



Testimony
to the North Carolina Utilities Commission
on Duke Energy's Revised Carbon Plan
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My name is Sophie Loeb, and I'm here on behalf of the Center for Progressive Reform in opposition to Duke Energy's revised carbon plan. The Center harnesses the power of law and public policy to create a responsive government, a healthy environment, and a just society.

As an Asheville resident, I am personally concerned about how this version of the Carbon Plan will adversely impact me and my neighbors from both an economic and environmental perspective. After living through Helene and experiencing the first-hand impacts of a climate disaster, I know that this fossil fuel-based plan will contribute even more carbon emissions that will proliferate these devastating and "once-in-a-generation" climate disasters. Helene wasn't my first climate disaster, and I know it won't be my last.

Duke Energy's latest carbon plan for our state is a bleak deal for North Carolinians. The world is already on track to exceed the 1.5 degree Celsius threshold of catastrophic human-induced warming above pre-industrial levels and is closer to 1.8 degrees Celsius warming, requiring urgent emissions cuts by 2030 to prevent even more extreme weather, accelerated ice melt, and significant ecological damage. Duke's latest plan eliminates 2030 decarbonization targets entirely and continues to imperil our present and future.

As you're aware, this latest iteration keeps coal plants online into the 2040s and builds huge amounts of new methane gas plants that poison our air and make us sick.

Instead of investing in cheap, clean energy resources like a lot more solar and wind, this plan includes unproven and expensive technologies like nuclear and hydrogen in addition to polluting resources like coal and methane gas.

And with the passage of Senate Bill 266, we as customers will be on the hook to pay for all of these expensive, polluting plants under construction, even if they never come online.

Duke Energy says they have to build more fossil fuel resources to “serve growth” for “robust economic development.”

What this means is that giant tech companies want to come to our state, build polluting and energy-intensive hyperscale artificial intelligence data centers, and then charge us for all this energy demand!

Data centers and large industrial users are asking for record amounts of electricity, and Duke is charging residential customers more to make that happen.

Duke Energy has already publicly stated that they project 46 GW of new generation is needed to meet future needs, but 39 GW of that power is needed for data centers.

These data centers give Duke Energy a perfect excuse to ignore our state’s decarbonization law, build expensive and polluting fossil fuel resources, and charge us more for it.

Not to mention all these new methane gas plants require pipeline build-out. Gas pipelines are a huge danger to people and the planet: they violate indigenous rights, pollute our communities, contaminate water sources, damage wildlife ecosystems and endangered species habitats, and are yet another environmental injustice.

We deserve an actual decarbonization plan that centers affordable, clean energy, not one that builds more polluting resources, not one that will skyrocket our bills, and not a plan that will maybe follow the law in 2050 and actually decarbonize. We are already in a climate crisis; we don’t have time to wait. We, not billionaire tech companies, not Duke’s shareholders, deserve to be prioritized. We the people deserve a healthy, equitable, and just world.