

# H. 5118:

## A utility power-grab that fast tracks risky, unreliable, and expensive fossil fuel megaprojects on the ratepayers' dime

### What you need to know

Dominion Energy and Santee Cooper are asking the South Carolina legislature to green-light huge new fossil fuel projects and then turn a blind eye. H. 5118 increases South Carolina's unstable reliance on fossil fuels over clean energy alternatives while putting South Carolina ratepayers, the environment, and clean energy future at risk.

- **H. 5118 requires state agencies to argue for federal eminent domain for natural gas pipelines—even if South Carolina residents would have their property taken or end up helping pay to export gas to other countries.**
- H. 5118 strips the review process for power plants and transmission lines, allowing Dominion and Santee Cooper to escape review for new projects—including the proposed new gas-fired plant on the Edisto River in Colleton County near Canadys.
- **H. 5118 effectively pre-approves multiple large gas-fired power plants that will cost ratepayers billions of dollars—even if cheaper alternatives are available.**
- H. 5118 allows utilities to charge ratepayers upfront for the licensing costs and potentially the capital costs of new small modular nuclear plants, even if they are abandoned before completion and never produce energy.
- **H. 5118 requires regulators to prioritize the word of the utility, regardless of accuracy, essentially allowing the industry to regulate itself.**
- The Consumer Advocate office was created to fight utility rate increases after the abandoned VC Summer nuclear project in 2017. H. 5118 transfers this office to the Office of Regulatory Staff, which is then required to instead support the financial integrity of the utility, even if the utility makes bad management decisions at the cost of ratepayers.
- H. 5118 restricts what the public can say to the state agency that regulates utilities so that they cannot address matters of general policy or the validity of the utility's plans to build billions of dollars of power plants. **In other words, ratepayers will be on the hook financially and without a voice to defend their land, pocketbooks, or energy future.**



COASTAL  
CONSERVATION  
LEAGUE

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## History Repeating: Canadys Gas-Fired Power Plant

- **Dominion Energy and Santee Cooper are pressing lawmakers to pass H. 5118, which would essentially direct the Public Service Commission (PSC)—our state’s energy regulator—to blindly approve a new large gas-fired plant on the Edisto River in Colleton County near Canadys.**
- **We’ve seen this before.** The failed VC Summer nuclear plant led to \$9 billion in wasted funds. South Carolinians already pay some of the highest energy bills in the country in part to this catastrophic failure. **We still don’t know how much this new megaproject will cost.**
- An independent study commissioned by state regulators raised concerns that the utilities are considering this gas-fired power plant as a foregone conclusion, without considering cleaner and cheaper alternatives.
- Gas-fired power plants rely on the super pollutant methane—which traps 84 times more heat in the atmosphere than carbon dioxide over 20 years.
- Clean energy technologies, like solar and battery storage, are cheaper and more reliable.
- **Utilities have yet to reveal the route for the gas pipeline or energy transmission lines.** H. 5118 forces our state agencies to fight for federal eminent domain, making it easier for utilities to uproot residents and take land for an unreliable project.
- **We don’t know the full scope of environmental fallout.** The proposed gas-fired plant will come with real land use, air quality, and water quality and quantity implications.

