

# Mississippi's Dependence on Imported Coal

Mississippi imported nearly three-quarters of the coal its power plants burned in 2008—some from as far away as Colombia and Wyoming. To pay for those imports, Mississippi sent **\$457 million** out of state.

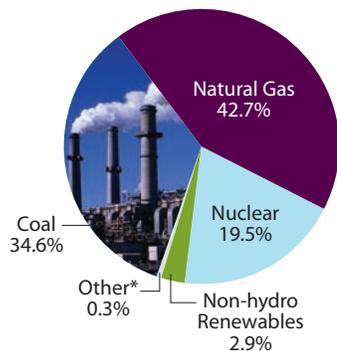
## Money Leaving Mississippi to Pay for Imported Coal



### Compared with other states, Mississippi:

- Spent the 4th most on international imports: \$145 million
- Spent the 5th most on net imports relative to gross state product: 0.50 percent
- Spent the 12th most on net imports per person: \$155

## Mississippi's Mix of Electricity Sources (2008)



Mississippi relies on coal for more than a third of its in-state electricity generation, and imports more than 70 percent of that coal.

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

## Clean Energy Solutions Can Boost Mississippi's Energy Independence

Investing in energy efficiency is one of the quickest and most affordable ways to replace coal-fired power while creating local jobs. Yet Mississippi spent just 11 cents per person on ratepayer-funded electricity efficiency programs in 2007—about 1,400 times less than the amount it spent per person on imported coal.

Reducing the state's electricity use by 1 percent annually could save consumers \$18 million, and avoid the need to send as much as \$13 million out of state 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 (which some states are already achieving). Leading states require annual cuts of 2 percent or more.

Mississippi can also reduce its dependence on imported coal by tapping its own wealth of renewable energy resources, which could technically supply more than 90 percent of the state's 2008 power demand. Though economic and physical barriers may curb some of that potential, by-products from Mississippi's forestry industry, and energy crops such as switchgrass, can be harvested in a sustainable manner for use in stand-alone power facilities, or co-fired in power plants that now burn only coal, replacing imported coal.

Mississippi could also develop solar energy, small-scale hydropower, and geothermal energy co-produced from existing oil and gas drilling locations. 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](http://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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