



**POWER PLAY:
POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS FROM
DOMINION POWER**

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Dominion Virginia Power – a subsidiary of Dominion, a Virginia-based energy company – recently helped author and lobby for a bill that would reverse much of the energy deregulation in the state that was begun in 1999.¹ This legislation would make Virginia only the second state, after Arizona, to re-regulate its electric utilities after deregulating them. However, the bill is hardly returning Virginia to its pre-1999 regulation. Instead, it is creating Dominion-tailored energy regulation unlike that in any other state, according to Kenneth Rose, a regulation consultant.²

House Bill 3068 “establishes a new mechanism for regulating the rates of investor-owned electric utilities, and limits the ability of most consumers to purchase electric generation service from competing suppliers.”

The stakes are high for Dominion. The bill would link profit margins to a slew of different activities, which include rate increases, using renewable energy, the profits of other utility companies in the region, and building new energy plants. The old system set a single profit margin for all non-fuel activities.³ Dominion claims that the bill will protect consumers from high prices, like the 70 percent increases that beset utility customers in Maryland after complete deregulation. Opponents, such as the Virginia Citizen’s Consumer Council and the Northern Virginia Regional Commission, claim that the legislation frees Dominion from much of the state’s oversight and gives it “too many goodies.”⁴

With its bottom line in mind, Dominion has narrowed the focus of its giving. In the 2005 election cycle, Dominion gave 92 of the 140 members of the General Assembly \$1,000 or more, with 32 of them not even appearing on a ballot. In the House, Dominion focused its funds almost entirely on incumbent candidates up for re-election. Since Republicans took power of both houses in 1999, Dominion has ratcheted up its giving to Republican Party committees while decreasing its financial attention to Democratic Party committees, culminating in 2005 when Republican committees received more than Democratic committees for the first time in four cycles.

Sponsored by Del. Clarke Hogan and Sen. Thomas K. Norment, Jr. – both Republicans – the bill passed overwhelmingly in both the House and Senate this spring: 85-13 and 35-3 respectively.⁵

At time of print, the bill is on its way to the desk of Democratic Gov. Tim Kaine, who has until March 26 to sign, veto or offer amendments to House Bill 3068.⁶

¹ Tim Craig, “Foes of Utility Bill Appeal to Kaine,” *Washington Post*, March 15, 2007 [newspaper on-line]; available from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/03/14/AR2007031402495.html?nav=hcmodule>; Internet; accessed March 19, 2007.

² Greg Edwards, “Va. Reviews Re-Regulation Plan,” *Richmond Times Dispatch*, March 18, 2007 [newspaper on-line]; available from http://www.timesdispatch.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=RTD%2FMSGArticle%2FRTD_BasicArticle&c=MGArticle&cid=1173350264597&path=!business&s=1045855934855; Internet; accessed March 20, 2007.

³ Chris Flores, “A Power Bill that May Hike Your Bill,” *Daily Press*, February 21, 2007. [newspaper on-line]; available from <http://www.dailypress.com/news/local/dp-52477sy0feb21,0,3807765.story?coll=dp-news-local-final>; Internet; accessed March 21, 2007.

⁴ Greg Edwards, “Va. Reviews Re-Regulation Plan,” *Richmond Times Dispatch*, March 18, 2007 [newspaper on-line]; available from http://www.timesdispatch.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=RTD%2FMSGArticle%2FRTD_BasicArticle&c=MGArticle&cid=1173350264597&path=!business&s=1045855934855; Internet; accessed March 20, 2007 and Tim Craig, “Foes of Utility Bill Appeal to Kaine,” *Washington Post*, March 15, 2007 [newspaper on-line]; available from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/03/14/AR2007031402495.html?nav=hcmodule>; Internet; accessed March 19, 2007.

⁵ “Virginia General Assembly Legislative Information System,” *State of Virginia* [on-line]; available from <http://leg1.state.va.us/071/1st/LS823920.HTM>; Internet; accessed March 19, 2007.

Dominion is no stranger to the campaign accounts of Virginia politicians. State-level candidates and party committees have received \$2.2 million from the company since 1999. Giving peaked in the 2005 election cycle, with Dominion contributing nearly \$707,000.

GIVING BY ELECTION CYCLE

ELECTION CYCLE	TOTAL
1999	\$346,414
2001	\$667,273
2003	\$480,657
2005	\$706,927
TOTAL	\$2,201,271

DOMINION FOCUSES ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Ninety-two of the 140 members of the Virginia legislature received contributions of \$1,000 or more from Dominion in 2005; thirty-two of these recipients were senators not up for election.

The 2005 election cycle saw Dominion give \$361,318 to candidates and officeholders in the General Assembly, over half of the \$706,927 it gave.

In 2005, Dominion focused 96 percent, or \$226,646, of its giving to House of Delegates on incumbents candidates seeking reelection. Thirty-five percent, or \$79,917, went either to current House leaders or members of the current Commerce and Labor Committee.

Although 2005 was not an election year in the Senate, Dominion gave \$124,672 to senators, 70 percent of which went to senators in leadership positions or members of the Senate Commerce and Labor Committee.

Since 1999, Dominion focused much of its attention on the Virginia General Assembly, giving \$668,569 to House candidates and \$422,306 to Senate candidates. Ninety-five percent, or \$1,035,795, of these contributions went to incumbent candidates and officeholders. Together, contributions to the legislature totaled 50 percent of Dominion giving. Playing both sides of the fence, the company gave Democratic legislative candidates \$515,103 and Republican \$571,022.

KEY PLAYERS

Several lawmakers with ties to House Bill 3068 received significant contributions from Dominion.

- Del. Clarke Hogan, one of the bill's sponsors, received \$2,000 from Dominion in 2003 and \$500 in 2005.
- Sen. Thomas K. Norment, Jr., another sponsor, received \$23,150; of this money, \$6,600 came in 2005, when he was not up for re-election.

⁶ Greg Edwards, "Va. Reviews Re-Regulation Plan," *Richmond Times Dispatch*, March 18, 2007 [newspaper on-line]; available from http://www.timesdispatch.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=RTD%2FMGArticle%2FRTD_BasicArticle&c=MGArticle&cid=1173350264597&path=!business&s=1045855934855; Internet; accessed March 20, 2007.

- Governor Kaine, who is being pressured by consumer, environmental and some business groups to veto or amend the bill,⁷ received \$55,000 for his 2005 gubernatorial campaign and \$25,000 for his 2001 Lieutenant Governor campaign.

Two Senate leaders, who are also members of the Senate Commerce and Labor Committee, which held hearings on the bill, received significant contributions from Dominion:

- Senate Minority Leader Richard L. Saslaw, a Democrat, received \$47,500; of this money, \$20,000 came in 2005, when he was not up for election.
- Majority Leader Walter A. Stosch, a Republican, received \$25,300; of this cash, \$10,000 came in 2005, when he was not up for re-election.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO VIRGINIA SENATE LEADERS, 1999-2005

NAME	LEADERSHIP POSITION	PARTY	2005 TOTAL	TOTAL
Saslaw, Richard L.*	Minority Leader	Democrat	\$20,000	\$47,500
Stosch, Walter A.*	Majority Leader	Republican	\$10,000	\$25,300
Chichester, John H.*	President Pro Tempore	Republican	\$1,404	\$12,250
Whipple, Mary Margaret	Democratic Caucus Chair	Democrat	\$0	\$2,750
TOTAL			\$31,404	\$87,800

*Also a member of Senate Commerce and Labor Committee

In the House, members in leadership positions were also rewarded with generous contributions:

- Majority Leader and Commerce and Labor Committee member, Republican H. Morgan Griffith, received \$19,000; he received \$2,500 of this total in 2005, when he had no competition during his re-election campaign.
- Minority Caucus Chair, Democrat Brian J Moran, received \$11,250, \$5,000 of this money coming in 2005.

⁷ Tim Craig, "Foes of Utility Bill Appeal to Kaine," *Washington Post*, March 15, 2007 [newspaper on-line]; available from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/03/14/AR2007031402495.html?nav=hcmodule>; Internet; accessed March 19, 2007.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO VIRGINIA HOUSE LEADERS, 1999-2005

NAME	LEADERSHIP POSITION	PARTY	2005 TOTAL	TOTAL
Griffith, H. Morgan*	Majority Leader	Republican	\$2,500	\$19,000
Kilgore, Terry G.*	Majority Caucus Chair	Republican	\$7,500	\$15,000
Moran, Brian J.	Minority Caucus Chair	Democrat	\$5,000	\$11,250
Cox, M. Kirkland	Majority Whip	Republican	\$4,500	\$8,100
Amundson, Kristen J	Minority Caucus Vice Chair for Operations	Democrat	\$3,055	\$7,055
Spruill Sr. Lionell	Minority Caucus Vice Chair of Outreach	Democrat	\$4,126	\$6,876
Ward, Jeion A	Minority Caucus Treasurer	Democrat	\$3,000	\$3,500
Howell, William J.	Speaker	Republican	\$0	\$3,250
Sickles, Mark D.	Minority Caucus Secretary	Democrat	\$2,000	\$2,000
Ware, Onzlee	Minority Caucus Sergeant at Arms	Democrat	\$500	\$1,750
Armstrong, Ward L.	Minority Leader	Democrat	\$500	\$500
TOTAL			\$32,181	\$78,281

*Also a member of House Commerce and Labor Committee

GIVING TO MEMBERS OF THE COMMERCE AND LABOR COMMITTEES

Prior to the floor vote, the bill passed through the House and Senate Commerce and Labor committees with 18-1 and 15-0 votes, respectively. These committees both rejected efforts by other lawmakers to return the state to a more traditional regulation system.⁸

Current members of the House Commerce and Labor Committee received nearly \$158,000 from Dominion since 1999. Nearly \$60,000 of those contributions came in the 2005 election cycle.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO MEMBERS OF HOUSE COMMERCE AND LABOR COMMITTEE, 1999-2005

RECIPIENT	PARTY	2005 TOTAL	TOTAL
Plum, Kenneth R.	Democrat	\$6,000	\$25,500
Griffith, H. Morgan*	Republican	\$2,500	\$19,000
Callahan Jr., Vincent F.	Republican	\$8,500	\$18,000
Kilgore, Terry Gene*	Republican	\$7,500	\$15,000
Melvin, Kenneth R.	Democrat	\$2,750	\$9,750
Jones, Dwight Clinton	Democrat	\$4,500	\$9,500
Suit, Terrie L.	Republican	\$3,750	\$8,150
Joannou, Johnny S.	Democrat	\$3,000	\$6,500
Purkey, Harry R.	Republican	\$5,000	\$6,000
Ware Jr., R. Lee	Republican	\$0	\$5,500
Alexander, Kenneth Cooper	Democrat	\$3,000	\$5,250

⁸ Greg Edwards, "Va. Reviews Re-Regulation Plan," *Richmond Times Dispatch*, March 18, 2007 [newspaper on-line]; available from http://www.timesdispatch.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=RTD%2FMGArticle%2FRTD_BasicArticle&c=MGArticle&cid=1173350264597&path=!business&s=1045855934855; Internet; accessed March 20, 2007.

RECIPIENT	PARTY	2005 TOTAL	TOTAL
Tata, Robert	Republican	\$3,250	\$5,250
Nixon Jr., Samuel A.	Republican	\$2,000	\$5,000
Hugo, Timothy D.	Republican	\$4,236	\$4,986
Byron, Kathy J.	Republican	\$250	\$4,500
Abbitt Jr., Watkins M.	Democrat	\$0	\$3,500
	Independent		
Sickles, Mark D.*	Democrat	\$2,000	\$2,000
Morgan, Harvey B.	Republican	\$0	\$1,500
Dudley, Allen W.	Republican	\$0	\$1,000
Hargrove Sr., Frank D.	Republican	\$500	\$1,000
McClellan, Jennifer L.	Democrat	\$1,000	\$1,000
	TOTAL	\$59,736	\$157,886

*Also member of House leadership.

Members of the Senate Commerce and Labor Committee have received \$265,743 since 1999, with almost \$90,000 of those contributions coming in 2005.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO SENATE COMMERCE AND LABOR COMMITTEE, 1999-2005

RECIPIENT	PARTY	2005 TOTAL	TOTAL
Saslaw, Richard L.*	Democrat	\$20,000	\$47,500
Potts Jr., H. Russ	Republican	\$13,500	\$30,818
Stolle, Kenneth W.	Republican	\$7,168	\$30,517
Stosch, Walter A.*	Republican	\$10,000	\$25,300
Norment Jr., Thomas K.	Republican	\$6,600	\$23,151
Edwards, John S.**	Democrat	\$2,000	\$19,500
Watkins, John	Republican	\$4,000	\$13,400
Colgan Sr., Charles J.	Democrat	\$5,000	\$13,207
Chichester, John H.*	Republican	\$1,404	\$12,250
Williams, Marty E.	Republican	\$5,000	\$12,000
Rerras, D. Nick	Republican	\$4,000	\$9,750
Wampler Jr., William C.	Republican	\$3,000	\$8,500
Wagner, Frank W.	Republican	\$3,000	\$7,850
Miller, Yvonne B.	Democrat	\$2,000	\$7,000
Newman, Stephen D.	Republican	\$1,000	\$5,000
	TOTAL	\$87,672	\$265,743

*Also member of Senate leadership.

**includes contributions to campaign for Attorney General

PARTY COMMITTEES

Over the last four election cycles state party committees received \$430,000 from Dominion, or 20 percent of its contributions to candidates and committees. Democratic committees received \$254,337 and Republican committees received \$175,700. Since 1999, when Republicans secured their current majorities in both houses, Dominion has steadily decreased its giving to Democratic committees while steadily increasing its giving to Republican committees.

In 2005 Dominion gave \$115,250 to state party committees. Democratic committees received \$45,250, while Republican committees received \$70,000.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO VIRGINIAN PARTY COMMITTEES, 1999-2005

PARTY	1999	2001*	2003	2005*	TOTAL
Democratic	\$105,540	\$52,946	\$50,600	\$45,250	\$254,336
Republican	\$25,000	\$32,700	\$48,000	\$70,000	\$175,700
TOTAL	\$130,540	\$85,646	\$98,600	\$115,250	\$430,036

*Gubernatorial election year.