

Collin Roehner

From: Office of Commissioner Brown
Sent: Wednesday, May 03, 2017 8:47 AM
To: Commissioner Correspondence
Subject: FW: Docket No. 160101-WS: Petition for rate increase by Utilities, Inc. of Florida and Utilities, Inc.
Attachments: Letter to PSC.pdf

Please place the attached in Docket Correspondence, Consumers and their Representatives, in Docket No. 160101-WS. Thank you.

-----Original Message-----

From: Clark @ RRF [<mailto:Clark@ResortRealtyFlorida.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, May 02, 2017 6:03 PM
To: Consumer Contact
Cc: Office of Commissioner Brown; Office Of Commissioner Graham; Office of Commissioner Brisé; Office of Commissioner Patronis; Office of Commissioner Polmann; Walter Trierweiler; kmapp@pac.state.fl.us; Danijela Janjic; Wesley Taylor; Saylor Erik; Hoy John; Flynn Patrick; MFriedman@ff-attorneys.com
Subject: Docket No. 160101-WS: Petition for rate increase by Utilities, Inc. of Florida and Utilities, Inc.

Please accept this letter into the docket, and please consider it as testimony before the commission on May 8, 2017.

Thank you.

8401 Placida Rd
Placida FL 33946

May 1, 2017

FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
COMMISSIONERS
COMMISSION STAFF
2540 Shumard Oak Blvd.
Tallahassee FL 32399-0850

Dear Commissioners and Staff,

Re: Docket No. 160101-WS: Petition for rate increase by Utilities, Inc. of Florida and Utilities, Inc.

I represent rate payers in West Charlotte County in the Sandalhaven service area. No doubt you will recall that our group has been quite active with regard to our sewer service hearings before the PSC. Although we are less than a thousand customers, we have turned out in sizable numbers over the years at various events. About sixty of us made the trip to Tallahassee in December, 2015 to attend a hearing. We appreciate the opportunity to participate.

I will be out of Florida on May 8th, otherwise I would have tried to make the trip to Tallahassee to testify. I hope you are able to treat this letter as though it were testimony delivered in person.

Our group has been in favor of consolidated rates for years, and we have had numerous conversations with UI in this regard. As we testified at the recent Service Hearing in Punta Gorda, consolidated rates would allow UIF to become a more efficient supplier. Everyone should be in favor of greater efficiency. All rate payers benefit from lower overheads, shared employees and resources, simplified accounting, and streamlined management, and not just this year and next, but over the long term as well. It is in the best interests of all rate payers that UI be allowed to deliver its services at the lowest possible cost.

We also believe that regulating UIF will become more streamlined and efficient. We cannot presume to speak for the PSC but we can imagine that the PSC would prefer to have one large UIF rate hearing once every few years, rather than a few small hearings every year. We rate payers, too, could become more efficient by joining forces in opposition to UIF plans and policies we believe are unfair.

In this particular case UIF ratepayers are not unified. We understand that our small group of ratepayers would benefit if rates are consolidated, and that other rate payers would experience increases. We would like to point out, though, that if anyone knows about rate increases, rate payers in the Sandalhaven territory are experts: since the upgrading and expansion of the UI system about ten years ago, our rates have more than doubled.

If we had been part of a larger group of ratepayers over the last decade, our rates would not have increased as much, and the increases would have been more gradual. Ongoing there will

be other UI systems needing major upgrades, just as our system did. If all our rates were consolidated, future, major capital investment costs would be shared across a larger group and rates would be more stable. Even rate payers enjoying favorable rates now would be protected from dramatic increases, and they would not have to experience the large, sharp rate hikes we Sandalhaven customers have had to accept.

Given our circumstances, we learned to adapt, and one way was by reducing use, which is a good thing. As a side note, we are in the process of incorporating reclaimed water into our landscape maintenance, which is another environmental benefit.

If there is any concern or hesitation regarding adjusting all rate payers to a single consolidated rate all at once, perhaps the impact of consolidation could be smoothed with stepped adjustments over a short phase-in period.

Thank you for allowing us an opportunity to present our point of view.

Yours truly,



Clark Gillaspie

CC:

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