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January 9, 2018

RE: Proposal 51 - Support

Dear Commissioner:

The National Energy Marketers Association (NEM)¹ urges you to support Proposal 51 by Commissioner Rich Newsome. The proposed amendment would enable Floridians to choose their retail electricity provider. The competitive forces created by this choice would help reduce energy bills, give customers greater control over their energy usage, enhance customer value through the availability of innovative products and services, and benefit the environment.

Florida is among the country's seven most populous states, but the only one of them where customers are unable to shop for an electricity provider in some form. Restricting Floridians to purchasing electric supply from monopolies is based on an antiquated regulatory framework developed in the early 1900s.

The electric power system has drastically changed since then. Electricity is no longer generated just by large monopoly-owned power plants. Electricity and other energy services come from a range of sources, including independently owned natural gas power plants and rooftop solar systems. The grid has also gone digital. Analog technologies such as rotating disk electric meters are rapidly being replaced by smart digital devices and systems.

These technologies are poised to "Uberize" Florida's electric power grid. Like the Uber application, the grid could connect buyers and sellers of energy services. This transition would spur job-creating innovation, enhance customer choices, and improve reliability. The choices would include access to more clean energy services providers who can help Floridians reduce pollution caused by their homes and businesses.

An excellent model for Florida is Texas, which restructured its electric sector almost twenty years ago and has been highly successful. The state's wholesale electricity prices have declined almost sixty-five percent and customers have a wide range of choices offered by retail electricity providers.

¹ The National Energy Marketers Association (NEM) is a non-profit trade association representing both leading suppliers and major consumers of natural gas and electricity as well as energy-related products, services, information and advanced technologies throughout the United States, Canada and the European Union. NEM's membership includes independent power producers, suppliers of distributed generation, energy brokers, power traders, global commodity exchanges and clearing solutions, demand side and load management firms, direct marketing organizations, billing, back office, customer service and related information technology providers. NEM members also include inventors, patent holders, systems integrators, and developers of advanced metering, solar, fuel cell, lighting, and power line technologies.

New technologies and services are ready to unleash a wave of innovation across Florida's electric power sector. But they remain bogged down by a regulatory framework developed when Ford Model T cars were still in production. It is time for these regulations to catch up with the twenty-first century and deliver the choice and value customers want.

The first step is giving Floridians the right to choose their retail electricity provider. We urge you to support Proposal 51.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Craig Goodman", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Craig G. Goodman, Esq.
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