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Governor Crist Addresses First Meeting of the Florida Energy & Climate Commission

~Nine-member panel will lead state energy and climate change programs and policies ~

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TALLAHASSEE – Governor Charlie Crist today welcomed state leaders and the public to the first meeting of the nine-member Florida Energy & Climate Commission, held in Tallahassee. The Commission was created by the Governor and 2008 Florida Legislature within the Executive Office of the Governor to centralize state energy and climate change programs and policies.

"I look forward to working with the Florida Energy & Climate Commission as we continue along the path to a clean, diverse and secure energy future for our state," said Governor Crist. "Investing in green technologies and energy efficiency strengthens our economy, increases our energy independence and reduces greenhouse gas emissions."

The Commission is comprised of nine members, with seven appointed last month by Governor Crist, including the Commission's chairman, James F. Murley. The remaining two are appointed by Agriculture and Consumer Services Commissioner Charles Bronson and Chief Financial Officer Alex Sink. Florida Energy & Climate Commissioners are experts in energy, natural resource conservation, economics, engineering, finance, law, transportation and land use, consumer protection, state energy policy, or another related field.

The Florida Energy & Climate Commission was created through House Bill 7135, the 2008 Energy and Economic Development Legislation, a comprehensive package aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions as well as encouraging investment in alternative and renewable energy technologies. The Commission holds a variety of responsibilities, including administering financial incentive programs; completing annual assessments of Florida's Energy and Climate Change Action Plan; and providing recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature. The Commission will also work cooperatively with other state entities to develop state energy and climate change policies and programs.

Signed into law by Governor Crist in June 2008, the 2008 Energy and Economic Development Legislation builds upon the foundation for Florida's energy future to diversify the state's energy sources, spur economic growth and promote energy conservation and efficiency. This comprehensive legislative

package authorizes the development of a cap-and-trade regulatory program, which gives businesses flexibility in meeting greenhouse gas reduction standards. It creates a renewable fuel standard for motor vehicles and a renewable portfolio standard for utilities; and provides grants and incentives to promote and enhance the use of alternative and renewable energy technologies. In addition, the legislation creates a new consortium of state universities to bolster and share energy research and discoveries.

For more information, visit www.MyFloridaClimate.com.