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## Donald Trump to end 'war on coal' with rule replacing Obama-era Clean Power Plan

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The Environmental Protection Agency moved Tuesday to upend the Obama administration's Clean Power Plan with a proposed rule that would shift authority over greenhouse-gas emissions from power plants to the states.

The Affordable Clean Energy Rule as proposed sets guidelines on emissions from coal-fired plants for states and replaces Clean Power Plan, the centerpiece of President Barack Obama's so-called "war on coal," which was frozen by the Supreme Court in 2016 and has never been implemented.

The EPA said that the proposed rule "empowers states, promotes energy independence, and facilitates economic growth and job creation."

"The ACE Rule would restore the rule of law and empower states to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and provide modern, reliable, and affordable energy for all Americans," said EPA acting administrator Andrew Wheeler. "Today's proposal provides the states and regulated community the certainty they need to continue environmental progress while fulfilling President Trump's goal of energy dominance."

The agency estimated that the benefit of subbing out the Obama-era rule with the ACE Rule would result in \$400 million in economic benefit by reducing the compliance burden, while potentially reducing 2030 carbon-dioxide emissions by 1.5 percent from projected levels, "the equivalent of taking 5.3 million cars off the road."

The reaction to the ACE Rule was swift. Environmental groups denounced the proposal, dubbing it "the dirty power plan" and "Trump's gift to coal barons," while the coal industry and free-market groups cheered the administration's long-anticipated move.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, from the coal-rich Commonwealth of Kentucky, hailed the move as the "first step" toward stopping the effort by Obama-era officials to "impose their radical agenda unilaterally."

"The Obama administration's so-called Clean Power Plan offered a typical story from that era," said Mr. McConnell said. "An innocent-seeming name. A pleasant-sounding objective. But

underneath, an intrusive regulatory regime—built not on effective policy, but on far-left ideology. That’s why I am so grateful that, today, the Trump administration is unveiling its plan to pare back this unfair, unworkable, and likely illegal policy.”

Hal Quinn, president of the National Mining Association, said the replacement rule “respects the infrastructure and economic realities that are unique to each state, allowing for state-driven solutions, as intended by the Clean Air Act, rather than top-down mandates.”

“Advancing the nation’s environmental protections does not have to come at the expense of American families, risking the reliability of our grid and sidestepping the law,” Mr. Quinn said. “The EPA and the Trump administration should be applauded for articulating a clear, legal proposal that considers the interests of all Americans.”

Meanwhile, Andrea McGimsey, Environment America’s senior director of global warming solutions, said the proposed rule would increase greenhouse-gas emissions by handing a lifeline to coal-fired plants and reducing the incentives for clean energy.

“That’s why we oppose President Trump’s Dirty Power Plan, which will increase carbon pollution from the burning of dangerous fossil fuels, accelerating the warming of the planet and changes in our climate,” she said. “At a time when communities across the U.S. are threatened by scorching temperatures, historic wildfires and air pollution, this move is sheer reckless folly, and it could have profound consequences.”

David Arkush, Public Citizen’s climate program director, called the proposal Mr. Trump’s “most terrible crime against humanity.”

But Brent Gardner, Americans for Prosperity chief government affairs officer, pointed out that U.S. carbon-dioxide emissions—including those from coal-burning plants—have been declining for years even without the Clean Power Plan.

The U.S. Energy Information Administration reported that the United States led the world in reducing carbon-dioxide emissions for the ninth time in 2017.

“The Clean Power Plan was all pain for American consumers and virtually no gain for the environment,” said Mr. Gardner. “Market-driven solutions are the most efficient and effective method of reducing emissions. The EPA’s revised Clean Power Plan will make energy more affordable to American consumers and is a welcome move from the Trump administration as part of their effort to reduce the massive regulatory footprint left by Obama’s EPA.”

Twenty-seven states sued the Trump administration to stop the Clean Power Plan after it was unveiled in 2015, arguing that the federal mandates on electricity generation usurped state authority.

The Clean Power Plan’s aim was to cut carbon pollution from the electricity grid by 32 percent by 2030 from 2005 levels, although the Cato Institute found that the regulations, using the EPA’s climate model, would have reduced global temperatures by less than two-hundredths of one degree Celsius by 2100.

Foes also argued that the plan would have come at a steep price to consumers. A Heritage Foundation analysis concluded that the regulations would have increased electricity prices by 13-20 percent and killed 400,000 manufacturing jobs.

The EPA plans to take comments for 60 days as well as hold a public hearing on the proposed rule following its publication in the Federal Register.