turns out, to escape 11 12 from any debt. That, the question of what is owed and 13 who owes what is going to be determined in that other 14 case, and it is not -- the amount owed either way is not going to be affected by the adoption. 15

As to the Global NAPS case, I just want to 16 17 read you what the Commission -- it happens to be the Massachusetts Commission said in that case in regard to 18 what they did and what they did not decide about 19 20 adoption. And they said the Massachusetts -- actually, this is the district court. The Massachusetts 21 22 Commission did not, contrary to Global NAPS' assertion, 23 hold that a party to an arbitrated agreement can never exercise rights under 252(i). It also does not, 24 25 contrary to Verizon's assertion, hold that a party

subject to valid arbitration could never under 250(i) (sic) take advantage of terms in a previously available agreement.

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That Global NAPS case is entirely different, and I think the court made it clear that they weren't issuing a blanket ruling that no adoption can ever be permitted. As to Mr. Hatch's claim that we need to look to the termination provision and ignore the provision regarding adoption, that 270-day window of negotiation is in the Federal Telecommunications Act. That is when parties can begin to renegotiate, if they so desire. It does not in any way change or do away with a party's right to adopt.

So I think that what you need to look at is we have met the adoption criteria, the billing dispute will be taken care of in another place, and you should find that we can adopt and that we can receive service under that agreement. Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN GRAHAM: Ms. Kaufman, does the 20 contract say, as Mr. Hatch has said, does it say that 21 if there is a billing dispute you are still responsible 22 to pay the bill and then it will be settled afterwards?

MS. KAUFMAN: The contract does say that disputed amounts shall be paid. However, it is our view -- we have several issues, and one is --

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CHAIRMAN GRAHAM: That's all right. I just 1 2 want to know what the contract says. 3 MS. KAUFMAN: Okay. It does say that, but we are not -- do not believe that we are in breach of that 4 5 agreement. CHAIRMAN GRAHAM: Okay. Commissioner. 6 COMMISSIONER BROWN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. 7 I think it is pretty clear that there are a 8 lot of outstanding factual items here, and the burden 9 here for the motion for summary final order would not 10 be met. It appears that there are several disputes 11 12 from factual matters of the status of the ICA, the effective date of the adoption, and I would support 13 staff's recommendation on this issue. 14 15 CHAIRMAN GRAHAM: On Issue 2? 16 COMMISSIONER BROWN: Uh-huh; yes, sir. CHAIRMAN GRAHAM: Was that a motion and a 17 second? Any further discussion on Issue 2? All in 18 favor say aye. 19 20 (Vote taken.) CHAIRMAN GRAHAM: Any opposed? Let's go to 21 Issue 3. 22 23 Commissioner Balbis. COMMISSIONER BALBIS: Thank you, Mr. 24 25 Chairman.

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And I think just a general question, just to clarify for me. And this question is for AT&T. If Express Phone did pay the disputed amount, would service be restored?

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MR. HATCH: I think the answer to that is 5 yes, but it depends on the existing ICA or under the 6 7 new opt-in ICA. If they met the conditions in the list, we have made that offer up to them. One of the 8 conditions being that they become current with all 9 their past debts, and then we would allow the opt-in. 10 And so on a going-forward basis, assuming they cured, 11 12 then they would otherwise be allowed to opt-in, in which case then they would have the Image Access 13 14 contract and then they could engage in the practice of 15 disputing (inaudible).

COMMISSIONER BALBIS: Okay. And, again, 16 whether or not the payment for the disputed amount, 17 whether it goes back to Express or back to AT&T, that 18 will fall out during the hearing process, which I agree 19 20 with Mr. Kaufman on that, as well. And it just seems 21 like it's pretty clear in the contract if there is a provision dealing with disputed amounts that the easy 22 solution would be for Express to pay the disputed 23 amount, and we would work everything out during a 24 hearing, and then go from there. But, again, just a 25

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general comment, and we can go through issue-by-issue 1 after that. 2 3 CHAIRMAN GRAHAM: Commissioner Brisé. COMMISSIONER BRISE: With respect to the 4 relationship between the two companies, is traffic one 5 way or is the traffic two ways? 6 7 MR. HATCH: I believe traffic is two-way. 8 They are a CLEC, so they originate and terminate traffic. That traffic could come from us or it could 9 come from other carriers. 10 COMMISSIONER BRISÉ: Okay. So there is the 11 12 possibility, as Express contends, that there may be 1.3 some outstanding financial responsibilities from AT&T's 14 side, as well. MR. HATCH: Financial, the issues here are 15 16 the charges that we believe Express Phone owes AT&T for the provision of the service to them as a reseller. 17 They are reselling our local service, essentially. And 18 so our contention is they have not paid us, pursuant to 19 20 their interconnection agreement, for the local service 21 that we wholesale to them that they in turn provide to their end users. 22 23 MS. KAUFMAN: Commissioner, if I might 24 comment on that. 25 CHAIRMAN GRAHAM: Sure.

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MS. KAUFMAN: Our position on this is that we 1 are entitled to the application of promotional credits, 2 which we have submitted, and which AT&T refuses to 3 honor. So that's really the issue for the billing 4 case. And if our position is the one that is 5 ultimately found to be the correct one, AT&T will owe 6 money to us, we will not owe money to them. 7 CHAIRMAN GRAHAM: Any further discussion on 8 Issue Number 3? Do I get a motion? Does somebody want 9 the gavel? 10 Commissioner Brisé. 11 COMMISSIONER BRISÉ: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. 12 I think at this time I'm prepared to move staff's 13 recommendation on Issue 3. 14 15 CHAIRMAN GRAHAM: It has been moved and 16 seconded, staff recommendation on Issue 3. Any further discussion on Issue 3? 17 Seeing none, all in favor say aye. 18 (Vote taken.) 19 CHAIRMAN GRAHAM: Any opposed? By your 20 21 action you have approved Issue 3. Issue 4. Commissioner Edgar. 22 COMMISSIONER EDGAR: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. 23 I have a quick question for staff, and then 24 maybe I'm able to make a motion. If the remainder of 25

the staff recommendation were to be adopted, what then 1 would be the status of the 087 docket? 2 MS. TAN: On the 087 docket, Issue 2 would be 3 a final order, and then Issue 3 would be a proposed 4 agency action in which Express Phone has the ability to 5 protest, if they wish. 6 COMMISSIONER EDGAR: Okay. And we are on 7 Issue 4, is that correct, Mr. Chairman? 8 CHAIRMAN GRAHAM: That's correct. 9 COMMISSIONER EDGAR: Then I'm prepared to 10 move the staff recommendation on Issues 4 and 5. 11 CHAIRMAN GRAHAM: It has been moved and 12 seconded, staff recommendation on Issues 4 and 5. Any 13 discussion on those last two issues? Seeing none, all 14 in favor say aye. 15 (Vote taken.) 16 CHAIRMAN GRAHAM: Any opposed? 17 By your action, you have approved staff 18 recommendation on Issues 4 and 5, which concludes Item 19 Number 3. 20 21 22 23 2425 FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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2	STATE OF FLORIDA)				
3	: CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER				
4	COUNTY OF LEON)				
5	T TANE ENDOW DDD Chief Meaning Dependen				
6	I, JANE FAUROT, RPR, Chief, Hearing Reporter Services Section, FPSC Division of Commission Clerk, do hereby certify that the foregoing proceeding was heard at the time and place herein stated.				
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8	IT IS FURTHER CERTIFIED that I stenographically reported the said proceedings; that				
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11	I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not a relative, employee, attorney or counsel of any of the parties,				
12	nor am I a relative or employee of any of the parties' attorney or counsel connected with the action, nor am I				
13	financially interested in the action.				
14	DATED THIS 16th day of June, 2011.				
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16	Jane Trurot				
17	JANE FAUROT, RPR Official FPSC Hearings Reporter				
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