FACTS AND FIGURES: CLIMATE CHANGE IN FLORIDA

Florida is on the front lines of climate change. Residents face rising seas causing sunny day flooding, hurricanes strengthened by warming ocean waters, harmful heat waves that imperil workers and coral die-offs and toxic algae that sicken people. Although the state lacks policies to encourage development of a robust renewables sector, its plentiful sunshine and long coastline mean the Sunshine State could become a leader in offshore wind and solar.

FLORIDA VOTERS WANT CLIMATE ACTION

- 66 percent of Florida voters are concerned that they or their family will be personally affected by climate change (93 percent of Democrats, 68 percent of independents) [Quinnipiac, March 2019]
- 63 percent think Florida is not doing enough to address climate change [Quinnipiac, March 2019]
- In advance of the 2018 election, Florida likely voters said the following impacts were a motivating factor in their voting plans: 51 percent were motivated by the problem of red tides, 50 percent by toxic algae blooms, 37 percent by climate change [St. Leo Poll, October 2018]

CLIMATE CHANGE DRAINS FLORIDA’S ECONOMY

- Florida’s tourism industry could lose $178 billion annually by 2100 [UCS]
- 20 of the top 25 cities in the US most vulnerable to climate flooding are in Florida [Climate Central]
- Florida has lost $5.4 billion in home property value between 2005 and 2017 [FloodIQ]

FLORIDA LAGS ON CLEAN ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

- Only 3 percent of Florida’s energy generation comes from renewable sources [U.S. Energy Information Administration]
- The Sunshine State is only 8th in solar SEIA rankings in total solar capacity (was 4th in 2018 installation) [SEIA]
- Ranks 3rd for projected solar capacity growth in the next 5 years [SEIA]
- Florida has no existing or planned offshore wind generation, but has the potential to supply 16 percent of the state’s electricity needs with wind power [Oceana]

CLEAR OPPORTUNITIES WHERE POLICY CAN HELP

- The legislature has blocked fracking bans, contradicting a promise from Governor DeSantis
- Florida lacks a standard that would require the state’s utilities generate a certain percentage of their energy from renewable sources
- Florida passed a constitutional ban on offshore drilling in 2018, but that only protects state waters – three miles from shore. A federal ban or exemption would be required to protect waters under federal control