

Another misleading opinion editorial misses the facts on solar energy

This week the *Miami Herald* allowed a rooftop solar company, vineyard owner and farmer to take the communal pen on a third-party opinion piece that incorrectly claims FPL is determined to “kill rooftop solar when it’s needed the most.” We are hardly surprised the *Miami Herald* would give prominent space to that misleading viewpoint.

The authors are referring to proposed legislation to update Florida’s more than decade-old net metering rules. The legislation would not prohibit Floridians from installing rooftop solar nor would it prohibit them from selling excess electricity to FPL. What it would do, however, is stop forcing customers who can’t or have chosen not to install solar on their roof to continue funding bill credits for those future customers who do.

Contrary to what the authors want you to believe, FPL supports net metering and we will always support customers who choose to purchase private solar systems. We simply believe future customers should pay the full cost of that decision and not force their neighbors to subsidize this growing expense.

Unfortunately, that’s exactly what happens today and that is why we support the proposal to keep this massive tax from growing even larger.

Today, 99.5% of FPL customers don’t have solar on their roofs, but they are forced to pay a state-manded fee each month on their electric bill to support the 0.5% of customers who do. This \$30 million annual tax is projected to nearly triple to more than \$80 million per year by 2025.

The authors try to sow fear by making unsubstantiated claims from the private rooftop solar industry that updating Florida’s outdated net metering rules will put them out of business.

While they’re busy crying wolf, the real numbers tell a very different story.

Data from across the country clearly demonstrates the rooftop solar industry continued to grow, and saw only minimal decline in adoption, even after net metering subsidies were reformed.

For example, Arizona implemented revised net metering rules in January 2017 and the change in the monthly growth rate has declined a modest 0.32 percentage points – hardly a death blow.

There is one place where we can all agree: all forms of solar play a role in a zero-carbon future and no one is installing more solar than FPL to benefit all our customers.

We’ve built and operate more solar power plants than any other utility in the nation, have created tens of thousands of construction jobs across Florida and we have even more plants on the way as we work to install 30 million solar panels by 2030 – a bold plan that’s on budget and now five years ahead of schedule.

FPL has a long-standing commitment to developing more zero-emissions power generation now and into the future. To put it simply, we believe Floridians benefit from the most green for the least green.

And there is no debate about how that is accomplished.

The large-scale, ground-mounted solar power plants FPL is building across the state are more than three times more cost-effective than private rooftop solar panels and the results are well documented: Reliable, affordable, clean power for all our customers.

It's a proven recipe that works and it's how we've been leading the nation's largest solar expansion while keeping bills well below the national average for more than a decade.

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