

By Senator Diaz

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to floating solar facilities; creating
3 s. 163.32051, F.S.; providing legislative findings
4 regarding floating solar facilities; defining the term
5 "floating solar facility"; providing that a floating
6 solar facility must be a permitted use in appropriate
7 land use categories in each local government's
8 comprehensive plan; requiring each local government to
9 amend its development regulations to promote the
10 expanded use of floating solar facilities; authorizing
11 a county to specify certain buffer and landscaping
12 requirements for floating solar facilities; providing
13 exceptions to the construction of floating solar
14 facilities; requiring the Office of Energy within the
15 Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to
16 submit specified recommendations to the Legislature to
17 provide a regulatory framework relating to floating
18 solar facilities; providing an effective date.

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20 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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22 Section 1. Section 163.32051, Florida Statutes, is created
23 to read:

24 163.32051 Floating solar facilities.-

25 (1) (a) The Legislature finds that floating solar
26 facilities, also known as "floatovoltaics," can be effective
27 tools in harnessing energy on manmade bodies of water.

28 (b) The Legislature finds that siting floating solar
29 facilities on wastewater treatment ponds, abandoned limerock

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30 mine areas, and other water storage reservoirs is a beneficial
31 use of those areas for many reasons, which include that the
32 water has a cooling effect on the solar panels which can boost
33 power production and that the panels help decrease the amount of
34 water lost to evaporation and the formation of harmful algal
35 blooms.

36 (c) Therefore, the Legislature finds that the siting of
37 floating solar facilities should be encouraged by local
38 governments as appropriate uses of water and land areas.

39 (2) For purposes of this section, the term "floating solar
40 facility" means a solar facility as defined in s. 163.3205(2)
41 which is located on a wastewater treatment pond, abandoned
42 limerock mine area, or other manmade water storage reservoir.

43 (3) A floating solar facility shall be a permitted use in
44 the appropriate land use categories in each local government's
45 comprehensive plan, and each local government must amend its
46 land development regulations to promote the expanded use of
47 floating solar facilities.

48 (4) A county may adopt an ordinance specifying buffer and
49 landscaping requirements for floating solar facilities. The
50 requirements may not exceed the requirements for similar uses
51 involving the construction of other solar facilities that are
52 permitted uses in agricultural land use categories and zoning
53 districts.

54 (5) Notwithstanding subsections (3) and (4), a floating
55 solar facility may not be constructed in the Lake Belt Area or
56 an Everglades Agricultural Area reservoir project if the local
57 governments involved with the area or project determine that the
58 floating solar facility will have a negative impact on that area

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59 or project.

60 (6) The Office of Energy within the Department of
61 Agriculture and Consumer Services shall develop and submit
62 recommendations to the Legislature by December 31, 2022, to
63 provide a regulatory framework for private and public sector
64 entities that implement floating solar facilities.

65 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2022.