

For Immediate Release

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PSC Members Applaud Rollback of EPA Carbon Regulations

Helena, Mont. – Members of the Montana Public Service Commission (PSC) issued the following statements today, commending EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt’s actions to repeal the Obama-era Clean Power Plan:

Even with repeal, impacts of Clean Power Plan remain:

“Administrator Pruitt took an important step today to unwind the disastrous legacy of the Clean Power Plan, but Consumers will continue to feel the impacts of this misguided policy for decades to come, said Chairman Brad Johnson, R-East Helena. “Utilities across the country have made resource planning decisions based on this regulation and in some cases a carbon-cost component is already baked into the rates customers pay for electricity. Those decisions can’t be easily undone and ratepayers will continue to suffer higher electricity prices as a result.”

Clean Power Plan was a power grab:

"The Clean Power Plan was EPA's attempt to create energy policy for states like Montana using an obscure provision of the federal Clean Air Act. That law was intended to give EPA authority to require upgrades to power plants. Instead, EPA reinterpreted the law in an attempt to rearrange the entire structure of the electric sector," said Vice-chairman Travis Kavulla, R-Great Falls.

"The Clean Power Plan was less about carbon emissions than it was about raw political power and one federal agency's desire to obtain it. Even those who believe something should be done about carbon emissions know that this was the wrong way to go about doing it," Kavulla said.

Clean Power Plan was all “pain” no “gain” for Montana:

“The EPA’s Clean Power Plan was all pain no gain for Montana,” said Commissioner Tony O’Donnell, R-Billings. “The draconian emission’s reductions specified in the plan would have created substantial hardship for Montana families in the form of higher electricity rates and lost

jobs without achieving any meaningful reduction in global CO2 levels. I applaud Administrator Pruitt for putting an end to this misguided and failed experiment.”

Rational debate on climate science is needed:

"Recent environmental policy has been too often driven by close-minded political correctness that shuts down healthy debate on the climate change question," said Commissioner Roger Koopman, R-Bozeman. "As a result, the EPA was about to take a wrecking ball to Montana's economy, based on dubious, unproven scientific claims."

"Pulling back the Clean Power Plan is exactly what we need right now, while we lower the emotions and decibel levels of this discussion," Koopman added. "In final analysis, we may discover that the altar upon which the previous administration was prepared to sacrifice our security and quality of life was grounded on fundamentally false assumptions about the sources and net effects of CO2."

Future for coal-fired generators remains uncertain:

"It's too early to tell what effect this decision will have on the market for coal power, but the Clean Power Plan was a major factor driving the accelerated closure of coal plants in the West," said Commissioner Bob Lake, R-Hamilton. "There are many challenges ahead for the coal industry, but this decision will ensure that generators of all fuel types have the opportunity to compete to serve customers without the thumb of the federal government on the scale."

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