

Resolution No. 107-2026**By Council Member:** Kazy

An emergency resolution condemning First Energy’s requests to the PUCO to allow it more time to restore electricity after an outage and to increase the number of permissible outages per year; calling upon the PUCO to reject First Energy’s requests; and supporting demands for the PUCO to launch a full investigation into First Energy’s persistent power outages affecting the City of Cleveland and other cities in northeast Ohio.

WHEREAS, First Energy is asking the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (“the PUCO”) for permission to take more time to restore electric power outages and to allow more outages to happen each year; and

WHEREAS, this request by First Energy should be rejected outright by the PUCO in no small part because allowing more frequent and prolonged outages would increase the harms Cleveland residents suffer from blackouts, including the inability to power critical health equipment; missing work or school; exposure to extreme heat or cold; and spoilage and loss of food; and

WHEREAS, in their letter to the PUCO, Council Members Brian Kazy and Charles Slife and Lakewood Mayor Meghan George stated that the repeated, prolonged power outages of this past summer experienced by Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company’s (CEI) customers on the City’s west side and in the City of Lakewood showed that First Energy “fundamentally and repeatedly failed” to provide “safe, reliable, and fairly-priced access to electricity”; and

WHEREAS, from September 2024 to September 2025, Lakewood reported 60 outages lasting longer than 5 hours; these outages also affected customers on Cleveland’s west side; and

WHEREAS, First Energy claims that increases in rainfall and fallen trees outside the right-of-way justify lowering reliability standards; both Lakewood and Cleveland dispute this saying that 33 of the 60 above-mentioned power outages were due to line failures, equipment failures, or company human error, while 12 were due to the trees First Energy maintains – all circumstances within First Energy’s control; and

WHEREAS, since 2017, rate payers have paid more than \$1.1 billion to First Energy to upgrade its grid, however an audit indicates that no significant modernization to the grid has occurred and CEI’s reliability has only gotten worse: the average duration of customer outages in CEI territory has increased by 12% for CEI customers from 2015-2019 to 2020-2024; and

WHEREAS, this Council supports the several requests for the PUCO to open a full and complete investigation into First Energy's persistent power outages affecting customers in Cleveland and other nearby municipalities; and

WHEREAS, the PUCO should not allow First Energy to force Cleveland residents to pay more for less reliable service; and

WHEREAS, this resolution constitutes an emergency measure for the immediate preservation of public peace, property, health or safety, now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CLEVELAND:

Section 1. That this Council condemns First Energy's requests to the PUCO to allow it more time to restore electricity after an outage and to increase the number of permissible outages per year and calls upon the PUCO to reject First Energy's requests.

Section 2. That this Council supports demands for the PUCO to launch a full investigation into First Energy's persistent power outages affecting the City of Cleveland and other cities in northeast Ohio.

Section 3. That the Clerk of Council is directed to transmit copies of this resolution to the appropriate parties at the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio, the Ohio Consumers' Counsel, First Energy, and to Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company.

Section 4. That this resolution is hereby declared to be an emergency measure and, provided it receives the affirmative vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to Council, it shall take effect and be in force immediately upon its adoption and approval by the Mayor; otherwise, it shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period allowed by law.

Adopted February 2, 2026.

Effective February 5, 2026.