



Protecting Clean Energy and Economic Growth in the Southeast

In the Southeast, where solar developers lack access to organized energy markets, the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act (PURPA) has outsized importance and is a significant market driver.

North Carolina and South Carolina are two of the top PURPA markets in the country.¹

PURPA has been a success in North Carolina



- PURPA helped North Carolina become #2 nationally in solar capacity.
- North Carolina has over 2,500 MW of solar facilities covered by PURPA currently operating, with more than 2,200 MW of PURPA solar projects in its contracted pipeline.
- The PURPA solar market has grown North Carolina's economy:²
 - A 2016 Clean Energy Census showed there are over **330 solar energy firms** operating in North Carolina.
 - The solar industry in the state supports over **5,400 jobs**, and generated over **\$1.4 billion** in revenue in 2016.
- Renewable energy projects are widely distributed across North Carolina, bringing investment to many rural counties.
- North Carolina's robust PURPA market also led Duke Energy to support energy legislation that will bring over **6 GW** of new solar onto the grid.

Following North Carolina's success, South Carolina has recently become a national leader in PURPA-driven solar



- From 2015 to 2017, South Carolina jumped from #36 to #13 nationally in solar capacity.³
- South Carolina has over 265 MW of solar projects operating, with more than 1,500 MW in the contracted pipeline.
- South Carolina's solar economy is growing quickly, with at least **70 solar energy firms** and more than **\$430 million total solar investment** in the state.⁴
- At least **\$1.5 billion of investment** in solar projects throughout South Carolina is expected over the next five years.
- One solar company, Cypress Creek Renewables, anticipates the need for 10,000 new solar construction jobs to meet future demand and recently launched a **solar workforce training initiative** to help train the next generation of solar industry workers in the state.⁵

Even with this progress, solar still makes up only a small percentage of the energy mix in the Southeast—less than 4.5% in North Carolina and less than .02% in South Carolina.⁶ Congress should not threaten to stop this growth in its tracks and stifle an important market driver. Congress should strengthen PURPA, not weaken it.

Sources

¹Todd Glass, SEIA, Written Testimony before the United States House of Representatives Committee on Energy and Commerce, (Sept. 6, 2017) at page 18.

²North Carolina Sustainable Energy Association, “North Carolina Energy Industry Census” (2016), https://energync.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/NC_Clean_Energy_Industry_Census_2016.pdf.

³Greentech Media, “Cypress Creek Invests Billions in South Carolina’s Solar Market: Now its Investing in People, Too” (Nov. 20, 2017) <https://www.greentechmedia.com/articles/read/cypress-creek-invests-in-south-carolina-solar-program-projects#gs.Kmb3WZQ>.

⁴SEIA, South Carolina Solar, <https://www.seia.org/state-solar-policy/south-carolina-solar>.

⁵Cypress Creek Renewables, “Cypress Creek Renewables Announces Solar Job Training Initiative in South Carolina” (Nov. 7, 2017), <https://ccrenew.com/uncategorized/solar-jobs-south-carolina/>.

⁶SEIA, North Carolina Solar, <https://www.seia.org/state-solar-policy/north-carolina-solar>; SEIA, South Carolina Solar, <https://www.seia.org/state-solar-policy/south-carolina-solar>