

CITY OF CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA

RESOLUTION NO. 2016-237

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA, ENCOURAGING FLORIDA VOTERS TO VOTE NO ON AMENDMENT 1, TITLED “RIGHTS OF ELECTRICITY CONSUMERS REGARDING SOLAR ENERGY CHOICE” ON THE NOVEMBER 8, 2016 GENERAL ELECTION BALLOT.

WHEREAS, the City Commission of the City of Coral Gables declares that it is in the best interest of the public health, environment, safety, and welfare of its residents and visitors to increase the use of solar and renewable energy in the state of Florida; and

WHEREAS, currently only a small percentage of Florida’s energy customers utilize solar or renewable energy source devices; and

WHEREAS, the resounding passage of Amendment 4 which authorized the Florida Legislature to exempt solar and other renewable energy systems from certain personal property tax by the voters on August 30, 2016, demonstrates that a majority of Floridians want to increase the use of solar energy in the state; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission passed a resolution in support of Amendment 4 in August of 2016; and

WHEREAS, Amendment 1, titled “ Rights of Electricity Consumers Regarding Solar Energy Choice” will be presented to the residents of Florida on the November 8, 2016 general election ballot; and

WHEREAS, the amendment as written establishes a right under Florida’s constitution for consumers to own or lease solar equipment installed on their property to generate electricity for their own use, a right which is already established via state statutes; and

WHEREAS, the amendment also states that state and local governments shall have the ability to ensure that consumers who do not choose to install solar are not required to subsidize the costs of backup power and electric grid access to those who do; and

WHEREAS, “net metering” is a policy that allows families and businesses to generate their own solar power and send any excess power back to the utilities grid; and

WHEREAS, the language in Amendment 1 incorrectly implies that solar customers are being “subsidized” by non-solar energy users and Amendment 1 would allow for the possible weakening or elimination of the state’s net metering policy, a policy which encourages residential solar use; and

WHEREAS, Amendment 1 is sponsored by an organization called Consumers for Smart Solar which appears to be primarily bankrolled by the state's large energy companies, including Florida Power and Light, Duke Energy, Tampa Electric Company and Gulf Power Company; and

WHEREAS, the City of Coral Gables Commission opposes the passage of Amendment 1, as the amendment as described above is detrimental to the City Commission's previously expressed strong support for solar and renewable energy in the City of Coral Gables and throughout the state;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES:

SECTION 1. The foregoing "Whereas" clauses are hereby ratified and confirmed as being true and correct and are hereby made a specific part of this Resolution upon adoption hereof.

SECTION 2. That the City Commission urges the residents of Coral Gables and voters throughout Florida to vote NO on Amendment 1, "RIGHTS OF ELECTRICITY CONSUMERS REGARDING SOLAR ENERGY CHOICE" during the November 8, 2016 election.

SECTION 3. That City Commission directs City staff to create educational materials regarding Amendment 1 and to publish that material through the city e-news and in the City of Coral Gables page in Neighbors in the Miami Herald in compliance with all relevant laws.

SECTION 4. That the City Clerk is directed to send a certified copy of this resolution to the Florida League of Cities, Miami-Dade County, and other neighboring municipalities.

SECTION 5. That this Resolution shall become effective upon the date of its passage and adoption herein.

PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS ELEVENTH DAY OF OCTOBER, A.D., 2016.
(Moved: Lago / Seconded: Quesada)
(Yeas: Quesada, Slesnick, Keon, Lago, Cason)
(Unanimous: 5-0 Vote)
(Non-Agenda Item)


APPROVED:


JIM CASON
MAYOR

ATTEST:


WALTER J. FOEMAN
CITY CLERK

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND
LEGAL SUFFICIENCY:


CRAIG E. LEEN
CITY ATTORNEY