



2019 CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Clean Virginia is a non-partisan, not-for-profit organization with an associated PAC, Clean Virginia Fund, that strives to advance clean government and clean energy in Virginia politics.

This questionnaire highlights Clean Virginia's priority issues and, along with past voting records and public statements, is used in our 2019 endorsement process for candidates for the Virginia General Assembly. We ask that all candidates complete the entire questionnaire. Further information about the issues raised in the following questions can be found on the Clean Virginia website, www.cleanvirginia.org.

Please email your responses to this questionnaire, or any questions you may have, to our Political Director, Lizzie Hylton at lizzie@cleanvirginia.org. You are welcome to attach additional pages if you feel further specifics are needed to answer any of the questions.

SECTION I - Candidate Information

Candidate: _____

District: _____

Party: _____

Name of Campaign Committee: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Website: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Campaign Manager: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

SECTION II**Public Service Utility Monopolies and Campaign Contributions**

Public service utilities are unique from other corporations in that (a) they are supposed to balance the public interest with their own profit motive and (b) they are given monopolies by the state, which in turn is responsible for their regulation. Inherent in this unique structure lies a conflict of interest for lawmakers who take campaign contributions from publicly-regulated utilities, because of the lawmakers' increased regulatory responsibility. As such, twenty-five states have bans on campaign contributions from utilities, twenty-two of which have gone as far as to prohibit campaign contributions from all corporations. Such a ban also protects ratepayers who otherwise indirectly fund the campaign contributions and who are unable to "walk away" from their utility if they object to their political practices. By removing any appearance of a conflict of interest, utility companies and lawmakers can share information without undermining the public interest in properly regulating monopolies as well as public trust in our legislature.

1. Are you accepting campaign contributions from Virginia utility monopolies (e.g. Dominion Energy, Appalachian Power) this cycle and in future cycles?

Yes No Comments:

2. Do you own any personal stocks, bonds, or investments in Virginia utility monopolies (e.g. Dominion Energy, Appalachian Power)?

Yes No Comments:

Ethical Governance

Central to Clean Virginia's mission is the promotion of clean governance and clean energy in our Commonwealth. We believe government should work for all citizens and that our leadership should strive to ethically represent their constituents. In Virginia it is permissible for legislators to own unlimited stock in the investor-owned utilities that they regulate, setting up a skewed incentive as lawmakers actions influence these companies' profits.

1. Do you actively support efforts to reduce corruption in government?

Yes No Comments:

2. Would you support legislation banning the ownership of stock in investor-owned utilities by legislators responsible for their regulation?

Yes No Comments:

3. How important is ethics reform in the state legislature to you as a representative? What are some specific ways you think Virginia could improve its ethical governance? [Max 250 words]

SECTION III**Utility Regulation and Grid Modernization**

In 2015, electricity rates were frozen at artificially high prices until 2022 for Dominion Energy and Appalachian Power, resulting in more than \$1 billion in ratepayer overcharges from 2015 to 2018. To address what to do with these overcharges, the Virginia General Assembly passed the Grid Transformation and Security Act of 2018 (SB 966), which required Dominion to refund just \$200 million in overcharges to consumers and Appalachian Power to offer \$10 million in fuel credits. Dominion was allowed to keep excess profit between \$350 and \$425 million a year and to offset consumer overcharges by investing in infrastructure projects, projects that come with guaranteed high returns on investment for Dominion. This bill also ensured that these infrastructure projects would be underregulated by removing the SCC authority to evaluate new power line undergrounding projects and by changing the frequency of the SCC review period from every two to every three years. Finally, the bill deemed 5,000 megawatts of solar and wind power to be “in the public interest,” but did not legally require its construction.

1. Will you support legislative efforts to restore the basic principle that when utilities overcharge ratepayers, that money should be refunded to them and not kept by the utility company?

Yes No Comments:

2. Will you support legislative efforts to restore the SCC’s regulatory authority over new infrastructure projects and reinstating their review period to every two years?

Yes No Comments:

3. Will you support legislative efforts to legally mandate the construction of the 5,000 megawatts of solar and wind power that the Grid Modernization Act of 2018 found to be in the public interest?

Yes No Comments:

Campaign Finance Reform

Our commonwealth lags behind the rest of the country in ending legalized corruption and safeguarding the democratic process, particularly with regards to campaign finance laws. Currently, Virginia is one of only five states that allows unlimited contributions to political campaigns, and is the only state in the country that has no ban on campaign funds for personal use.

1. Will you support legislative efforts to establish reasonable limits to campaign contributions from individuals, state parties, PACs, corporations, and/or unions?

Yes No Comments:

2. Will you support legislative efforts to ban campaign contributions by public service monopolies?

Yes No Comments:

3. Will you support legislative efforts to prohibit corporate contributions to candidates, as has been done in 22 other states?

Yes No Comments:

4. Will you support legislative efforts requiring politicians to wait two years before becoming lobbyists and to eliminate lobbying donations in the General Assembly?

Yes No Comments:

5. Will you support legislative efforts to tighten the laws surrounding lobbying gifts given to elected representatives in Virginia?

Yes No Comments:

Clean Energy & Clean Jobs

According to the 2017 U.S. Energy and Employment Report, the United States saw more than 300,000 net new jobs in the energy sector in 2016, representing roughly 14% of all jobs created that year. Within this category, the most rapid job growth has come from renewables, with the solar workforce increasing by 25% and the wind workforce increasing by 32%. The solar industry is currently employing more than twice as many Americans as coal, and solar and wind together provide more jobs than natural gas. However, Virginia has missed out on these opportunities; the same report found our Commonwealth to have a “low concentration of energy employment” and independent analysis estimates that we have lost more than 50,000 solar jobs to neighboring states.

Virginia should be a leader on America’s booming renewable energy industry. We are not, largely due to arbitrary and restrictive regulations on technologies like net metering which allows homeowners or businesses who produce their own solar, wind, or other renewable energy to sell excess energy back to the grid. This benefits everyone—it allows for small business job creation that cannot be outsourced, increases grid resilience, and can reduce demand for energy during peak times, one of the largest drivers of increased energy costs. However, Virginia currently has a 1% cap on net metering (of a utility’s annual peak-load); once we hit that cap, no new solar customers can enroll.

Instead of working towards an energy independent future for Virginia, our energy utilities have been aggressively building natural gas pipelines in our state, pipelines that are not needed to meet demand for natural gas, fail to generate permanent jobs, and will raise the cost of energy for all Virginians.

1. Will you support legislation to raise the net metering cap from 1% to 5% (or outright abolish the cap) of a utility’s annual peak-load?

Yes No Comments:

2. Will you support legislation to eliminate all standby charges and fees for ratepayers who enroll in net metering, as net metering benefits all ratepayers, even those who do not enroll in the program?

Yes No Comments:

3. Will you support legislation to repeal size caps that limit how much energy homeowners and businesses can generate and sell back to the grid?

Yes No Comments:

4. If construction on the MVP and ACP continues, will you support the establishment of a Damages and Injury Fund, paid for by pipeline operators, to support Virginians physically or monetarily harmed by the projects?

Yes No Comments:

5. Currently, Virginians will be forced to pay for the construction of ongoing and future natural gas pipeline projects even if those pipelines are never used to provide energy in our state. Do you support legislative efforts to prevent Virginians from being forced to pay for such projects if the companies building them cannot prove that (a) the projects are meeting a real demand for energy and that (b) they represent the most cost-effective way to meet that demand?

Yes No Comments:

AUTHORIZATION

This signature attests that the above information accurately represents the views of the candidate.

Candidate signature: _____ **Date:** _____