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Contact: Kaitlin Sheppard, Kaitlin.Sheppard@fleishman.com, 704-295-6365

NCSEA Census Shows North Carolina's Diverse \$7 Billion Clean Energy Industry Added 3,000 Jobs in 2015

Manufacturing, research & development jobs stand out in eighth-annual Clean Energy Industry Census as clean energy total revenue rises 45% from 2014

RALEIGH, N.C., Jan. 27, 2016 — North Carolina's growing clean energy economy now accounts for nearly \$7 billion in revenue and over 26,000 jobs, including many new manufacturing and research & development jobs, according to the [2015 Clean Energy Industry Census](#) from the [NC Sustainable Energy Association \(NCSEA\)](#), a leading 501(c)3 nonprofit organization dedicated to shaping the state's clean and efficient energy future. Rises in total clean energy employment and revenues, up 14% and 45% respectively from 2014, take the spotlight in the eighth edition of NCSEA's signature publication, which measures the effectiveness of current clean energy policies by quantifying the industry's impact on North Carolina.

Despite years of political uncertainty, the Census confirms a continued upward trend NCSEA has observed since the first edition was released in 2008: Policies like the current Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Portfolio Standard (REPS) and now-expired Renewable Energy Investment Tax Credit (REITC) are working for North Carolina. These policies have allowed limited market competition in North Carolina's monopoly-controlled electricity market, to meet steadily growing consumer demand while driving down the cost of clean energy.

"Demand for North Carolina's clean energy products and services continues to grow both locally and globally," said NCSEA's executive director Ivan Urlaub. "Recent political changes, including the expiration of the REITC, are not expected to derail the progress of our growing industry supply chain, which has continued to mature and advance over the past eight years. All indications tell us that demand is here to stay, and we can expect it to only continue increasing – to the benefit of industry and all electric ratepayers in the state."

According to the Census, revenue generated by clean energy activities in the state increased by \$2.1 billion, or 45%, since last year. Now a \$6.96 billion industry, North Carolina's clean energy economy continues to expand local tax bases and add jobs, all while providing longstanding energy infrastructure to power homes and businesses across the state.

"The clean energy industry in North Carolina continues to prove its economic value to the state, steadily adding jobs and revenues," said NCSEA's manager of energy research and Census author Robin Aldina. "2015 saw the industry overcome policy uncertainty during the legislative session to record significant growth."

North Carolina added over 3,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs in 2015, growing the universe of clean energy jobs to an estimated 26,154 FTE jobs – a 14% increase over last year. Energy efficiency in particular was a dominant job-creating sector, accounting for approximately one-half of all employment in the industry with 13,036 FTE jobs, many of them coming from the design and construction of new, energy-efficient buildings.

North Carolina's solar industry continued shining bright in 2015 as well. With earnings of \$1.8 billion, the solar industry comprised 20% of clean energy firms in North Carolina and 21% of all clean energy jobs. These results come as North Carolina's solar industry hit a new milestone in 2015, becoming the fourth state in the nation – behind California, Arizona and New Jersey – to reach over 1 gigawatt (GW) of installed solar capacity. Demand for both energy efficiency and solar are expected to continue rising in 2016.

The diversity of the clean energy industry also reached new levels in 2015, with some emerging, perhaps less well-known sectors adding jobs and increasing their market share on the clean energy spectrum. The wind sector experienced a nearly seven-fold increase in employment from 2014, reaching 1,721 FTE jobs in 2015. The smart grid and energy storage sectors also grew their presences in the state, accounting for 1,291 FTE jobs, or 5% of total clean energy jobs, and 1,159 of FTE jobs, or 4% of total clean energy jobs, respectively.



The types of jobs available through clean energy continued expanding as well, with firms reporting manufacturing/production jobs and research & development jobs now comprise a combined 12% of reported clean energy activities in the state.

“We’ve seen a diversification across the clean energy industry, with typically smaller sectors such as wind and energy storage catching up with traditional leaders like energy efficiency and solar,” said Aldina. “We are also encouraged to see the uptick in manufacturing and R&D jobs. We look forward to a ninth year of growth across this diverse industry in 2016.”

Perhaps most notably, this progress is occurring despite clean energy policy uncertainties North Carolina encountered throughout the year. “This is a resilient and increasingly diverse industry. Only a portion of the jobs and revenues reported in the Census are related to the now-expired state tax credit. If clean energy policies allowing market access and limited competition remain in place, NCSEA anticipates 2016 will once again continue building on the growth we’ve seen in clean energy over the last eight years,” said NCSEA’s communications manager Allison Eckley.

About the Clean Energy Industry Census:

Since 2008, the NC Sustainable Energy Association (NCSEA) has surveyed companies, institutions, and organizations in the clean energy industry in order to quantify their impact on the state’s economy. The 2015 North Carolina Clean Energy Industry Census represents the eighth edition of this survey and resulting report. NCSEA created the Census to help measure the impact of North Carolina’s clean energy policies and identify where policies are or are not achieving the results policymakers, economic developers, and industry envisioned.

About the NC Sustainable Energy Association:

The NC Sustainable Energy Association (NCSEA) is a recognized 501(c)3 nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy organization dedicated to shaping North Carolina’s clean energy future through commonsense policy solutions that enable clean energy jobs, business opportunities and affordable energy to strengthen the state’s position as a leader in the new energy economy.

Engaging its deep ties with members, government officials, North Carolina communities and industry partners, NCSEA leads policy change that motivate sustainable market development while educating North Carolinians about the impacts of abundant and accessible clean energy.

NCSEA has served as a respected, trusted and collaborative resource to North Carolina and beyond driving some of the most successful policies across all energy sectors since 1978. NCSEA is also a member of the American Solar Energy Society and the Advanced Energy Economy.

For regular updates, please visit NCSEA online at energync.org and follow NCSEA on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).