

## 2024 VCCA Advocacy Day Talking Points

### Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI)

#### Talking points:

- Since joining RGGI in 2021 the Commonwealth has received over \$800 million with \$414 million to low-income energy efficiency and \$373 million to community flood preparedness.
- RGGI decreased air pollution by 16% in the first two years.
- Continuing in RGGI is projected to decrease overall emissions 30% by 2030.
- Significant health benefits are realized through RGGI with decreases in premature deaths, hospital visits, strokes, and heart attacks.<sup>1</sup>

#### Our request:

Continue Virginia's participation in RGGI by supporting budget amendments:

- 336 #1h (Del. Herring) "Requirement to Rejoin the RGGI"
- 4-5.12 #1s (Sen. Surovell) "Returning Virginia to RGGI"

### Advanced Clean Car Standards

#### Talking points:

- In Virginia, 48% of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions come from transportation.
- Electric vehicles have 67% less CO<sub>2</sub> emissions compared with internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles.
- One component of Virginia ICE vehicular pollution, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, is responsible annually for 92 premature deaths, 71 non-fatal heart attacks, and 220 new asthma cases.<sup>2</sup>

#### Our request:

- Continue Virginia's participation in Advanced Clean Car Standards to improve the health of Virginians.
- Assure that bills that seek to repeal ACC standards are defeated. These include:
  - SBs 3, 7, and 160.
  - HBs 3, 7, and 693.

### Parking lot solar

#### Talking points:

- Heavily increasing electric demand adds numerous challenges to achieving Virginia's mandated clean energy goals.
- *Virginia could generate around 64 Terawatts Hours of energy from parking lot solar on an annual basis.* That would be approximately half of Virginia's energy usage.
- Building solar on parking lots uses land that has already been impacted and is already accounted for under existing stormwater management plans.
- More parking lot solar leads to less removal of prime agricultural soils and forests.
- Would realize cleaner air and fewer adverse health impacts on Virginians.

#### Our request:

Support **SB 234/HB 367** "Parking Lot Solar Development Pilot Program and Fund Bill" Patrons: Senator Ghazala Hashmi & Delegate David Reid

## Data centers

### Talking points:

- Virginia currently has the largest data center footprint worldwide with about 30% of global hyperscale data center capacity.
- By late 2022, data centers accounted for 21% of one electric utility's power load.
- The need to meet this ever increasing data center demand for electricity could jeopardize the Virginia Clean Economy Act's mandating zero-carbon energy generation by 2050.
- Meeting the VCEA's targets is needed to protect Virginians from the unhealthy impacts of GHG emissions.

### Our request:

Support **HB116/SB192**: Retail Sales and Use tax; exemption for data centers.  
(Del. Sullivan, Sen. Subramanyam)

- Incentivizes data center operators to use carbon-free renewable energy in order to receive sales and use tax exemptions.

## Comprehensive Health Plan

### Talking points:

- This bill would allow localities to adopt a healthy communities strategy as part of its next and any subsequent reviews of the comprehensive plan.
- identifying neighborhoods with major sources of pollution or hazardous waste and identifying objectives and policies to reduce health risks in such neighborhoods.

### Our request:

- Support **SB595/HB208 (Sen. Bagby, Del. Simonds)** Comprehensive plan; Creating Healthy Communities during Comprehensive Planning Bill

## Tree Canopy

### Talking points:

- Canopy loss contributes to degraded waterways and Virginia's ability to protect its residents from the impacts of climate change, such as inland flooding and negative health consequences of urban heat islands.
- Virginia suffered a net loss of 9,548 acres between 2014-2018.

### Our request:

Support **HB529** (Del. Hope) "Trees; expands existing local government authority to conserve or replace during development process."

1. <https://www.abtassociates.com/rggi>
2. [https://www.viriniaclinicians.org/\\_files/ugd/b42d13\\_6ee5a674cb8f43418404d9ddf6fe6f6a.pdf](https://www.viriniaclinicians.org/_files/ugd/b42d13_6ee5a674cb8f43418404d9ddf6fe6f6a.pdf)