FACT SHEET

WHY VIRGINIA NEEDS THE RGGI FUNDS

What is RGGI?
The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, otherwise known as RGGI, is a multi-statewide effort towards pollution reduction. It is already helping drive down greenhouse gas emissions, and improve air quality and public health in Virginia. Moreover, the program brings in desperately needed revenue to help Virginians.

Through just one year, Virginia’s program has generated $228 million that is already being used to do the following:

• Create more energy efficient affordable housing
• Help low-income families reduce energy bills
• Enhance community flood prevention and protection efforts.

It’s a great start, but we can’t stop now. Virginians are facing real problems and RGGI funds are a critical part of the solution.

Why RGGI Matters

Energy-efficient affordable housing Virginia’s RGGI funds are being used to build even more energy efficient affordable housing units than would otherwise be feasible with existing funding. To qualify for RGGI funds, developers must meet strict energy efficiency requirements for new construction, and adaptive reuse and rehabilitation projects.

Weatherization
Weatherization reduces energy consumption, lowers energy bills for low-income households, and creates a healthier and safer living environment.

In Virginia, hundreds of thousands of households face crippling energy bills. 164,000 Virginia households living below the poverty level pay about 31% of their income on energy costs, and another 179,000 pay about 17% of their income—far exceeding the 6% threshold considered to be non-burdensome.

Community Flood Preparedness Fund
Communities all across the Commonwealth are being impacted by flooding, and Virginia’s RGGI proceeds represent the first dedicated stream of state funding to help localities prevent and protect against the significant damage it causes. Local governments and Native American tribes can apply for funding for flood-protection planning and projects.

Flooding is the most costly and common natural disaster in Virginia, and there is a huge need to invest in helping localities prevent damage from this growing threat. Virginia’s funds also help inland communities deal with repeated flooding. This type of work, while critical to a community’s long-term viability, is harder to fund through federal grants.

How RGGI is Used

50% of all funds are directed to programs for low-income individuals and families state-wide
• Hundreds of extra efficient affordable housing units are in development, with thousands more to come.
• In just a few months of operation, hundreds of home repairs and weatherization services for low-income families have been completed or are in the active pipeline.

45% of funds are directed to community flood preparedness programs, and at least a quarter of these funds must go to projects in low-income areas
• These projects will help communities all across the Commonwealth, including in: Virginia Beach, Richmond, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Buchanan County, Northampton County, Hampton, Charlottesville, Alexandria, Chesapeake, Suffolk, Winchester, the Middle Peninsula, and the Eastern Shore

Contact: Faith Harris
fharris@vaipl.org, 804-920-3761

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