

## **New EPA Rules Impact Our State**

### **By Senator Terry Moulton**

There has been quite a bit of talk lately about President Obama's Clean Power Plan that he unveiled on August 3<sup>rd</sup>. The President's plan is designed to decrease carbon emissions by more than 30% in the next 15 years. While this is a federal issue, it does have an impact on Wisconsin, so I'd like to explain the plan, as well as the arguments for and against it for you.

The Clean Power Plan establishes national standards to limit carbon pollution for the first time in our nation's history. Currently, there are emissions standards for newly-built power plants, but these new standards are the first for existing power plants, the largest source of carbon emissions. The plan establishes pollution standards for power plants and each state will be required to design and implement their own plan to ensure that all power plants within the state meet the standards. Wisconsin will be required to reduce their emissions to 27 million tons of carbon dioxide, which is a 34% decrease from our emission levels in 2012.

Supporters of this plan believe that it is a public health and environmental necessity, stating that, among other things, the pollution caused by unclean power sources has directly caused the percentage of Americans with asthma to double in the past thirty years. Supporters also claim climate change resulting from this unclean power is causing extreme weather events like severe droughts, wildfires and heat waves. Supporters also contend that the plan will drive investment into clean energy, thereby saving families money on their energy bills.

Opponents of the Clean Power Plan are concerned about a government overreach and massive costs that states will be forced to pay. Additionally, many have argued that the plan's intended goals are unrealistic and cannot be attained in 15 years. The National Economic Research Associates have estimated the cost of this plan to be more than \$400 billion, which will cause significant damage to our slowly-recovering economy.

Sixteen states, including Wisconsin, have already filed suit against the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), asking them to halt implementation of the plan until it can be determined whether or not the plan is legal. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Kentucky) has stated that a Congressional Review may be undertaken to review this plan and possibly revise it.

As I mentioned before, the Clean Power Plan is a federally designed and implemented plan. As such, if you have any questions or comments, I encourage you to contact your federal legislators, whose name and phone numbers can be found by visiting [house.gov](http://house.gov) or [senate.gov](http://senate.gov) and entering your address, or by calling (202) 224-3121.

The environment will continue to be a contentious issue for years to come here in Wisconsin and across the globe. If you have questions or comments about any state-related environmental issues, or state issues not related to the environment, you can always contact me at [Sen.Moulton@legis.wisconsin.gov](mailto:Sen.Moulton@legis.wisconsin.gov) or (888) 437-9436.