

THE POWER SOURCE

IGNITING THE FUTURE OF FLORIDA



January 2026

Ana Ortega

Commissioner

Florida Public Service Commission

How will your professional background and institutional experience guide you in your service as a Commissioner?

I have spent nearly my entire professional career at the Florida Public Service Commission, serving in a range of roles that span administrative support, technical and analytical positions, and senior policy advisory work. His progression has given me the technical expertise needed to navigate complex regulatory, as well as a deep understanding of how cases move from initial filing through final order..... [Read More](#)

From your perspective, what are the most pressing challenges currently facing Florida's utility and energy sectors?

Florida is growing at an incredible pace, so one of the biggest issues we're facing is ensuring our utility infrastructure keeps up in a way that remains reliable, resilient, and cost-effective for Florida's businesses and families. We are seeing utilities invest in the grid, plan for new large load customers such as data centers, and address long-term generation.....[Read More](#)

As you begin your tenure, have you identified any initial goals or priorities you hope to focus on during your service on the Commission?

I'm particularly looking forward to supporting the vision of our new Chairman, Gabriella Passidomo Smith, who has emphasized transparency and clear communication as key priorities of her Chairmanship.....[Read More](#)

Included In This Issue:

Power Profile: January 2026
Ana Ortega

FMPA and Origis Energy
Announce Completion of
Whistling Duck Solar Energy
Center

FWELF 2026- Registration
Now Open

Duke Energy Florida Unveils
Nation's First System
Capable Of Producing,
Storing And Combusting
100% Green Hydrogen

Chesapeake Utilities
Corporation Promotes
Michael Cassel to Senior VP,
Strategic Development

Chairman Gabriella
Passidomo Smith
Emphasizes Transparency in
New Leadership Role at the
FPSC

Q&A With FPL President On
Expected Data Center
Growth And The Company's
New Customer Protections

HData Secures Investment
From MassMutual Ventures
to Scale Regulatory
Intelligence Technology

Administration Calls for
Temporary PJM Market
Reforms to Address
Reliability and Cost Risks

[Read Full](#)
[Interview](#)



FMPA and Origis Energy Announce Completion of Whistling Duck Solar Energy Center



Florida Municipal Power Agency (FMPA), in partnership with Origis Energy and participating municipal electric utilities, has announced the completion of the Whistling Duck Solar Energy Center, a nearly 75-MWac solar facility located in Levy County near Williston, Florida.

The project is the fourth solar site developed as part of the Florida Municipal Solar Project (FMSP) and marks the successful completion of Phase II of the initiative, which added a total of 300 MW of solar generation to serve Florida communities.

Whistling Duck Solar achieved commercial operation in December 2025 and will deliver clean, reliable solar power to the cities of Homestead, Key West, Lake Worth Beach, and Winter Park. Several of these communities also began receiving solar energy in late 2024 from the Rice Creek Solar Energy Center, the first project completed under Phase II.

FMPA serves as the project coordinator for the Florida Municipal Solar Project, with participating municipal utilities purchasing power from the facility. Origis Energy developed, owns, and operates Whistling Duck Solar, continuing its long-standing partnership with FMPA to expand affordable renewable energy across the state.

The completion of Whistling Duck Solar strengthens FMPA's ability to provide cost-effective, stable solar energy for its 33 member utilities, which collectively serve more than 4 million residents and businesses across Florida. The project supports long-term price stability, enhances energy reliability, and advances shared goals for sustainable power generation within Florida's municipal utility communities. [Read More](#)

A promotional graphic for the Florida's Women in Energy Leadership Forum 2026. The background is a dark, starry space. On the right, a glowing lightbulb is shown with a human brain inside it, surrounded by a network of glowing nodes and lines, symbolizing innovation and energy. On the left, there is a white rectangular box containing the logo for Florida's Women in Energy Leadership Forum, which consists of three overlapping golden arcs. Below the logo, the text reads "FLORIDA'S WOMEN IN ENERGY LEADERSHIP FORUM". Below this, in large, bold, white letters, it says "ANNOUNCING FWELF 2026: EVOLVE!". At the bottom left, in smaller white text, it says "AUGUST 31- SEPTEMBER 2 | FOUR SEASONS ORLANDO".



Duke Energy Florida Unveils Nation's First System Capable Of Producing, Storing And Combusting 100% Green Hydrogen



Duke Energy Florida has unveiled its DeBary Hydrogen Production Storage System in Volusia County, a first-of-its-kind demonstration project in the United States capable of producing, storing, and combusting up to 100% green hydrogen. The innovative system integrates renewable energy and advanced generation technology to strengthen grid reliability while supporting the transition to cleaner energy.

The process begins at Duke Energy Florida's existing DeBary solar site, where solar power is used to operate electrolyzers that split water into hydrogen and oxygen. The hydrogen is safely stored on site and later delivered, during times of peak demand, to an upgraded combustion turbine equipped with GE Vernova technology. The turbine can operate on natural gas, a hydrogen blend, or 100% hydrogen, providing flexible, on-demand energy regardless of weather or time of day.

By enabling reliable energy storage and dispatch using green hydrogen, the project helps integrate more renewable resources like solar while managing rising customer demand. The DeBary system represents an important step in diversifying Duke Energy Florida's generation fleet and advancing clean energy innovation for the benefit of customers and the broader energy industry. [Read More](#)

Chesapeake Utilities Corporation Promotes Michael Cassel to Senior Vice President, Strategic Development



Chesapeake Utilities Corporation announced the promotion of Michael (Mike) Cassel to senior vice president, strategic development, effective Jan. 2. In his new role, Cassel will lead business development, external affairs, and strategic planning to support sustainable growth, expand community partnerships, and identify emerging opportunities. Cassel has been with Chesapeake Utilities since 2008 and brings nearly two decades of experience in regulatory, legislative, and public-affairs leadership. His work has played a key role in strengthening system reliability, advancing long-term value for customers, and supporting the company's capital investment and growth strategy.

"Mike has played a pivotal role in our growth for many years and is well-positioned to guide the next level of our business development and strategic analysis work, as we continue to execute on our significant capital investment and growth plans. His leadership and success in developing rate case strategy, building community partnerships and securing key legislative outcomes have strengthened our company and expanded our value proposition," said Jeff Householder, president, CEO and chairman of the board of directors. [Read More](#)



Chairman Gabriella Passidomo Smith Emphasizes Transparency in New Leadership Role at the FPSC



Gabriella Passidomo Smith presided over the first Commission Agenda Conference of the new year as Chairman of the Florida Public Service Commission (FPSC), following her election by fellow Commissioners in November. Through January 2028,

Chairman Smith will lead the five-member Commission in its mission to ensure safe, reliable utility services are delivered efficiently and at fair prices. As she begins her chairmanship, Chairman Smith identified transparency and public engagement as central priorities.

“Transparency will be a central theme of my chairmanship,” Chairman Smith said at today’s Agenda Conference. “Customers deserve to understand why decisions are made, how rates are determined, and how and when they can meaningfully participate.” [Read More](#)

Q&A With FPL President On Expected Data Center Growth And The Company’s New Customer Protections



As demand for digital services continues to grow, Florida lawmakers and regulators are preparing for a potential influx of large-scale data centers. In a recent conversation, Florida Power & Light (FPL) President Scott Bores outlined how the company is planning ahead to serve future data center development while ensuring existing customers are protected from higher electric bills. While large data centers have not yet arrived in Florida in significant numbers, FPL expects interest to grow due to the state’s strong business climate, low electricity rates, and high reliability.

Bores emphasized that FPL’s recently approved rate agreement was driven by the need to continue investing in reliable service—not by data centers—and includes new large load rates designed to prevent residential customers from subsidizing these energy-intensive projects.

Under the new rate structure, data centers are required to pay the full cost of the infrastructure needed to serve them, including new power generation and battery storage. Consumer protections include charges that ensure data centers fund 100% of new generation, minimum “take-or-pay” demand charges, long-term contracts, strict credit and collateral requirements, and early exit fees. Together, these measures are designed to support responsible economic growth while keeping customer bills low and protecting Floridians from cost increases seen in other states. [Read More](#)



HData Secures Investment From MassMutual Ventures to Scale Regulatory Intelligence Technology

HData announced a new investment from MassMutual Ventures to expand its regulatory intelligence platform for the energy sector. The investment will support HData's efforts to help utilities, regulators, financial institutions, and other energy stakeholders navigate regulatory complexity using centralized data, artificial intelligence, and purpose-built tools. Through its Climate Technology Fund, MassMutual Ventures invests in companies advancing electrification, grid optimization, and resource efficiency. As part of the investment, Timothy Krysiak, managing partner at MassMutual Ventures, will join HData's board as an observer, bringing experience in growth strategy and climate technology investing.

HData's platform helps energy professionals reduce the time and cost of regulatory research by extracting insights from rate cases, integrated resource plans, and other regulatory filings at enterprise scale. Company leaders said the partnership will enable HData to expand across the energy ecosystem and support more efficient regulatory processes as utilities increase infrastructure investment and modernize the power grid.

"Working with MassMutual Ventures brings us new opportunities to expand across verticals in the energy ecosystem that benefit from more efficient regulation," said Hudson Hollister, HData CEO and Co-Founder. "They also provide a strong network for future growth capital, plus expertise in the energy sector that we're thrilled to add to our team." [Read More](#)

Trump Administration Calls for Emergency Power Auction

The U.S. Department of Energy, Department of the Interior, and Mid-Atlantic governors have jointly urged PJM Interconnection to adopt temporary market rule changes to address growing electricity reliability risks and rising capacity costs in the PJM region. The proposal centers on conducting an emergency procurement auction to accelerate investment in new reliable, baseload generation, estimated at more than \$15 billion. The recommended actions respond to recent PJM capacity auction outcomes that failed to procure sufficient resources to meet reliability requirements, following years of baseload retirements. Federal officials argue these conditions increase the risk of supply shortfalls and higher prices for consumers and industrial users.

Key policy elements include providing 15-year revenue certainty for newly built power plants to support financing and development, limiting capacity market payments to existing generators to protect residential customers, and allocating a greater share of new generation costs to large data center loads that have not self-procured capacity or agreed to curtail during system stress. Additional measures focus on near-term grid stability while longer-term generation is developed.

The administration characterized the proposals as temporary interventions designed to stabilize PJM markets, support manufacturing-intensive states, and ensure sufficient around-the-clock power to meet rising demand. In the years ahead, America's industrial resurgence, advanced manufacturing growth, and leadership in the global AI race will require additional reliable, around-the-clock power that runs without interruption. See the signed statement of principles [here](#) and [fact sheet here](#).

