NC SUSTAINABLE ENERGY ASSOCIATION

# Clean Energy in the Southeast

## North Carolina Sustainable Energy Association's 2027 Continuing Legal Education Program

January 21, 2027 | 8:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M. | Brier Creek Country Club

**Course Goal:**

This course will explore energy matters currently at issue in the Southeast. This all-day continuing legal education program (CLE) will provide its attendees with legal and regulatory education on the ongoing transition to a cleaner energy mix and the related legal elements.

**Attendees will receive the following credits:**

North Carolina: **6.00 General CLE Hours**

**Course Objectives:**

- Provide attendees with an update on regulatory and legislative developments impacting clean energy in the Southeast
- Provide attendees current information that will be useful in the year ahead for their legal practices working on energy issues

Bios and photos of the speakers as well as the PowerPoint Slides will be made available through the NCSEA website with a special password we will provide to all attendees.

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8:00 – 8:45 A.M. **Networking & Conversation Over Breakfast**

8:45 – 8:55 A.M. **Welcome & Course Introduction**

- Goals of the course
- Agenda Overview

**Matt Abele**, Executive Director, North Carolina Sustainable Energy Association

9:00 – 10:00 A.M. **The Next Era of Programs to Address Customer Affordability**

Utilities, regulators, advocates, and policymakers are evaluating what comes next to address growing energy affordability challenges. This panel will explore emerging approaches to customer assistance, rate design, energy efficiency and weatherization, and bill-reduction programs from North Carolina and other states.

10:00 – 10:15 A.M. **Break**

10:15 – 11:15 A.M. **View from the Bench: Advice on Practicing Before Utilities Commissions**

The View from the Bench panel consists of current or former commissioners providing their perspectives about the changing energy landscape in the Southeast and what emerging topics they are learning about in the energy sector that most interest them. Commissioners will provide advice to attorneys on how to be most effective when practicing before a commission.

11:20 – 12:20 P.M. **IRPs Across the Southeast**

Utilities across the Southeast are planning large investments in a wide array of types of energy infrastructure to meet the needs of a dynamic grid. From resources reaching the end of their useful or economic lives, to emerging technologies and distributed resources, transmission and distribution grid needs, large-scale gas generation proposals, and more are being considered within foreseeable planning horizons. This panel will discuss how different utilities and regulatory authorities are approaching this challenge.

12:20 – 1:30 P.M **Lunch**

1:30 – 2:30 P.M. **Regional Approaches to Large Load Tariffs**

Many states around the country are deciding on how to accommodate large load growth. This panel will compare emerging approaches in different jurisdictions, examining issues such as cost allocation, infrastructure investment, customer commitments, and ratepayer protections. Attendees will gain practical insights into recent regulatory developments, key areas of stakeholder debate, and the implications for future utility planning and economic development.

**Nick Greene,** Associate Regulatory Counsel, NCSEA

2:35 – 3:35 P.M. **The Changing Utility Landscape - Mergers, Acquisitions & Impacts to Ratepayers**

The Southeast has recently seen a number of utility mergers either proposed or approved, including Duke Energy's utilities in the Carolinas and between Dominion Energy and NextEra Energy, with both Carolinas and Virginia considering the proposal at the state level. This panel will discuss the reasons underlying these mergers, the work ahead to effectuate them should they be approved, and how they may impact ratepayers moving forward.

**Ethan Blumenthal,** Senior Regulatory and Legal Counsel, NCSEA

3:35 – 3:50 P.M. **Break**

3:50 – 4:50 P.M. **Balancing Cost Recovery & Rising Rates**

The needs of the grid are expanding, requiring large scale utility investments on behalf of, and paid for, by ratepayers. At the same time, the cost of energy is of increasing concern to both homeowners and businesses as they look to balance their budgets in an inflationary environment. How utilities and regulators continue to meet the needs of the grid and recover their costs, while balancing the need for affordable rates is a critical question that this panel will discuss.

**Will Scott,** North Carolina Policy Director, Environmental Defense Fund

4:50 – 5:00 P.M. **Wrap Up and Conclusion**

**Nick Greene,** Associate Regulatory Counsel, NCSEA