



Corrosive Impact of Money in Politics: The Case of Dominion Energy in Virginia

Background: Virginia’s energy policies and prices are greatly influenced by energy-related companies and organizations, in particular Dominion Energy, the State’s largest electric utilities provider, enjoys a near monopoly. The energy industry donates to both political parties, spending more than half a million dollars in annual donations to members of the General Assembly, who, accordingly, enacted the 2015 “rate freeze” that led to an epic windfall, and more than an estimated \$1.3 billion in overcharges since 2015.

This political spending creates a regulatory landscape which benefits the bottom line of energy and utility companies while discouraging climate technology innovation and raising utility prices for Virginia customers.

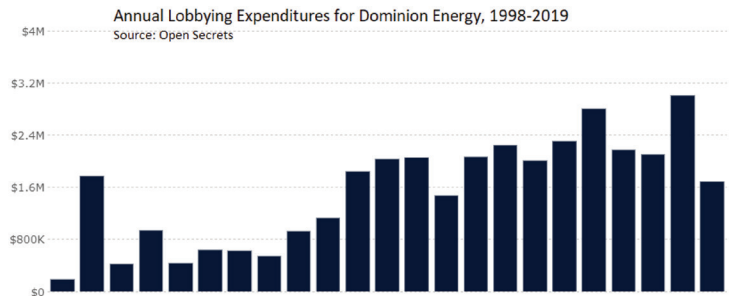
Corporate Spending Facts:

- Since 1996, Dominion Energy has been one of the largest corporate contributors to Virginia’s elected officials, donating more than \$13.4 million to legislators on both sides of the aisle (see table).
- In 2018, Dominion Energy accounted for nearly \$2 million of the \$3.2 million energy and natural resource groups contributed to the coffers of over 100 candidates and legislators running for office. Since 1996, Senator Dick Saslow, the head of the Senate, has received more than \$487,000 from Dominion Energy, receiving over \$82,000 in 2018/19.
- In addition to direct campaign contributions, lobbying expenditures by Dominion totaled \$3 million in 2019 (source: Open Secrets). In the same year, they spent over \$355,000 on entertainment and gifts for legislators.

Amount	Donor
\$20,122,456	Electric Utilities
\$13,460,456	Dominion Energy (Richmond)
\$2,612,994	Appalachian Power Co (Richmond)
\$982,282	Old Dominion Electric Cooperative (Glen Allen)
\$929,827	Farrell, Thomas F II (Henrico)
\$712,555	Dominion Resources (Richmond)
\$629,432	Virginia Maryland & Delaware Assn of Electric Cooperatives (Glen Allen)

How This Affects You:

- Over the past decade, Virginia’s largest utility monopoly—Dominion Energy—has reportedly overcharged its customers by more than \$2.3 billion¹. To date, less than 5% of this money has been refunded.
- For Dominion’s residential customers—Virginia’s families and workers—bills have skyrocketed in the same period, rising over 25% since 2007².
- As of 2018, the average Virginia household in Dominion’s service territory paid \$133.19 a month for electricity—more than 13% higher than the national average. Despite Dominion Energy’s paid advertisements on “low rates”, Virginians’ residential electricity bills are the 7th highest in the country³.
- Meanwhile, monthly bills for Appalachian Power clients rose almost 64 percent between July 2007 and July 2020, from \$67 to \$109.



¹ Figures compiled from Virginia State Corporation Commission (SCC) reports and final orders for the years 2009–2018.

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