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Georgia Public Service Commission decides Vogtle’s final cost to rate payers

Final agreement provides meaningful relief for Georgians, including expanded efficiency and low-income discount programs

ATLANTA — Today the Georgia Public Service Commission held a final vote on how much Georgia Power will charge billpayers for Plant Vogtle construction costs after meaningful involvement from all intervenors. While customers will be on the hook for $7.562 billion in project construction costs, the commission agreed to many pro-consumer terms supported by Partnership for Southern Equity (PSE), Georgia Interfaith Power and Light (GIPL), and other consumer advocate groups.

Those terms include a roughly 50% expansion of Georgia Power’s energy efficiency programs or demand-side management savings target to .75% of annual retail sales starting in 2025. These programs invest in Georgians’ homes to reduce energy use and make bills less expensive. Georgia Power will also expand its popular bill-relief program (currently available to a limited group of income-qualified seniors) pledging to add up to 96,000 new participants over the next three years. Seniors in households with a combined income equal to or less than 200% of the federal poverty level, customers receiving Social Security Disability Income assistance or Supplemental Security Income, and customers who use HUD section 8 will now qualify for this important bill-relief program which reduces the average monthly bill by $33.50.

“For people living paycheck to paycheck increased bills from Vogtle will cause real pain, that’s why I am proud we advocated to significantly reduce bill hikes for Georgia Power’s nearly 2.7 million customers across the state,” said Nathaniel Smith, Chief Equity Officer for Partnership for Southern Equity.

This is a meaningful step towards mitigating billions of dollars of budget overruns and years of delays. Georgia Power customers have each already paid nearly $100 a year for more than ten years before Vogtle Units 3 and 4 ever produced electricity. In late July, Vogtle’s third nuclear reactor began commercial operation more than seven years after the unit’s original completion date. That milestone triggered one of three bill increases for Georgia Power customers in 2023, totaling more than $24 a month for the average residential customer.

“We are pleased the commission included programs that will provide the most vulnerable customers with some bill relief. That being said, Georgia Power customers have and will continue to pay heavily for Vogtle’s budget overruns,” said Codi Norred, GIPL Executive Director. “After Vogtle, we hope the commission will double down on their support of cost-saving renewable options, like solar and battery storage.”
Georgia Interfaith Power and Light (GIPL) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that works across the state to mobilize people of faith toward environmental action. An affiliate of the national Interfaith Power and Light movement, GIPL sees its response to global climate change, resource depletion, environmental injustice, and pollution as an extension of faith. gipl.org

About The Partnership for Southern Equity: Based in Atlanta, PSE is a nonprofit organization that advances policies and institutional actions that promote racial equity and shared prosperity for all in the growth of metropolitan Atlanta and the American South. Through forums, research, and organizing efforts, PSE brings together the regional community to lift up and encourage just, sustainable, and civic practices for balanced growth and opportunity. psequity.org