



---

## MEDIA RELEASE

[www.WiseEnergyForVirginia.org](http://www.WiseEnergyForVirginia.org)

---

**May 8, 2008**

Southern Appalachian Mountain Stewards	Kathy Selvage	(276) 565-1083
Appalachian Voices	Tom Cormons	(434) 293-6373
Sierra Club, Virginia Chapter	Glen Besa	(804) 225-9113
Chesapeake Climate Action Network	Steve Calos	(804) 767-8983
Southern Environmental Law Center	Cale Jaffe	(434) 977-4090

### ***Clean energy advocates petition Dominion Power to call off its dirty coal plant, invest in clean energy***

Citizens present the company with a "mile-long" petition

**Richmond** – Citizens from Wise County, where Dominion Power proposes building a controversial coal-fired power plant, and from across Virginia rallied in Richmond today to urge the company to drop the project and instead invest in energy efficiency and other clean sources of power.

Representatives of the Wise Energy for Virginia coalition presented Dominion with a mile-long ribbon of paper with more than 42,400 signatures of people opposed to the coal plant. Later today, a few of the power-plant opponents are heading to Chicago, where Dominion is holding its annual shareholder meeting tomorrow, to present the signatures to company executives.

The coalition launched its campaign at a press conference in Richmond in September, promising to gather enough signatures against the coal plant to fill a "mile-long" petition. Since then, they have held town meetings, aired radio spots, handed out leaflets at events and door-to-door, sent postcards and emails, and utilized blogs and social networking websites to get their message out.

"Today, we are here in Richmond again to celebrate the thousands of great Virginians from all across this Commonwealth who have signed in opposition and to deliver a loud, crystal clear message to Dominion," said Kathy Selvage, a Wise County native and co-founder of the Southern Appalachian Mountain Stewards.

The lunchtime rally in Kanawha Plaza drew more than 100 people, who were given green bandanas to wear in a show of unity. The organizers draped the petition – in 53 rolls of 100 feet – around the park while two Virginia bands played folk and bluegrass music. After a brief press conference, Selvage and other members of the coalition gathered up the petition and presented it to a Dominion representative.

"We are delivering this mile-long petition today, but we want to encourage more Virginians to sign up, adding their voice to this movement to protect our mountains, our health and our future," said Tom Cormons with Appalachian Voices.

The proposed 585-megawatt plant is designed with conventional technology and would emit up to 5.4 million tons of global warming gases each year. At that level, the plant would increase by almost 15% Virginia's entire carbon output, putting Virginia ahead of California which has five times the population. The plant would also emit high levels of mercury, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides and particle dust.

It will also increase the destructive practice of mountaintop removal coal mining in Wise County and elsewhere in southwest Virginia. Moreover, Dominion's customers would have to foot the bill for the current \$1.8 billion price tag that will almost certainly increase as construction costs soar and carbon controls become mandatory in the near future.

"Of the \$1.8 billion cost to build this coal plant, not one penny will do anything to reduce the 5.4 million tons of global warming pollution it would emit every year – and Dominion's shareholders and customers will be left holding the bag," said Cale Jaffe, staff attorney with the Southern Environmental Law Center.

"Dominion spends millions and millions of dollars on political contributions, lobbyists, PR, and on misleading advertisements in an effort to convince the public that they are good stewards of Virginia's air, soil and water," said Steve Calos, Virginia director of Chesapeake Climate Action Network. "Let's get Dominion to spend much less money on their lobbying and advertising campaigns and more on conservation and clean energy."

"Our job must be to convince Governor Kaine and state officials that what is good for Dominion is not necessarily good for ratepayers or for the environment," said Glen Besa, director of the Virginia Chapter of the Sierra Club.

"Given the lack of government leadership in addressing climate change, the most important thing that the public can do is to help block the construction of new coal-fired power plants," said Jim Hansen, who heads NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies and is widely known as one of the first scientists to raise the warning of climate change. (He did not attend the rally.)

###

*The mission of the Wise Energy for Virginia Coalition is to stop Dominion Power's proposed coal-burning power plant in Wise County and turn Virginia toward a cleaner, sustainable energy future. [www.WiseEnergyForVirginia.org](http://www.WiseEnergyForVirginia.org)*