



Southern Alliance for  
**Clean Energy**

# Renewable Energy In South Carolina

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## **REAL ENERGY SOLUTIONS: A Renewable Energy Standard**

### **What is a Renewable Energy Standard?**

A renewable energy standard, also known as a renewable portfolio standard, is a market-based mechanism that requires utilities to gradually increase the portion of electricity produced from renewable resources, such as plant and animal matter (biomass), solar and wind, over a given time period. As of 2007, 24 states and the District of Columbia have enacted minimum renewable energy requirements.



Wetland marshes along South Carolina's coast

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### **A Federal Renewable Energy Standard Will:**

- ✓ Protect against increasing and volatile fossil fuel prices by stabilizing electricity prices
- ✓ Hedge against energy supply shortages and disruptions
- ✓ Diversify our energy supply with clean, local resources
- ✓ Avoid a growing dependence on natural gas
- ✓ Reduce emissions of carbon dioxide, reduce emissions of harmful air pollution and cut water use
- ✓ Create local markets, jobs and bring added value to farms and rural businesses

**A federal renewable energy standard, if enacted, would require that up to 15% of our nation's electricity would come from renewable resources and energy efficiency by 2020.**

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### **The Renewable Energy Standard Relies on Market Forces**

- The renewable energy standard uses tradable "renewable energy credits" to achieve compliance at the lowest cost
- This market-based approach creates competition among renewable generators, providing the greatest amount of clean power for the lowest price, and creates an ongoing incentive to drive down costs.

**A renewable energy standard is an important economic development tool to create jobs and income for South Carolina farmers, scientists and entrepreneurs.**

## ***What is South Carolina's Renewable Energy Potential?***

South Carolina does not have coal or oil deposits, so our economy largely depends on imported fossil fuels.

However, South Carolina has tremendous renewable energy potential through offshore wind energy, and plant and animal matter (biomass), and, to a lesser degree, solar energy. There is a growing movement worldwide to increase the supply of dependable renewable energy to supplement the current practice of burning coal and using nuclear energy, which have devastating impacts on our ecosystems.



Coal and nuclear power dominate electricity generation in South Carolina; coal-fired power plants supply more than two-fifths of our state's electricity output, while nuclear power plants supply more than half. All of the coal and uranium used in these power plants is imported from out of state.<sup>1</sup>

### ***Clean Energy Is Creating New Jobs and Saving Money for South Carolinians***

- South Carolina's offshore wind potential is among the largest and most accessible wind resources in the region; early studies estimate our state's offshore wind potential is greater than Georgia's which is estimated at approximately 10,000 MW.<sup>2</sup>
- GE Energy's wind and gas-powered turbines plant in Greenville, SC employs more than 2,700 workers. A national RES would create more demand for wind turbines, which could lead to an expansion of GE's work force in South Carolina.
- A recent report finds that South Carolina has the potential to generate about 1,000 MW of energy from forest and agricultural waste, providing approximately 3% of electric demand.<sup>3</sup>

### ***Renewable Energy Is Reliable and Affordable***

- The fuel for renewable energy, such as solar and wind, is free. The more we build and the more we can manufacture, the cheaper renewable energy will become.
- Renewable energy development can also improve overall system reliability by helping to diversify a utilities resource portfolio.

### ***What can you do to help?***

- **Ask your U.S. Senators and Representative to support a renewable energy portfolio standard in Congress and create a clean energy economy today.**
- **Join the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy so we may keep you updated on key energy votes and developments on clean energy issues.**

1. [http://tonto.eia.doe.gov/state/state\\_energy\\_profiles.cfm?sid=SC](http://tonto.eia.doe.gov/state/state_energy_profiles.cfm?sid=SC)
2. [http://www.gawwg.org/BruceBaileyGAWindConference10-24\\_06.pdf](http://www.gawwg.org/BruceBaileyGAWindConference10-24_06.pdf)
3. [Potential for Biomass Energy Development in South Carolina](#). Harris, Robert. September 2004.

**For more information contact Southern Alliance for Clean Energy  
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