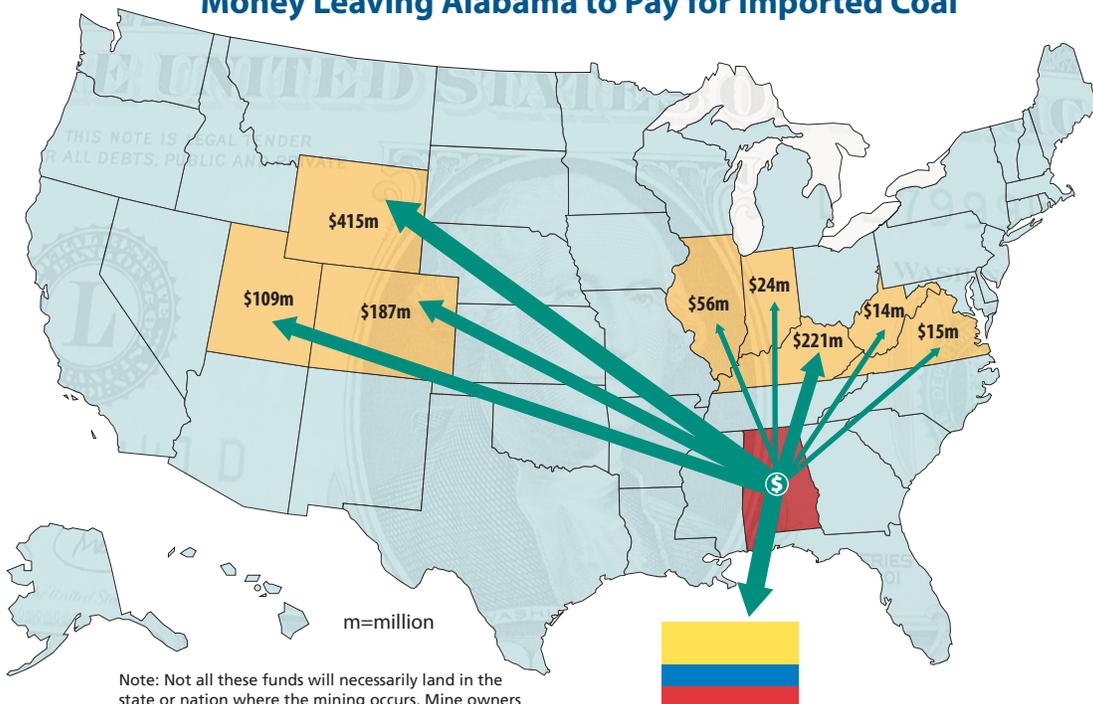


Alabama's Dependence on Imported Coal

In 2008, Alabama imported 79 percent of the coal it used. To pay for those imports, Alabama sent **\$1.53 billion** out of state, with the largest sums going to buy coal from Colombia and Wyoming. In-state mines not only supplied the rest of Alabama's coal but also exported coal worth \$141 million to other states. Alabama spent a net \$1.39 billion on imported coal.

Money Leaving Alabama to Pay for Imported Coal

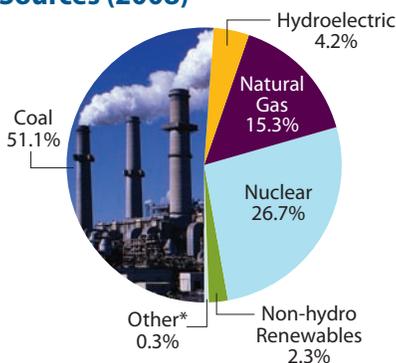


Compared with other states, Alabama:

- Spent the most on net imports per person: \$297
- Spent the most on net imports relative to gross state product: 0.82 percent
- Spent the most on international imports: \$489 million
- Spent the 6th most on net imports: \$1.39 billion
- Imported the 10th largest amount by net weight: 25.4 million tons

Note: Not all these funds will necessarily land in the state or nation where the mining occurs. Mine owners may divert the profits to parent companies in other locations, for example. Amounts also include the cost of transportation.

Alabama's Mix of Electricity Sources (2008)



Alabama relied on coal for more than half its in-state electricity generation, and imported 79 percent of that coal. The state produced 63 percent more electricity from all sources than retail customers bought. That suggests in-state coal plants may have exported some of their power.

* "Other" includes oil, municipal solid waste, tires, propane, or other manufactured and waste gases from fossil fuel.

Clean Energy Solutions Can Boost Alabama's Energy Independence

Investing in energy efficiency is one of the quickest and most affordable ways to replace coal-fired power while boosting the local economy. Yet Alabama spent just 49 cents per person on ratepayer-funded electricity efficiency programs in 2007—about 600 times less than it spent on imported coal.

Reducing the state's electricity use by 1 percent annually could save consumers \$50 million, and avoid the need to spend \$16.7 million on imported coal in the first year alone. Twenty-three states have adopted energy efficiency resource standards, most of which require utilities to achieve annual electricity savings of at least 1 percent (a target some states are already achieving). Leading states require annual cuts of 2 percent or more.

Alabama can also reduce its dependence on imported coal by tapping its own wealth of renewable energy resources, which could technically supply at least 56 percent of the state's 2008 power demand. Though economic and physical barriers may curb some of that potential, by-products from Alabama's forestry industry, and energy crops such as switchgrass, could be harvested in a sustainable manner for use in stand-alone power plants, or co-fired in plants that now burn only coal, replacing imported coal.

Alabama can also develop solar energy, small-scale hydropower, landfill gas, and geothermal energy—the latter co-produced at existing oil and gas wells. The state could spur deployment by adopting a renewable electricity standard, requiring utilities to gradually expand their use of renewable resources. Twenty-nine states and the District of Columbia have already adopted this effective and affordable policy.



Union of Concerned Scientists

Citizens and Scientists for Environmental Solutions

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This fact sheet is based on the findings of *Burning Coal, Burning Cash: Ranking the States That Import the Most Coal*, a report by the Union of Concerned Scientists. The fully referenced report, along with other state profiles, is available on the UCS website at www.ucsusa.org/burningcoalburningcash. The Union of Concerned Scientists is the leading science-based nonprofit working for a healthy environment and safer world.

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