

## Data Center Reform

Lawmakers are focused on the environmental and grid impacts of rapid data center expansion.

- **HB507:** Requires **carbon dioxide-emitting backup generators** at data centers to undergo air monitoring.
- **HB511 / HB2026:** Addresses land use by requiring localities to designate data centers specifically as **industrial zoning** uses and assessing their sound profiles.
- **HB155:** Proposes an **SCC review process** for "large load users" (over 25 MW) to ensure the state's electrical infrastructure can support their power needs before connection.
- **Diesel Generator Restrictions:** Legislation introduced by Del. John McAuliff requires data centers to use **energy storage** as the primary backup during emergencies, limiting diesel generators to a secondary role.

## Energy & Carbon Emissions

Sustainability efforts include rejoining regional climate initiatives and expanding renewable capacity.

- **HB397:** Mandates the state rejoin the **Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI)** and requires the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to manage a market-based carbon trading program.
- **Battery Storage Expansion:** New bills seek to increase **energy storage targets** for utilities to manage peak demand and improve grid reliability.
- **Clean Energy Enforcement:** While some bills (like **SB40** and **SB69**) seek to repeal or weaken carbon regulations, other efforts aim to make the **Virginia Clean Economy Act** standards more strictly enforceable.

## Sustainability & Land Use

- **SB26:** Supports the development of **solar canopies** in surface parking areas as a dual-use land strategy.
- **HB508:** Establishes a stakeholder panel to develop criteria for **agrivoltaic projects** (solar energy paired with agriculture see demonstration project by PEC) and identify incentives for their promotion.

- **Water Resilience: HB70** directs funds from the **Resilient Virginia Revolving Fund** toward nature-based solutions and flood preparedness in low-income areas.
- **Conservation Funding:** Advocates are pushing for increased state funding for **land conservation** programs and smart growth legislation to support transit-oriented development.