



**SOUTHEAST FLORIDA REGIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE COMPACT COUNTIES
2015 STATE ENERGY AND CLIMATE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM**

APPROVED BY STAFF STEERING COMMITTEE – 12/12/2014

Background

Southeast Florida is one of the most vulnerable areas in the country to climate change and sea level rise. Recognizing their shared challenges, Palm Beach, Broward, Miami-Dade and Monroe counties (“Compact counties”) adopted the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact (“Compact”) in 2010. The Compact includes a commitment to develop and advocate for joint state and federal legislative policies. Accordingly, the Compact counties have adopted a *State Energy and Climate Legislative Program* each year since 2011.

The following state policies and priorities form the *Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact Counties 2015 State Energy and Climate Legislative Program*:

Solar Energy

SUPPORT the expansion of existing net metering policies to allow for off-site or “virtual” net metering.

OPPOSE any weakening of existing net metering policies.

SUPPORT legislation and/or constitutional amendments that will exempt solar photovoltaic systems from commercial property assessments and the tangible personal property tax.

SUPPORT legislation allowing Power Purchase Agreements.

SUPPORT existing statutory authority for the Florida Solar Energy Center (FSEC).

Sea Level Rise and Adaptation

OPPOSE any infringement on local home rule authority to plan for and adapt to future climate conditions, including sea level rise, changing precipitation patterns, and more extreme temperatures.

SUPPORT greater incorporation of adaptation strategies in state climate/energy policies, legislation, and appropriations.

SUPPORT legislation and policies requiring state agencies, water management districts, local governments, and industries regulated by the state (e.g. electric utilities) to consider projected sea-level rise, coastal flooding, and potential storm surge in all infrastructure and facility-siting decisions.

SUPPORT legislation, programs, and funding that support local governments' adaptation activities, including the establishment and use of Adaptation Action Areas.

SUPPORT legislation directing closer coordination among state agencies on climate and extreme weather preparedness, resilience, and adaptation issues.

Energy

SUPPORT integrated resource planning/least cost planning for electric utilities to ensure that energy efficiency and renewable energy sources are fully considered as strategies for meeting future needs.

OPPOSE legislation limiting the ability of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to craft a State Implementation Plan in response to the US Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Power Plan.

SUPPORT energy efficiency and renewable energy finance options, including the retention and strengthening of Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) programs, to advance local economic development, alternative and renewable energy technologies, and pollution reduction goals.

SUPPORT legislation to establish stringent energy conservation targets and meaningful renewable energy programs for electric utilities.

SUPPORT rebate programs, tax credits, and other financial incentives that encourage property owners to invest in energy efficiency and renewable energy systems.

SUPPORT legislation allowing local water conservation amendments to an edition of the Florida Building Code to carry over into the next edition, subject to the normal review and modification procedures outlined in the Code.

SUPPORT legislation creating a green bank or state investment fund to finance renewable energy and energy efficiency projects.

SUPPORT renewable portfolio standards for utilities that would require a set percentage of electricity to be generated from renewable energy sources by a given date.

Water

SUPPORT legislation enhancing the authority and finances of the state's Water Management Districts, in recognition of their vital role in protecting water resources.

OPPOSE legislation centralizing management of water resources at the state level at the expense of the regional Water Management Districts.

SUPPORT legislation expanding the list of priorities used in evaluating proposed projects for State Revolving Fund assistance to include incorporation of nature-based infrastructure.

Oil and Gas Drilling

OPPOSE relaxation of prohibitions against leases or permits for oil or gas drilling within Florida's territorial seas and the Everglades.

OPPOSE legislation authorizing hydraulic fracturing operations near conservation land or drinking water aquifers.

OPPOSE legislation limiting the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's authority to block requests for offshore drilling in federal waters off Florida's coast.

Everglades Restoration and Land Conservation

SUPPORT legislation and funding supporting complete implementation of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan and advancing the Central Everglades Planning Project, recognizing that a restored Everglades will help make the region more resilient to sea level rise and extreme weather events.

SUPPORT legislation to ensure that regional and local priorities, including extreme-weather and climate resilience, shoreline protection and restoration, Everglades restoration, and water resource protection, are reflected in the programs funded under the terms of the Water and Land Conservation Amendment.

Investment Priorities

SUPPORT funding for alternative water supply development through the Water Protection and Sustainability Program.

SUPPORT funding for adaptation planning and no-regrets investments in water management, water supply, conservation land acquisition, transportation, and other infrastructure that provide hazard mitigation and improve immediate and long-term resilience.

SUPPORT prioritized funding for infrastructure investments in Adaptation Action Areas or other areas subject to the impacts of sea level rise.

Transportation

SUPPORT development of electrical vehicle infrastructure, including statewide policies to streamline siting and permitting of electrical vehicle charging stations, siting of charging infrastructure on state property, and inclusion of electric vehicle models and specifications in the state contract system.

SUPPORT legislation that encourages the adoption of Complete Streets policies by the Florida Department of Transportation and local transportation agencies and the establishment of integrated local and regional networks of non-motorized transportation corridors (such as bike lanes).

SUPPORT legislation that would provide additional local transit connectivity to existing and proposed regional transit systems (i.e., a "first and last mile strategy").

SUPPORT legislation that supports planning and construction of transit-oriented developments (TODs).