

Politics

ENERGY

EPA proposal forces power plants to slash nearly all emissions

Critics: Plans could jeopardize energy security, needs

By Ramsey Touchberry
The Washington Times

The Biden administration proposed new rules Thursday to drastically cut emissions from fossil fuel power plants, a major component of the president's climate change agenda to achieve a zero-emission electrical grid by 2035.

Top White House and administration officials say the move is two-fold: reducing climate-warming emissions and improving Americans' health through cleaner air.

"Our fundamental responsibility at EPA is to protect people's health and safeguard the environment," Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Michael Regan said. "And a key part of our role is ensuring that all people

in this country have clean air to breathe."

But critics say the stringent rules targeting natural gas- and coal-fired power plants — which account for roughly 60% of the country's electricity — could jeopardize U.S. energy security and fail to meet the nation's energy needs.

A Democrat has emerged as one of the fiercest critics of the proposal: Sen. Joe Manchin III of West Virginia. The Senate Energy Committee chairman has vowed to oppose all of Mr. Biden's future nominees for the EPA who require confirmation, a move that could cause headaches for the president with Democrats' one-seat majority in the chamber.

Under the rules, plants would be forced to implement costly carbon capture technology, switch to

renewables or shutter altogether if they fail to reduce or capture nearly all of their emissions by 2040.

"This administration is determined to advance its radical climate agenda and has made it clear they are hell-bent on doing everything in their power to regulate coal and gas-fueled power plants out of existence, no matter the cost to energy security and reliability," Mr. Manchin said. "I fear that this administration's commitment to their extreme ideology overshadows their responsibility to ensure long-lasting energy and economic security, and I will oppose all EPA nominees until they halt their government overreach."

Carbon capture, a little-used and expensive technology, takes carbon dioxide emissions and stores them so that they are not

released into the air. But states and industry groups say the cumbersome permitting process for new energy projects is causing the EPA to lag in greenlighting new construction of carbon capture technologies.

Mr. Regan conceded to reporters that the EPA's proposed rules, which will be open for public comment for the next two months and were issued under the Clean Air Act, will force some coal power plants to close because of the costs of reducing emissions. He suggested the onus is on states and power companies to use available technology to find a solution.

"What our analysis projects is that we will see some coal retirements. But the way this program is designed, this is really a decision that will be made company by company, state by state," Mr. Regan said. "We've created a system that gives a ton of flexibility so that the power sector can make

individual decisions based on available technology and the resources that they want to expand."

Democrats' tax and climate spending law from last year known as the Inflation Reduction Act included tax credits for plants that use carbon capture, hydrogen and other clean electricity incentives.

The rules are certain to draw legal challenges once enacted. The Supreme Court ruled last year in *West Virginia v. EPA* that the agency lacks broad congressional authority under the Clean Air Act to curb emissions from power plants industry-wide. The case prompted the latest rules that administration officials insist will survive the courts because they allow emissions reductions through carbon capture rather than explicitly forcing plants to adopt other energy sources.

West Virginia Sen. Shelley Moore Capito, the top Republican

on the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said she will attempt to scuttle the rules through a Congressional Review Act resolution that must receive a vote and only requires a simple majority to pass.

Wyoming Sen. John Barrasso, the top Republican on Mr. Manchin's Energy Committee, lambasted the proposed policy as overreach.

"The [Supreme] Court rightfully confirmed Congress, not the EPA, has the authority to create environmental policy," he said. "Nothing has changed since then to give the unelected and unaccountable bureaucrats at the EPA this authority."

White House Climate Adviser Ali Zaidi suggested plants could switch to hydrogen — which currently produces 6% of U.S. electricity — to comply. He emphasized that the "focus here is on tackling pollution."

CONGRESS

Senators call for reform on how information gets classified

By Guy Taylor
The Washington Times

Senators from both parties are pushing a package of bills that could overhaul how the federal government manages classified information following the alleged leak of intelligence documents by a 21-year-old National Guard airman.

The package of legislation announced Wednesday aims to improve the security classification system, prevent mishandling of classified information, promote better use of intelligence and enhance public trust, according to a group of lawmakers backing the bills.

"The government systematically over classifies too much information," said Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Chairman Mark R. Warner, Virginia Democrat. He co-sponsored the legislation with many other lawmakers, including Sens. John Cornyn and Jerry Moran, Republicans from Texas and Kansas, respectively, and Sen. Ron Wyden, Oregon Democrat.

"At the same time, we too often fail to protect the nation's most important secrets," Mr. Warner said in a press release, adding that "it is clear that our security classification system is badly in need of change."

The proposed legislation comes after the arrest in Massachusetts last month of Airman Jack Teixeira in connection with a massive leak of highly classified documents that rocked the U.S. national security community and triggered unease among American allies cited in some of the documents.

The case, which has been embarrassing for the U.S. government, was apparently sparked when the airman first class began posting top-secret internal Pentagon and intelligence material to an internet chat room for gamers he managed on a social media app.

It took months for the leaks to be noticed. However, by early April the materials created repercussions worldwide, including on the front lines of Ukraine and in U.S. embassies across Europe and Asia.

While Mr. Warner's press release did not explicitly mention those developments, the legislation is widely understood to be a reaction to the leak case.

"Given the explosion in digital records, the status quo is no longer tenable. We've got too many people with access to a system that is devoid of accountability and has grown increasingly byzantine, bureaucratic and outmoded," said Mr. Warner. "We need to protect our national security secrets and then declassify those secrets when protections are no longer necessary. It's time for Congress to take action and establish accountability."

Mr. Cornyn added that the proposed pair of bills "would modernize the process for classification, ensure the safety and security of what should be classified, and make the declassification process more efficient as we seek to strike the delicate balance between transparency and secrecy."

One of the bills is the Classification Reform Act of 2023, which would set a maximum period for classification at 25 years, letting only agency heads or the president extend classification protections beyond that duration. The legislation is also co-sponsored by Sens. Michael Bennet, Colorado Democrat, Bob Casey, Pennsylvania Democrat, Martin Heinrich, New Mexico Democrat, Angus King, Maine independent and Mike Rounds, South Dakota Republican.

The other bill — the Sensible Classification Act of 2023 — aims to streamline the processes for declassification, dedicate additional resources to the issue of declassification, invest in new technology to assist with classification reviews, and undertake an evaluation of existing security clearances and their justifications.

Turn the Tide of Veteran Suicide

It is patently unconstitutional for ANY state to make or enforce ANY law to extract ANY money from veteran benefits.

April 10th, 2023

From: Operation Firing For Effect, Forgotten Warriors Project, and VeteranHope.org

To: Members of Congress

Re: Legislative Action to deal with Predatory Embezzlement of Federal Funds

Dear Sir or Madam,

Our combined voices represent thousands of disabled veterans and we are speaking to you on behalf of millions of veteran families in hardship nationwide. It is our solemn duty to help you understand that thousands of veterans are dying every year by poverty and by suicide because they are illegally stripped of benefits by corrupt state officials and courts.

State legislatures, officials and courts are using 42 U.S.C. § 659 as a cover to generate revenues for state payroll via 42 U.S.C. § 658a *Incentive Payments to States* under Title IV-D *Child Support Enforcement*. This predatory fraud has cost the US Billions of dollars and thousands of veteran lives.

In *Rose v. Rose*, 481 U.S. 619 (1987) and *Traynor v. Turnage*, 485 U.S. 535 (1988), the Supreme Court described the chaos that would happen if Congress did not promptly establish Complete Federal Preemption on Title 38.

In a wall-to-wall bipartisan avalanche after *Rose* and *Traynor*, Congress passed the Veterans Judicial Review Act (VJRA) Pub. L. 100-687 (1988) making it clear that Title 38 is permanently and Totally Exempt from state jurisdiction, thereby exempt from 42 U.S.C. § 659 and Title IV-D.

Then, in 1996, when Congress merged the old 42 U.S.C. § 662 with § 659, they overlooked the fact that it is unconstitutional for any state to make or enforce any law to extract money from veteran benefits by assignment, or garnishment, or contempt, or jail, even for alimony or child support.

Veteran Benefits were NEVER intended for state employee payroll, and Section 659 has NO effect on Statutory Federal Preemption of state jurisdiction.

This is a matter of legislative housekeeping. We need you to solve this problem by amending 42 U.S.C. § 659 to say that VA benefits are exempt, and by repealing 658a to remove the financial motivation to commit predatory fraud.

The whole purpose of the VJRA was to make it clear that nobody has jurisdiction to extract money from benefits granted by the VA, and to give the veterans an opportunity for judicial review on appeal of claims denied by the VA.

The VJRA and 38 U.S.C. § 511 are the Supreme Law of the Land. Semantic babble taken out of context from *Rose v. Rose* is NOT.

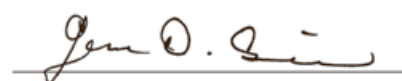
We stand firm on our oath to support and defend the Constitution from all enemies foreign and domestic. We stand fast on our commitment to support and defend our families to the best of our abilities and disabilities.

Please join us in Washington DC to discuss this issue and help your colleagues understand how amending § 659 and repealing § 658a will be the single best resolution that to save the most veteran lives, help the most veteran families, and protect our country from any further harm.

We will do our best to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,


Gene Simes


Simon Alvarado


Bob Terrien



Operation Firing For Effect
Gene Simes
1700 Waterford Road
Walworth, NY 14568
(315)986-7322
gdsusa@rochester.rr.com



Forgotten Warriors Project
Simon Alvarado
1448 Private Rd
Giddings, TX, 78942
(979) 716-8272
ForgottenWarriors1@gmail.com



VeteranHope.org
Bob Terrien
P.O. Box 7213
Tacoma, WA 98417
253-499-5805
Bob@VeteranHope.org