

Brian Schultz

From: Brian Schultz on behalf of Records Clerk
Sent: Thursday, October 01, 2020 8:37 AM
To: 'Diana Cowans'
Cc: Consumer Contact
Subject: RE: Docket #20200219-EI Comment

Good Morning, Diana Cowans

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: Diana Cowans <cognitas@msn.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 30, 2020 6:06 PM
To: Records Clerk <CLERK@PSC.STATE.FL.US>
Subject: Docket #20200219-EI Comment

Hello,

I understand that the PSC is holding a meeting next Tuesday, October 6, on the Petition to initiate emergency rulemaking to prevent electric utility shutoffs. I would like to add my comment to the record. I live in Manatee County and work with a Sierra Club Ready for 100 campaign, the Manatee Clean Energy Alliance. Our focus is on obtaining commitments from local government to move to 100% clean, renewable energy but the Covid-19 pandemic has added the critical work of helping our community. Even though the state is opening back up, people are still either unemployed or making less money than they did previously. And the working and school landscape has changed in ways that put more burden on people - many are now working and studying from home, which increases their electric bills. And even for those who are able to get fully back to work, many are saddled with bills from the months of unemployment and will have trouble getting back on track.

Furthermore, people who have financial issues are often embarrassed to ask for help. We have heard, as we contact different non-profits, that people who do call their utilities are getting help but too many are afraid or embarrassed. People who are trying to care for themselves and their families while adhering to safe measures

to avoid getting ill should not have to worry about losing their electricity. Without electricity, people can't cook, they can't access the Internet (critical for job searches, learning from home, etc.), they have no hot water and they have no air conditioning. In an area that had 14 straight days with a heat index of 105 or more this past summer, air conditioning is critical.

In addition, if the electricity or water is shut off, there is an additional charge added to a bill that people can't afford to pay already. And then another charge when the electricity is restored. This is unfair in this unprecedented time. The utility companies (Gulf Power, TECO, Peace River Electric and FPL in our county) are making money, they can surely afford to be more compassionate and stop shut offs at least through the end of this year. Please encourage this humanitarian outlook for our communities.

Thank you for your attention and consideration,

Diana Cowans

cognitas@msn.com

678-447-4840

@catslib

www.manateecleanenergyalliance.org

info@manateecleanenergyalliance.org

@cleanmanatee