



THE FLORIDA SENATE
SENATOR JEFF ATWATER
President

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CONTACT: Jaryn Emhof
(850) 487-5632

SENATE PRESIDENT JEFF ATWATER ANNOUNCES PROCESS FOR OFFSHORE DRILLING STUDY
~ Reiterates commitment to deliberative, objective review ~

Tallahassee, FL – Senate President Jeff Atwater (R-Palm Beach) today announced that the staff of the Senate Environmental Preservation and Conservation Committee would be conducting a detailed and comprehensive review of the implications of offshore drilling. Describing offshore drilling as one element of the larger energy discussion facing Florida, the President also released the methodology by which the Florida Senate will manage the process.

“Offshore drilling is a complicated issue with significant ramifications for our State,” said President Atwater. “The citizens of Florida deserve a thoughtful and deliberative conversation free of rancor or hyperbole, and the Senate intends to provide a structure for that conversation within our body.”

Recognizing that FSU’s Institute for Energy Systems, Economics and Sustainability (IESES) and the Century Commission for a Sustainable Florida have also initiated similar analyses, the President was pleased to note that these organizations, in conjunction with the resources of the Office of Economic & Demographic Research (EDR), will be sharing data and information. The objective, as described by President Atwater, will be to develop a comprehensive, balanced and unimpeachable analysis of the myriad issues encompassed by offshore drilling. Believing that the best interests of Florida, at this stage, are better served by a reasoned and informed discussion than a hasty call to action, the analysis will not include recommendations for further action.

“Given the complexity of this issue it is imperative that our partners have the expertise and ability to dispassionately gather and collate the data,” President Atwater said. “These groups represent a wealth of knowledge, information, and above all a commitment to identifying accurate information that is not skewed by personal or political opinion. This collection of data is vital for members of the Senate and the public, and will serve as an unbiased foundation from which individuals can make factually based decisions.”

"In such an important State of Florida issue, it is crucial to identify facts and information, free of preconceived ideas," said IESES Director Dave Cartes. "The university system of Florida must play this role."

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“The Century Commission for a Sustainable Florida, with the assistance of the Collins Center for Public Policy, looks forward to helping serve the needs of the Legislature and Governor through a transparent fact-finding process that engages the public on this important issue,” said Mayor Rick Baker, Century Commission Chairman.

President Atwater outlined the methodology that will shape the analysis and create the factual baseline from which further discussions may ensue. While IESES, the Century Commission, and EDR may provide their initial findings prior to the 2010 Legislative Session, this analysis will be driven by the need for a dispassionate review, not timelines or schedules.

About The Institute for Energy Systems, Economics, and Sustainability

The Institute for Energy Systems, Economics, and Sustainability at FSU is public resource dedicated to addressing energy alternatives through academic research and analysis in engineering, science, infrastructure, governance, and society. It brings together research individuals with backgrounds in engineering, natural sciences, law, urban and regional planning geography, and economics. The institute is the state’s leading scholarship center looking at the informed governance, economics, and decision making to support a sustainable energy economy.

About The Century Commission

The Century Commission, a 15-member commission, was created by the Florida Legislature in 2005 to develop and recommend long-term policies that will strengthen Florida’s future. It serves as a conduit of nonpartisan, objective information and data and conducts periodic reviews of government processes, statutory provisions and economic trends.

About the Office of Economic & Demographic Research

The Office of Economic & Demographic Research is a research department within the Florida Legislature that provides impartial information to Legislative staff and members regarding policy issues. EDR is also responsible for forecasting economic and social trends as they related to policymaking, revenues, and appropriations.

Attached is the analytical methodology provided to IESES, the Century Commission, and EDR.

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