

**Remarks by Armando J. Olivera
President, Florida Power & Light Company
NASA Solar Groundbreaking Event
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Thank you, Pam, for that introduction. And let me also recognize our special guests who are with us today: Senator Bill Nelson, Representative Suzanne Kosmas, Representative Bill Posey, and Kennedy Space Center Director Robert Cabana.

A little over 40 years ago, on Christmas Eve 1968, the crew of Apollo 8 was completing a lunar orbit when a remarkable sight appeared in the window of the command module. It was the Earth, 240,000 miles away, rising above the horizon like a blue-white marble. Little did they know, but Frank Borman, Jim Lovell and Bill Anders would fundamentally change how we think about our planet. The image they captured that day – called “Earthrise” – made us realize more powerfully than ever before that *this* is the only home we have.

Supportive Policy Needed

In a word, they gave us *perspective*. And perspective is what we badly need in our energy and environmental policy these days. The political process easily succumbs to the tyranny of the urgent. But it is the longer-term issues such as climate change that will determine the quality of life for our children and grandchildren.

Whether it’s passing legislation in Tallahassee to expand renewable energy in Florida, or enacting a cap-and-trade bill in Washington to put a price on carbon, we need policymakers with the vision to see how their actions shape our world. My hope is that the Florida legislature and the U.S. Congress will understand that climate change is the defining issue of our time and pursue policies that create more emissions-free power.

A Low-Carbon Leader

At Florida Power & Light, we are doing our part. We are the first company to bring commercial-scale solar power to the Sunshine State. And together with our sister company NextEra Energy Resources, we are the largest renewable energy provider in North America.

Our clean-energy focus has given us one of the lowest emission rates of any electric power company in the nation. In fact, if every utility were as clean as FPL Group, carbon emissions from the entire U.S. power sector would be reduced by 50 percent, and America’s total carbon emissions would be reduced by 20 percent. Picture half of the nation’s power plants simply vanishing, or imagine every major city in America without automobiles – that’s how much emissions would be reduced if the electric industry simply matched FPL Group’s performance.

The Space Coast Solar Energy Center will be an important part of Florida’s clean-energy future. This project will bring 10 megawatts of emissions-free solar power to Florida, enough to power 1,100 homes. It will reduce CO2 emissions by hundreds of

thousands of tons. And combined with the other solar plants we are building, it will make Florida number two in the nation for solar power.

Economic and Energy Security

Nor should we ignore the significant economic benefits of clean energy. The solar projects we are building will create nearly 1,500 good-paying construction jobs during this economic downturn. And as Florida achieves critical mass in the number of solar projects it builds, we'll be able to attract research and development and solar manufacturers to the state.

But let me emphasize: *Only* with continued public policy support will this vision become a reality. Otherwise the clean-energy economy we hope to build will find a home in Texas, or Arizona, or some other state.

The time has also come to get serious about Florida's energy security. Florida is dependent on fossil fuels for more than 80 percent of its electricity needs. The only way to bring that number down is with additional nuclear power, which is at least a decade away, or with a dramatic expansion of renewable energy.

Simply put, we need more solar power to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels. The Space Coast Solar Energy Center alone will reduce annual fossil fuel use by more than a hundred thousand barrels of oil and billions of cubic feet of natural gas. And solar plants never suffer from price volatility – the fuel is *a/ways* 100 percent free.

Powering the Space Program

In addition to feeding the grid with power from our 10 megawatt solar plant, we are also building a 1 megawatt solar array exclusively for the Kennedy Space Center. For me, this is one of the most exciting aspects of the project.

I grew up in Florida, and I'm an engineer by training, so I love the idea of FPL helping to power the space program. This facility is home to historic American achievements ... Projects Mercury ... Gemini ... Apollo ... and the Space Shuttle. And even now, orbiting the earth 220 miles above us, the International Space Station is drawing the power from the sun with solar wings reaching into space.

As the astronauts and cosmonauts aboard the station look down on the Earth, they see it the way we must see it ... the way the crew of Apollo 8 first saw it – as a fragile ecosystem with human beings as the only stewards able to preserve it for all inhabitants. Here on Earth, in our fight to combat the worst potential effects of climate change, it is imperative that we capture more of the sunlight that illuminated that first Earthrise.

Conclusion

To our friends at NASA, thank you again for making this project possible. And to our friends in Tallahassee and Washington, let me say this: We want to do more. We're ready to do more. And with your help, we will.

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