



Rep. Michelle Rehwinkel Vasilinda
Florida House of Representatives
District 9

PRESS RELEASE

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Grass Roots Opposition to Nuclear Cost Recovery Growing

Tallahassee – By a vote of 18-12 the Broward League of Cities today approved Resolution 2012-S03 Opposing Advanced Nuclear Cost Recovery. The vote followed presentations by Florida Power and Light and State Representative Michelle Rehwinkel Vasilinda.

Representative Rehwinkel Vasilinda has for two years sponsored legislation to repeal the advanced nuclear cost recovery scheme contained in FS 366.93. She is a leading proponent to open markets to “Florida brand energy” like distributive solar, wind, biomass, as well as conservation and efficiency innovations made and produced in Florida by Floridians.

Representative Rehwinkel Vasilinda has also filed, with a bipartisan coalition of legislators, a friend of the court brief with the Florida Supreme Court, challenging the constitutionality of the law allowing utility companies to collect hundreds of millions of dollars each year for a decade or more before any electricity is produced.

In her presentation, she cited “Footnote 42” in her brief filed in the Supreme Court and noted the almost three hundred million dollars being collected by Florida Power and Light and Progress Energy Florida in 2012 “is nothing more than a tax on the residents of Florida that could be better used putting Floridians to work immediately on home grown energy solutions, conservation and efficiency.

Each side was given ten minutes to make their case. Rehwinkel Vasilinda compared the investor owned utilities to candlemakers trying to maintain their monopoly as electricity was being introduced, and to buggy whip makers “not realizing that seismic shifts are occurring around the world in an inevitable change in how we do business and use and create energy” just as when automobiles began replacing horse drawn carriages.

“Florida Power and Light and Progress Energy Florida have a vested interest in selling energy by the watt in an outdated profit model. To keep the status quo and their monopoly, the utility companies have given enormous sums of money primarily to Republicans who control the state legislature.” In the current election cycle, Florida Power and Light has contributed more than one point two million dollars to advance their political agenda.



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“Utility companies enjoy a monopoly which capitalist systems usually abhor and in exchange they are supposed to be regulated to insure fair practices by a representative government. At this point in Florida’s political history the utility industry is doing the regulating,” said Rep. Rehwinkel Vasilinda.

Advanced Nuclear Cost Recovery was approved by the state legislature in 2006 and has resulted in Progress Energy and Florida Power and Light collecting more than one billion dollars in fees with no requirements new nuclear plants actually be built or the money refunded if the plants are not constructed. Several current legislators who voted for the 2006 legislation now support repeal of this hidden tax on utility customers.

Today’s vote came after four previous discussions by the Broward League of Cities on advanced nuclear cost recovery. The Broward League of Cities is a non-partisan, non-profit organization dedicated to raising awareness and resolving issues facing Broward County’s 31 cities and municipalities at the local, county and state level.

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