



MOVING SOLAR ENERGY FORWARD IN FLORIDA

Deirdre Macnab, former President, League of Women Voters of Florida, and currently a member of Florida's Federal Judicial Nominating Commission, spoke at the Palm Beach County Hot Topics Luncheon on May 17, 2017. Hot Topic: **Solar for Florida!**

Deirdre reported that Florida has fallen behind in solar home installations because of two key reasons: Knowledge and Price. Everyone should know Florida's laws:

- Everyone/anyone can put solar on their roof. **HOA's** cannot prevent!
- Utilities must offer **NET METERING** – they buy back unused power.
- Residential solar installation costs are **EXEMPT** from both property and sales tax.

Deirdre explained that **Florida Solar United Neighborhoods (FLSUN)** is a non-profit that educates Floridians about the benefits of solar energy and helps organize group solar installations – solar cooperatives. **FLSUN** makes solar easy, understandable and affordable by holding public information sessions. Here is how the **FLSUN** Solar Cooperative works:

- Homeowners form a buyers' cooperative
- The co-op bundles the group's buying power
- Members use free-market approach in competitive bidding process to select installer and secure significant discounts for rooftop solar system because of bulk purchasing and coordinated scheduling
- Each homeowner contracts individually with installer
- No obligation or commitment by homeowner to sign the contract unless homeowner wishes to proceed

Solar co-ops result in lower utility bills, saving money for the consumer, and increased property value. [2015 DOE Study, "Selling into the Sun"]

Diane Marks, LWVPBC, is leading the Palm Beach County Co-op. We are looking for volunteers to assist Diane in this endeavor. Volunteers are needed for a variety of tasks, especially to reach out to groups within the community. The groundwork will be accomplished this summer and the first co-op meeting will be held in October. You can volunteer by contacting Diane at 702-1451 or e-mail at dimarks@gate.net.