



MEDIA RELEASE

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Community-Led Coalition Launches Campaign to Stop Wise County Coal Plant

WISE COUNTY RESIDENTS AND GROWING COALITION CALL ON DOMINION, GOVERNOR Kaine TO SWITCH TO SMART ENERGY SOLUTIONS

Richmond – A coalition of citizens and conservation groups announced the Wise Energy for Virginia campaign at a press conference today. The campaign is a major effort to challenge the building of Dominion’s proposed new coal-fired power plant in Wise County, Virginia, and to encourage Virginia to accelerate a shift to smart energy solutions including efficiency, conservation, and renewable energy.

The coalition launched the campaign just days after the New York Attorney General started an investigation of Dominion, questioning whether the company adequately disclosed investor risks associated with new coal-fired power plants. If built, Dominion’s proposed coal-fired power plant would worsen global warming, accelerate mountain-top removal coal mining, encourage the construction of new transmission lines, and further pollute Virginia’s air, land, and water.

The campaign kick-off includes the start of an effort to collect signatures from citizens on a “mile-long petition” telling Dominion Resources that its proposed coal plant is not wanted or needed. The coalition plans to present the petition to Dominion executives at the 2008 shareholder’s meeting in April 2008.

“We ask all Virginians who have concerns about Virginia’s forests, watersheds and mountains, all the damage done to our planet by the burning of fossil fuels, to join us in this effort,” said Kathy Selvage, Vice President of the Wise County-based Southern Appalachian Mountain Stewards (SAMS), which was formed to protect the way of life in Southwest Virginia. In a symbolic gesture, Selvage signed the first entry line of the citizens’ petition at the press conference.

Representatives of the five groups of the Wise Energy for Virginia coalition highlighted their concerns with the proposed 585-megawatt dirty coal plant, including an increase in mountaintop removal coal mining in the region and millions of tons of additional greenhouse gases that

cause global warming. They groups stated that Dominion plans to continue investing billions of dollars in the old way of doing business, a way that increases global warming, air pollution, as well as other negative environmental and health harmful effects. Dominion's proposal to construct a coal-burning plant in Wise County that fails to use state-of-the-art pollution control technology and efficiency, and instead locks Virginia into 40 or 50 more years of polluted air and greenhouse gases with the proposed old-style coal-burning plant in Wise County. They also said that Dominion customers would bear the cost of the plant through increased rates which Dominion is already seeking from the State Corporation Commission for the 1.6 billion dollar plant.

"Whether it's higher electric rates in northern Virginia, higher poverty rates in southwest Virginia, or higher emissions rates of greenhouse gases, Dominion's proposal is bad for the commonwealth," said Matt Wasson, Conservation Director for Appalachian Voices.

One of the coalition's main goals is to pressure to Dominion and the state to dramatically increase investment in alternative, clean energy sources. The coalition asked Dominion to shift course to become a 21st century energy company focused on smart energy solutions.

The coalition members also said they plan to vigorously fight the proposed Wise County plant before environmental regulators and before the State Corporation Commission, which must approve the project based on public need before Dominion can proceed.

Excerpts of Statements from speakers:

Kathy Selvage, Southern Appalachian Mountain Stewards: "Today marks a new beginning and we begin with: We are all Virginians, including those citizens who reside in the far southwestern corner. We take our very first step on a journey into a new 21st century energy policy in the state of Virginia. The journey will be neither short nor easy, but we promise you if you will take this journey with us and we all work together, it will culminate in an energy policy that we can all be proud of."

Glen Besa, Sierra Club: "We view Dominion's decision to move forward with this power plant as cynical and socially irresponsible actions intended to 'beat the clock' on meaningful federal controls on global warming that are likely forthcoming in the next few years. The company's plans aren't even in the best interest of its own shareholders, as the recent subpoenaing of Dominion by New York Attorney General Cuomo illustrates."

Mike Tidwell, Chesapeake Climate Action Network: "Coal combustion is a central contributor to the greatest crisis facing the entire planet: global warming. In this sense, all of us, wherever we live, are victims of King Coal. We are ALL Wise Countians. When Dominion poisons the atmosphere anywhere, it poisons the atmosphere everywhere."

Cale Jaffe, Southern Environmental Law Center: "There is nothing to capture carbon dioxide emissions from this type of power plant, which means that if Congress enacts global warming legislation, Virginia ratepayers will be on the hook, bearing the financial consequences of Dominion's failure to control greenhouse gas pollution. Virginia electricity consumers don't need or want a rate hike. They don't need or want the financial risk that comes with investing in dirty, coal-fired power."

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