

*The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has finalized a rule to reduce carbon pollution from existing power plants—a critical step to address climate change in the U.S. The rule, dubbed the Clean Power Plan, asks each state to design its own strategy to achieve carbon reduction targets by 2030. It offers Georgia a great opportunity not just to reduce climate change, but to lower electricity bills and boost the state economy.*

## Basics on the Clean Power Plan in Georgia

In August 2015, the EPA finalized a rule to curb carbon pollution from existing power plants. The EPA has set a 34 percent emission reduction target by 2030 for Georgia. States must submit their plans for compliance with the Clean Power Plan starting in the summer of 2016.

The EPA rule offers a significant opportunity to save Georgia electricity consumers money and boost the state economy. **A Public Citizen analysis projects that energy efficiency measures under the Clean Power Plan will cut electricity bills for Georgia residents up to 9 percent by 2030.**

Georgia can save electricity consumers even more money if it adopts stronger energy efficiency policies. It should seize this opportunity to serve its citizens, who overwhelmingly support more investment in efficiency and clean energy.<sup>1</sup>

## The Clean Power Plan Will Cut Georgia Electricity Bills

- Based on the EPA's conservative data, by 2030, electricity bills will be 5.6 to 9 percent lower under the Clean Power Plan, saving the average Georgia household up to \$133 annually.<sup>2</sup>
- Without the Clean Power Plan a typical Georgia household will pay \$1,472 for electricity in 2030; with the Clean Power Plan it will pay \$1,339 to \$1,390.<sup>3</sup>
- Georgia could see even greater savings than the EPA's data suggest because the agency omits entire categories of efficiency measures that states can use, such as building codes and appliance standards.<sup>4</sup>

## Promoting Energy Efficiency Benefits Georgia Consumers and the Environment

- Efficiency is a critical resource for Georgia to develop since the state imports all fuel for power plants from other states and nations - energy efficiency reduces the export of energy dollars and increases wealth for all Georgia communities.<sup>5</sup>
- Georgia, which is ranked 37 by the American Council on an Energy Efficient Economy (ACEEE) in its 2015 State Energy Efficiency Scorecard for widespread adoption of policies and regulations to support the energy efficiency industry, can do far better to promote energy savings.<sup>6</sup>
- In fact, policies that promote efficiency could save Georgians,

by 2020, energy from the equivalent of about 400,000 and save households \$340 annually.<sup>7</sup>

- And per household electricity consumption in Georgia is among the highest in the country. Reducing residential energy use by just 1 percent a year would save Georgia's households \$770 million in energy costs per year.<sup>8</sup>
- The amount of energy that could be saved each year in Georgia by residential energy efficiency upgrades alone would be enough to displace the energy produced from two coal-fired plants.<sup>9</sup>

## Georgia Can Capitalize on the Expanding Clean Energy Economy

- Georgia is one of the leading states of energy potential from solar power.
- On average, Atlanta alone has more than 2,800 hours of sun a year, far more than Germany, the world's largest solar energy market.<sup>10</sup>
- In 2013, Georgia homeowners, businesses and utilities invested \$189 million to install solar power - a 79.5% increase over the previous year. Solar power investment expected to grow again this year.<sup>11</sup>
- 142 solar companies in Georgia employ 2,600 residents of the state.<sup>12</sup>
- A \$4.6 billion investment in clean energy could create an additional 59,000 jobs in Georgia, with a \$2.8 billion investment leading to more than 31,000 jobs in Atlanta.<sup>13</sup>

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Yale Project on Climate Change Communication, Yale Climate Opinion Maps, 2014  
<https://environment.yale.edu/poe/v2014/>

<sup>2</sup> PUBLIC CITIZEN, EPA CLEAN POWER PLAN ANALYSIS (2015).

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> Southface Energy Institute, Energy Efficiency: Georgia's Highest Priority, March 2010  
<http://www.southface.org/default-interior/Documents/energy-efficiency-whitepaper.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> American Council for an Energy-Efficiency Economy, The 2015 State Energy Efficiency Scorecard, October 2015.  
<http://database.aceee.org/state/georgia>.

<sup>7</sup> Georgia Tech and the Nicholas Institute, Energy Efficiency in the South April 2010, [http://research.fit.edu/sealevelriselibrary/documents/doc\\_mgr/441/Georgia\\_Opportunities\\_for\\_Energy\\_Efficiency\\_-\\_Brown\\_et\\_al.\\_2010.pdf](http://research.fit.edu/sealevelriselibrary/documents/doc_mgr/441/Georgia_Opportunities_for_Energy_Efficiency_-_Brown_et_al._2010.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> Energy Information Administration 2009 Residential Energy Consumption Survey, Georgia Factsheet  
[http://www.eia.gov/consumption/residential/reports/2009/state\\_briefs/pdf/ga.pdf](http://www.eia.gov/consumption/residential/reports/2009/state_briefs/pdf/ga.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> Southface Energy Institute, Energy Efficiency: Georgia's Highest Priority, March 2010  
<http://www.southface.org/default-interior/Documents/energy-efficiency-whitepaper.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> Environment Georgia, A Bright Future: Building a Solar Atlanta, March 2013  
<http://www.environmentgeorgiacenter.org/sites/environment/files/reports/GAE%20Solar%20Report%20Feb%2013%201.2.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> Solar Energy Industries Association, Georgia Solar  
<http://www.seia.org/state-solar-policy/georgia>.

<sup>12</sup> *id*

<sup>13</sup> Robert Pollin, Jeannette Wicks-Lim & Heidi Garrett-Peltier Political Economy Research Institute, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Atlanta, Georgia: Green Prosperity and Poverty Reduction, June 2009  
<http://www.peri.umass.edu/fileadmin/pd>

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