



PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Alexandra Dunn, (202) 266-4929 or adunn@ecos.org
Environmental Council of the States (ECOS)

States, Energy Experts Gather in D.C. July 31 to Discuss Proposed Power Plant Guidelines

Washington, DC – The Obama Administration’s proposed greenhouse gas (GHG) guidelines for existing power plants will be the subject of the sold out third annual State Environmental Protection (STEP) meeting being held by the Environmental Council of the States (ECOS) tomorrow, July 31, in the nation’s capital. “The proposal highlights states’ key role in environmental protection as well as the challenges they face,” said Dick Pedersen, ECOS President and Director of the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. “There is no time like now for over 35 state environmental agencies, experts from all sectors of our nation’s energy economy, and other thought leaders, to gather to discuss the implications of the proposed Clean Power Plan.” If finalized, states would prepare and implement plans to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from power plants within their borders, contributing to a nationwide reduction of such emissions by thirty percent by the year 2030.

The ECOS STEP meeting agenda features a variety of luminaries from the energy and environmental fields, including former Colorado Governor Bill Ritter, now Director for the Center for the New Energy Economy at Colorado State University; former EPA Administrator Carol M. Browner, member of the Leadership Council of Nuclear Matters; and Federal Energy Regulatory Commissioner Tony Clark. Other experts hail from federal agencies, major universities, diverse power sector companies and associations, and non-governmental organizations. All STEP discussions are led by state environmental commissioners. The luncheon keynote will be delivered by Collette Honorable, Chairman of the Board and President of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, and Chairman of the Arkansas Public Service Commission.

“The proposed guidelines require incredible focus on the wide variety of players that impact our nation’s energy portfolio and delivery system, as well as on the state-federal partnership,” added ECOS President Pedersen. “States play a central role in environmental protection and air quality advancement in the United States, and the STEP meeting provides a unique forum to discuss the proposal and our nation’s energy and environmental future. No matter where a state stands on climate change, this proposal will likely cause a redirection of existing, or investment of new, resources during challenging fiscal times,” Pedersen continued. “The proposal includes provisions that would give states needed flexibility – at the STEP meeting we’ll be exploring additional flexibilities and approaches that can work, as well as short and long-term actions.”

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is accepting comments on the proposal through October 16, 2014. EPA plans to issue a final guideline by June 2015, and states will be expected to submit full or preliminary plans to EPA for approval in 2016. Under the proposal, EPA could prepare and impose plans in states that over time do not submit approvable plans – a matter of some discussion among states.

ECOS is the national nonprofit, nonpartisan association of state and territorial environmental commissioners. Press should contact ECOS at the number/e-mail above immediately if attendance is desired.