



## **SIXTH MEETING OF THE GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

August 27, 2008

The Richmond Salons, University Student Commons

Virginia Commonwealth University – Richmond, Virginia

---

### **I. Call to Order**

The Honorable L. Preston Bryant, Jr., Chairman, called the sixth meeting of the Governor's Commission on Climate Change to order at 1:05 p.m.

### **II. Attendance**

The following Commission members were present: The Honorable L. Preston Bryant, Jr., The Honorable Patrick O. Gottschalk, Mr. Stephen A. Walz, The Honorable Joseph F. Bouchard, The Honorable David L. Bulova, Mr. R. Daniel Carson, Jr., Christine Chmura, Ph.D., The Honorable John W. Daniel, II, Mr. Ralph Davis, The Honorable Paul Ferguson, Mr. Stuart A. Freudberg, Mr. Felix Garcia, Mr. Dale A. Gardner, The Honorable John H. (Jack) Gibbons, Ms. Jodi Gidley, Mr. William S. Greenleaf, The Honorable Penelope A. Gross, Mr. Robert F. Hemphill, Jr., Ms. Ann F. Jennings, Mr. Michael L. Lipford, Roger Mann, Ph.D., The Honorable Robert E. Martínez, Mr. Tyrone W. Murray, The Honorable Ralph S. Northam, Mr. R. Paul Orentas, The Honorable Kenneth R. Plum, Mr. Oliver A. Pollard, III, Mr. Michael J. Quillen, Mr. Harrison B. Rue, Dr. Jagadish Shukla, The Honorable Bruce Smart, Mr. William A. "Skip" Stiles, Dr. Lydia W. Thomas, Mr. Michael S. Townes, and The Honorable Frank W. Wagner.

Those not in attendance were: Ms. LuAnn L. Bennett, The Honorable Donald S. Beyer, Jr., The Reverend Richard Cizik, The Honorable R. Creigh Deeds, Mr. Robert J. Fledderman, Dr. David A. Heacock, The Honorable Joe T. May, and the Honorable Ron Rordam.

### **III. Opening Remarks**

Chairman Bryant greeted the Commission members, speakers, and public.

### **IV. Approval of Minutes**

The Chairman requested a motion to approve the minutes from the June 17, 2008 meeting. The motion was moved and seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

### **V. Draft Final GHG Inventory Document: Accounting for Sinks in Calculating Governor Kaine's 30% Reduction Goal**

*Thomas R. Ballou, Department of Environmental Quality*

Mr. Ballou presented information on the final draft greenhouse gas emissions inventory document. He discussed a substantial change to the transportation sector emission

projections and resulting change in the total projected inventory for 2025. He indicated this also would impact the 30% reduction goal.

Mr. Ballou also discussed the estimate of natural sequestration of carbon in Virginia, which can be used to offset carbon emissions through a net inventory calculation. He presented the impact on the inventory and the reduction goal of applying this natural reduction. The Commission's Adaptation and Sequestration Workgroup will make a recommendation about whether to incorporate natural sequestration into the inventory, based on the availability of reliable data.

#### **VI. Commission Discussion of Draft Interim Report**

Chairman Bryant indicated that the interim report could best be described as a status report, a recitation of previous discussions. He stated that no conclusions have been drawn or recommendations discussed.

Commission members discussed various issues such as the inclusion of all presentations from local governments in the report; whether the 30% reduction target is sufficient; keeping the information factual and balanced; and the importance of pointing out barriers and obstacles that need to be changed in order to move forward the recommendations of the Commission. There also was discussion about the need of a preamble or prequalification being added to the document.

It was suggested that the report address the cost of inaction. Chairman Bryant stated that in the next couple of months the Commission will begin debating, identifying recommendations, and will prepare a final report based on workgroup discussions.

#### **VII. Workgroup Updates**

Chairman Bryant described the Commission's workgroups as expertise-driven. He commented that anything the workgroups come up with will be open for debate for the Commission as a whole. He indicated that workgroups have been asked to limit recommendations to fifteen, thus allowing the Commission to focus on quality.

##### **A. Electricity Generation/Other Stationary Sources**

*The Honorable L. Preston Bryant, Jr.*

Chairman Bryant stated that in the two meetings of the Electricity Generation workgroup, the group's focus has been on the big issues, and they have discussed the following: (i) state support of federal cap and trade legislation; (ii) development of a statement supporting nuclear energy; (iii) distributed generation and combined heat power; (iv) adequacy of Virginia's current policy on renewable portfolio standards (RPS); (v) waste energy power in terms of methane capture; (vi) R&D investment; and (vii) smart metering.

Chairman Bryant indicated the workgroup will continue discussion and gather information to develop its recommendations.

**B. Built Environment**

*Steve Walz*

Mr. Walz told the Commission that the workgroup has been looking at major policy areas focusing on energy efficiency. The group has looked at recommendations from other states as a framework. He commented that the workgroup has discussed three broad areas of recommendations: (i) conservation and efficiency; (ii) smart metering – which offers opportunities of improvement for both consumer and utilities; and (iii) education of citizens and business in conservation and efficiency – let the government lead by example.

**C. Adaptation**

*The Honorable Joseph F. Bouchard*

Delegate Bouchard reported that the first task of the workgroup was to define adaptation. The group looked at a variety of definitions already in use and decided on: “actions taken or decisions made in response to actual or expected climatic changes to society, ecology, or economy.”

He stated that the workgroup focused discussion on key issues revolving around the three elements of climate change – temperature, sea level, and weather patterns – and is considering the following points: (i) addressing the instability and volatility of weather patterns; (ii) the use of information on current situations in the Chesapeake Bay when dealing with sea level; (iii) addressing all carbon sinks in Virginia; (iv) securing an accurate elevation survey and having that data entered into a GIS system; and (v) the need for Virginia to have a voice in the development of federal legislation.

**D. Transportation and Land Use**

*Nikki Rovner, Deputy Secretary of Natural Resources*

Ms. Rovner reported that the workgroup has discussed the following issues: (i) whether there should be a specific emissions reduction target for the transportation sector, (ii) whether there should be specific reduction targets for vehicle miles traveled; (iii) the role of government in being a leader in this area; (iv) whether the electricity infrastructure is going to be ready to accommodate the increasing availability of plug-in hybrids to consumers; (v) how to increase walking and bike riding as an alternative; (vi) ways to increase use of transit; (vii) ways to reduce the need for automobile travel to and from work; and (viii) how to increase the availability of rail transportation as an alternative to the trucking of freight or as an alternative for passengers.

Deputy Secretary Rovner stated that land use and its connections with transportation will be discussed at the workgroup's next meeting. The workgroup has also requested information on the effect of recently established fuel efficiency standards and rising fuel costs on vehicle GHG emissions.

**VIII. Stakeholder Recommendations****A. CNX Gas Corporation***Gary Slagel*

Mr. Slagel stressed to the Commission the importance of Virginia to CNX Gas. He reported that CNX Gas is the second largest producer of gas in the Appalachian Basin and the largest producer in Virginia. He indicated that CNX is the largest capturer of methane of all energy companies and invests million of dollars in Appalachia every year.

Mr. Slagel commented that coal states can achieve their energy policies and reduced carbon emission goals by evolving the coal industry from a single product mindset to a dual product mindset, improving the safety of the coal industry, and reducing the carbon footprint of the coal industry. Mr. Slagel stated that Congress or the states can help by providing economic incentives or removing impediments to capture methane generated from coal mining.

**B. Washington Gas***Adrian Chapman, Vice President*

Mr. Chapman told the Commission that the future of the environment and the future of the energy industry are forever linked. He indicated that not only must consumer energy consumption behaviors change but energy providers must be leaders in helping change occur. Mr. Chapman stated that the ideal energy future consists of a multi-fuel approach that emphasizes the cleanest and most efficient fuels. He noted that while electricity is 29% efficient from production to consumption, natural gas, measured on the same basis, is 93% efficient. The annual pounds per year savings of nitrous oxides, sulfur oxides, and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions that result from converting a house from electric to natural gas are significant, being 87%, 100%, and 77% respectively.

Mr. Chapman stressed that natural gas can play a significant role in meeting energy demands and supporting a cleaner environment. He stated that an energy policy should be adopted that recognizes the distinctions between electricity and natural gas.

**C. American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity***Ned Leonard, Vice President of Policy*

Mr. Leonard stated that nationally, just over half of all electricity that is generated uses coal as the source of energy to begin the process. In Virginia, the reliance upon coal is a bit less at 47%. Nationally, residential electricity costs 10.5¢ per kilowatt hour, while in Virginia it is 8.6¢. Mr. Leonard commented that modestly priced electricity creates an attractive economic climate for Virginia. He stated that Virginia's reliance upon coal-based electricity generation is a primary reason electricity rates are modest. The correlation between coal-based electricity and low-priced electricity is a nationwide pattern.

Mr. Leonard commented that the Commonwealth of Virginia and Dominion Virginia Power are deserving of admiration for taking on the difficult twin technology challenges of carbon capture and carbon dioxide storage. Mr. Leonard stated that if the Commission wants to make a solid commitment to tackling the potential for climate challenge associated with the continued use of coal to provide affordable and reliable coal-based electricity, it will recommend that the Commonwealth become a full partner alongside industry in helping fund the cost of carbon capture and storage research.

**D. National Wildlife Federation***Austin Kane, Policy Specialist*

Ms. Kane told the Commission that natural systems are experiencing major changes from global warming. She stated that in the Commission's discussions, there is a need for consideration of the impact of climate change impacts on wildlife.

Mr. Kane stated that the National Wildlife Federation recommends that the Commission's report contain a recommendation to the Governor that a dedicated source of funding be identified for the Wildlife Action Plan's update and implementation. She indicated this recommendation would strengthen the effort to protect and restore natural resources for the benefit of people and wildlife in Virginia and help draw support for needing funding to implement the adaptation strategies.

**E. Solar Innovations, LLC***Daniel A. Graber*

Mr. Graber stated that over the past few years there have been several opportunities for Virginia to consider opportunities for clean and alternative energy sources. He commented that Virginia is falling behind with regard to renewable energy resource implementation.

Mr. Graber indicated that solar and other renewable technologies, if given equal footing with tax breaks, would be competitive with oil and natural gas resources. The key to

renewables, including solar, being a viable and significant contributor lies in realizing that a major benefit to the development of this energy is the opportunity of a distributed energy system. The cost competitiveness aspect of renewables will become clearer when one considers the overall external benefits of clean fuels. He stressed the need to push for funding in the state budget and implementation of the tax credits for renewable energy already authorized in Senate Bill 262.

**F. Piedmont Environmental Council**

*Dan Holmes*

Mr. Holmes stated that the charge of the Commission falls short of any reasonable goal for the Commonwealth. He commented that while the goal of a 30% reduction by 2010 is attainable, it fails to meet the goal the scientific community has suggested is necessary to avoid the most deleterious effects of climate change. Mr. Holmes stated that the Commission's recommendations should avoid sources of energy that perpetuate the use of fossil fuels and disrupt a transition to alternatives that have little or no negative effect on the environment.

Mr. Holmes asked the Commission to be ambitious and stronger in the commitment in the transition to renewable energies. He stated that if the plan has stronger commitments and a focus on efficiency and renewable energy (i) we are more likely to succeed in minimizing our contributions to fossil fuel consumption and avoid unnecessary increases in utility rates, thereby saving the consumer and our businesses money, (ii) we can more effectively address Virginia's problem with sprawl and congestion; (iii) we can meet our obligations under the Chesapeake Bay Act and reduce other harmful air pollutants that threaten public health and fragile ecosystems; and (iv) we can increase conservation lands and open space that contributes to our tourism industry and assist in protecting some of our most beautiful landscapes and historic assets.

**G. Sierra Club – Virginia Chapter**

*Glen Besa, Director*

Mr. Besa told the Commission that Virginia must build a future on efficiency and renewable energy. He shared with the Commission a series of recommendations that were developed by several organizations. Two of the recommendations that he asked the Commission to consider are (i) adoption of statewide targets for a reduction in carbon dioxide emissions of at least 80% below 1990 levels by 2050, and (ii) the adoption of a comprehensive Climate Action Plan to address the consequences of climate change that are already taking place.

Mr. Besa acknowledged that the Commission is an advisory body that does not have the power to implement any recommendations, but he encouraged the Commission to define and recommend a future course of action that brings Virginia closer to implementing measures and charting a course to a clean energy future.

**H. Public Policy Virginia***Al Weed, Chairman*

Mr. Weed indicated that Public Policy Virginia is in the process of developing an assessment of Virginia's biomass energy potential. The preliminary estimates of the amount of Virginia's energy needs that could be provided by biomass feedstock alone are around 20%. This figure includes biofuels for our transportation needs as well as co-firing biomass to replace as much as 15% of the coal we burn for electricity. He stated that some of this energy will be produced by proven, and ready to go technology, and some will depend on further steps to commercialize well proven technology. He commented that virtually all will depend on the availability of viable crop and forest lands to produce biomass. Mr. Weed stated that long-term biomass production also depends on predictable energy prices. He indicated that carbon fees are the best tools to use the market to reduce emissions.

Mr. Weed stated that in order to switch from fossil fuels to renewable energy we must preserve our open land. He indicated that, in addition to dependence of energy and food security, the mechanism of carbon sequestration that trees, grasses, and wetlands provide also depends on open land.

**I. Virginia Wildlife Society***Scott Klopfer, Certified Wildlife Biologist*

Mr. Klopfer stated that climate change levels impact fish and wildlife resources both directly and indirectly. He commented that in 2005 the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries completed the Virginia Wildlife Action Plan which identified 925 species moving closer to extirpation from our land and waters. He indicated the present and future increase in temperatures, sea level rise, and shifting seasons will unquestionably increase that number unless management options are identified and actions are taken. Mr. Klopfer stated that the direct and indirect impact of climate change will be profound and result in loss of some of the most imperiled species.

Mr. Klopfer commented that major changes in energy production systems such as biomass crops and wind, while a positive step, will result in additional impacts that his profession is ill-equipped to contend with under present resource levels.

Mr. Klopfer stated the threat of climate change is serious and eminent. He recommended that the Commission elevate the issues and its effects on fish and wildlife habitat to a level that will assure biologists and their agencies receive the support they need to address this challenge.

**J. Virginia League of Conservation Voters**

*Carmen Bingham-Kilduff, Climate Change Project Coordinator*

Ms. Kilduff commented that climate change, as a result of global warming, is a simple, logically drawn conclusion easily supported by basic scientific fact. The solution, however, is not so simple, and the task of identifying a specific plan of action to reach that solution is even less so. She said the reason we are here today is to identify any actions, beyond those identified in the Virginia Energy Plan, that need to be taken to achieve a 30% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions – specifically, bringing emissions back to the 2000 levels. She stated that most important item the Virginia League of Conservation Voters (VALCV) must stress is that the reduction goal identified in the Energy Plan is far too low to effect climate change in a substantive way.

Ms. Kilduff indicated that it is VALCV's strong recommendation that the Commission develop its action plan with the goal to meet the IPCC target reductions, surpassing the reduction target stated in the Virginia Energy Plan. She stated further that it is VALCV's further recommendation that the Commission also strongly encourage the Commonwealth of Virginia to work with its national Congressional delegation to develop and support a national energy policy that is based on the premise of meeting or exceeding the IPCC CO<sub>2</sub> target reductions.

**K. Virginia Agribusiness Council**

*Katie Kyger Frazier, Vice President Public Affairs*

Ms. Frazier stated that the Council represents agriculture and forestry interests across Virginia, including producers, processors, manufacturers, and suppliers of agricultural and forestal products. She commented that in addition, the Council's membership is made up of approximately 50 commodity associations. She indicated that the Council represents these varied and diverse interests with a unified voice, working to achieve consensus, seek solutions, and provide input on the impacts to the agribusiness industry.

Ms. Frazier indicated that agriculture and forestry make up the number one industry in Virginia, providing a bountiful food, feed, and fiber supply, economic stimulus, and jobs to the Commonwealth. She stated that in addition, our natural resource-based industries of agriculture and forestry plays a pivotal role in continuing to make progress in water and air quality. The Council urges the Commission to explore the possible partnerships with agribusinesses to be part of the solution to its questions, through carbon sequestration in forestry and cropping systems and capture and remediation of gases from some agricultural systems. Ms. Frazier stated the need to protect the environment and to limit impacts on the climate must be balanced and solutions avoided that drastically increase the cost of production. She stated that technology and innovation must play a key role in addressing these issues in order to limit the impacts on Virginia's businesses.

**L. Virginia Farm Bureau***Wilmer Stoneman*

Mr. Stoneman commented that the good part of the discussion of climate change is the recognition that agriculture and forestry have something to offer. Sequestration is something that the Virginia Farm Bureau is interested in. The Bureau recognizes that with what it has to offer there will be challenges. He stated that the Bureau wants to make sure that the Commission understands that when it talks about protection, that protection needs to be about land use.

Mr. Stoneman indicated that 61% of the state is forested, 80% of which is owned by private land owners. He stated that because that land is owned by private individuals, making private decisions, it will be difficult to say that is a natural sink. He suggested that by keeping farmers farming and foresters working in the forest harvesting trees the result will be the land use and footprint that the Commission wants to address climate change.

**M. Appalachian Voices***Tom Cormons*

Mr. Cormons indicated that while the Governor has expressed his sincere appreciation of the dire consequences of climate change, the 30% reduction goal does not reflect this commitment. This translates roughly into a return to 2000 levels. Stating that this goal falls short of what must be achieved to avoid catastrophic climate change, Mr. Cormons urged the Commission to adopt statewide targets for the reduction of at least 80% of 1990 levels by 2050, with a short-term goal of 25% of 1990 by 2020. He indicated these are science-based targets calculated to avoid seeing a 2 degree centigrade rise in temperature.

Mr. Cormons stated that, as the group of experts charged with the responsibility of charting Virginia's path of addressing climate change, the Commission has the responsibility to ensure that the responding course has the correct destination. Therefore, he stated the Commission's first recommendation should be to bring the greenhouse gas reduction goal into line with scientific reality for climate change. He indicated that if the Commission accepts the Governor's goal, Virginia will miss this critical chance to address its contribution to climate change.

**N. Chesapeake Climate Action Network***Mike Tidwell, Executive Director*

Mr. Tidwell praised the work of the Commission but stated that the goal set by the Governor's Energy Plan needed to be changed if Virginia is going to address climate change. He stated that across the nation and internationally so much is happening regarding the issue of climate change, and this is Virginia's opportunity to make an impact. He reported that because of climate changes many insurance companies are

making science-based decisions and are not granting new policies to those residing in coastal Virginia. He stated that it is time for this Commission to make science-based action.

Mr. Tidwell said the first recommendation of this body should be to urge the Governor to change goal of this Commission to a science-based target. He stated the Commission needs to make science-based recommendations that would support the development of wind power and put a moratorium on new coal plants.

#### **O. Climate for Responsible Development**

*Lucille Miller*

Ms. Miller stated that she agreed with the need to reduce greenhouse gases. She commented that all industrial scale energy production produces some negative environmental impact in the case of large scale renewables and that we do not have a clear understanding of what those impacts are. She indicated that the permitting process that is in place at the State Corporation Commission is a critically important forum for expert testimony that makes it possible to weigh the positive versus negative impacts and the setting of conditions that can move the implication of renewable generation with minimal environmental impacts.

Ms. Miller respectfully requested the Commission to support the permitting process that presently exists at the State Corporation Commission.

#### **IX. Public Hearing**

- David Anderson stated that clearly there is a consensus that global warming needed to be dealt with. He suggested that when the Commission looks at the alternatives and their economic cost it also look at the economic gains and make those as articulate and specific as possible. He asked the Commission to articulate not only a plan that will capture and reduce carbon footprints but also would encourage economic growth and keep energy costs reasonable.
- Diana Withen, with the Wise Energy Alliance, stated that protecting our atmosphere should be the top priority of all branches of government as well as all individuals. She asked the Commission to challenge Virginia to move from last place in wise energy uses and become a leader in the exporter of free energy.
- Carmen Cantrell, with the Wise Energy Alliance, stated that Virginia needs a comprehensive climate action plan to meet both the short- and long-term goals for reducing global warming conditions that ensures moving away from a carbon dependency. She indicated Virginia needs to invest in energy conservation and renewable energy sources that promote conservation and efficiency.
- Jane Branham, of the Southern Appalachian Mountain Stewards, said that the Commission and Governor Kaine need to get serious about climate change. She expressed concern about the mountain top coal mining that is taking place in

Southwest Virginia. She stated the Commission must take action to stimulate growth in renewable energy and green jobs as well as listen and heed the counsel of the experts that advise the Commission.

- John Ziegler, a middle school student on the First Lego League Robotics Team, stressed the importance of using reusable bags. He indicated that people can make a difference in climate change one bag at a time. By using reusable bags instead of plastic or paper, he indicated we would save trees, oil, and water as well as eliminate extensive emissions and reduce pollution and trash.
- Matt Hedrick, a middle school student on the First Lego League Robotics Team, encouraged the importance of educating the public on the negative effects on climate change associated with using paper and plastic bags. He stated that local merchants can encourage the use of reusable bags by offering incentives for their use. He encouraged Virginia become a national leader in this effort.
- Peter Beament stated that it is important for the Commonwealth to work with the federal government to ensure that any legislation on the state or federal level cannot harm Virginia's economy or its ability to provide an opportunity for a secure future for its citizens. He stressed that Virginia must strive to get funds to assist in the development of carbon capture and storage facilities at suitable sites.
- Bill Cunningham, with Unions for Jobs and the Environment, stated that cap and trade legislation belongs at the federal level and not the state level. He stressed that the states need to evaluate the opportunities for energy savings and efficiencies.
- Randy Randol stressed the need for a detailed study of the natural gas supply and demand. He indicated that science is evolving and data should be used versus the model.
- Kathy Strickler, of the Climate Action Alliance of the Valley, asked the Commission to be strong and make the right decisions. She asked that the Commission's decisions be made based on science.
- Brandon Smith stated he hoped that Virginia's policies would coincide with the sound national energy policy promoting reliability, diverse fuel portfolios, and affordable electrical services while also pushing for more investments in new power infrastructure that would include wind, biomass tidal, nuclear, coal and natural gas.
- Bruce Ritchie, with Appalachian Voices, commented that one cannot solve a problem with the same thought process that created the problem. He stated that we form habits and then our habits form us. He urged the Commission to be the example and lead.
- Jennifer Johnson stated that the Governor's goals are not high enough. She indicated that the Commission has a tough task ahead of it, and she hopes the Commission will make the right decisions in making Virginia a leader in energy and climate change.
- William Penniman, a resident of Northern Virginia, stated we need to promote conservation – it is a very real resource that can reduce energy by very substantial amounts. He stated that Virginia needs to set standards that address energy efficiencies.
- Laura Miller, a resident of Wise, Virginia, expressed concern over Dominion Virginia Power's proposed power plant. She indicated that energy solutions must be found that are clean, safe, and renewable, with emphasis on wind, solar, hydropower, bio

mass and conservation. She asked that no more coal fired plants be approved, stating that we should not have to choose between good jobs and a clean environment.

- Dan Graber, representing Solar Renovations, stressed that renewables are an important part of the mix.
- Roger Diedrick, from Fairfax County, stated that the charter of the Commission is inadequate to the task. He indicated that the goal of 30% reduction by 2050 roughly relates to maintaining the status quo and that just will not do. He asked the Commissioners to see their task as a scientific one, not a political one.
- Ivy Main, of the Sierra Club, commented that we can and should go well beyond the Governor's 30% reduction goal for greenhouse emissions. She stated that alternative resources can meet the additional future needs and allow us to phase out our reliance on fossil fuels.
- Brian Morrissey, of the Point of View, stated that science needs to be the guiding force. He indicated we need to move to a new level of thinking, as we cannot expect the thinking that created the problem to solve it.
- Scott Monett asked the Commission to encourage strong leadership and innovation and insist that the Commonwealth be a leading state in the areas of conservation, environmental protection, and innovation. He suggested taking a proactive approach in helping industries reduce or eliminate harmful emissions and ensuring that the latest technologies are employed to reduce Virginia's contribution to climate change.
- Archie Abaire, representing the Bahá'i Faith, acknowledged the importance of the Commission's role in developing a climate action plan for the Commonwealth. He stated that it is an urgent issue and the Commission's work is critical. He asked that the Commission recognize faith communities in the work before them.
- Larry Roussell, from Richmond, stated it is time for radical change in the policies of our environmentally-lagging state. He stated new coal installations should not be an option. Instead, efficiency conservation, wind, solar, and geothermal energies need to be implemented. He said the time for action is now.
- Joseph Overton, of Scott County, stressed the need to set goals higher. He also suggested a moratorium on new coal fired plants. He indicated we need fresh thinking and leaders who are not afraid to think outside the box and who are ready to make the tough decisions.
- Jonah Marsh, a college student, addressed the need for the creation of a public benefit fund that can result in monumental growth and savings. Funds can be used for service upgrades for residents or to fund energy programs. He asked the Commission to make this part of their recommendation to the Governor.
- Kathy R. Selvage, of Southwest Virginia, stated that dealing with climate change and global warming issues is no longer an option. She indicated the goals set by the Governor are not acceptable, but by implementing energy efficiency standards we can offset the need for the conventional coal fired plant in Wise County. She said the task is achievable and that we need to move to a 21st century energy policy.
- Ron Skinner stated that current energy solutions are not working. He said the Commission needs to develop recommendations for cleaner and more efficient energy supplies. He indicated that the time is now and that we cannot wait for someone else to do it.

- Larry L. Bush, of the Southern Appalachian Mountain Stewards, commented that coal is killing communities, mountain ranges, and people. He said there is no such thing as clean coal, but that clean energy sources will provide more jobs than coal. He continued that coal is dirty and a polluting source that is destroying economic development and that we need to move toward a cleaner safer energy source. he encouraged the Commissioners to “Think green!”
- Tyla Matteson, of the Sierra Club, asked the Commission to do what is necessary to bring the Commonwealth up to speed with areas of the United States in dealing with climate change. She indicated the first and most important task is to find a way to stop the Wise County coal fired power plant.
- Fred Krohn, from Richmond, commented that nuclear power produces less waste than coal power. He asked that Wise County be given a wind farm, not another smoke stack.
- Mike McCoy stated that Commission’s priority should be getting the Governor to agree to a real and meaningful goal. He stated the current goal is not adequate.
- Amanda Horwitz, a teacher from Northern Virginia, stated that incentives need to be created to increase the usage and building of clean energy technologies. She also stated a need for a moratorium on coal.
- Allison Fisher, of the Greater Washington Interfaith Power & Light, stated that the Commonwealth needs to revise its status as being last in conservation efficiencies. She said we must to take advantage of cost effective investments in efficiency to help meet our growing energy needs.
- Pete Ramey, a member of the Southern Appalachian Mountain Stewards, commented that an energy policy that includes mountain top mining and coal fired power plants is a sin. He said the use of coal fired power plants needs to be stopped.
- Thomas Cleary, from Chesterfield, encouraged the Commission to just say no to coal fired power plants.
- Mark Fowler said that unless we make a change, we could actually change the climate in unpredictable ways. He suggested that the Commission visit Southwest Virginia and see first-hand what mountain top mining does to the environment and make the right decision.
- Margaret Hoerath, stated that we need to move toward renewable energy. She said renewable energy is cheaper and will provide jobs and coal does not have to be a part of our economy.
- Bill McCabe, from Southwest Virginia, stated that he is scared that it is almost too late, that the Commission does not understand how serious the situation is, and that the Commission does not understand the terror in the coal fields of Virginia. He indicated coal is not clean, and he is scared that there are no risk takers or leaders on the Commission. He is scared that the Commission will not go back to the Governor and say it is not good enough.
- Hannah Wiegard, a member of Students for Environmental Action Commission at the College of William and Mary, commented that the American Council for Energy Efficient Economy listed Virginia very low on the amount spent on efficiency. She said any serious plan for Virginia needs to include spending on efficiency measures.

- E.E. Tun, a nursing student from Radford University, indicated now is the time to stop coal plants and adopt renewable energy.
- Margaret Smith, a student from the College of William and Mary, stated to please say no to the coal plant.
- John Kwapisz, of the Virginia Coalition for Common Sense on Climate Change, asked that the Commission make a proposal to the Governor asking for a balanced review of scientific evidence regarding global warming and change.
- Adele MacLean, a member of Falls of the James Sierra Club Group, asked how we as a Commonwealth will grow, how will we plan for growth, and how will we build communities to use less energy. She indicated this has been a unique opportunity and asked the Commissioners to take the voices back with them to the wider Commonwealth community.
- Chris Wiegard, from Chesterfield County, stated that while economical alternatives are vital, we need to admit cheapest causes humans to waste – things can be done to lessen the impact on the poor. He indicated poverty is not an excuse to do nothing and that cheapest is not the solution that will get us out of this mess. He said we need more action and leadership.
- Antigone Ambrose, of the Chesapeake Climate Action Network, commented that the Commonwealth is being left behind in climate change. He indicated we must have energy targets that are based on science not on politics, and we need renewable energy right now. He indicated our choice is to lead or follow.
- Christine Llewellyn, from the Williamsburg Climate Action Network, stated that the Commission needs to choose very carefully what they do between now and December. She indicated future generations are depending on the Commission and that it should pay attention to other experts in Virginia. She said we need meaningful emission standards, and we need them now.

X. **Adjournment**

Chairman Bryant thanked everyone for coming. He adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.