



Rep. Scott Plakon (R-Longwood), Chair of the House Energy and Utilities Subcommittee, attends a meeting of AIF's Florida Energy Council to discuss the future of our state's energy policy.

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.

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 six years, AIF and its Florida Energy Council (FEC) have provided a voice for Florida's business community as it relates to energy policy.

Despite the recent Deepwater Horizon oil spill, the FEC continues to believe that 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.

Florida's employers depend on access to affordable and reliable energy to run their businesses. They are also affected by higher energy costs, which increases their prices while reducing customers' purchasing power. As such, the FEC 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.

Council Priorities

The FEC will concentrate their efforts in 2012 on:

- Supporting efforts to accelerate and streamline permitting for coal plants and other reliable, low-cost sources of electricity.
- Supporting legislation that provides state funding or identifies federal grant opportunities for clean energy R&D.
- Supporting legislation that confirms Florida will not create separate CO2 standards or Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS) that exceed federal standards or create additional layers of regulation.

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