Offshore wind offers Virginia the opportunity to confront the climate crisis with a renewable energy source that provides massive economic development opportunities and creates thousands of family-supporting jobs. That’s why Virginians have worked for over a decade to make it happen off our coast. In 2020 that hard work will pay off as Virginia becomes the first in the nation to stand offshore wind turbines in federal ocean waters.

While cause for great celebration, it also comes with the responsibility to do it right. Dominion, state regulators, our public officials, and indeed all Virginians, will play a critical role in ensuring that offshore wind powered electricity comes online in a way that is fair and equitable to all Virginians, especially to customers already overburdened by utility bills.

Why Offshore Wind Matters:

Virginia cannot reach its 100% clean energy goals without offshore wind

- And it’s there for the taking! The wind resource off the Atlantic coast is great enough to supply the entire electric demand of the U.S.
- Unlike fossil fuel projects and infrastructure, offshore wind does not come at the expense of people’s health and the environment.

Offshore wind creates thousands of career-length, family-supporting jobs for Virginians

- Each wind turbine is made with over 8,000 parts, many of which can be manufactured in Virginia. With its deep-water ports, world-class shipbuilding and maritime industries, and ready workforce, Virginia can become a major east coast hub for the offshore wind industry.
- Researchers concluded that a full build-out of this industry can create over 10,000 jobs in Virginia.
- Offshore wind will provide job opportunities for a broad swath of Virginians including members of low-income communities, communities of color, and veterans transitioning into the civilian workforce.

Offshore wind distinguishes Virginia as a national clean energy leader

- There are 26,500 MW of OSW projects on the planning horizon along the Atlantic, enough to power over 15 million homes. This is America’s new energy frontier, and Virginia can and must be part of it.
- The Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind project - two turbines generating 12 MW of wind power - is a demonstration project that will test OSW technologies and provide valuable lessons that will translate to cost savings for Virginia’s 2600 MW project and for projects up and down the Atlantic.
According to 2018 data from the US Energy Information Administration, Virginians pay the 7th highest electricity bills\(^1\). There is a strong correlation between energy burden - the percentage of income going to utilities - and eviction rates. Of the top 10 U.S. cities with the highest eviction rates, five are in Virginia\(^2\). One is Richmond, the four others are in Hampton Roads, specifically Hampton, Norfolk, Newport News, and Chesapeake.

**We must ensure that offshore wind is a cost-effective resource.**

**Virginia must secure itself as a mid-Atlantic hub for the offshore wind industry**
- Turbines made with American parts (as opposed to European parts) will result in significant cost savings. Virginia, with its many port advantages, is uniquely positioned to capture a large portion of the OSW supply chain. Local and state economic development efforts must be laser-focused on selling Virginia to OSW industry developers and manufacturers.

**Virginia must develop and implement a robust and diverse workforce development plan**
- Virginia must quickly ready a large and diverse workforce to support both the construction of wind turbines along with the manufacturing of its parts. A workforce development plan must be developed and implemented that integrates Virginia’s large network of community colleges, world-class universities, and labor apprenticeships programs.

**Virginia must hold Dominion accountable for offshore wind’s cost-effective development**
- Competition is effective in reducing costs. Even though offshore wind comes at half the cost of new nuclear plants, and is cheaper than energy from our newest coal plant - the Virginia City coal plant in Wise - it is a new industry. And with a new industry comes risks, which comes at a cost. Experience building offshore wind will reduce risk and drive down costs. Dominion must therefore work with experienced European developers, examine and adopt every lesson learned from the other Atlantic projects, ensure local procurement of offshore wind parts and employment of local labor, and ensure open and competitive bidding for turbine blades and towers.

**Virginia must invest in offshore wind**
- Governor Northam’s budget includes $40 million for port infrastructure upgrades supporting Virginia’s entry into the offshore wind manufacturing industry. It also includes $275,000 to create a much-needed Office of Offshore Wind. These specific budget items must be adopted.

For more information, visit sierraclub.org/virginia/offshore-wind.

---

\(^1\) [https://www.eia.gov/electricity/sales_revenue_price/pdf/table5_a.pdf](https://www.eia.gov/electricity/sales_revenue_price/pdf/table5_a.pdf)

\(^2\) [https://evictionlab.org/rankings/#/evictions?r=United%20States&a=0&d=evictionRate&lang=en](https://evictionlab.org/rankings/#/evictions?r=United%20States&a=0&d=evictionRate&lang=en)