

Recommendation 1: Energy Policy Governance

It is recommended that the Florida Legislature create a new infrastructure within state government for the development of a state energy and climate policy as outlined in this recommendation. The FEC would become an independent executive/legislative commission located in the Department of Environmental Protection and have enhanced responsibilities with the purpose of being an independent organization within state government.*

The FEC would operate as an independent commission and make recommendations to the Governor, the Speaker of the House and President of the Senate. The FEC's recommendations shall be guided by the principals of energy reliability, efficiency, affordability, diversity and environmental quality. The DEP Secretary shall be responsible for providing additional staffing to the FEC upon its transfer to DEP to enable the FEC to adequately address its additional responsibilities. Its membership would be;

*6 public members appointed by the Governor, with one designated as chair,
3 public members appointed by the President,
3 public members appointed by the Speaker
for a total of 12 members, and
one member of the Senate, ex officio, appointed by the Senate President, and
one member of the House, ex officio, appointed by the House Speaker.*

The ex officio members, and the Chair of the PSC, the Public Counsel, and the secretaries of DEP, DCA and DOT, the CFO and the Commissioner of Agriculture would be non-voting members of the Commission.

Current membership would be replaced as member's terms expire. New terms would be for three years. Members could be reappointed with no limitation on how long they can serve. The 12 appointed public members, including the chairperson, would require Senate confirmation.

New responsibilities for the FEC would include making recommendations to the appropriate entity for grant awards and authorizing incentive programs from appropriated monies, public awareness advocacy, and conducting education and academic summits. The FEC would work closely with other state agencies to ensure that Florida's climate and energy policies are properly implemented. Existing statutory responsibilities, with some clean up, would continue, as well as making policy recommendations to the Governor and Legislature.

Additionally, both the DEP and Public Service Commission shall be responsible for review and determination as to the suitability of the 10 year site plan for each electric utility.

**The agency within which the FEC is located could be either DEP or DCA.*

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The rationale for a new energy and climate policy development process has never been more important to the future of our State. With the evolving nature of the energy sector and climate change concerns, the current method for developing and implementing energy policy appears to be inadequate.

There are various state entities that have regulatory or policy responsibility over some aspect of the utility, energy or climate change question. The Florida Public Service Commission is a legislative entity charged with setting rates for the investor owned electric utilities. The Governor and Cabinet sitting as the Utility Siting Board grant certificates for power plants, electric transmission facilities, and natural gas transmission pipelines. The Department of Agriculture administers the Farm to Fuel Initiative that promotes the production of renewable energy from Florida grown crops. The Department of Community Affairs plays a role in building efficiency standards, appliance efficiency standards, and weatherization programs. The Department of Environmental Regulation administers Florida's environmental regulatory programs with respect to energy production and transportation. The Florida Energy Office within DEP provides public information and administers federal and state grant funding for advanced clean energy sources and energy conservation and efficiency.

What does need to occur is the deletion of redundancies and streamlining of the process to create a smooth flow of responsibilities with accountability across agencies or entities with a strong focus on effectiveness. The new commission would be the State's premier energy policy formulating board, making recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature and implementing the programs statutorily assigned to it.