

**To the North Carolina Utilities Commission**

**RE: Docket No. E-100 Sub 165.** (Testimony given at the WebEx meeting on May 5, 2021)

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to submit this testimony. I want to register my deep concern about greenhouse gas emissions that are contributing to global warming. We're in the midst of a true climate emergency, with little time left to address it. What I saw in Duke's IRP, which I read through with care, was a failure to recognize this.

Climate chaos is already costing us so much that it's simply not in the public interest to skimp or hold back on investing in renewable energy. Even if Duke finds it necessary to increase utility rates in order to meet the challenges of climate change in a responsible manner, the hardship for ratepayers will be much less than what continuing carbon dioxide and methane emissions will cost us all.

This is a hard reality which I can attest to from personal experience. When my husband and I purchased a home in Charlotte some 20 years ago, we did not buy flood insurance. There was no reason to. Our lot was not in a designated flood zone, and the house had been standing since the 1950's with no high-water issues. But that changed as severe weather events began to increase with global warming. In one night of heavy rain, flooding completely destroyed the heating-&-air unit in our crawl space. Its replacement and relocation cost us \$10,000. But that was only the beginning: High water from run-off during heavy rains has become a regular occurrence in our yard. Flood insurance and other corrective measures are a significant budget item for us every year now. I can't imagine how a low-income family would be able to handle these expenses, and I wonder how we will manage in the future. Experts project that, in order to handle such weather events, flood insurance premiums already need to increase by a factor of 4, with much greater increases to come.

In the flooding that caused our initial financial hit, some of our neighbors lost their homes entirely, and the city had its own associated expenses. But this was no Superstorm Sandy, no Hurricane Florence. The losses were small by comparison. And they were nothing compared to what escalating climate chaos is expected to bring in the future: The few displaced homeowners did *not* become climate refugees. No political strife ensued. No one died. No species was driven to extinction. All we lost was money. But this should be one more wake-up call that we can't go on with "business as usual". It's time for bold, creative action to care for this planet home of ours. The consequences of not doing so are unthinkable. Yet Duke Energy has so far shown no signs of understanding the urgency.

That's why I'm asking the Utility Commission to reject Duke's IRP as it stands. Duke must get serious about decreasing its greenhouse gas emissions. That would mean retiring all its coal plants as soon as humanly possible and replacing them with renewable energy. It would also mean an end to any new gas investment, because gas is not "clean energy", in spite of how it's been advertised. Finally, I ask that the Utilities Commission set up an evidentiary hearing to examine the figures used in the IRP to support Duke's slow-walking its transition to renewable energy. We need to see why many other utility companies, in this country and around the world, are finding practical ways to move faster.

I respectfully submit these opinions with gratitude to the commission for giving me and other citizens a voice in this process.

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