

# FACT SHEET



virginia interfaith  
power & light

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## Don't Give Dirty Power Plants Special Treatment

### Oppose:

#### **SB 992: Spruill**

**Problem:** Fossil-fueled power plants emit massive amounts of carbon pollution damaging Creation. Power plants also emit harmful air pollution (PM) and toxic gases that impact those living nearby. This pollution especially harms children, the elderly, and those with existing health conditions.

Residents of Charles City County are faced with two proposed dirty fracked-gas plants, the Chickahominy and the C4GT. There are African American and indigenous communities living in close proximity. The Chickahominy would be the fifth largest plant in the US and the largest in Virginia. This bill gives the plants subsidies (~\$176 million) and inconsistent advance permission to break new standards on carbon pollution before those requirements actually exist.

### Policy solution:

Ensuring participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) is an important part of the Commonwealth's efforts to reduce carbon pollution and is designed specifically to reduce harmful emissions in the most efficient and cost-effective manner possible. RGGI helps to meet Virginia's goal of powering 30% of the electric grid with carbon-free sources by 2030.

Undermining RGGI by giving special treatment to particular power plants will have damaging effects. It is important for pollution sources to be treated equally so that the market can determine the least expensive and most efficient method to cap emissions. Ensure fairness and oppose SB 992 because it bypasses the interests of the public. Sen. Spruill has been a champion on many issues, but this bill is a handout to private businesses.

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### Who benefits if opposed:

#### **The environment:**

Reducing carbon pollution and increasing clean energy like solar panels and wind turbines helps to care for all of Creation by taking action against climate change.

#### **Low-income families and communities of color:**

Many studies have shown disproportionate environmental burdens placed on low-income communities, communities of color, and indigenous communities, such as pollution, hazardous workplace conditions, industrial operations and a shortage of access to playgrounds, parks, nutritious foods, etc.

The negative consequences of climate change similarly heavily burden these same communities. These proposed fracked-gas plants would subsidize air pollution in Charles City County.

Instead of helping families save on their energy bills, helping families deal with the effects of climate change or helping communities deal with recurrent flooding, \$176 million over three years would go to private companies.

#### **Public engagement:**

It is critical that communities have a voice in decisions impacting them. Placing dirty power plants nearby and giving them special exemptions from rules should be done only with input from an engaged community.

*Sources: Virginia Conservation Network, Southern Environmental Law Center*

*Virginia Interfaith Power & Light collaborates, as people of faith, to grow healthy communities and advance climate justice through education, advocacy, and worship.*