

# MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

## A GUIDE TO MEETING WITH LEGISLATORS ABOUT NET METERING

In-person meetings with constituents are the most effective way to communicate with lawmakers. Furthermore, individual stories are the most impactful way to deliver your message.

A legislative visit provides the opportunity to establish a working relationship and puts a face on the issue. Communicating with your local legislators on a continual basis will keep them aware of your issues and identifies you as a resource they can utilize when formulating a position on issues impacting the solar industry.

Our voice is most effective when local business owners, like you, speak directly with their local elected officials about the impacts of the decisions they make.

### IN-PERSON AND DISTRICT OFFICE LEGISLATIVE MEETINGS

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Before meeting with legislators:

**1. Find your local Senate and House members:**

- Go to [www.myfloridahouse.gov](http://www.myfloridahouse.gov) and enter your address.

**2. Contact the local offices to request an in-person meeting.** Tell them the issue and bill number you would like to discuss during your meeting.

- HB 741 by Rep. McClure and SB 1024 by Sen. Bradley – Net Metering

**3. Practice your elevator speech:**

- **Who you are:** Where you live in the area. What you do. Describe your company.
- **Why you're here:** Trying to stop the net metering bill from killing solar jobs.
- **Ask for support:** We need your help opposing this bill.

**4. Add your personal story:** Don't just recite stats or explain details of net metering policy.

Be sure to include:

- Impact to your business
- Impact to your employees (estimated jobs lost/impacted)
- Impact to your current customers

**5. Educate:** Select 2-3 talking points below that you want to use. Don't try to cover everything.

Offer to be a resource going forward that they can reach out to with questions or ideas.

**6. Listen:** Leave time for them to talk about their concerns and what they need from you to help. Don't talk at them the entire meeting.

# Key Messages on Net Metering

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## Rooftop solar means Florida jobs

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- The rooftop solar market contributes a lot to Florida's economy:
  - \$18.3 billion dollars in economic value
  - \$3.2 billion dollars in household income to Florida workers
  - Over 9,000 direct jobs that support nearly 40,500 jobs across the state
  - \$3.3 billion in federal, state and local tax revenues
- Florida's small-but-mighty rooftop solar industry is supported by state laws that protect Floridians' right to adopt solar. The most important law requires Florida's utilities to offer net metering.
- This bill will kill thousands of solar jobs. Similar proposals have been catastrophic for local solar jobs. When JEA cut net metering in 2018, Veteran-owned AIA Solar had to let go half of its 50 employees.

## What is net metering?

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- Net metering is a type of bill credit similar to rollover minutes on a cell phone plan.
- The utility provides a credit for excess solar energy that a customer sends to the grid, which offsets a customer's usage later.
- Picture a meter running backward when the energy flows back from the customer to the grid.
- The utility moves the excess energy and sells it at the usual retail rate to a nearby neighbor.
- 93% of both Republicans and Democrats support net metering (Nov. 2021 poll).

## **Why are opponents proposing changes to rooftop solar?**

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- Rooftop solar is still a very small part of Florida's overall energy mix. Solar makes up less than 1% of total energy generation in the state.
- Opponents of rooftop solar claim net metering allows customers to offset their monthly bill to such an extent that it causes non-solar customers to have to pick up a greater share of the cost.
  - The truth is, even after accounting for the energy generated from rooftop solar, solar customers still purchase about the same amount of electricity as non-solar customers, with an average bill of at least \$80.
  - Solar customers already pay grid connection fees which are set independently by each utility to cover any potential "cost-shift."
  - In Florida, regulated utilities have only approximately 72,000 net-metered customers compared to more than 8.3 million total customers.

## **Rooftop solar means competition**

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- Rooftop solar is the only competitive energy market in the state — the last bastion of energy freedom for customers.
- Utilities do not allow other competitive forms of energy like community solar.
- Many utilities operate their own monopoly solar programs for customers to buy solar, at retail rates, from their utility-scale solar farms. This bill would eliminate consumer choice by removing any incentive for rooftop solar, leaving utility-scale solar as the only option.
- The current utility-scale solar programs in Florida are already growing faster than the rooftop solar market. So why eliminate consumer choice and disincentivize personal responsibility and resiliency?

## **Energy security and resilience**

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- Utility-scale solar projects do not offer the same energy independence, security, and resilience that rooftop solar can.
- When the grid goes down, solar farms go down with it.
- Rooftop solar paired with battery storage can keep the lights on even during outages, creating real energy security for communities.
- A healthy rooftop solar industry is critical to making these backup power options available in the market to any Floridian that needs them.