



PRESS RELEASE

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

States Front and Center on Proposed Power Plant Guidelines

Washington, DC – The Obama Administration’s newly proposed greenhouse gas (GHG) guidelines for existing power plants highlight states’ key role in environmental protection as well as the challenges they face. If the President’s Clean Power Plan is 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 proposed guidelines require a laser-like focus on the state-federal partnership,” said Dick Pedersen, President of the Environmental Council of the States (ECOS) and Director of the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. “States play a central role in environmental protection and air quality advancement in the United States, and the Clean Air Act provisions underlying the proposal recognize the primacy of state agencies.”

State environmental leaders from across the country and the political spectrum are considering how to respond to the proposal, and how to plan future actions if it is finalized and withstands anticipated legal challenges. Once published in the *Federal Register*, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will accept comments on the proposal for 120 days. EPA will 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.

State agency heads will gather in Washington, DC on July 31 at ECOS’ State Environmental Protection (STEP) meeting to discuss the proposal with issue experts, thought leaders, and federal officials. “No matter where a state stands on climate change, this proposal sets out a heavy lift for states, which already face extensive responsibilities and limited resources,” Pedersen continued. “While the proposal includes provisions that would give states needed flexibility, states will be evaluating how additional flexibility can be added.”

The type and age of power plants and their fuel mix and customer base differ significantly from state to state. States also vary widely in their positions on climate change, greenhouse gas reductions, and on the proposal in particular, as well as in the actions they have taken to date related to climate change. In Pedersen’s view, the Administration “must continue to work with states throughout the public process to ensure this proposal, if and when finalized, allows states to address their unique situations while advancing environmental protection, electric reliability, and economic growth.”

Registration information for the ECOS July 31 STEP “Planning for CO2 Reductions under 111(d)” meeting is available at <http://www.ecos.org/section/events/?id=4925>.

ECOS is the national nonprofit, nonpartisan association of state and territorial environmental commissioners. Press should contact ECOS at least two weeks prior to the event to arrange complimentary attendance.