

To: All members of the Virginia Senate and House of Delegates

RE: Climate and Energy Policy

As a community of Virginia municipalities, we are proud of the progress our Commonwealth has made toward climate sustainability. We share a common goal to protect the health and vitality of our Commonwealth. Climate change poses a significant risk to the health, livelihood, and economic stability of our communities. Recognizing these risks, our communities are making ambitious commitments and taking action to improve energy efficiency, adopt clean energy, and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

In the 2022 General Assembly session, we urge you to maintain the following major initiatives:

- Keep Virginia in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) and maintain the current funding allocations of the program. The 2020 funding of residential energy efficiency programs and local resilience projects to protect low-income residents from the effects of climate change are good for both our residents and our infrastructure. The Community Flood Preparedness Fund (CFPF) and High innovation Energy Efficiency (HIEE) funds are deploying these funds statewide.
- Keep Virginia on the path to a 100% zero-carbon electricity grid by maintaining the policy commitments of the Virginia Clean Economy Act (VCEA). The VCEA is already spurring investments in solar, wind, battery storage, and energy efficiency. Continuing the path toward a zero-carbon electricity grid allows our localities to meet our own commitments to reduce our carbon footprint.
- Keep Virginia's Clean Car standards in place and fund the electric vehicle rebate program. Transportation is the leading source of carbon pollution in Virginia. The Clean Car standards and electric vehicle rebates will help Virginians access cleaner, more efficient vehicles while reducing pollution in our communities.
- Maintain the most recent Capital Assistance Rule of the of Virginia's Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) that includes funding for Battery Electric Buses and the installation of their electric charging structures. Accessible, clean transit is a high priority for communities across the Commonwealth, and state funds must match clean bus investments with at least the same rule as they fund fossil-fuel-powered buses, in order to eliminate market bias and enable cities and counties to develop modern and efficient transit systems, which are critical for reliable workforce transport and access to essential services.

Thank you again for your past commitment to this important issue. We encourage you to continue making progress on climate and protect the policies above which support healthy communities in Virginia. We are excited to work with other leaders to move our whole Commonwealth forward to a cleaner future.

Sincerely,