



The North Carolina Carbon Plan

Points to Consider for Advocates and Communities

THE CARBON PLAN IS AN OPPORTUNITY

- The Carbon Plan is an opportunity to reshape North Carolina's energy future and protect the health of all North Carolinians.
- Continuing to rely on gas, coal, and other fossil fuels for our energy puts North Carolina's climate targets out of reach while pumping out air pollutants that jeopardize our health and make us sick.
- North Carolina has the capability to rapidly integrate renewable energy capacity into its grid.
- We demand a strong, equitable Carbon Plan centered around clean energy and community health.
- Elements of a strong Carbon Plan include:
 - Restrict future investments in new gas, nuclear, oil, or coal-powered plants and infrastructure.
 - Set ambitious timelines for closing dirty fossil fuel power plants.
 - Does not set limits on solar or other clean energy installations.
 - Utilize North Carolina's full offshore wind potential.
 - Require real, authentic, and intentional community engagement and involvement in the planning process.
 - Include labor unions in the planning process to ensure North Carolina's workforce is prepared for the clean energy transition.
 - Lay out a just transition to clean energy that reduces harm to frontline communities.

DUKE ENERGY

- The climate crisis is here, and we need urgent action. Duke Energy's proposed Carbon Plan fails to meet the moment.
- Duke Energy must recognize its impact on climate change and assertively move toward clean energy generation.

- As the leading provider of consumer electricity in North Carolina, we are relying on Duke Energy to take a strong leadership role in reducing carbon emissions.
- While we can appreciate Duke Energy's concerns around the cost and timelines of Pathway 1, they haven't provided evidence that demonstrates the feasibility of this pathway. We know that Duke can and must do better.
- If Duke Energy wants to be a climate leader, it should put out a plan centered around clean energy.
- Duke Energy should be constantly assessing their plans to determine how to improve them. Each iteration of the Carbon Plan should seek to accelerate the clean energy transition, not move backwards.
- It is disappointing and frustrating that Duke's proposed plan calls for more investments in polluting, outdated fossil fuels.
- Duke Energy is willing to risk climate chaos just to temporarily increase their shareholder profits.
- This isn't Duke's Carbon Plan. It's a Carbon Plan for all of North Carolina.

NC UTILITIES COMMISSION

- It's the NCUC's responsibility to submit a final Carbon Plan, not Duke Energy's.
 - This is important to ensure the Carbon Plan represents the interests of North Carolina's residents, not Duke Energy's investors.
 - The NCUC needs to do its job and stop handing this process over to the monopoly it is supposed to regulate.
- The NCUC should acknowledge that Duke Energy is a corporation bound by fiduciary responsibility. Duke will always be biased toward a pathway that would maximize their bottom line and shareholder value.
- There are multiple pathways to effectively reduce emissions. The NCUC can pick from any plan that has been submitted, or create their own plan. They are not required to choose Duke Energy's preferred pathway.
 - In fact, based on the requirements set by HB 951, the NCUC legally should reject Duke's proposal.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

- Every North Carolina community will be impacted by the design and implementation of the Carbon Plan. Real, authentic, and intentional community engagement and involvement in the planning process is therefore essential.
- The Carbon Plan should have an explicit focus on environmental justice.
- The NCUC and Duke Energy must recognize communities as vital stakeholders in the Carbon Plan process. They should provide education and engagement on the process and its underlying issues, with the goal of maximizing community participation.
- Fossil fuel power plants are disproportionately located in or near lower-wealth or BIPOC communities, polluting the air and causing serious health problems.
- BIPOC communities and low-income communities are on the frontlines of the climate crisis, and suffer the greatest harms from fossil fuel pollution. The transition to clean energy should be designed with those communities in mind.
- Listening to community concerns, and working with communities to address them, is essential for a just energy transition.
- Environmental Justice demands the participation of the public to be considered equal partners in the decision making process.

PUBLIC HEALTH

- All North Carolinians deserve to breathe clean, healthy air.
- Fossil fuel emissions jeopardize our health and make us sick. North Carolina should move away from these dirty fuels.
- Burning fossil fuels emits fine particulate matter (also known as soot). The fine particles (PM2.5) within soot are small enough to infiltrate our lungs and pass into our bloodstream. From there they can wreak havoc on other primary organs, including the heart and brain.
- In North Carolina, nine of the ten leading causes of death are caused or worsened by fossil fuel emissions.
 - These include stroke, heart disease, asthma and other respiratory conditions, influenza or pneumonia, cancer, COVID-19, Alzheimer's disease, diabetes, and kidney disease.

- Fossil-fuel related air pollution is far more toxic than other types of air pollution.
- Closing coal-fired power plants leads to substantial health improvements. A recent study found that coal plant closures resulted in an immediate 42% reduction in emergency room visits for heart problems, thanks to substantial decreases in air pollutants such as sulphur dioxide, arsenic, and particle pollution.
- Fossil fuel pollution can lead to premature births, along with several other maternal and fetal health issues. A 2016 NYU study found that health costs associated with premature births from fossil fuel emissions totaled nearly \$5 billion.
- Air pollution kills more people each year than cigarettes.

NORTH CAROLINA'S ECONOMY:

- Investing in a clean energy economy will help North Carolina stay competitive well into the future.
- It will also drive innovation, creating new opportunities for businesses and entrepreneurs.
- A strong Carbon Plan will position North Carolina as a leader in the fast-growing clean energy sector, attracting new companies and talent to our state.
- Short-sightedly clinging onto outdated fossil fuels will hobble growth opportunities as the rest of the country sprints toward a clean energy future.
- We need to shift to cheaper, cleaner energy solutions.
- Clean energy technologies like solar and wind are the cheapest energy options available today. This gap will only continue to grow as renewable technologies continue to improve. Clinging onto outdated fossil fuels creates additional and unnecessary energy expenses for businesses, households, and the state.
- The cost of inaction is greater than the cost of action. Climate change and air pollution are already costing businesses billions of dollars each year in lost productivity, healthcare, and damage to infrastructure.