

June 20, 2014

Paul Newton
State President
North Carolina Duke Energy
PO Box 1090
Charlotte, NC 28021-1090

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Clerk's Office
N.C. Utilities Commission

F-100 SUB 83

Dear Mr. Newton:

We are writing this letter on behalf of the Orange County Farm Bureau Federation which consists of 397 farm families in Orange County. Recently Duke Energy terminated the Agriculture Specialist Account Manager position and the Agriculture Market program. This staff position and program provide vital services to farmers in this county and across the state. Farming operations depend upon a reliable source of electricity in order to work efficiently. Tobacco barns, greenhouses, and livestock barns particularly are impacted in the event of a power outage. Generators can only support the power needs of these structures and the plants and animals within them but for so long. We need individuals on your staff that understand these unique concerns and can respond promptly.

Under the Agriculture Market program, farmers had access to engineers specifically prepared to assist farmers when constructing new agricultural structures (i.e. poultry facilities) or upgrading existing facilities to help them be more energy efficient. Farmers do not necessarily have the time or opportunity to consult with private engineering firms for this information. There is a need for qualified engineers who are knowledgeable about agricultural operations that can assist our farmers in planning projects or make recommendations on how to make our farms more energy efficient.

Agriculture and agribusiness is the number one economic industry in North Carolina contributing over \$70 billion annually to our economy. Agricultural operations and businesses, like any other business, depend on electricity to power facilities and equipment to function efficiently. The livelihood of our farmer members, and consequently our state's economy, is directly impacted by the resources available to agricultural operations. Having adequate resources for our farms helps everyone from farmers to the consumers.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter. Our hope is you will consider reopening this position and program.

Sincerely,



Howard McAdams
President
Orange County Farm Bureau Federation

cc: Jame McLawhorn, Director, Public – Staff Electric Division
cc: North Carolina Utilities Commission