



Press Release from the North Carolina Sustainable Energy Association, Southern Environmental Law Center, Clean Energy Group, and Southern Alliance for Clean Energy

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **NC Utilities Commission Approves New Innovative, Inclusive Statewide Energy Efficiency Program**

*The new program will help households, including low-to-moderate income residents, access much-needed energy efficiency upgrades to see overall utility savings.*

**RALEIGH, N.C., September 28, 2023** — Recently, the [North Carolina Utilities Commission \(NCUC\) issued an order](#) approving the statewide rollout of an innovative energy efficiency program designed to help homes receive much-needed upgrades at low-to-no upfront costs and see monthly net savings on their utility bills. This milestone comes after years of program design and negotiation amongst regional stakeholders to develop a program in Duke Energy operating territory to replicate the success seen by other tariffed on-bill programs, such as [Roanoke Cooperative's Upgrade to \\$ave](#) in Northeastern North Carolina. Now that the NCUC has authorized the program, and that Duke Energy has filed the required modifications, the residential tariffed on-bill program is set to launch in the first quarter of 2024 and will be one of the first programs of its kind offered by an investor-owned utility in the country.

The North Carolina Sustainable Energy Association, Southern Environmental Law Center, Clean Energy Group and Southern Alliance for Clean Energy celebrate the news and commend the NCUC for its decision that is expected to serve thousands of residents across the state, including those who pay high proportions of their income on utility bills every month. Additionally, these groups celebrate the expansion of energy efficiency opportunities as a tool to cost-effectively meet the legislative mandate of 70% carbon emissions reduction in the electricity sector by 2030.

“This is a monumental decision by the North Carolina Utilities Commission – as it stands to potentially help thousands of families across North Carolina,” said Daniel Pate, Energy

Program Manager at the NC Sustainable Energy Association. “Today, we’re excited to finally see a program designed to address the barrier of the upfront costs of residential energy efficiency, while also cost-effectively helping the utility meet its carbon reduction goals – this is a win-win for ratepayers and the state alike.”

“We applaud the Commission’s approval of Duke Energy’s new tariffed on-bill program that will bring bill savings and improved comfort to a much larger segment of North Carolinians,” said David Neal, senior attorney at the Southern Environmental Law Center. “For too long, far too many of Duke’s customers were effectively denied access to the benefits of existing rebates for efficient appliances, like high performance heat pumps, even though it would save them money on their utility bills. With this innovative new inclusive repayment program, the higher upfront costs will no longer be a barrier. We expect the tariffed on-bill program to unlock significant energy efficiency savings, helping Duke to achieve its carbon reduction goals at a lower cost for all of us.”

"Tariffed on-bill programs have dramatically increased access to energy efficiency upgrades and demand-side management resources across the country in electric cooperative territories, but investor-owned utilities have been slow to adopt them," said Shelley Hudson Robbins, Project Director at Clean Energy Group. "Our organization applauds the North Carolina Utilities Commission for approving this program, and we applaud Duke Energy for being at the forefront on this issue and for utilizing a strong stakeholder process to develop a program that will address both equity and carbon emissions at the same time."

"Not only do tariffed on-bill programs for home efficiency upgrades create instant savings on a family’s monthly energy bill, customers can also leverage the program with additional rebate incentive dollars to lower the project costs even further," said Forest Bradley-Wright, Energy Efficiency Director at the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy.

Tariffed on-bill is an innovative utility program that allows residents to receive home upgrades at low-to-no upfront cost, while allowing them to pay for the upgrades over time on their energy bill without the bill amount increasing. No loan is involved and upgrades are paid for up front by the utility. Costs are then recovered through a monthly charge that is less than the estimated savings. The agreement of a tariffed on-bill program between Duke Energy and regional stakeholders was the result of years of collaboration to create a program that addresses key barriers to residential energy efficiency. The Tariffed On-Bill Working Group was a collaboration of more than 40 stakeholders that worked with Duke over the course of 18 months to help design the program leading up to the filing of the proposed program in September 2022. For more information on tariffed on-bill programs, visit the [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\) website](#) and [this resource](#) from the National Association of Regulatory Utility

Commissioners (NARUC).

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### **About the North Carolina Sustainable Energy Association**

The North Carolina Sustainable Energy Association (NCSEA) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that drives public policy and market development for clean energy. Our work enables clean energy jobs, economic opportunities, and affordable energy options for North Carolinians. Learn more about NCSEA, our mission, and vision at [www.energync.org](http://www.energync.org).

### **About the Southern Environmental Law Center**

The Southern Environmental Law Center is one of the nation's most powerful defenders of the environment, rooted in the South. With a long track record, SELC takes on the toughest environmental challenges in court, in government, and in our communities to protect our region's air, water, climate, wildlife, lands, and people. Nonprofit and nonpartisan, the organization has a staff of 200, including more than 100 attorneys, and is headquartered in Charlottesville, Va., with offices in Asheville, Atlanta, Birmingham, Chapel Hill, Charleston, Nashville, Richmond, and Washington, D.C. [southernenvironment.org](http://southernenvironment.org).

### **About Clean Energy Group**

Clean Energy Group (CEG) is a leading national nonprofit advocacy organization focused on accelerating an equitable and inclusive transition to a resilient, sustainable, clean energy future. CEG works at the forefront of energy innovation to address the urgency of the climate crisis while strengthening historically marginalized communities through enabling greater access to and ownership of clean energy technologies. Founded in 1998, CEG has been a thought leader on effective climate and clean energy strategies for more than two decades, filling a critical resource gap by advancing disruptive energy initiatives and serving as a trusted source of technical expertise and independent analysis in support of communities, nonprofit advocates, and government leaders working on the frontlines of climate change. [www.cleanegroup.org](http://www.cleanegroup.org)

### **About the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy**

Since 1985, the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy has worked to promote responsible and equitable energy choices to ensure clean, safe, and healthy communities throughout the Southeast. Learn more at [www.cleanenergy.org](http://www.cleanenergy.org).