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PRESS RELEASE

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Two PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) Providers Agree to Tax Collector Fasano's and Property Appraiser Joiner's NEW Customer Protections

The **Pasco County Tax Collector's Office** and the **Pasco County Property Appraiser's Office** announce that as of July 3, 2018 two PACE providers will be the only providers authorized to do business in Pasco County. The PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) Program is a government sponsored program that is used in Florida to finance energy efficiency home improvements, renewable energy improvements and wind resistance improvements. The two approved providers are *Renew Financial* and *Florida Resiliency & Energy District (FRED)*. These providers are the only two approved to do business in Pasco County because they are the only two that agreed to abide by stringent customer protections that **Tax Collector Mike Fasano & Property Appraiser Gary Joiner** drafted.

For many people a loan through the PACE Program may be the only option they have to fund needed home improvements. However, the industry has been riddled with shady businesses who have dealt unfairly and even fraudulently with customers. News accounts throughout the state document people left owing huge sums of money that they never agreed to pay nor asked for. The newly created consumer protections became part of PACE contracts in Pasco on July 3, 2018. The aforementioned companies are the only two who agreed to the new

terms. Contracts with any PACE vendor signed prior to July 3 are still in force. However, going forward all companies except for *Renew Financial* and *Florida Resiliency & Energy District* are effectively banned from doing business in Pasco County.

“If a company is not willing to sign a simple statement that it will provide certain consumer protections,” states **Tax Collector Mike Fasano**, “then there is no place for them in Pasco County. Our office and **Property Appraiser Gary Joiner** and his staff worked closely with consumer advocates and others familiar with the abuses occurring in this industry. The results are some very doable protections that will give assurances to customers that they are not only important but that they are working with a reputable firm. The fact that only two providers agreed to the contract terms speaks volumes regarding the reputation of those who did agree with the new protections and those who did not.”

“Making certain that our customers are both protected and receive the tax benefits they are entitled to are top priorities of this office,” comments **Property Appraiser Gary Joiner**. “The two PACE providers that agreed to the consumer protection terms of the new contracts are demonstrating their commitment to ensuring that our customers are kept safe from unscrupulous vendors.”

Before entering into an agreement with a PACE provider customers’ needs to ask themselves some basic questions: Is the PACE program free for me? How do I qualify for the loan? Do I pay interest for the loan? For answers to these and other questions about the PACE Program please visit the Pasco Tax Collector’s website at <http://www.pascotaxes.com/faqs/pace-program/>

The Pasco Tax Collector’s Office will only accept payments from vendors that have been processed and approved by the property appraiser’s office.