



For Immediate Release – May 2, 2013

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REPS Repeal Bill Pushed Through Senate Finance Committee

S 365 defies public opposition and bipartisan concern in Committee action

RALEIGH – The North Carolina General Assembly’s Senate Finance Committee passed Senate Bill 365, the Senate’s version of the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Portfolio Standard (REPS) repeal bill, in a close vote. During discussion on the bill Senators from both sides of the aisle raised concerns about the wisdom of ending the REPS policy, some pointing out that the REPS has spurred economic development in the state, and others refuting the claim that the REPS creates a cost burden for ratepayers. As the bill was put to a voice vote that sounded highly inconclusive, the Committee Chair ignored several calls from Committee members for a vote count to verify the outcome, declaring the bill approved and adjourning the meeting instead.

“What was most notable about the Committee meeting was not the gamesmanship that allowed the bill to live for another day, but the bipartisan nature of the support expressed for preserving the REPS,” said Ivan Urlaub, Executive Director of the North Carolina Sustainable Energy Association. “It is also telling that North Carolina citizens, businesses, and investors continue to speak out in support of the REPS, as they have each time repeal has been debated at every step along the way.”

Six members of the public who spoke during the meeting were unanimous in their expressions of support for the REPS as a driver of investment, innovation, and job creation, and unanimously opposed to the bill. S 365 is the Senate companion bill to Rep. Mike Hager’s REPS repeal measure, H 298, in the House. That bill was rejected last week in the House Public Utilities and Energy Committee by a decided bipartisan majority of 18 – 13 including several from Republican leadership.

About the NC Sustainable Energy Association:

Founded in 1978, the NC Sustainable Energy Association (NCSEA) is a 501(c)3 non-profit membership organization of individuals, businesses, government and non-profits working to ensure a sustainable future by promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency in North Carolina through education, public policy and economic development. NCSEA has been the “go-to” leader in shaping North Carolina’s commitment to renewable energy, energy efficiency, high performance building, smart grid and electric vehicle jobs and economic opportunities in communities all across our state. Learn more at www.energync.org