

Proposed 2026 General Assembly Legislative Priorities – Sustainability (9-19-2025)

Local Bill Sponsorship Request: N/A

Funding Request for Local Initiative:

- \$600,000 to support the [Energy Resource Hub](#) (ERH) for 3 years. The ERH helps residents and businesses in the City of Charlottesville and Albemarle County navigate resource programs, rebates, and incentives for energy efficiency, weatherization services, and electrification. Local nonprofits Local Energy Alliance Program (LEAP) and the Community Climate Collaborative (C3) provide technical expertise and resources, ensuring that the Hub delivers high-quality and impactful services. This initiative has been funded by the City of Charlottesville and Albemarle County at \$200,000 in FY25 and in FY26, but ongoing ability to fund is uncertain. The ERH has been very effective in its first six months, successfully connecting households and small businesses with incentives to improve affordability and efficiency of their homes and facilities. It will integrate and leverage the Virginia Energy Connect initiative being launched by Virginia Energy. Awareness and demand for the support offered by the ERH is anticipated to increase, especially with the upcoming launch of the state-administered Home Energy Rebate Program. The ERH model, which delivers a personalized approach to navigating incentive options, is a replicable approach for local communities who seek to support their community members address the rising cost of energy and their interest in improving the performance of their own buildings.

Priority Policy Positions:

- Support the Commonwealth's re-entry in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI).
- Maintain the intent of the Virginia Clean Economy Act (VCEA) and the Clean Cars Standard; support adequate state resources for localities to invest in EVs and EV infrastructure.
- Support legislation that creates a robust distributed energy resources (DER) environment to achieve both grid reliability and climate goals (e.g., shared solar, DER interconnection requirements, virtual power plants, power storage, state-level financing mechanisms).

- Support legislation that expands opportunities for net metering programs (e.g., eliminate the cap, standby charges, and fees).
- Support data center reform legislation to minimize environmental impacts and reduce financial burden on rate payers (e.g., building data disclosure, cost-share reform, transmission cost allocation).
- Support legislation related to utility Integrated Resource Planning reform (e.g., improving accessibility for nontraditional stakeholders, load growth data transparency, prioritizing energy efficiency and energy storage).
- Support legislation authorizing localities to require greater building energy efficiency (stretch codes) and establish commercial building benchmarking within their jurisdictions