



*Commonwealth of Virginia
Office of the Governor*

Executive Order

EXECUTIVE ORDER 14 (2026)

ESTABLISHING THE ROLE OF CHIEF ENERGY OFFICER

By virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor under Article V of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Virginia and under the laws of the Commonwealth, including, but not limited to, §§ 2.2-103 and 2.2-110 of the Code of Virginia, and subject always to my continuing and ultimate authority and responsibility to act in such matters, I hereby establish the position of Chief Energy Officer within the Office of the Governor as a cabinet-level position to navigate energy challenges across state government and take action to reduce energy bills for Virginians while also ensuring energy reliability and making progress towards clean energy goals.

Importance of the Initiative

Virginia is facing myriad challenges across the electricity sector, including rising electricity prices, rapid load growth, supply chain constraints, interconnection queue delays, and an electric grid in transition. At the top of the list of challenges facing Virginia households is energy affordability, where electricity rates have risen by 36% over the last five years. At the same time, median household income has remained flat, further exacerbating this crisis.

The affordability challenge is intensified by rapid and unprecedented growth in electricity demand across the Commonwealth. High energy users, population growth, and electrification are driving record increases in electricity demand that are hard to plan for and address. At the same time, Virginia must navigate a constrained regional grid operated by Pennsylvania-New Jersey-Maryland Interconnection (“PJM”), where tightening margins, transmission constraints, and market design issues directly affect the prices Virginians pay.

In the face of these challenges, Virginia has reason for hope. We are seeing significant new opportunities and advancements in energy resources and technologies that could further the Commonwealth’s decarbonization objectives and enable beneficial electrification. These

advancements could be deployed in ways that provide rate relief for families. For example, cost-effective energy efficiency improvements across Virginia's single-family homes could yield statewide consumer savings of about \$1.5 billion annually on utility bills, including electricity, gas, propane, and fuel oil.

To achieve the parallel objectives of addressing the Commonwealth's energy challenges and advancing its opportunities, Virginia needs accountable leadership to coordinate energy policy and prioritize solutions that balance affordability, reliability, and the energy transition. While the need for this coordinated work is clear, the responsibility for the energy programs that are within the Governor's authority has often been fragmented across multiple entities without a unified strategy. This fragmentation makes it harder to respond effectively to emerging affordability challenges. It also makes it challenging to ensure that energy programs and incentives are deployed in a way that maximizes participation and furthers the broad energy policy objectives of the Commonwealth.

Aligning Virginia's energy policy objectives under a single, accountable individual will help ensure a beneficial customer experience for state-administered energy affordability programs and clean energy programs. Equally important, it will provide a unified voice in regional and federal forums, including improving Virginia's engagement with both PJM and federal regulators to protect the reliability of our grid while limiting the market price uncertainty and volatility that is leading to higher bills.

Directive

Pursuant to the authority vested in me as the Governor of the Commonwealth, and pursuant to Article V of the Constitution of Virginia and the laws of the Commonwealth, I hereby establish the position of Chief Energy Officer within the Office of the Governor to navigate and address energy challenges across state government. The Chief Energy Officer will serve in the Governor's Cabinet. The Chief Energy Officer's duties shall include working to keep energy affordable, maintain reliability, and ensure Virginia meets long-term clean energy goals.

The Chief Energy Officer shall:

1. Engage with PJM and other PJM states to develop capacity market reforms to address energy prices, generator interconnection reforms to get new energy projects on the grid, and load forecasting transparency to reduce the risk of speculative or duplicative projects;
2. Engage with the Virginia State Corporation Commission, the public electric utilities serving the Commonwealth, the Division of Consumer Counsel, and other stakeholders to:
 - a. Identify and adopt solutions to put downward pressure on the electric rates customers pay to keep household energy bills affordable; and
 - b. Ensure that costs are fairly allocated across customer classes, including that high-load customer classes are not leading to increased energy bills for all Virginians.
3. Engage with the General Assembly, in coordination with the Governor's Office, to enact and implement legislation to address energy affordability and meet energy demand.

4. Coordinate with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership and the Secretary of Commerce and Trade in consultation with private industry to scope the energy landscape in Virginia as it relates to the Commonwealth's efforts to recruit investments and understand the current and future needs of Virginia businesses to meet economic development goals while maintaining affordability and reliability.
5. Coordinate with the Secretary of Commerce and Trade, Department of Social Services, Department of Housing and Community Development, Virginia Energy, the State Corporation Commission, and Virginia's public utilities to maximize customer participation in existing programs aimed at lowering Virginians' utility bills.

Effective Date of the Executive Order

This Executive Order shall become effective upon its signing and shall remain in full force and effect until amended or rescinded by further executive order.

Given under my hand and under the Seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia this 25th day of March 2026



Abigail D. Spanberger

Abigail D. Spanberger, Governor

Candi Mundon King

Candi Mundon King, Secretary of the Commonwealth