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Renewables Alert

FLORIDA LEGISLATORS FILE A 100 PERCENT CLEAN ENERGY BILL

- On August 27, 2019, Representative Anna Eskamani (Democrat, Orlando) filed HB 97, which seeks 100 percent clean energy in Florida by 2050, according to a press release. The bill advances an initial goal of 40 percent clean energy in the state by 2030. Rep. Eskamani filed a similar bill, HB 1291, in March 2019, but it did not survive review by the energy and utilities subcommittee. Rep. Eskamani tweeted that she refiled the legislation with State Senator José Javier Rodríguez (Democrat, Miami-Dade).
- The bill requires certain clean energy goals from public colleges and universities, as well as public agencies. These goals include removing the use of fossil fuels and encouraging the addition of solar power. In a tweet, State Senator Rodríguez stated that he filed the legislation because "inaction fails Floridians, hurting our health, our economy, and our precious ecosystems; and as ground zero when it comes to sea-level rise, we also need to take responsibility." The bill also seeks to promote job growth in the solar field.

NCUC APPROVES DUKE ENERGY'S NEW RENEWABLE ENERGY PROGRAM

- On August 21, 2019, the North Carolina Utilities Commission ("NCUC") approved Duke Energy's Green Source Advantage ("GSA") program for North Carolina. GSA allows large energy consumers to choose and broker the price terms and contract lengths directly with the renewable suppliers of their choice. The program also allows large energy consumers to purchase renewable energy certificates from the renewable suppliers. The program allows customers to attain more renewable energy on their own terms.
- GSA applications will be available on a first-come, first-served basis on October 1, 2019, at 9:00 a.m. GSA will seek to subscribe a total of 600 megawatts ("MW") with 100 MW designated to military installations and 250 MW designated to University of North Carolina institutions. The 250 MW of unreserved energy will be available to large nonresidential consumers under Duke Energy Carolinas and Duke Energy Progress.

DOMINION ENERGY LAUNCHES VIRGINIA ELECTRIC SCHOOL BUS INITIATIVE

- On August 29, 2019, Dominion Energy unveiled its initiative to replace all diesel school buses in its Virginia territory with electric buses. The utility is aiming for 50 operational buses by the end of 2020 and 1,000 by 2025. The third phase calls for 100 percent electric buses.
- The utility has pledged to pick up the price difference between electric and diesel models, including the cost of the charging infrastructure. Dominion Energy projects the lowered operating and maintenance costs alone could provide a 60 percent annual cost reduction for school districts. Manufacturers will be

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able to submit bids through a request for proposal process, and school districts can enter the program in 2020. The initial rollout will cost $13.5 million, which the utility says will not be passed onto customers.

- The buses will also help manage the grid and incorporate renewable energy by storing wind and solar energy and injecting it onto the grid during peak demand when the buses are not in use. At the completion of phase two, the bus batteries could provide enough energy to power over 10,000 homes.
- Dominion Energy has undertaken this initiative in recognition that transportation is the main source of U.S. carbon emissions. It follows California's August approval of a $1.7 million San Diego Gas & Electric pilot to connect 10 electric school buses. Governor Ralph Northam has already publicly supported the initiative, but Dominion Energy still requires the state's authorization to move forward.

ALABAMA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION WILL SOON DECIDE SOLAR FEE

- The Alabama Public Service Commission ("PSC") is set to decide on Alabama Power's extra fee for customers with rooftop solar. Yet the question remains as to whether the PSC will hold a public hearing on the matter. Alabama Power, the largest electricity provider in the state, contends that the fee is needed to offset the cost of providing backup power to customers with rooftop solar. Alabama Power argues the fee avoids passing on costs to customers without solar and that to accurately cover costs, the fee must be increased from $5 per kilowatt-hour ("KWh") to $5.42 per KWh. Solar advocates argue the fee is unnecessary and discourages homeowners from installing solar energy. Moreover, solar advocates point out that Alabama Power has neither studied the costs or benefits associated with solar nor supported their claims with evidence of real customer data.
- Alabama implemented this solar fee in 2012 when the PSC ruled that the utility could charge an additional monthly fee based on the size of the solar system installed on a home, school, or small business. The Southern Environmental Law Center filed a complaint with the PSC in April 2018. In January 2019, Alabama Power filed a motion in opposition to a public hearing. The next regular PSC meeting is set for September 10, and the meeting agenda—which may or may not include this matter—will likely be released around September 6.

DUKE ENERGY'S NINE NEW SOLAR PROJECTS ONLINE IN GEORGIA

- On August 22, 2019, Duke Energy Renewables announced that nine Georgia solar projects—developed between SolAmerica Energy ("SolAmerica") and Duke Energy Renewables subsidiary, REC Solar—are all in commercial operation as of May 2019. Completed through Georgia Power's Renewable Energy Development Initiative ("REDI"), the nine projects generate 14.1 MW of Duke Energy Renewables' 27.4 MW of solar in the state. The nine projects are expected to contribute $10 million to local communities in leasing and taxes.
- Duke Energy Renewables has signed a 35-year power purchase agreement with Georgia Power for each project to sell electricity as a part of the utility's REDI Customer-Sited Distributed Generation Program. This is the second solar portfolio Duke Energy Renewables and SolAmerica have completed in Georgia.

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