



TO: Interested Parties

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RE: **Electricity Bills: The Kitchen Table Issue Driving Dem Wins in 2025 and Beyond**

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**Decisive victories for Mikie Sherrill in New Jersey, Abigail Spanberger in Virginia, and Democratic candidates for Georgia Public Service Commission prove that electricity bills are the kitchen table issue driving Democratic wins in 2025 and beyond.**

In Georgia, New Jersey, and Virginia there was a clear line drawn between candidates responding to voters' concerns about energy costs with real solutions, and those toeing the MAGA party line. Candidates who ignore rising energy costs do so at their own peril. This election was a decisive rejection of the Trump Administration's ban on clean energy, multi-million dollar [taxpayer bailouts](#) for expensive dirtier energy sources like coal, and other ineffective proposals that will make costs go even higher.

Cost of living continues to be a [major issue on voters' minds](#), with rising energy costs among their top household budget concerns. Recent [polling](#) shows that the majority of voters believe that elected leaders have an impact on electricity costs. A majority of Americans also attribute rising costs to [the GOP agenda, utility companies, and Big Oil CEOs](#). The reasoning is simple. The public understands that actively blocking the development of the cheapest and fastest-to-deploy power sources—wind, solar, and battery storage – only leads to more expensive options dominating the grid.

**Grounded in this understanding of voters' concerns, LCV's state affiliates in Georgia, New Jersey and Virginia invested a total of \$7 million in robust campaigns to engage and educate voters about which candidates are focused on lowering energy costs and which candidates will raise costs even more.**

## **New Jersey Governor**

***"Mikie's plan to cap energy prices in the short term and speed approval of new solar energy projects, the cheapest energy in America, while safeguarding our open space and environmental protections, will create union jobs while providing cheap, clean energy that we need to lower costs for the long term," [Ed Potosnak](#), NJLCV Executive Director***

One of the most closely watched races in the country was the fight for New Jersey Governor where ratepayers were hit with a 20% increase in utility bills in June. Democratic Rep. Mikie Sherrill was laser-focused on her [affordability agenda](#), which she announced early in the race to tackle rising costs by building more clean energy and committed to implement [a full rate freeze](#) on day one in office. Her MAGA Republican opponent, Jack Ciattarelli promised

to take power off the grid by opposing proven and homegrown energy generation [like offshore wind](#) and an independent analysis found that his plan would cost New Jerseyans [\\$900 per year](#) in new energy costs.

## New Jersey LCV Victory Fund Moved Voters on Energy Costs

- New Jersey LCV Victory Fund and their affiliated entities invested over [\\$1.7 million](#) in a campaign squarely focused on [Jack Ciattarelli's costly energy policies](#) and their impact on New Jersey families. This is the largest electoral investment ever for New Jersey LCV Victory Fund, making them one of the top spenders in the race.
- [Ad testing](#) showed that New Jersey LCV Victory Fund's ad "[Jacking Up Prices](#)" was effective in driving up Jack Ciattarelli's unfavorability by over 6 points. The ad focused on how Ciattarelli's support for Trump's cuts to energy production. Most notably, the ad testing showed that it was particularly effective in driving up Ciattarelli's unfavorability by more than 8 points among Trump voters.
- A recent [Fox News poll](#) showed voters favor Mikie Sherrill by 10 points on energy cost.

## Virginia Governor

***"We're willing to roll up our sleeves and work with lawmakers to find the best fix for how we make sure that customers are being treated fairly and that big corporations are paying their share of ... the bills and the need for additional electricity in the grid," – Mike Town, executive director of the Virginia League of Conservation Voters.***

In the Virginia governor's race, energy costs dominated the headlines and airwaves. This contrast also filtered into races for the [Virginia House of Delegates](#) where Democrats are on track for historic pickups. The proliferation of data centers in Virginia, which is now home to [over a third](#) of data centers worldwide, made the associated increased energy rates a flashpoint issue in down-ballot races.

Spanberger focused relentlessly on affordability with policies that addressed data centers directly to ensure they are "[paying their fair share](#)" and committed to building out clean energy projects long stalled by both Governor Youngkin and new blockades from the Trump Administration. Earle-Sears campaign chose to focus on culture issues to divide the electorate. When she addressed rising energy costs, she [promised to](#) gut the state's landmark clean energy law and pull out of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative [despite the thousands of jobs and billions of dollars in investments](#) both have brought to Virginians.

## Virginia LCV PAC's Massive Campaign on Energy and Data Centers

- Our state affiliate in Virginia VALCV-PAC, the largest outside spender in the Governor's race, ran a large-scale canvass program knocking on over 210,000 doors to talk with voters about the issues that matter to them including energy costs and making sure they know the stakes of this election.
- VALCV-PAC also [ran a wave of digital ads](#) in four House of Delegates races focused on affordability and supporting candidates behind building more affordable clean energy.
- In the Virginia House races, Democratic candidates ran on the need to [lower energy costs](#) and the importance of [data centers](#) paying for their electric usage. Mailers from candidates emphasize their role in protecting clean energy sources that keep costs low and protect the health and safety of our communities.

## Georgia Public Service Commission

***"There's never been an issue that's more kitchen table than the power bill. We have an opportunity to have an uncluttered conversation about it. We can talk to voters directly."*** — Brionté McCorkle, executive director at the Georgia Conservation Voters to [Politico](#).

The Georgia Public Service Commission (PSC) had two seats of their five member board up for statewide election this year. The Commission oversees the state's utilities and has oversight over utility rates and future energy development. Until now, all 5 seats were occupied by Republicans who repeatedly voted to hike rates – raising bills by [over \\$500 a year](#) for the average Georgia family. Meanwhile elections were delayed due to a Voting Rights Act [lawsuit followed by anti-democratic state government actions](#). That means this was the first time Georgia voters had the chance to make their voices heard since [numerous utility bill rate hikes](#) were approved by the commission

Commissioners-elect Peter Hubbard and Dr. Alicia Johnson, the two Democratic challengers, made rising costs central to their campaign with a statewide ["My Power Bill's Too High"](#) tour in the closing days of the race. Meanwhile the Republican candidates turned to familiar 2024 culture and racially coded attacks with incumbent Commissioner Tim Echols saying Dr. Alicia Johnson, a Black woman, ["wants to bring DEI and wokeness to the PSC."](#)

## Georgia Conservation Voters Action Fund Making the Choice Clear

- Our state affiliate Georgia Conservation Voters Action Fund made these races their top 2025 priority investing over \$2.2 Million in robust organizing and voter

communications. This makes GCV Action Fund the largest outside spender in these elections.

- This was the largest electoral investment in GCV Action Fund's history with billboards, SMS texting, direct mail and digital ads squarely focused on costs ("[\\$500](#)", "[Wallet](#)", and "[No Accident](#)") alongside a new [webpage](#) where voters can see how much their bills have risen.

## **The Road Ahead**

The political lessons from these high energy prices will not be limited to a single election cycle. The energy affordability crisis is a seismic event that will shape next year's elections and beyond. In 2026, any candidate who supports a high-cost energy agenda will face an activated electorate ready to vote for change. The winning message is clear and effective: more clean energy means more jobs and lower energy bills. This year's results are a clear signal of where political power will shift. Americans are saying loud and clear: cheap, clean energy is the future and anything less is fiscally and politically irresponsible.