

P I T T S B U R G H

BUSINESS TIMES

Pennsylvania to host 'listening sessions' about EPA's Clean Power Plan

Matt Stroud
September 4, 2015

More than a dozen public meetings will be held in Pennsylvania over the next two months to hone the commonwealth's approach to cutting carbon emissions. A Pittsburgh meeting will be held at 6 p.m. on Sept. 21, on the fourth floor of Roberts Hall on the Carnegie Mellon University campus.

The meetings will be organized by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection as a way to accept public input during a two-month comment period on the federal Clean Power Plan. The Pittsburgh session is one of 14 around the state to take place between September and November.

"We want to hear from the people of Pennsylvania and all stakeholders as we prepare a Pennsylvania-centric plan to comply with the Clean Power Plan," said DEP Secretary John Quigley in an emailed statement. "Gov. Wolf is committed to making the Clean Power Plan work for Pennsylvania and these listening sessions will help meet that goal. We strongly believe we can reduce carbon emissions statewide and address climate change in fair and smart ways that take into account legitimate concerns of all parties."

President Obama and EPA announced the Clean Power Plan on Aug. 3 as a way to reduce carbon pollution from power plants.

The plan has received both praise and scorn around the country. In a column for The Hill on Wednesday, an adjunct scholar with the Cato Institute, Ned Mamula, called the plan unrealistic - - "incredibly ill-advised and poorly-timed, especially given the disparity between the perpetually underperforming 'renewable' energy sector and surging US natural gas production -- which is abundantly available for power generation and far cleaner than coal."

Also on Wednesday, Daniel Hochman and Luke Metzger -- respectively, a board member of Texas Physicians for Social Responsibility, and director of Environment Texas -- wrote in a column for the Houston Chronicle that the plan is "a victory for public health." The EPA changes are worth the stress they'll put on industry, the column read: "[W]e can -- and we must --

take steps now that put us closer to a trajectory to solve this problem for future generations," they wrote.

At the Pennsylvania DEP meeting sessions, you'll be able to weigh in, too.