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March 18, 2021

Ms. Kimberly A. Campbell  
Chief Clerk  
North Carolina Utilities Commission  
4325 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-4300

**RE: Duke Energy Carolinas, LLC's Notification of Customer Connect  
Deployment of Certain Changes to Customer Bill Invoicing  
Docket No. E-7, Sub 1214  
Docket No. E-7, Sub 1271**

Dear Ms. Campbell:

This letter serves to notify the Commission of the status of Duke Energy Carolinas LLC's ("DEC" or the "Company") Customer Connect implementation and incorporation of certain requested changes to customer invoicing and payment processing in the next phase of Customer Connect deployment. In its Application in the 2019 Rate Case proceeding in Docket No. E-7, Sub 1214, which is currently pending decision and issuance of an order by the Commission, Duke Energy Carolinas LLC ("DEC" or the "Company"), *inter alia*, requested to: (1) change the remittance period for non-residential customers and (2) eliminate the requirement for residential customers to pay a convenience fee when making a payment by credit card, debit card, or electronic check (the "Fee-Free Program"). Both requests are described in more detail below. Customer Connect, the new customer information system, will go live on April 5, 2021. Due to the lead time necessary to design and incorporate changes to the invoicing and electronic payment process and consistent with the anticipated issuance of the order from the Commission in the 2019 Rate Case, the April 5, 2021 Customer Connect deployment will incorporate both the change in the remittance period and elimination of the convenience fee for customer bills processed from that date forward. Customer Connect is working to improve the customer's experience and both of these programs are expected to increase customer satisfaction.

Specifically, the following changes will be implemented:

#### **Remittance Period**

In response to requests from non-residential customers for additional time to process their invoices, the Company proposed to change when bills become past due and delinquent from fifteen

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to twenty-five days to match the current requirement for residential customers. This change is based on feedback from the Company's non-residential customers and better aligns with the payment terms of net thirty days these customers have with other vendors. No parties objected to this change. Customer Connect was designed with this change in mind and will be effective for DEC non-residential customer bills beginning April 5, 2021.

### **Eliminate Payment Fees for Residential Customers**

In response to customer feedback, the Company proposed to eliminate the requirement to pay a convenience fee when making a payment by credit card, debit card, or electronic check. The convenience fee is one of the largest frustrations residential customers experience, and customers have grown accustomed to paying for other products and services with a credit card or debit card without a separate, additional fee. No parties objected to the elimination of the convenience fee as proposed by the Company. In addition, the Public Staff proposed an adjustment to operations and maintenance expense to remove expenses related to the payment forms from the 2018 cost of service and also proposed tracking the impact of the program on late payments and uncollectibles. The Company and the Public Staff reached an agreement on the Public Staff's recommendation in the First Partial Stipulation. Customer Connect was designed with the elimination of the convenience fee and will be effective April 5, 2021 for DEC customers.

The Company has consulted with the Public Staff and is authorized to represent to the Commission that the Public Staff does not object to incorporating these changes when Customer Connect goes live. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Sincerely,

/s/ Camal O. Robinson

Camal O. Robinson

cc: Parties of Record

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

**DOCKET NO. E-7, SUB 1214**

**DOCKET NO. E-7, SUB 1271**

I hereby certify that a copy of the foregoing **DUKE ENERGY CAROLINAS LLC'S NOTIFICATION OF CUSTOMER CONNECT DEPLOYMENT OF CERTAIN CHANGES TO CUSTOMER BILL INVOICING** was served electronically or by depositing a copy in United States Mail, first class postage prepaid, properly addressed to the parties of record.

This the 18<sup>th</sup> day of March 2021.

*/s/ Camal O. Robinson*

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