

# NEWS

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**Contact:** Ryan Banfill  
(850) 222-1996

## **Advocates: Florida Should Keep Solar Energy Promise to Citizens**

*More Than 1,700 Consumers Currently on State Solar Energy Rebate Waiting List*

**TALLAHASSEE, Fla.** – Solar energy advocates today called on Florida’s lead state budget negotiators to provide funding necessary to keep the promise the Legislature made last year to provide rebates to consumers who invest in solar energy alternatives. According to information from the Florida Energy Office, as of April 23, 1,725 Florida consumers sat on a waiting list to receive \$3.2 million in solar energy rebates.

“Florida leaders made a strong commitment to promote energy independence when they created this bold initiative. Florida consumers took them up on the deal and made a vital investment in the state’s energy future,” said Bruce Kershner with the Florida Solar Energy Industries Association. “Now, we urge the governor and Legislature to keep the state’s promise to these consumers by funding this critical effort.”

Last year, Gov. Charlie Crist and the Florida Legislature set aside \$3.5 million for the Florida Solar Energy System Incentives Program, which provides the rebates to residents and businesses on the purchase of solar equipment. Under the program:

- Solar thermal swimming pool heaters are eligible for a \$100 rebate per system.
- Residential solar water heaters are eligible for a \$500 rebate per system. Commercial solar water heating systems are eligible for a rebate of \$15 per 1,000 Btu, with a maximum rebate amount of \$5,000.
- Photovoltaic systems of 2 kilowatts or larger can qualify for a rebate based on the manufacturer’s power output rating of the system. The amount is \$4 per watt, with a residential cap of \$20,000 and a \$100,000 cap for commercial, publicly owned, or private non-profit organizations.

The program has proven so popular that applicants exhausted the program's funding after only six months. To meet the incredible public demand, Gov. Crist recommended \$10 million for the solar rebate program for fiscal year 2008-09.

In March of this year, a statewide poll by Mason-Dixon Polling & Research found that 85 percent of those Floridians believe the Legislature should act to encourage investment in solar energy, and 81 percent said they would support that investment even if it cost them an extra dollar per month on their utility bills.

For more information on solar energy in Florida, please visit the Florida Solar Energy Industries Association Web site at [www.flaseia.org](http://www.flaseia.org) and The Vote Solar Initiative Web site at <http://www.votesolar.org/state-initiatives/florida.html>.

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