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## Florida Energy

Florida needs diverse energy sources. As a result, AIF has and will continue to support conservation, efficiency, all fossil fuels, all alternative fuels and nuclear energy. Likewise, we support the conceptual idea of moving to a greener economy, but not unilaterally. For the past five years, AIF and its Florida Energy Council (FEC) have provided a voice for Florida's business community as it relates to energy policy.

Currently, Florida's House and Senate leadership are considering legislation that would open up Florida's territorial waters to oil and natural gas exploration. A number of hearings, debates and conferences have been held on the proposal, which has the potential to create desperately needed jobs and additional revenue. First addressed and debated during the 2009 legislative session, the exploration proposal would create a process for the Florida Cabinet to review and approve proposals for drilling and exploration in water three to 10 miles off shore. Companies would be required to provide a non-refundable million-dollar application fee just to be considered and the Cabinet would have the ultimate say on whether the projects are approved.

Responsible and environmentally-sound oil and natural gas exploration can be the foundation for an energy economy that will allow the state of Florida to be a leader in research and development of alternative and renewable energy sources. The revenue from drilling activity can be the foundation for these types of projects that are several years away from contributing the necessary amount of reliable and cost-effective energy options.

### Council Position

**The FEC recognizes the importance energy plays in keeping Florida's economy healthy and vibrant. Any recommendations, rules or legislation should allow for reasonable implementation, support efficiencies and ensure undue mandates and costs are not placed on Florida's businesses and consumers, thereby creating a unilateral economic disparity. Florida should ensure that every effort is made to undertake a balanced approach that avoids unrealistic requirements on energy producers and suppliers, while planning for the state's future energy needs. It is imperative that Florida not be alone in this arena. Rather, it must be a collective effort by other southeastern states. Otherwise, we could become the East Coast version of California.**

Co-Chair: Dave Mica  
Co-Chair: David Rogers  
Lobbyist: Jim Rathbun

### Council Priorities

The FEC will concentrate their efforts in 2010 on the passage of legislation opening up Florida waters for oil and natural gas exploration. Not only will increased exploration and production assist in decreasing our country's dependence on foreign oil, it also represents a future source of revenue for Florida in the form of royalty payments during a time when dollars for state coffers are scarce.

Florida's employers depend on access to affordable and reliable energy to run their businesses. They are also affected by higher energy costs, which increase their prices while reducing customers' purchasing power. Thus the Florida Energy Council will pay close attention to any climate change rules being considered or proposed at the state or federal level, which have the potential to drive up the cost of energy and durable goods, as well as decrease the profitability and viability of Florida's businesses. Although conceptually worthy, the goals established by these potential proposals could cause an economic disadvantage for goods and services produced in Florida. The end result would ultimately further deteriorate Florida's economic climate.