**Headline: Amendment 1 Promotes Solar and Protects Consumers**

Solar power is an emerging energy option in Florida and we want to make sure that it’s developed the right way in our state. Electric co-ops across Florida are testing solar generation and in many cases are on the verge of offering new solar options to their consumer-owners.

Unfortunately, big, for-profit, out-of-state companies have come to Florida looking to make big bucks by leasing rooftop solar panels. Thankfully, standards are in place to protect you and your family from businesses driven only by high profit margins. These protections help ensure the safety of your family, our linemen, and first responders. They also protect you from contracts that are misleading or even fraudulent.

Disturbingly, big solar companies are lobbying the Legislature and are working on a constitutional amendment for the 2018 ballot that would protect you from shady solar business practices. This November you have the opportunity to stop their lobbying efforts by cementing solar related consumer protections into Florida’s Constitution. Proposed Amendment 1 will guarantee that consumer protections survive big solar’s lobbying efforts by establishing three different protective rights in Florida’s Constitution:

Protection 1: **Your right to own, rent, and use solar generation and solar electricity.**Currently, your right to have and use solar is not in Florida’s Constitution. Amendment 1 fixes this problem by cementing into Florida’s Constitution your right to have solar generators and to use solar power. Amendment 1 would guarantee your ability to purchase solar equipment for your home or office, or rent it if you prefer, and to use the electricity it generates.

Protection 2: **The right to be protected from fraudulent or unsafe solar providers.**

Solar power is a great resource, but unfortunately, there are some bad actors in the solar industry, and as with all electric generation there are safety risks. Amendment 1 ensures that necessary standards can continue to protect you and your family from substandard installations and unsafe solar equipment. It also allows the government to protect you from predatory solar companies that are only focused on their profits.

Protection 3: **Treat all Floridians fairly.**

Even when a home has solar panels, it almost always has to be connected to the grid – because electricity can’t be stored affordably. Therefore, most solar users will continue to rely on their utility’s electric grid when the sun doesn’t shine. Amendment 1 ensures that those who do not have solar generators are not required to pay more than their fair share of the cost of maintaining the electric grid, and will not be forced to subsidize the electric rates of those that choose to use solar.

Here at <insert\_local\_co-op>, we believe in providing safe, affordable, and reliable power. Amendment 1 will help solar meet those criteria, and that’s good news for all of our consumer-owners. As always, if you’d like to know more about Amendment 1 or solar power in general, please contact us.