

New EPA Rules Anything But Reasonable **By State Representative Mike Kuglitsch**

It's hard to understand how anyone can conclude reasonableness when evaluating President Obama's new plan to supposedly rein in carbon emissions. The so-called Clean Power Plan is poised to dramatically increase electricity costs in Wisconsin while doing little to nothing to actually reduce global greenhouse gas emissions.

Governor Walker has already made clear that he is going to fight to protect Wisconsin's economy and, thankfully, Attorney General Brad Schimel has been on the front lines of challenging this measure that may pose disastrous consequences for Wisconsin families and businesses.

The EPA's plan has faced particularly widespread opposition from some of the country's leading legal experts, including the president's former Harvard Law School professor Laurence Tribe. Critics contend the proposal not only tramples the letter of the law, but also sets a dangerous precedent for executive rulemaking, as the agency does not possess the authority to regulate carbon emissions under the Clean Air Act, precisely what these regulations seek to do.

Here in Wisconsin, the EPA's regulations will cripple our economy and commercial activity and leave many families struggling to afford the higher cost of electricity. Over half of our state's electricity is generated from coal, an abundant and low-cost resource that EPA's proposal effectively seeks to eradicate. Since lower electricity rates lead to a more sound economy, shifting away from coal and increasing our use of these other resources spells bad news for Wisconsinites, from corner offices to cul-de-sacs. The EPA's devastating policies will leave Wisconsin and this country economically hamstrung. It is estimated that Wisconsin alone could lose over 21,000 jobs by the time this new power plan is fully implemented.

It is estimated that under the EPA's plan, Wisconsin ratepayers will be left facing electricity rate increases as high as 17 percent. The Public Service Commission is estimating the proposal could cost \$13 billion over the next 15 years. For businesses, that means cutbacks, often in the form of shedding jobs or scaling back operations and output. With less affordable electricity, Wisconsin's manufacturing, agricultural and burgeoning technology industries that sustain our economy could be thrown into a tailspin. Families, especially the poor, will likewise be forced to make difficult decisions about their spending in order to afford their power bills each month, which may include sacrificing other vital needs just to keep the lights on.

President Obama is correct in saying that no one country can solve climate issues. Unfortunately, countries across the world will not be using the same costly standards that we use here. While the United States attempts to make microscopic environmental victories in the upcoming years, countries like China, India, and Mexico stand to benefit in the global market place. These countries will continue to add coal fired power plants to their fleets and import jobs out of the United States.

Critics' repeated warnings about these potential consequences have fallen on deaf ears in the Obama Administration. With divisive partisanship handicapping any meaningful effort to overturn these rules on Capitol Hill, it is up to individual states to lead the charge. Ordering states like ours to completely overhaul electricity production is in itself illegal; but doing so in the name of a political agenda, and with complete disregard for the impact it will have on hard-working Americans, is infuriating.

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