



# State of North Carolina

**JOSH STEIN**  
GOVERNOR

August 26, 2025

## EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 23

### ESTABLISHING THE NORTH CAROLINA ENERGY POLICY TASK FORCE

**WHEREAS**, Article XIV, Section 5 of the North Carolina Constitution establishes that it is the policy of the state to conserve and protect its lands and waters for the benefit of all its people, that it is a proper function of the state to control and limit the pollution of our air and water, and that in every other appropriate way the state should preserve as a part of the common heritage of this state its forests, wetlands, estuaries, beaches, historical sites, open lands, and places of beauty; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2021, the General Assembly enacted Session Law 2021-165, "Energy Solutions for North Carolina;" and

**WHEREAS**, this bipartisan legislation directs the North Carolina Utilities Commission to ensure electric public utilities achieve carbon neutrality by 2050; and

**WHEREAS**, according to the 2024 North Carolina Greenhouse Gas Inventory, statewide net greenhouse gas emissions in 2020 were nearly 40% below 2005 levels; and

**WHEREAS**, on October 29, 2018, Governor Roy Cooper issued Executive Order No. 80, which called for North Carolina to transition to a clean energy economy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions and continues to guide state policy; and

**WHEREAS**, on June 9, 2021, Governor Roy Cooper issued Executive Order No. 218, which set goals for the development of offshore wind energy resources and laid a path for North Carolina's economic and clean energy future with offshore wind; and

**WHEREAS**, on January 7, 2022, Governor Roy Cooper issued Executive Order No. 246, which further advanced and continues to guide North Carolina's progress towards a clean energy economy; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2022, 2023, and 2024, Governor Roy Cooper issued Executive Order Nos. 266, 271, 292, and 305, which additionally advanced progress on addressing and responding to climate change; and

**WHEREAS**, North Carolina has emerged as a hub for the clean energy technology economy, with more than \$24 billion in investment since the second quarter of 2022, and more than 100,000 people now employed in the clean energy technology sector; and

**WHEREAS**, North Carolina, with its skilled workforce, top business climate, top research universities, excellent community college system, and enviable quality of life, is well-positioned to realize continued economic development success in clean energy technology; and

**WHEREAS**, to ensure continued economic development success, North Carolina must maintain an adequate, reliable, clean, and affordable electricity supply; and

**WHEREAS**, the emergence of artificial intelligence and the associated need to power data centers, increased loads from manufacturing and other heavy industry, growing population, and new sources of electricity demand have prompted new questions about how the state should maintain an adequate, reliable, affordable, and clean electricity supply; and

**WHEREAS**, the costs to power these new loads should not unfairly increase rates for ratepayers or leave North Carolinians responsible for the costs of stranded assets; and

**WHEREAS**, for the years 2017 through 2023, nearly two-thirds of the rise in electricity rates for most residential customers in North Carolina was due to increases in fuel costs; and

**WHEREAS**, deployment of additional clean energy and storage resources can reduce fuel costs, reduce the exposure of ratepayers to fuel price volatility, and save money for North Carolina ratepayers; and

**WHEREAS**, the 2020 North Carolina Climate Science Report found that the adverse impacts of climate change in North Carolina threaten human health, the state's economy, and our quality of life, including through more intense storms and flooding, dangerously high temperatures, droughts, rising sea levels and beach erosion, and harms to ecosystems and wildlife; and

**WHEREAS**, the 2020 North Carolina Climate Science Report further found that greenhouse gas emissions have caused climate change and that North Carolina's climate will experience significant changes if greenhouse gas concentrations continue to rise; and

**WHEREAS**, North Carolina has already experienced significant adverse impacts from climate change, including Hurricane Helene, for which the latest science has found that climate change made the massive cumulative amounts of rainfall associated with the storm's catastrophic damages approximately 70% more likely to occur; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Article III of the North Carolina Constitution and N.C. Gen. Stat. §§ 143A-4 and 143B-4, the Governor is the chief executive officer of the state and is responsible for formulating and administering the policies of the executive branch of state government; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 147-12, the Governor has the authority and the duty to supervise the official conduct of all executive and ministerial officers.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, pursuant to the authority vested in the undersigned as Governor by the Constitution and the laws of the State of North Carolina, **IT IS ORDERED**:

**Section 1. Establishment and Purpose.**

The North Carolina Energy Policy Task Force ("Task Force") is hereby established. The mission of the Task Force is to advise the Governor, the General Assembly, and other state policymakers and to develop recommendations for how to manage increasing electricity demand while maintaining adequate reliable, affordable, and clean electricity for North Carolina. The Task Force may advise and develop recommendations on other topics that arise during the conduct of its work that address current and future energy needs and goals or that promote economic development for North Carolina and the state's clean energy economy.

**Section 2. Membership.**

The Task Force shall include no more than thirty (30) members. All members shall be appointed by the Governor and shall serve at the Governor's pleasure. Task Force members shall serve a term of two (2) years and may be appointed to successive terms. Vacancies shall be filled by the Governor and members appointed to fill vacancies shall serve for the remainder of the unexpired term. The Governor shall appoint the chair or co-chairs from among the members of the Task Force. To the extent practicable, members should represent the geographic, economic, and

demographic diversity of North Carolina and include a range of relevant stakeholders and subject matter experts.

The Task Force members shall include, but not be limited to, representatives from the following:

- a. North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality
- b. North Carolina Department of Commerce
- c. North Carolina Office of the Attorney General
- d. North Carolina General Assembly
- e. North Carolina Utilities Commission
- f. North Carolina Utilities Commission Public Staff
- g. Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina
- h. North Carolina Electric Utilities, Public Power Providers, and Electric Cooperatives
- i. Energy Companies and Independent Power Producers
- j. Large Load Data Center Electricity Customers
- k. Large Load Industrial Electricity Customers
- l. Advocates for North Carolina Electricity Ratepayers
- m. Non-Governmental and Non-Profit Organizations
- n. North Carolina Public and Private Colleges and Universities

### **Section 3. Duties.**

The Task Force shall:

- a. Recommend policies to manage increasing electricity demand while maintaining affordability, reliability, and carbon emissions reductions.
- b. Develop additional recommendations based on the work of each subcommittee, as appropriate.
- c. Provide advice and recommendations on any other matter the Governor refers to the Task Force.

The Task Force shall consult with knowledgeable experts in the conduct of its work, as appropriate.

### **Section 4. Subcommittees.**

To fulfill its Duties, the Task Force shall establish the following subcommittees:

- a. Load Growth Subcommittee, to focus on, as appropriate:
  1. Developing estimates of near term and longer-term load growth forecasts under varying economic outlook scenarios.
  2. Assessing the implications of load growth and new large loads, including as related to existing resource capacity and reliability constraints, new resource needs, and transmission and distribution requirements.
  3. Identifying technological and policy solutions, including load flexibility and demand response strategies, to address the growing energy needs of data centers and heavy industry.
  4. Evaluating strategies for avoiding stranded assets while meeting growing electricity demand.
  5. Identifying recommendations for minimizing residential rate increases and maintaining affordability while managing rising electricity demand.
- b. Technical Advisory Subcommittee, to focus on, as appropriate:
  1. Advising the Office of the Governor on any commissioned modeling of North Carolina's electricity system.
  2. Developing testable hypotheses and questions that can inform state energy policy.
  3. Increasing transparency and public understanding of models used to inform energy policy, including their inputs and outputs, risks, and uncertainties.
  4. Providing quantitative and qualitative assessment results and supporting information to other subcommittees.



The chair(s) shall appoint individuals to subcommittees and designate a chair for each subcommittee. The Task Force may establish additional subcommittees and modify the work of existing subcommittees as necessary to carry out the Task Force's purpose and duties.

#### **Section 5. Meetings and Deliverables.**

The Task Force shall meet quarterly and at the call of the chair(s) or the Governor. A simple majority of the Task Force members shall constitute a quorum to transact business.

Subcommittees shall convene at a regular frequency, to be determined by the subcommittee chair upon the advice of its members, and at the call of the subcommittee chair. A simple majority of the subcommittee members shall constitute a quorum for the subcommittee to transact business.

The Task Force's meetings shall be governed by the North Carolina Open Meetings Laws, N.C. Gen. Stat. § 143-318.9, *et seq.*

The Task Force shall submit an annual report on or before February 15 describing Task Force activities, findings, and recommendations to the Governor, the General Assembly, the North Carolina Utilities Commission, the North Carolina Rural Electrification Authority, and the public.

#### **Section 6. Administration.**

The Task Force shall serve without compensation but may receive per diem allowance and reimbursement for travel and subsistence expenses in accordance with state law and Office of State Budget and Management policies and regulations.

The Task Force shall be staffed by the Office of the Governor and executive branch agencies, as appropriate.

#### **Section 7. Effective Date.**

This Executive Order is effective immediately and shall remain in effect until December 31, 2028, pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 147-16.2, or until repealed, replaced, or rescinded by another applicable Executive Order.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto signed my name and affixed the Great Seal of the State of North Carolina at the Capital in the City of Raleigh, this 26th day of August in the year of our Lord two thousand and twenty-five.

  
Josh Stein  
Governor

#### **ATTEST:**

  
Elaine F. Marshall  
Secretary of State

