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Florida Renewable Energy Producers Association join opposition to 2011 legislative bill that closes markets for independent producers

Tallahassee- The Florida Renewable Energy Producers Association joins the Florida Retail Federation, The Florida Manufacturers Association, the Federation of Independent Business of Florida and Americans for Prosperity in opposition to the bill which allows Florida Power and Light and other investor owned utilities to garner complete control of Florida's renewable energy market and pass the cost on to their customers without any public and /or regulatory review. In comparison, independent renewable energy developers finance their projects through private investors, not through cost recovery from citizens. ***It is opposing the bill in its current form because SPB 7082 and its house companion does not open the renewable energy market for independent power producers and foster competition in what would be the open markets bestowed by Governor Scott.*** Additionally, the bill eliminates any reference to Renewable Energy Portfolio Standards which served as a legal statement of intent which the bill should be predicated on.

The associations leadership acknowledges that the bill has brought together allies that do not always agree. But, all in opposition agree that open markets and a competitive business environment is center to their missions and ideology. And, while there have been some concessions to the bill such as a paltry 5% for residential solar, the concessions are too small and not worth the long-term damages this bill will do to the potential to develop a sustaining, open market and competitive robust renewable energy industry in Florida, let alone the loss of jobs or the crippling affect it will have to Florida's market competitiveness in a 21st century economy.

According to Michael Dobson, President of Florida Renewable Energy Producers Association, the bill represents the worst of government at the worst of time. He goes on to say that " instead of opening markets the bill closes them; instead of urging competition, it squelches competition; instead of creating a broad renewable energy policy, it creates a policy for a by the corporate monopolies that are our regulated investor owned utilities. The bill protects monopolies at the expense of jobs as well as stiff arms competitive markets, and does not make Florida engaging for independent renewable energy developers, cleantech entrepreneurs or interested investors. Our opposition does not mean we think FPL and others are bad people, we understand why this bill is important to them based their business models, its just not good for Florida business and closes markets. We urge the legislature to take up a "real" renewable energy bill for Florida's future that creates a Renewable Energy Portfolio standard (RPS) that commits the state to a competitive market and renewable energy goals, which would keep the cost down. It's a policy that has been vetted and is known to open markets in every state it has been implemented in, but our legislature has missed the boat on it time and time again, But, it is still time to replace this bill with a broad renewable energy policy that drives investment and open markets" said Michael Dobson.

The Florida Renewable Energy Produces Association is a Tallahassee Florida based trade group which represents independent renewable energy producers. Its members range from biomass developers, large scale solar developers as well as residential solar contractors, wind energy developers, biofuels developers, economic development councils and auxiliary businesses such as engineers, industrial builders, project finance professionals, researchers and a host of others.

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