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## Environmental Protection Agency announces plan to cut carbon emissions

On June 2, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a proposed rule, the Clean Power Plan, aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions from coal-fired power plants. The Clean Power Plan, which would be implemented through a state-federal partnership, would achieve carbon emission reductions of 30 percent in existing power plants by 2030.

The EPA, which is required by the Clean Air Act to regulate any substance defined as a pollutant, offers numerous suggestions for cutting carbon emissions in the proposal including using renewable energy sources such as wind and solar, switching from coal to natural gas, and participating in interstate emissions trading. The rule sets unique emissions reduction goals for each state that depend on current carbon usage and needs. Reduction rates for most states lie between 20 and 30 percent, but range higher for states that already demonstrate lower carbon emissions, such as Washington State.

Legislators on both sides of the aisle have started voicing their opinions on the rule. Governor Sam Brownback (R-KS) called the proposal a “war against middle America” that will increase energy costs. Governor Jerry Brown (D-CA) applauded the rule, saying it will spur development in cleaner energy technology. The EPA estimates the proposal will cost states a total of \$8.8 billion per year, but will lead to climate and health-related savings of between \$57 and \$93 billion by 2030.

States must submit their plans for meeting the regulations to the EPA by June 2016.

Sources: Environmental Protection Agency, E&E News

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