

Shutts Lawyers Sue Angola for \$52M of Unpaid Electric Bills

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Shutts & Bowen attorneys filed a \$52 million lawsuit against the African nation of Angola on behalf of its client, LS Energia, claiming years of underpayment for operating two of its power plants.

The two Angolan facilities provided electricity to more than 2 million people in the Portuguese-speaking nation. Angola is the largest oil exporter and producer in sub-Saharan Africa, which caused the country to face hardships when oil prices dropped. "Unfortunately, despite making some random payments from time to time, the payment amounts were insufficient and Defendants were often in arrears," said Miami partner Ed Patricoff. "During those difficult times, LS Energia remained in solidarity with Angola, and they were of course aware of the economic climate, and notwithstanding that fact, continued to provide uninterrupted service despite the lack of regular payments."

Now that oil prices regained strength, Patricoff said there's "no excuse" for the withheld payments. LS Energia stopped operating the power plants at the end of April. According to the lawsuit, the Angolan electricity company PRODEL acknowledged in June that it owed \$43.6 million, an amount that has since ballooned to \$52 million with interest.

The Shutts team was led by partner and Chair of the International Dispute Resolution Practice Group Ed Patricoff, and attorney Kristin Drecktrah Paz.

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