

FACT SHEET



virginia interfaith
power & light

www.vaip.org

Protecting Virginians from Utility Shut Offs

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SUPPORT

[HB 906](#) Delegate Shin

[SB 480](#) Senator Aird

The Problem

Virginia currently has among the weakest utility disconnection protections for customers of any state in the south and southeast.

North Carolina, Kentucky, West Virginia, Maryland, Georgia, Mississippi and Alabama each offer more protection for low-income customers by prohibiting utility disconnection during certain months, during extreme weather or within specified temperature ranges.

Policy Solution

Virginia should protect utility customers (electric, gas, and water) by:

1. Per SCC recommendations, establishing a disconnection policy for any declared public health emergency, and formalizing

disconnection policies during very hot or cold weather conditions (i.e., when forecasted temperatures are at or below 32°F) or heat index is at or above 95°F).

2. Suspending service disconnections for non-payment during non-business days or Fridays.

3. Requiring utilities to report on the frequency and reasons for shut-offs due to unpaid bills.

Who Benefits

Low-income Families & Communities of Color

Many of our neighbors most impacted by states of emergency and the increasingly worsening effects of climate change like extreme weather are from communities of color and low-income families. It is important to ensure resilience for families financially burdened by utility bills in times of crisis.

Vulnerable Populations

Providing additional support for community members like the elderly, children, and those who have medical conditions and/or disabilities is urgently needed.

Expanding utility disconnection protections for our neighbors at higher risk of being affected by extreme weather events helps to limit disconnections and ensure access to those who need gas, electric, and water services the most.

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