

Florida House of Representatives

August 11, 2022

Attorney General Ashley Moody
Office of the Attorney General
400 S Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399

RE: Request for state investigation into Florida's largest electric utility Florida Power & Light

Dear Attorney General Moody:

As monthly electricity bills have continued to increase across the state, Floridians have watched a series of utility-related scandals unfold in the media that all involve Florida's largest utility: Florida Power & Light (FPL). These scandals began with three "spoiler candidates" who ran in the 2020 election cycle to deliberately deceive voters, undermine democracy, and siphon away votes from legitimate candidates running in those same seats.

But the scandals have extended far beyond that spoiler-candidate scheme.

In 2021, nearly a dozen members of Congress requested that the Department of Justice investigate these campaigns. Recently, Congresswoman Kathy Castor sent a similar request to the DOJ, and Florida law enforcement has filed multiple criminal charges concerning these fraudulent campaigns. Financial analysts have also taken notice of the ongoing scandals, with one investment firm downgrading its assessment of the company, citing concerns over lobbying practices.

Dogged journalism by the Miami Herald, Orlando Sentinel, and Florida Times-Union revealed that the only donor to support these spoiler candidates was a nonprofit called "Grow United," a political front group set up by consultants working for FPL. Those same FPL consultants have set up similar front groups and communicated extensively with senior FPL executives (including CEO Eric Silagy). These consultants invoiced FPL over \$3 million during the 2020 election cycle alone and used their front groups to carry out political campaigning activities, apparently in an attempt to hide any connection between FPL and the political operatives.

Most recently, Florida newspapers have reported that FPL consultants spied on a journalist in Jacksonville (in addition to spying on elected officials and state regulators) and that the same consultants financed and controlled a news/blog website in Tallahassee called The Capitolist. The Capitolist seems to serve as a platform to launder pro-FPL propaganda and smear anyone who dares to stand up to the company, spending thousands of dollars on social media advertising to promote its content. This spending is in addition to the millions of dollars in lobbying the company conducts, along with a secret bar it runs in its Tallahassee office.

There is ample evidence to suggest that FPL executives or consultants have acted illegally. For instance, Florida newspapers have reported that FPL's consultants attempted to bribe a member of the Jacksonville City Council who opposed selling the city's utility company to FPL, by offering the council member a six-figure job at a phantom nonprofit if he would resign from the council. Further reporting has shown that FPL executives -- including Silagy -- have personally directed campaign contributions be made on FPL's behalf out of dark-money nonprofits, in violation of campaign-finance laws. And it is unclear how FPL could sell liquor from its secret bar in Tallahassee since it does not have a liquor license -- or how it could give free drinks to legislators without violating Florida's legislative gift ban.

The corruption, influence peddling, and breaches of the public trust by FPL and its senior executives should be of grave concern. It raises significant questions about the potential of FPL using ratepayer funds to influence elections and undermine democracy through fake candidate schemes, astroturfing, and attempted bribes. It also exposes FPL's tactics to intimidate and smear journalists, elected officials, and members of the public who dare critique their practices.

FPL ratepayers deserve to know whether the money they are forced to send the utility every month to pay their bills was used to influence elections and undermine our democracy through fake candidates and other schemes - and whether FPL broke any laws in its quest for total political control of our state.

Therefore, the undersigned respectfully requests that the Florida Office of the Attorney General immediately investigate the concerns we've brought forth in this letter, pursuant to your guidelines and policies.

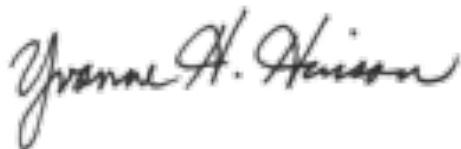
We look forward to your response.



Representative Anna V. Eskamani
Florida House of Representatives, District 47



Representative Carlos Guillermo Smith
Florida House of Representatives, District 49



Representative Yvonne Hinson
Florida House of Representatives, District 20



Representative Joy Goff-Marcil
Florida House of Representatives, District 49