

# Americans for Balanced Energy Choices Releases Statement in Support of Proposed Virginia City Coal-Fueled Power Plant

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ALEXANDRIA, Va., Feb. 11 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- The Department of Environmental Quality should approve Virginia Power's application for an air permit to build the Virginia City Hybrid Energy Center, says Joe Lucas, executive director of Americans for Balanced Energy Choices (ABEC).

"Our state needs clean, affordable and reliable electricity - and the community needs the stable, high-paying jobs that will improve the quality of life in Wise County," he said. "The plant also will double the community's economic output - and that means tax revenue and better services for area citizens."

Virginia residents have benefited from affordable electricity for many years, and one of the big reasons is because coal makes up over 40 percent of the state's energy mix keeping rates in the lower one-third nationally. However, electricity demand in the region is expected to more than double in the next 20 years making new base-load power generation essential.

The Virginia City Hybrid Energy Center received support from the Legislature and is incorporated into Virginia Governor Tim Kaine's "Virginia Energy Plan." It is designed to use a wide range of fuels available in the region, including Virginia coal, waste coal and renewable biomass (organic material from plants and animals).

"Three things make this plant good for Virginia and good for Wise County," Lucas added. "Using the reclaimed coal mine site adds value to local natural resources, and the power plant will also create significant jobs. Additionally, using waste coal will help clean up historical mine waste and prevent harmful runoff to nearby waterways like the Clinch River," Lucas said.

Clean coal technology is also playing a critical role at the proposed plant. The power station will be a model of modern environmental controls and among the cleanest fossil-fuel electric generation plants in the country. The power plant will use advanced circulating fluidized bed (CFB) technology - a flexible, proven clean coal technology that can burn run-of-the-mine coal, waste coal and as much as 20 percent renewable biomass. This advanced technology, combined with efficient emissions controls, will minimize the overall impact to air, water and land resources. Additionally, the company and experts

from Virginia Tech are exploring ways to store CO2 emissions from the plant in nearby unmineable coal seams.

"Each new power plant using advanced clean coal technologies moves forward the reality of near zero emissions from coal-fueled power plants," Lucas said. "That's good for Wise County, Virginia and the environment."

Americans for Balanced Energy Choices is a non-profit, non-partisan group that promotes a dialogue with recognized community leaders across the nation to discuss balancing America's growing demand for electricity with the need to protect the environment. ABEC counts more than 125,000 members nationwide with 5,000 members in Virginia. Because of its prominence in the nation's energy mix, electricity from coal is a major focus of the dialogue.