

SEEA Quarterly Highlights

Quarter 2: April - June 2019

NOTE: SEEA is improving upon the popular “Policy Highlights” quarterly document to include more of SEEA’s work areas and to adapt to the industry’s evolving regulatory and technical landscape. SEEA now distributes “Quarterly Highlights” for the previous quarter during the first week of April, July, October, and January. Each email distribution will allow you to view the Highlights in a single document or separated by subsections. The Second Quarterly Highlights of 2019 is divided into *Energy Efficient Transportation* updates and other *State, Local, and Utility Updates* and *Regional and National Updates*. In addition, the email body will now show brief summaries instead of displaying the full document text. The new Quarterly Highlights will continue to provide stakeholders with brief, timely, and relevant information on energy efficiency policy, codes, transportation, and related topics throughout the Southeast.

If you are part of a [member organization](#) and someone in your organization would like to be added to the SEEA Policy email list, please contact Emmeline Luck, Policy Associate at eluck@seealliance.org. To find more information or to provide input, please fill out our quick survey at <https://bit.ly/2HOnDZY>.

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State, Local, and Utility Updates

Arkansas

- **Energy Efficiency:** On May 10, the Arkansas Public Service Commission issued an [order](#) accepting a National Standard Practice Manual (NSPM) [Case Study](#) completed by the Parties Working Collaboratively (PWC) in October 2018. The order directs the PWC to address certain areas of inconsistency in how utilities were conducting cost-effectiveness testing that were identified in the case study. The order also instructs utilities not to include the following non-energy benefits (NEBs) in their cost-effectiveness testing due to the uncertainty of quantifying those NEBs: environmental, economic development, and energy security impacts. *Docket 13-002-U.*
- **Energy Savings Contracts:** Governor Hutchinson signed [Act 507](#) on March 18. The Act amends the maximum term of twenty years for a guaranteed energy cost savings contract to allow an extension of a given contract if it includes energy cost savings measures with an active equipment warranty period or a combined useful life that exceeds twenty years.
- **Distributed Energy Resources (DERs) and Grid Modernization:** On April 30, the Arkansas Public Service Commission (APSC) issued [Order 11](#) instructing utilities to assess the potential impact of DERs on their operations and setting dates for the first two workshops on June 11-12. The APSC filed [Order 12](#) on June 6 establishing a continued workshop schedule for participation by the PWC and other stakeholders. The third workshop will take place in September. *Docket 16-028-U.*

Florida

- **Florida Energy Efficiency and Conservation Act of 1980 (FEECA) Goals Review:** Under FEECA, seven of Florida's utilities undergo a goal-setting process that is reviewed and updated approximately every five years. The Florida Public Service Commission (FPSC) opened a docket to review the utilities' progress towards their FEECA goals on January 15 and consolidated dockets and established a procedure on February 18. Each utility must propose electricity and peak demand savings targets for the next ten years. Proceedings will take place August 12-16. See Section X of Order PSC-2019-062-PCO-EG for the full schedule. [Docket No. 20190015](#)
- **Resilience Legislation:** The Florida House of Representatives [introduced House Bill 797](#) on March 5; the bill would require utilities to submit long-term grid hardening plans to lessen the potential impact of severe storms on Florida's grid. The bill was tabled on May 1. On June 17, Governor DeSantis [signed Senate Bill 796](#), requiring investor-owned utilities to file storm protection plans and allowing them to recover costs for undergrounding power lines outside of a utility's rate base.
- **Energy Choice Amendment:** The [Florida Energy Choice Amendment](#) is a petition to amend the state's constitution to grant customers of investor-owned utilities the right to choose their electricity provider and to generate and sell their own electricity. On April 18, the Florida Chamber

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of Commerce [filed](#) a legal brief with the Supreme Court opposing the amendment. As of July 1, the petition has over 307,000 signatures; it [needs](#) 766,200 to make it onto the 2020 ballot.

- **Florida Chief Resilience Officer:** Governor Ron DeSantis is [preparing](#) to hire a resilience officer for the state to coordinate Florida’s preparations for “environmental, physical, and economic impacts of climate change, especially sea level rise.
- **Clean Energy Commitments:** On May 7, South Miami’s City Commission unanimously [passed](#) a resolution committing the City to transition to 100% clean energy by 2040. In June, Safety Harbor also [committed](#) to a 100% clean energy goal by 2050.
- **Building Commission Legislation:** [Senate Bill 1800](#), a proposed bill that would have removed Green Building and State Energy Office representatives the state’s Building Commission, failed in the Senate Innovation, Industry, and Technology Committee on May 3.

Georgia

- **Georgia Power Integrated Resource Plan:** Georgia Power Company [filed](#) its IRP on January 31. The Georgia Public Service Commission (GPSC) held hearings on the IRP from April to June. Georgia Power recently reached a settlement with the GPSC Staff, signaling the pending completion of its 2019 Integrated Resource Planning (IRP) process. The settlement mandates the retirement of 982.5 megawatts (MW) of coal-fired power plants and the procurement of 1,500 MW of renewable resources and 150 MW of distributed generation resources. It also gives Georgia Power the authority to own and operate 80 MW of energy storage demonstration projects, directs the Company to add energy savings programs that will reduce peak demand supply by 1,600 MW by 2022, and requires that Georgia Power model demand side management alongside supply-side resources in its next IRP in 2022. Additionally, the IRP contains a tariffed on-bill financing pilot program for 500 residential buildings. A final decision is expected by July 16. [Docket No. 42310](#)
- **Georgia Power Rate Case:** On June 28, Georgia Power [requested](#) a rate increase of \$2.2 billion over the next three years, which would add about \$16.48 per month to a typical residential customer bill if approved. The GPSC will likely set hearings for late September and make a final decision in December. [Docket No. 42516](#)
- **Atlanta Gas Light Rate Case:** On June 3, Atlanta Gas Light (AGL) [proposed](#) to raise rates by \$96 million during the next three-year period, which would add approximately \$3.80 per month to average residential bills. On June 26, AGL requested approval of its proposal. [Docket No. 42315](#)
- **Clean Energy Commitments:** On May 21, Athens [became](#) the fourth city in Georgia to commit to a 100% clean energy goal.

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- **Vogtle Nuclear Plant:**
 - **Schedule:** On May 1, Southern Company CEO Tom Fanning [announced](#) that the reactors are on schedule to meet all deadlines. Early in May, Georgia Power [energized](#) Unit 3 for the first time, meaning that the reactor will soon move on to the testing phase.
 - **Equipment Lawsuits:** A dispute between Santee Cooper and Westinghouse may [jeopardize](#) Southern Company's ability to buy \$8.5 million in parts needed to build the nation's lone nuclear construction project. See VC Summer update under South Carolina for more information.

Louisiana

- **Proposed Energy Efficiency Rules:** On April 16th, the Louisiana Public Service Commission issued [draft comprehensive energy efficiency rules](#) for public comment. Currently, Louisiana utilities are operating energy efficiency programs under the Phase I or "Quick Start" rules. The deadline for public comments ended June 14. SEEA's comments on the docket can be found [here](#). The Commission will also hold a Technical Conference on the draft rules in Baton Rouge on July 22. [Docket No. R-31106](#).

Mississippi

- **Energy Efficiency and Resource Planning:** On June 11, the MPSC [issued](#) draft energy efficiency and IRP rules. [If adopted](#), the draft rules would replace the state's existing energy efficiency rules, under which utilities are currently implementing "Quick Start" energy efficiency programs. The new proposed rules would not require utilities to meet a specific energy savings target but would allow utilities to propose incentive mechanisms. The draft rules encourage utilities to create on-bill financing programs for demand-side management and distributed energy resources. The Commission is seeking comments on the proposed rules by August 1. After the comment period, the Commission will submit a final proposed rule and arrange a public hearing.
- **Investigation into Kemper Plant:** On April 29, the US Department of Justice [informed](#) Southern Company that it has started a civil investigation into the failed Kemper County coal gasification plant that was being built by subsidiary Mississippi Power. Last year, a [settlement](#) approved by the Mississippi Public Service Commission (MPSC) ensured that ratepayers would not be responsible for covering the costs of the plant, which increased from \$2.9 billion to \$7.5 billion. Southern Company's [10-Q filing](#) with the Securities and Exchange Commission states that Mississippi Power's finances could face a "material impact" from the investigation.

North Carolina

- **Regulatory Commission:** On May 1, Governor Roy Cooper [nominated](#) Floyd McKissick, Kimberly Duffley, and Jeff Hughes to the North Carolina Utility Commission (NCUC) to replace three

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Commissioners whose terms ended June 30. Governor Cooper [reappointed](#) Chris Ayers as the Executive Director of the Public Staff of the NCUC. Ayers has been confirmed; the General Assembly has yet to confirm the new Commissioners. On June 4, Cooper [named](#) Commissioner Charlotte Mitchell to serve as the next chairperson of the NCUC.

- **Utility Rate-Setting:** [Senate Bill 559](#), currently before the House of Representatives, would [allow](#) the NCUC to permit regulated utilities to set key components of electricity rates for up to five years without the traditional proceedings before the Commission. The bill would also [establish](#) a securitization plan to fund storm recovery costs.
- **State Clean Energy Plan:** The Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) held several [Clean Energy Plan](#) stakeholder workshops from February through June to identify opportunities and tensions associated with technology and policy trends surrounding clean technology. Registration for the [July 24 workshop](#) is due on July 10. Comments can also be submitted [online](#). NCDEQ draft Clean Energy Plan will be released in August followed by a thirty-day comment period and a review by the Climate Change Interagency Council for approval in September. The State Clean Energy Plan is due to the Governor on October 1.
- **Economic Impact of Clean Energy:** A study released in May from the North Carolina Sustainable Energy Association [found](#) that clean energy development projects in North Carolina have generated more than \$28.2 billion statewide since 2007.

South Carolina

- **Energy Freedom Act:** On May 9, the state legislature unanimously [passed](#) the Energy Freedom Act, lifting the state's 2% net metering cap and directing the South Carolina Public Service Commission (SCPSC) to establish a new net metering structure in a series of public dockets. An integrated resource planning (IRP) component of the Act requires utilities to present multiple resource and cost scenarios to regulators when filing plans. The Act also [includes](#) a "customer bill of rights," which requires utilities to provide usage data, among other provisions. Governor Henry McMaster signed the Act on May 16. [Docket No. 2019-182-E](#), [Docket No. 2019-176-E](#)
- **Potential Sale of Santee Cooper:** On May 21, South Carolina lawmakers [decided](#) to slow down the process of selling Santee Cooper. Over the next few months, the state will field and evaluate offers to either purchase or take over management for the utility. After pitching management offers, executives from Dominion Energy and Southern Company [told](#) state legislators that the financial benefits of Santee Cooper remaining a public entity are greater than those of selling it to become a for-profit company. Lawmakers [expect](#) to make a final decision in 2020.
- **VC Summer Nuclear Plant Lawsuits:** On May 14, Santee Cooper [filed](#) a lawsuit against Westinghouse, the now-bankrupt lead contractor of the VC Summer nuclear plant, asking a judge to rule that Santee Cooper owns all the equipment leftover from the failed reactor project and that Westinghouse must give the utility the certification documents. This lawsuit comes a month after Westinghouse [filed](#) its own lawsuit against Santee Cooper, accusing the utility of thwarting

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opportunities to sell the equipment to Southern Company for use on Plant Vogtle. Additionally, Santee Cooper investor Murray Turka [sued](#) the utility and ex-CEO Lonnie Carter, alleging that utility decision-makers knew that the reactor couldn't be finished but decided to continue the project. On June 11, Circuit Judge John Hayes [finalized](#) the settlement, returning up to \$146 million to South Carolina Electric and Gas (SCE&G) ratepayers.

- **Utility Merger:** Dominion Energy [completed](#) its purchase of SCE&G on January 2. Dominion Energy South Carolina [is now](#) officially the new name for what was previously SCE&G.
- **Duke Energy Rate Cases:** Duke Energy Progress (DEP) and Duke Energy Carolinas (DEC) originally proposed to triple their Basic Facility Charges from \$9.06 to \$29 and from \$8.29 to \$28 per month, respectively, beginning June 1. After direction from the SCPSC, both companies [reduced](#) their fixed charge proposals to \$11.78 for DEP customers and \$11.96 for DEC customers. The SCPSC ultimately approved lower returns on equity (ROEs) for each utility compared with what was proposed. The SCPSC also disallowed 75% of Duke Energy CEO Lynn Good's South Carolina compensation and reduced the compensation of the next three top executives' salaries from South Carolina by 50%. On May 31, DEP and DEC [challenged](#) the rate decision, holding that the SCPSC did not consider all recoverable costs. More details on each are included below.
 - **DEP Rate Case:** In its initial proposal for rate increase, DEP asked the Commission for an ROE of 10.5% and to increase the monthly variable rate for residential customers by 12.5%. The SCPSC [approved](#) a 9.5% ROE on May 8. [Docket No. 2018-318-E](#)
 - **DEC Rate Case:** On May 1, the SCPSC [approved](#) DEC's rate case after decreasing the proposed rate increase by 54%. DEC had requested a \$231 million rate increase and an ROE of 10.5%. The SCPSC ultimately approved a 9.5% ROE and a rate increase of about \$107 million and instructed DEC to propose a tariff consistent with the SCPSC findings. [Docket No. 2018-319-E](#)

Tennessee

- **Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) Leadership:** Before his retirement from TVA, ex-CEO Bill Johnson [announced](#) on April 2 that TVA expects to source at least 60% of its energy from non-carbon-emitting sources by 2020. Later in April, the TVA Board of Directors [hired](#) Jeffrey Lyash as the new president and CEO. On June 3, TVA [restated](#) its intentions to decrease its carbon emissions by 70% of 2005 levels by 2030.
- **Integrated Resource Plan (IRP):** TVA released its [IRP](#) on June 28 after undergoing a writing process that included various occasions for public and expert input. The plan proposes to continue the utility's shift away from fossil fuels and towards renewables. Energy efficiency will be deployed through a focus on low-income energy efficiency programs, called Home Uplift, underway in five pilots throughout TVA jurisdiction. TVA has also proposed conducting an energy efficiency market depth study to help inform decisions to deploy additional energy efficiency and demand response. In May, SEEA provided remarks and answered questions about energy efficiency before TVA's Regional Energy Resource Council. The TVA Board will vote on the IRP in August.

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- **Memphis Gas, Light, and Water (MGLW):** In April, Memphis Gas, Light, and Water (MGLW), TVA's largest customer, [began](#) an integrated resource planning process to assess the possibility of buying power from a source other than TVA. In May, TVA CEO Jeffrey Lyash [said](#) that Memphis' feedback highlighted some opportunities for TVA to improve its relationship with MGLW.
- **Call for Public Accessibility to TVA Meetings:** In January, two Tennessee Congressmen, US Rep. Tim Burchett and US Rep. Steve Cohen, introduced the Tennessee Valley Authority Transparency Act of 2019. The bill "would require meetings of the TVA Board to be held in public, properly noticed, and make available minutes and summaries of each meeting." State lawmakers passed a [resolution](#) earlier this year that supports the idea that TVA's meetings should be public. Governor Lee and Speakers in the House and Senate [signed](#) the resolution in early May.
- **TVA Board:** On June 19, the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee [approved](#) nominee William Kilbride to serve on the Board of Directors for TVA.

Virginia

- **Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative:** The state legislature passed its 2019-2020 budget and included language that prevents the state from participating in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), a regional carbon cap-and-trade program. Governor Ralph Northam chose not to veto the budget, which [passed](#) into law on May 2.
- **Energy Efficiency at Dominion Energy and Appalachian Power:** On May 2, Virginia regulators [approved](#) \$225.6 million of new efficiency and demand response programs proposed by Dominion Energy Virginia. The new offerings include six residential and five non-residential programs. Virginia lawmakers in 2018 approved [Senate Bill 966](#) requiring Dominion to propose a total of \$870 million in energy efficiency programs. After some debate over the intent of the law, the utility confirmed in March that it would [spend that full amount](#). The Virginia State Corporation Commission (SCC) also [approved](#) an updated rate adjustment clause to cover Appalachian Power (APCo)'s current energy efficiency and demand response programs.
[Docket No. PUR-2018-00168](#), [Docket No. PUR-2018-00118](#)
- **Integrated Resource Planning (IRP):** On March 7, Dominion [filed](#) an amendment to its 2018 IRP after the SCC [rejected](#) its initial IRP in December, citing high future demand forecasting and a lack of alignment with the public's best interests. On May 8, the SCC reconvened the hearing on Dominion's IRP. On the same day, a group of technology companies in the state [submitted](#) a letter to Dominion calling for more renewable and energy storage capacity and for less natural gas infrastructure. On June 27, the SCC issued a final [order](#) accepting the amended IRP, [stating](#) that it meets the minimum legal and regulatory thresholds but that it may significantly understate the potential costs to customers. The order includes specific directions that Dominion must follow in the next IRP. APCo [filed](#) its 2019 IRP on May 1. APCo's 2019 IRP [addresses](#) mandates from the 2018 General Assembly, including \$140 million towards energy efficiency programs.
[Docket No. PUR-2018-00165](#), [Docket No. PUR-2019-00058](#)

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- **Industry Utility Service:** The SCC [rejected](#) a request from Walmart in February to exit from the services of Dominion Energy and Appalachian Power and buy its electricity elsewhere. On May 30, the SCC also [rejected](#) Costco's bid to leave Dominion's service. The SCC has pending exit applications from Target, Kroger, and Cox Communications.
- **Virginia Energy Reform Coalition:** On May 7, nine organizations from across the political spectrum [announced](#) the creation of the [Virginia Energy Reform Coalition](#). The Coalition advocates for a competitive energy market in the state and for reducing dependence on traditional utilities.
- **Successful Energy Efficiency Programs:** The American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE) [released](#) a blog post in May describing how the success of Virginia's increased energy efficiency offerings could serve as a model to the rest of the Southeast.

Regional Updates

- **Rural Electricity:** The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced in April that it is investing \$485 million to upgrade rural electric systems in order to reduce energy costs. USDA is providing financing through the [Electric Loan Program](#) to improve rural electric infrastructure in several states, including Georgia, Mississippi, and North Carolina in the Southeast.
- **Energy Emissions Goals:** On April 22, Entergy released a [Climate Scenario Analysis and Evaluation of Risks and Opportunities report](#) acknowledging the impact of climate change and announcing an ambitious new strategy to lower the company's carbon emissions by 50% by 2030. The company also plans to be a leader in the development of clean fuel options.
- **Blockchain in Energy:** In June, the Southeast Energy Efficiency Alliance [released](#) a brief paper on blockchain in energy. The paper provides an overview of the technology, reviews energy applications, and discusses potential future roles of blockchain in energy. Additionally, the Energy Web Chain, the energy sector's first unique open-source blockchain, [launched](#) on June 19.
- **Energy Codes Updates:** In the Southeast, Arkansas, Florida, Tennessee, and Virginia are currently updating their state energy codes:
 - **Arkansas** issued a request for proposals (RFP) seeking a facilitator for the upcoming code update process; proposals are due July 15.
 - **Florida** is currently updating their residential and commercial building codes to [2018 IECC](#) and [ASHRAE 90.1](#) standards. The final Technical Advisory Committee proceedings and comment period will take place in July. The new code update may make Florida the first state in the Southeast to amend the electrical code to support EV charging in single-family and townhouse dwellings statewide.
 - **Tennessee** is conducting a stakeholder input process for residential code updates. The second draft including stakeholder feedback is expected to go to the General Assembly later this year. SEEA provided comments to the Tennessee Department of Environmental Conservation encouraging the inclusion of updated energy codes in the new building

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- code. In the current working draft, all 2018 energy code provisions are amended to 2009 levels except for lighting efficiency.
- **Virginia** is updating residential and commercial building codes to 2018 IECC through a stakeholder process that will continue through 2020.

National Updates

- **Clean Car Rule:** In August 2018, the EPA released the [Safer Affordable Fuel Efficient \(SAFE\) Vehicles](#) proposed rule to amend emissions standards for passenger cars and light trucks. If adopted, the rule will limit the ability of states to set their own standards and will roll back a 2012 regulation requiring automakers to achieve an average passenger vehicle fuel economy of 54 miles per gallon by 2025. EPA's proposal has faced pushback from [US legislators](#), [air conditioning and refrigerant companies](#), and [vehicle manufacturers](#). The administration is also facing a [lawsuit](#) by the State of California, which claims that the government is withholding the analysis supporting the proposed rollback. Soon after, lawyers for the administration [countered](#) that the rulemaking process should be able to run its course before legal intervention by other groups. In early June, EPA's Science Advisory Board [voted](#) to review the science behind the proposed rule change. The House Energy and Commerce subcommittee held hearings on the proposed rule on June 20. EPA initially expected to finalize the rule by the end of June.
- **Appliance Standards Process Rule:** Earlier this year, the Department of Energy (DOE) [proposed a rule](#) that would change the process by which it set appliance standards and increase the savings threshold for issuing new standards to 0.5 quadrillion BTUs. Energy efficiency advocates opposed the proposed rule, [arguing](#) that the minimum threshold is too high and will likely result in a lack of attainable appliance standards and a [reduction in efficiency](#). Efficiency advocates have also expressed concern that the proposed rule includes additional steps that will slow down the standard-setting process, under which DOE has recently [missed](#) seventeen deadlines. On May 9, Energy Secretary Rick Perry [stated](#) that the department will provide an outline of its plan to address some of the outstanding standards updates. DOE will host a [webinar](#) on the proposed rule on July 11 and will accept comments through July 15.
- **Clean Power Plan Replacement:** On June 19, the EPA released its [Affordable Clean Energy \(ACE\) regulation](#) and its [regulatory impact analysis](#) repealing the 2015 Clean Power Plan. Instead of establishing emissions caps for facilities, the ACE rule gives states the authority to determine to how to control power plant emissions in their jurisdictions. The rule extends the timeline for state plans to follow the state implementation plan schedule under the National Ambient Air Quality Standards. The final ACE rule [does not](#) include changes to the New Source Review program, but EPA plans to change power-plant specific changes to NSR separately in the future. Several environmental groups, states, and attorneys general have already [indicated](#) they will file lawsuits to block the regulation.
- **Lighting Standards:** The public comment period on [DOE's proposal](#) to [roll back](#) energy efficiency requirements for several types of household lightbulbs closed on May 3. A group of fifteen state

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Attorneys General and the City of New York and the District of Columbia [filed](#) comments opposing the proposal.

- **100 Resilient Cities:** In April, the Rockefeller Foundation [announced](#) that it will discontinue funding for its nonprofit 100 Resilient Cities (100RC), which has funded salaries for city chief resilience officers and technical assistance to local governments. In June, 100RC president Michael Berkowitz said that staff are preparing to start a new nonprofit with similar goals. Rockefeller Foundation has also confirmed that it may continue some elements of the 100RC program.
- **NARUC Leadership:** On June 5, the Southeastern Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners [elected](#) MPSC Chairman Brandon Presley as the next president of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC). NARUC's rules call for the first vice president to be promoted to president during formal elections during its annual November meeting, but NCUC Commissioner Ed Finley Jr. did not get reappointed to another term on the Commission. Presley still must be formally elected at the NARUC meeting. On June 19, NARUC [appointed](#) Judith Jadgmann of the Virginia SCC and Presley to the [Executive Committee](#) as supporting members.
- **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA):** [EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler](#) was sworn into office on April 16. On May 28, Mary Walker, acting Southeast Regional Administrator, officially [became](#) EPA's Region 4 Administrator. On June 26, EPA's administrator for the Office of Air and Radiation, Bill Wehrum, [resigned](#). Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator [Anne Idsal](#) is the acting leader.
- **DOE EE Staff:** In early June, Alex Fitzsimmons, Chief of Staff for the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, [became](#) the acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Energy Efficiency.
- **Weatherization Legislation:** The US House of Representatives introduced [HR 2041](#) on April 2. The bill would reauthorize the weatherization assistance program with a budget of \$350 million per fiscal year until 2024, representing an increase of nearly \$100 million from the budget approved by Congress in 2019. The bill is waiting to be considered in committee.
- **EE Rebates:** The US House introduced [HR 2043](#), the HOMES Act, on April 3. The bill would create an energy efficiency rebate program for homeowners making upgrades. Those who achieve a 20% reduction in energy usage would be eligible to receive a \$2,500 rebate while those who achieve a 40% reduction may earn \$5,000. The bill is awaiting subcommittee hearings.
- **NERC Annual Report:** In June, the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) released its [2019 State of Reliability report](#).
- **Pre-Disaster Mitigation Funding:** On May 22, the Federal Emergency Management Agency [requested](#) public comments on a new pre-disaster hazard mitigation grant program called Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC). The BRIC program was established to manage funds for pre-disaster planning under Section 1234 of [the Disaster Recovery and Reform Act](#) of 2018. The comment period ends on July 15.

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- **EE Financing Portal:** The recently-released portal from [National Energy Improvement Fund](#) (NEIF) partners with contractors, manufacturers, distributors, governments, utilities, and industry trade groups to develop and administer financing, rebates, and related programs designed to help improve the uptake of energy-related property improvements. NEIF facilitates access to capital to support energy improvements in buildings through nuanced understanding of capital structures, market needs, utility and state efficiency programs and efficient delivery of financing through our partners. For more information contact Heater Braithwaite at hbraithwaite@neifund.org.

Energy Efficient Transportation (EET) Updates

EET State, Local, and Utility Updates:

- **Arkansas EV User Fee:** On March 12, Governor Hutchinson signed [Act 416](#); the Act requires an annual registration fee of \$200 for battery-powered electric vehicles (EVs) and \$100 for plug-in hybrid vehicles.
- **Florida EV Roadmap:** The Office of Energy within the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) has initiated the development of a statewide Electric Vehicle Roadmap planning process. The first [meeting](#) was held on May 16, 2019. For more information, please contact April Groover Combs at April.GrooverCombs@freshfromflorida.com.
- **Florida Electric Buses:** At the [May 14 Orlando Utilities Commission \(OUC\) meeting](#), Linda Ferrone, Chief Customer Officer, presented OUC's planned [LYNX](#) e-bus pilot program and OUC's intention to support LYNX's application for DOE's Low-No Emissions Grant. The program promotes the use of clean transportation and new electric load growth in OUC's service territory and creates a pilot to highlight OUC's current EV [Own It/Charge It](#) program. The program will cost \$1.2 million over twelve years, with an estimated \$792,000 spent in Fiscal Years 2019 and 2020.
- **Georgia Clean Energy Roadshow:** The Clean Energy Roadshow, initiated by Georgia PSC Commissioner Tim Echols, will host various [events](#) to advance clean energy in transportation from August to October. The first event will take place on August 27 at Southface Energy Institute.
- **Georgia Fleet Hub Grand Opening:** In June, the Cox Automotive Mobility Group hosted the grand opening of its new and industry-first facility, the [Manheim Metro-Atlanta Fleet Hub](#). The facility includes labs focused on autonomous vehicle assistance technologies, a ride-share drivers' lounge, a state-of-the-art reconditioning center, and mobile car care capabilities powered by RideKleen. The Hub will be home to [Pivnet](#), Cox's new brand for mobility fleet services networks.
- **Georgia Municipal EV Fleet:** Savannah is [working towards](#) replacing 300 cars in its municipal fleet with EVs and has already added [two](#) cars.
- **Kentucky Charging Infrastructure:** On June 14, the Kentucky Public Service Commission [ruled](#) that electric vehicle charging stations do not constitute a utility and therefore are not subject to

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utility regulation. [Docket No. 2018-00272](#)

- **North Carolina EV User Fee:** On April 17, the Senate introduced [SB 446](#) which would require an annual fee of \$230 for electric vehicles and \$115 for plug-in hybrids. The bill failed to make it out of committee, but the language was included in the Senate budget. The language was not included in the final General Assembly budget, which Governor Cooper [vetoed](#) on June 27, and does not appear to be progressing in additional budget negotiations.
- **North Carolina Fleet Expo:** The [Sustainable Fleet Technology Conference](#) on August 7-8 in Durham will showcase biofuels, electric, natural gas, and propane technologies.
- **Duke EV Infrastructure:**
 - **North Carolina:** Duke Energy [filed](#) a plan with the NCUC on March 29 for a \$76 million electric transportation program to develop charging infrastructure for electric vehicles (EVs) and electric buses. SEEA [filed](#) a letter in support for the proposal on May 6. Duke requested an expedited approval by June 1 with an effective date ninety days later, but regulators have yet to approve. [Docket No. E-2 Sub 1197](#)
 - **South Carolina:** Duke [filed](#) a revised proposal totaling \$9.8 million with the SCPSC on April 1; on the same day, the Office of Regulatory Staff [filed](#) a report on the proposed programs and stakeholder input. On June 13, Duke [requested](#) that the SCPSC approve the amended applications. [Docket No. 2018-321-E](#); [Docket No. 2018-322-E](#)
- **Volkswagen Diesel Settlement Environmental Mitigation Trust (VW Settlement EMT):**
 - **North Carolina:** The North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) [issued](#) RFPs for two projects that will achieve significant emissions reductions: the Diesel Bus and Vehicle Program and the DC Fast Charge Program. DEQ released applications on July 1; the submission deadline is September 30, 2019.
 - **Tennessee:** The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation has [selected](#) thirty-nine school districts to receive over \$8 million in grant funding from the VW Settlement EMT to support school bus replacement projects.
 - **Virginia:** On June 24, Governor Northam [announced](#) that about \$12 million in state funding, including \$9 million from the VW Settlement EMT, will be allocated towards the deployment of electric transit buses in three municipalities.

EET Regional Updates:

- **Electric Transportation in Rural Communities:** SEEA was selected to participate in the Rocky Mountain Institute's [Mobility Innovation Lab Project Accelerator](#) program on August 5-8. SEEA will work with a team of electric utility cooperatives, Vote Solar, and Clean Cities-Georgia on a regional program to advance electric transportation in rural communities.
- **Autonomous Electric Vehicles:** Autonomous EV pilot projects are underway in Florida and Georgia. The Florida Department of Transportation [Florida Autonomous Vehicles](#) initiative is

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hosting several research and pilot projects. The City of Chamblee, Georgia is [using](#) autonomous shuttles to solve the “last mile” connection problem using public transportation.

EET National Updates:

- **Electric Vehicle Tax Credits:** The [Electric Cars Act of 2019](#) would extend the EV tax credit for ten years and would help deploy EV charging infrastructure. The [Drive America Forward Act](#) would also extend the federal EV tax credit as well as the hydrogen fuel cell credit through 2028. It would offer a \$7,000 tax credit for EV purchasers of 400,000 cars per manufacturer. Consumers could receive the full tax credit through the calendar quarter after the 600,000th vehicle is sold, at which point the credit will decrease to \$3,500 before being phased out entirely after six months.
- **Electrify America and ChargePoint Partnership:** On June 11, the two largest EV charging companies [announced](#) a roaming partnership to allow customers of each charging network to charge on either network with a single account and no additional fees.
- **EVgo Commits to Renewable Energy:** On May 7, EV fast-charging network EVgo [committed](#) to use 100% renewable energy to power its charging stations.
- **Drive Electric Week:** [National Drive Electric Week](#), a celebration to heighten awareness of the benefits and availability of plug-in hybrids and all-electric vehicles, will take place September 14-22. Local EV drivers and advocates will organize events nationwide.
- **Mayors EV Collaborative:** The [Climate Mayors Electric Vehicle Purchasing Collaborative](#), started in September 2018, is an initiative intended to help cities expedite the adoption of EVs. The Electrification Coalition [offers](#) webinar recordings providing information on the Collaborative. On June 28, 2019, 127 cities and fifteen counties [joined](#) the Collaborative.
- **Google Maps EV Upgrade:** Google Maps [now allows](#) EV drivers to search for nearby charging stations, provides real-time information on currently available chargers including port type and charging speeds, and shares customer reviews. The feature is available to drivers across the US and includes information on chargers from networks like Chargemaster, EVgo, SemaConnect. Chargepoint stations will be added soon.

What did we miss?

If you have been tracking any important updates pertaining to energy efficiency in SEEA’s region from April-June that do not appear here, please email Emme Luck, Policy Associate, at eluck@seealliance.org.