



FLORIDA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES ASSOCIATION PRESS RELEASE

Florida Supreme Court Hears Consequences of False, Misleading Energy Amendment Ballot Summary; Proponents Fail to Refute Exposed Flaws

*Florida's Electric Cooperatives Testify on Behalf of 2.4 Million
Consumer-Members in Florida*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AUGUST 28, 2019

CONTACT: [AMANDA BEVIS](#)

(202) 680-9262

Tallahassee, FL – In oral arguments before the Florida Supreme Court today, attorneys on behalf of the Florida Electric Cooperatives Association (FECA) emphasized yet again the false claims made by the energy amendment's ballot summary and articulated the immediate and inescapable consequences the amendment would have on the 2.4 million Floridians who are consumer-members of electric cooperatives.

The "ballot summary doesn't just kind of inform or partially inform; it affirmatively misleads and does not tell the truth with regard to the impact on cooperatives," said George Meros of Holland & Knight, representing FECA.

FECA represents 17 not-for-profit electric cooperatives that operate in Florida. Collectively, they provide essential electric services to more than 2.4 million Floridians in 54 counties around the state.

FECA's attorneys argued the amendment's ballot summary falsely assures voters that cooperatives are outside the amendment's purview, and their consumer-members will only be affected if they affirmatively elect to "opt into competitive markets." However, impacts of this amendment are immediate, substantial and inescapable for cooperatives and their consumer-members.

== MORE ==

FECA's initial brief filed in April explained that cooperatives will be unable to avoid negative impacts of the amendment, regardless of whether they opt into the new "competitive market" formed under the initiative. In fact, the amendment would destroy wholesale power supply agreements and invalidate service area boundary agreements that enable cooperatives to meet the needs of their consumer-members and keep rates as low as possible.

As just one example, which was described by Meros before the Florida Supreme Court today, the 34,000 consumer-members that make up the Florida Keys Electric Cooperative rely on FPL for 100% of the electricity needed to serve their consumer-members. But this amendment would bar investor-owned utilities (IOUs) like FPL from generating and selling electricity. If the amendment passes, wholesale power supply agreements like this are destroyed. The cooperatives will be forced to roll the dice, hoping to find the same level of price stability and reliability their consumer-members have come to depend on.

Other cooperatives have similar power supply agreements with IOUs that would also be destroyed by the amendment. Unfortunately, the ballot summary misleads millions of consumer-members into believing that their cooperatives will be unaffected.

During the oral arguments at the Florida Supreme Court today, proponents of the energy amendment continued to divert the court's attention from the facts that the amendment will have an immediate, adverse impact on cooperatives and the ballot summary is misleading.

"The out-of-state special interests attempting to dupe voters were not able to answer many of the questions asked by the justices today regarding the misleading nature of the ballot summary" said Amanda Bevis, spokesperson for FECA, referring to oral arguments by the proponents of the energy amendment. "Too much is at stake, not only for the cooperatives' consumer-members, but for all Floridians."

Florida's electric cooperatives deliver safe, affordable and reliable electricity to their communities. Cooperatives are not-for-profit. They are owned by their consumer-members, and decisions are member-driven.

Florida's electric cooperatives contributed more than \$11.6 billion to the economy during a five-year period, 2013 to 2017, and support more than 15,000 jobs per year on average for Florida families.

FECA represents 15 electric distribution cooperatives and two generation and transmission cooperatives, serving approximately 2.4 million Floridians. For more information about FECA, including a list of its members, visit: www.feca.com.

###