

RESOLUTION

NO. R-21-344

CITY HALL: September 23, 2021

**BY: COUNCILMEMBERS MORENO, GLAPION, GIARRUSSO, BANKS AND
BROSSETT**

**RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE LOUISIANA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION TO
INVESTIGATE ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION FAILURES RESULTING FROM HURRICANE
IDA AND PLEDGING NEW ORLEANS CITY COUNCIL SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE**

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Constitution of the State of Louisiana and the Home Rule Charter of the City of New Orleans ("Charter"), the Council of the City of New Orleans ("Council") is the governmental body with the power of supervision, regulation, and control over public utilities providing service within the City of New Orleans; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Public Service Commission ("LPSC") is the state regulatory agency charged with the regulation of certain public utilities and motor carriers, including electric utilities operating outside of the City of New Orleans; and

WHEREAS, Entergy New Orleans, LLC ("ENO" or "the Company") is a public utility providing electric and natural gas service to all of New Orleans; and

WHEREAS, ENO is a wholly owned subsidiary of Entergy Utility Holding Company, LLC; and

WHEREAS, Entergy Louisiana, LLC ("ELL") is a public utility providing electric service within Louisiana outside of New Orleans and is a wholly owned subsidiary of Entergy Utility Holding Company; and

WHEREAS, ELL also owns and operates major electric transmission facilities and lines that move power throughout the state including into the City of New Orleans; and

WHEREAS, ENO depends on ELL transmission lines to deliver a major portion of the power that it distributes to customers within the City; and

WHEREAS, the LPSC has regulatory authority over ELL and its facilities, which authority is not shared with the Council; and

WHEREAS, on the morning of Thursday, August 26, 2021, Tropical Depression 9 formed in the Caribbean Sea and was projected to make landfall on the Louisiana coast as a hurricane between Sunday, August 29 and Monday, August 30; and

WHEREAS, by the late afternoon of August 26, Tropical Depression 9 was upgraded to Tropical Storm Ida, the projected landfall was accelerated to early afternoon Sunday, August 29, and the public was encouraged to finalize their hurricane preparedness plans; and

WHEREAS, facing a hurricane watch, on August 27, with Ida predicted to make landfall as a major hurricane with winds exceeding 110 miles per hour, Mayor Cantrell filed a Mayoral Proclamation of Emergency Due to Tropical Storm Ida in Civil District Court and ordered a mandatory evacuation for residents living outside of levee protection and a voluntary evacuation for other residents in the City; and

WHEREAS, by the evening of August 27, New Orleans was under a hurricane warning, Ida was projected to intensify to a Category 4 hurricane prior to making landfall in Louisiana, and residents who did not evacuate were told to prepare to shelter-in-place beginning at midnight August 28 until the storm passed; and

WHEREAS, Hurricane Ida struck the Louisiana Gulf Coast during the morning of Sunday, August 29, eventually bringing hurricane force winds to the greater New Orleans area; and

WHEREAS, as Hurricane Ida moved inland, windspeeds experienced in the City and metro area intensified and power outages began; and

WHEREAS, at approximately 11:30 a.m. on Sunday, August 29, the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans reported outages at sewage pump stations and urged residents to minimize water usage; and

WHEREAS, by 7:00 p.m. Sunday evening, all power in Orleans Parish was lost due to “catastrophic damage” to several major ELL transmission lines that facilitate ENO’s operation as part of the larger transmission grid, including ENO’s participation in the Midcontinent Independent System Operator regional transmission organization; and

WHEREAS, in the aftermath of Hurricane Ida on Monday, August 30, all New Orleans customers, including the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans, hospitals, and police and fire stations, remained without ENO-supplied power; and

WHEREAS, ENO initially estimated that due to the “catastrophic failure” of the ELL transmission lines that it could take up to three weeks to completely restore power to all affected New Orleans customers; and

WHEREAS, with an estimated 207,000 customers in the City during and after the storm, with no power, and expected heat indices over 105 degrees, the situation in New Orleans was dire; and

WHEREAS, at around 1:00 a.m. on Wednesday, September 1, ENO reported that some power was flowing into New Orleans and that power was being supplied utilizing both the New Orleans Power Station and a transmission line coming into the City from the east; and

WHEREAS, over the course of nine days after achieving “first light,” ENO worked to restore power to customers prioritizing critical customers including hospitals and Sewerage and Water Board facilities; and

WHEREAS, on September 10, ENO communicated that it had restored power to 100% of customers that could safely receive power; and

WHEREAS, although the Council has initiated an after-incident review of ENO's conduct before, during, and after Hurricane Ida, the Council does not exercise regulatory control over ELL or its transmission lines, including those that "catastrophically" failed; and

WHEREAS, the LPSC does have regulatory control over ELL and its facilities; and

WHEREAS, the LPSC has previously expressed concerns about the resiliency and reliability of ELL's transmission system and has conducted previous assessments and ordered improvements; and

WHEREAS, after the Hurricane Ida failure, LPSC chair, Craig C. Greene, M.D., M.B.A., expressed concern in a letter to Entergy CEO Leo Denault urging that the LPSC and Entergy customers be provided "**clear, transparent, truthful communications...NOT the spinning press releases and evening reports we are seeing.**" (Emphasis in original); and

WHEREAS, the Council agrees completely with Dr. Greene and expresses its common purpose with the LPSC to obtain the information sought by Dr. Greene; and

WHEREAS, although the Council does not regulate ELL or its transmission system, the Council urges the LPSC to investigate ELL and its performance before, during, and after Hurricane Ida, especially with respect to the "catastrophic" transmission failures, which directly impacted the City and, unchecked, will likely do so again in the future; and

WHEREAS, the Council pledges its support and encouragement in any LPSC effort to protect all of southeast Louisiana from ever facing another such "catastrophic failure;" **NOW THEREFORE**

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW ORLEANS, That the Council, hereby supports, and encourages the LPSC to exercise its duly authorized regulatory control over ELL and determine the causes of and remedies for any Hurricane Ida-related failures.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW ORLEANS, That certified copies of this Resolution shall be forwarded by the Clerk of Council to the the LPSC Commissioners and Executive Secretary.

THE FOREGOING RESOLUTION WAS READ IN FULL, THE ROLL WAS CALLED ON THE ADOPTION THEREOF, AND RESULTED AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS:

NAYS:

ABSENT:

AND THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.