



**City of Lakewood
Office of the Mayor**

Meghan F. George, Mayor

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Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO)
180 E. Broad St.
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chair French and PUCO Commissioners:

On behalf of the City of Lakewood, I am writing with important information that I request PUCO to consider as you weigh FirstEnergy's response to your agency's August 7, 2026 finding of probable noncompliance. FirstEnergy's August 21, 2026 "Response and Corrective Action Plan" indicates that the company will be undertaking a "Comprehensive Lakewood Reliability Improvement Plan." In its August 21st response, FirstEnergy states that its intention for addressing its frequent, chronic, and ongoing failures to provide safe and reliable power to Lakewood involves a "long-term plan" that will require "retiring, replacing or upgrading facilities."

This long-term plan – if truly implemented – may eventually address the reliability crisis that has plagued Lakewood for years now, and the City of Lakewood of course supports all long-term investments by FirstEnergy. However, what is missing from FirstEnergy's August 21st response is any statement of intention to map out and implement a plan to serve Lakewood residents while these long-term investments are happening. This is highly concerning, as the experience of the last two years shows us that days-long failures are likely to recur in the short term while FirstEnergy implements its long-term plan.

Over the past two summers, when our residents were most in need of safe reliable power, prolonged outages occurred due to FirstEnergy's long-term failure to invest in its infrastructure. Since PUCO issued its August 7, 2026 probable noncompliance letter, FirstEnergy CEO Brian Tierney spoke at a breakfast hosted last month by Crain's Cleveland Business. (An article summarizing his comments is included with this letter). CEO Tierney's statements appear more specific than some of the content in FirstEnergy's own August 21 response to PUCO. Tierney told the audience that Lakewood's entire power grid must be replaced and that will take between seven and nine years to do so. This prolonged timeline is of note, as was Tierney's assessment of Lakewood's power grid: "It's too old. It's not reliable. It's at capacity, and that system needs to be replaced." CEO Tierney also indicated that Lakewood's infrastructure is so antiquated that Thomas Edison would recognize its equipment, which garnered laughs from some in attendance. I assure you no one from Lakewood laughed.

Two things become clear when one compares CEO Tierney's statements to the August 21 letter: 1). FirstEnergy is not as explicit regarding the breadth of the problem with its Lakewood grid and the time required to fix it in its letter; and 2). FirstEnergy has completely failed to consider the



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issue of how it is going to provide power to Lakewood during the “interim period” over the seven-to-nine-year replacement period that Tierney mapped out.

The City of Lakewood is respectfully requesting that PUCO explore additional requirements of FirstEnergy moving forward to comply with its duties as a public utility beyond what was published in PUCO’s August 7th letter. Given FirstEnergy’s dismal track record with respect to Lakewood over recent years and CEO Tierney’s public comments, it is now apparent that FirstEnergy should commit to a clear and implementable plan for interim emergency capacity provision to Lakewood until its long-term capital investments are completed. This interim plan may include, among other things, the provision of readily available emergency generators placed near Lakewood to pick up the load when inevitable failures occur in the years to come while FirstEnergy implements its promised repairs and upgrades in Lakewood. We know from the past two years that it is highly likely that days-long failures will recur, especially given the recent admissions by FirstEnergy that its infrastructure in Lakewood is “too old” and “not reliable.”

The City of Lakewood continues to appreciate the serious approach that PUCO has taken with respect to holding FirstEnergy accountable to its duties over the past year. That includes last year’s finding of noncompliance, the June 23, 2026 decision to deny FirstEnergy’s effort to lower its performance standards, and the August 7, 2026 probable noncompliance letter.

I look forward to continuing to work with PUCO to hold FirstEnergy accountable to its duty to provide safe, reliable, and affordable power to the people of Lakewood.

Sincerely,

Meghan F. George

Mayor
City of Lakewood