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Florida Public Service Commission  
2540 Shumard Oak Blvd.  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0850

Dear Public Service Commissioners,

Florida Veterans for Common Sense asks that you preserve the current net metering policy, as is. We are a non-profit non-partisan veterans' organization that advocates for a strong national security, veterans' issues, and environmental protection. Florida Veterans For Common Sense views climate change as a national security issue from threats such as sea level rise and extreme weather.

As responsible citizens and environmentalists, many in our organization have reached into our personal finances to invest in rooftop solar for our homes not only to show environmental leadership, but to save money on energy bills in our retirement. For this reason, we will be personally affected – faced with higher energy bills -- by any decision that rescinds net metering. The unfair consequence of rescinding net metering is that a significant economic penalty will be targeted *specifically and exclusively toward those families who have invested their savings or borrowed money to show leadership to their communities in a cause -- the environmental cause – that we believe in.*

However, quite beyond our personal interests, we are deeply concerned about the effects of rescinding net metering on the growth of the solar industry, creation of valuable jobs, and protection of the environment. Environmental protection is a high priority in Florida where 900 people move daily into a state that has been heralded for its natural gifts. Solar panels save precious water by replacing energy from natural gas, including frack-gas, the production and generation of which consumes and contaminates water. Further, rooftop solar protects air quality by eliminating combustion emissions, including conventional air pollutants (Sulphur Oxides, Nitrous Oxides, and particulates) and greenhouse gases that exacerbate climate change, health issues, and may contribute to harmful algae blooms. These benefits are greater from local rooftop solar than from large solar fields because of avoided transmission loss and not needing to cover otherwise productive lands with sprawling infrastructure. They are also greater in that they

help our citizens afford an electricity source that helps them be more resilient during hurricane induced grid outages.

Rescinding net metering will discourage the growing commercial opportunity for marketing, selling, installing, and servicing rooftop solar. Small business owners who have invested to build companies around the state to serve their local communities will see their markets dry up. Businesses will fail, jobs will be lost, and lives will be ruined all for what will be but a minor benefit to investor-owned utilities. Net metering has been used in other states to foster thriving green economies; please don't allow this momentum to be halted here in Florida.

For all these reasons (our personal economic well-being, clean energy jobs, economic growth, protection of the environment, health, and mitigation of climate change), Florida should be expanding net metering instead of rescinding it. For example, allowing virtual net-metering (community solar) so that people in condos or apartment buildings can share a solar installation. Instead of limiting net metering only to customers who are served by a public owned utility, we need make net-metering available to all rural and urban areas regardless of the utility provider.

Finally, rescinding net metering would greatly damage people's trust in government. Local government interests such as City Sustainability Departments and County Extension Agents have been widely promoting net metering as an important tool in making solar affordable. They have encouraged citizens to borrow money through the popular Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) policy. People who have attended government-sponsored workshops and been convinced to invest in solar because of attractive payback periods made possible by net metering will feel totally deceived and burned by their own government. Many homeowners and businesses will find their investment suddenly becoming an economic burden due to the unexpected rescinding of a promised incentive.

In that spirit, we hope you will consider net metering to be a *promise made by government to the people of Florida* – a promise that encourages Floridians to make economically difficult decisions to invest in rooftop solar, launch local solar businesses, or study and pay for a solar degrees to find local clean-energy jobs. Florida Veterans for Common Sense implores you not to rescind net metering – not to retract the promise – that currently promotes a valuable industry and protects its subscribers from unexpected economic hardship. Additionally, we encourage you to expand net metering to include community (virtual net metering) solar and non-publicly owned utilities.

Respectfully,

/s/

Gene Jones  
President, Florida Veterans for Common Sense

cc: Florida Chief Scientist