

# RGGI is the law in Virginia.



*In 2020, the Virginia General Assembly passed the Clean Energy and Community Flood Preparedness Act (HB 981/ SB 1027). The law requires Virginia to participate in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI — pronounced "Reggie") which is a successful pollution reduction program that drives utilities and power generators toward cleaner, more sustainable and less damaging energy solutions. This is accomplished through a regional market-based approach that reduces carbon dioxide emissions year by year and requires fossil fuel power plants to pay for each ton of their pollution.*

## RGGI is working.

RGGI formed in 2005 and Virginia's participation in the program began in 2021, following the 2020 law mandating participation. The program is working — power plants are polluting less and critical financial resources are being generated to address climate change.

### Since Virginia joined RGGI:

- Before RGGI, Virginia's emissions weren't going down.<sup>1</sup> In just the three years that Virginia participated in RGGI, power plant emissions fell 22% statewide according to the EPA. Since Virginia left RGGI, Virginia's emissions have increased by 31%.<sup>2</sup>
- Volatile fossil fuel prices are the real driver behind high utility bills, and RGGI will continue to help protect Virginians from these high costs by reducing Virginia's reliance on fossil fuels. From 2008 to 2017, RGGI states saw electricity prices drop by almost 6% while they went up by almost 9% throughout the rest of the country.<sup>3</sup>
- Virginia's participation in RGGI generated \$827 million in critical funding to support low-income energy efficiency programs and flood resilience infrastructure in the Commonwealth.
  - Energy efficiency upgrades are the best way to lower electricity bills, and Virginia's funds are directed to helping those households most in need. A 2023 study showed that through 2030, RGGI funds would facilitate the upgrade of 130,000 homes in Virginia, saving low-income households about \$676 per year on utility bills, while creating 2,100 jobs for local communities.<sup>4</sup>



- Virginia's participation in RGGI is the only consistent state funding for localities to perform resiliency work. More than 50 localities, counties, or planning district commissions have received over \$370 million, helping coastal and inland communities all across the Commonwealth.<sup>5</sup>

Virginia needs to get back into compliance after the prior administration illegally withdrew us from the program, so that we can continue building our clean, affordable energy future and generating critical funding for low-income energy efficiency and flood resilience infrastructure.



STEPHANIE GROSS



MICHAEL CAUDILL

## Results That Matter

RGGI is helping combat climate change and improve the lives of everyone.

In just the three years that Virginia participated in RGGI, **power plant emissions fell 22% statewide, and RGGI generated \$827 million in funding** to support low-income energy efficiency programs and flood resilience infrastructure in the Commonwealth.

States that have participated in RGGI have seen their **electricity prices drop by almost 6%** while they went up by almost 9% throughout the rest of the country.

### 3 POSITIVE IMPACTS



Emissions decreased



Funding generated



Electricity prices lowered over time

## RGGI is law.

In 2023, the Youngkin Administration removed Virginia from RGGI via the Air Pollution Control Board. Since RGGI is law, the former Governor's attempt to use administrative action to undo the law was not legal. SELC sued to challenge the removal on behalf of our clients the Association of Energy Conservation Professionals. In November 2024, a court ruled that the regulatory action removing Virginia from RGGI was unlawful and without legal effect. The Youngkin Administration

appealed that decision, and the court agreed to suspend the judgment while the state appeals the ruling. This means that Virginia will remain out of RGGI while the case is appealed.

Governor Abigail Spanberger has stated that under her administration, Virginia will rejoin RGGI. In the meantime, legislation is working its way through the General Assembly that would solidify the process of getting Virginia back into RGGI as soon as possible.

## REFERENCES

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