



Atlantic Coast Pipeline The False Promise of Jobs

The companies who will own the proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline if it is built have calculated how many FTE's (full time equivalent) jobs will be created during the construction phase of the pipeline. While their methodology of how they calculated their jobs number is not known at this writing, their estimate of 2,873 jobs during construction is likely the result of estimating how many hours will be incurred by all the workers to build the pipeline and the compressor stations, and then dividing by 2,080, the number of hours worked in a normal year at 40 hours per week. Their claim that building the pipeline will create an estimated 2,873 jobs may be a reasonable number, as pipeline companies would hire employees to do the work once a contract for the large job is issued.

Once built, a pipeline requires only few employees to operate. That's because much of the operation is automated and/or controlled by computers, and because, with the exception of compressor stations, there are few moving parts to maintain.

Politicians make a point of highlighting any new job as proof that the activity giving rise to the job must be worthwhile—the idea that almost any new job is justified regardless of how utilized.

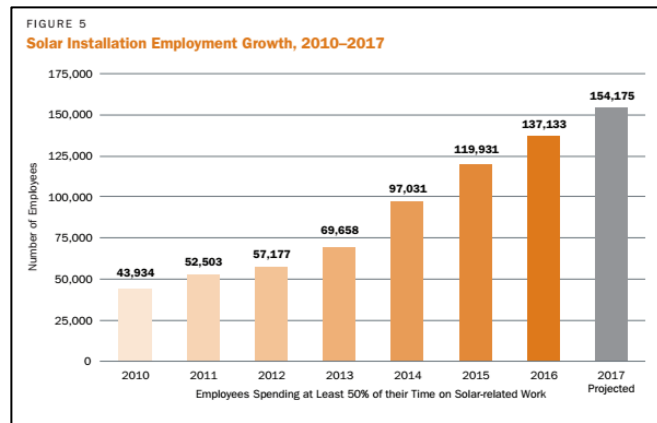
The mythical German scholar, Dr. Faust, was dissatisfied with his life and craved knowledge above all else, motivating him to make a pact with the Devil. In exchange for limitless knowledge, he gave the Devil his soul. Such arrangements are now commonly called a “Faustian bargain.” This term fits the perpetuation of a fossil-fuel-based economy because it can be shown to create a few jobs. The Faustian bargain in this case is that these few jobs commit the South to another 40 years of fossil fuel use—unnecessarily adding to the carbon load of the planet and pushing our dynamic climate system beyond the brink of repair. Plus these new jobs can be found elsewhere, in clean energy.

Because the electric grid can now begin using renewables for new capacity needed and to replace old coal or gas plants being retired, jobs will be created in the renewables industry in the same numbers or in excess of fossil fuel jobs, with the added benefit of beginning to heal the planet. It would be better in almost every conceivable way to create these jobs with clean energy rather than with more polluting fossil fuel infrastructure. And best of all is that North Carolina has been blessed with enormous potential for solar energy and wind energy, sources that we can live with.

Here's what the Solar Foundation reported about jobs in the just the solar energy sector¹:

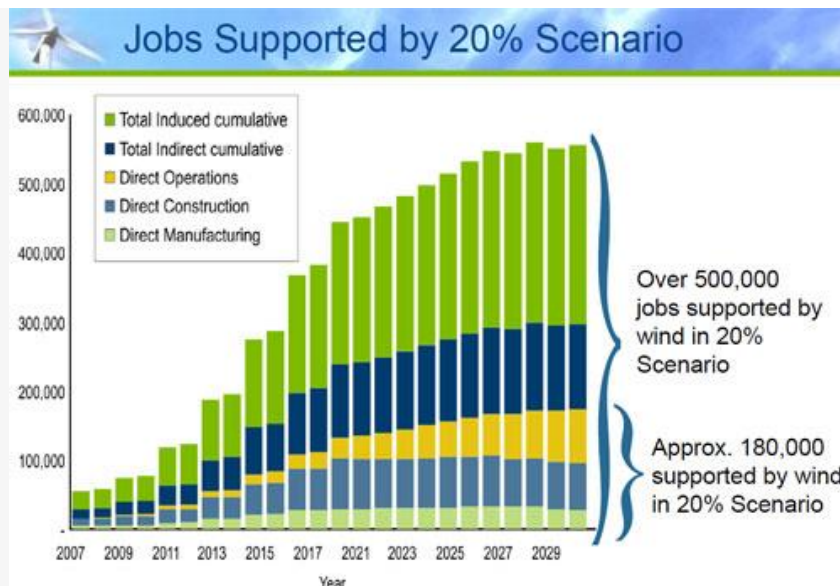
The Solar Jobs Census 2016 found that solar employment increased by over 51,000 workers, a 25 percent increase over 2015. Overall, the Solar Jobs Census found there were 260,077 solar workers in 2016. Solar industry employment has nearly tripled since the first National Solar Jobs Census was released in 2010.

- One out of every 50 new jobs added in the United States in 2016 was created by the solar industry, representing 2% percent of all new jobs.
- Solar jobs in the United States have increased at least 20 percent per year for the past years, and jobs have nearly tripled since the first Jobs Census was released in 2010.
- Over the next 12 months, employers surveyed expect to see total solar industry employment increase by 10 percent to 286,335 workers.
- In 2016, the five states with the most solar jobs were California, Massachusetts, Texas, Nevada, and Florida.



four
Solar
solar

And the future of employment in the **wind industry** can be bright as well. To achieve 20% wind power by 2030, the U.S. Department of Energy estimates that the United States will require more than 100,000 additional wind turbines, creating more than 500,000 new jobs.



Source: *20% Wind Energy by 2030* (PDF 3.6 MB)

It is not rational to commit to a pipeline that will hasten the breakdown of climate systems and ecosystems because of the promise of the few jobs it will create when just as many or more jobs can be created in clean energy without wrecking the planet.

1. The Solar Foundation. (2017). Retrieved from the World Wide Web February 24, 2017 at: <http://www.thesolarfoundation.org/national/>.

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