



Commonwealth of Virginia
Office of the Governor

Executive Order

NUMBER NINE (2022)

PROTECTING RATEPAYERS FROM THE RISING COST OF LIVING DUE TO THE REGIONAL GREENHOUSE GAS INITIATIVE

By virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor, I hereby issue this Executive Order to re-evaluate Virginia's participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative and immediately begin regulatory processes to end it.

Importance of the Initiative

Reliable and affordable access to electricity is imperative to the health and safety of all Virginians. Our hospitals, schools, businesses, and homes all rely on this essential service. And the unpredictable and rising cost of electricity poses a significant and immediate threat to our Commonwealth and its citizens. In 2019, alone, over 100,000 Virginian households required Energy Assistance with a cost of \$46 million to the Commonwealth.

Virginia's participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) risks contributing to the increased cost of electricity for our citizens. Virginia's utilities have sold over \$227 million in allowances in 2021 during the RGGI auctions, doubling the initial estimates. Those utilities are allowed to pass on the costs of purchasing allowances to their ratepayers. Under the initial bill "RGGI rider" created for Dominion Energy customers, typical residential customer bills were increased by \$2.39 a month and the typical industrial customer bill by was raised by \$1,554 per month. In a filing before the State Corporation Commission, Dominion Energy stated that RGGI will cost ratepayers between \$1 billion and \$1.2 billion over the next four years.

Simply stated, the benefits of RGGI have not materialized, while the costs have skyrocketed. Re-evaluation of the Initiative represents a meaningful step toward alleviating this financial burden on the Commonwealth's businesses and households. Regulations must be evaluated in view of the costs and benefits to all Virginians.

Directive

Accordingly, by virtue of the authority vested in me as the Chief Executive Officer of the Commonwealth, and pursuant to Article V of the Constitution and the laws of Virginia, I hereby direct the Director of the Department of Environmental Quality, in coordination with the Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources, to take the following actions in accordance with the provisions and requirements of § 10.1-1300, et seq. and § 2.2-4000, et seq. of the *Code of Virginia*:

1. Provide me a full report re-evaluating the costs and benefits of participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative Inc. in view of all available data, within 30 days.
2. During this same period, develop a proposed emergency regulation for the State Air Pollution Control Board's consideration to repeal 9VAC5-140.
3. During this same period, take all necessary steps to so that any proposed regulation to the State Air Pollution Control Board can be immediately presented for consideration for approval for public comment in accordance with the Board's authority pursuant to § 10.1-1308 of the *Code of Virginia*.
4. During this same period, notify the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative Inc. (RGGI Inc.) of the review and the Governor's intent to withdraw from RGGI, whether by legislative or regulatory action.

Effective Date

This Executive Order shall be effective upon its signing and shall remain in force and effect unless amended or rescinded by further executive order or directive.

Given under my hand and under the Seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia, this 15th day of January 2022.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Glenn Youngkin".

Glenn Youngkin, Governor

Attest:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kelly Thomasson". The signature is written in black ink and ends with a long, horizontal flourish.

Kelly Thomasson, Secretary of the Commonwealth