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Supreme Court Strikes Down EPA's Effort to Restrict Greenhouse-Gas Emissions from Power Plants

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The Supreme Court on Thursday issued a devastating ruling for the Biden administration and the Environmental Protection Agency's efforts to restrict greenhouse-gas emissions from power plants.

It is a decision that could limit the authority of government agencies to address major policy questions without congressional approval for years to come. The vote was 6 to 3, with the court's three liberal justices in dissent.

The decision was in line with several Supreme Court decisions in recent years that dramatically restricted federal regulatory agencies.

The decision strikes down EPA regulations on the grounds that agencies had overstepped its power when developing regulations.

West Virginia led a coalition of Republican-leaning states and coal producers that asked the Supreme Court to weigh in and clarify the limits of the Environmental Protection Agency's authority, raising broader questions about how far the regulatory authority of federal agencies extends. The coalition said powerful and wide-reaching policies should come from Congress, not agency-level regulators.

The EPA rules were promulgated during the Obama administration and were "illustrative of an alarming trend whereby presidents turn to implied authority, typically in long-extant statutes, to achieve what Congress fails to do," the libertarian Cato Institute said in a legal brief.

"The case before the high court was unusual because it involved regulations put forth by the Obama administration that never went into effect and were replaced in 2019 under the Trump administration. At issue was the Clean Power Plan, an Obama-era set of rules devised by the EPA that sought to mandate a national shift away from coal to cleaner sources of power, including natural gas, wind and solar," **reported the WSJ.**