

House Stands Up for Affordable Electricity by Approving the Bipartisan Ratepayer Protection Act

June 24, 2015

WASHINGTON, DC – The U.S. House of Representatives today approved [H.R. 2042, the Ratepayer Protection Act](#), by a bipartisan vote of 247-180. The Ratepayer Protection Act was introduced by Energy and Power Subcommittee Chairman Ed Whitfield (R-KY), Rep. Sanford Bishop (D-GA), Rep. Morgan Griffith (R-VA), and Rep. Collin Peterson (D-MN).

Based on a rarely invoked provision of the Clean Air Act, section 111(d), the EPA is seeking to set mandatory carbon dioxide (CO₂) “goals” for each state’s electricity system. The EPA seeks to fundamentally change how electricity is generated, distributed, and consumed in the United States. States would be required to submit complex plans to EPA in 2016, and begin meeting interim goals in 2020, with a final goal of 2030. There are significant economic costs associated with the pending rule and some estimate that the costs could range from [\\$366 billion to \\$479 billion](#) over the period of 2017-2031.

The Ratepayer Protection Act would protect families and businesses from significant electricity rate increases or reduced electric reliability that may result from EPA’s pending regulations for existing power plants, commonly referred to as the ‘Clean Power Plan.’ The legislation would allow for the completion of judicial review of any final rule before requiring states to comply, and states could not be forced to implement a state or federal plan if its governor finds a significant adverse effect on rates or reliability.

Chairman Whitfield said, “EPA’s power grab is a bad deal for the American economy, businesses, and ratepayers. The president’s own EPA estimates that its proposed rule would cost tens of billions of dollars and would be unworkable for many states. At a time when our economy is still recovering, regulations that will raise the price of energy, especially on the most vulnerable in this country, will be devastating. My legislation is simply a safeguard to protect ratepayers and electric reliability across the country and I’m honored that it passed the House today.”

Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Fred Upton (R-MI) concluded, “Folks in Michigan could face a [12 percent increase](#) in electricity prices under the EPA’s proposal and the costs of this proposed rule would fall disproportionately on the most vulnerable. The Ratepayer Protection Act is a thoughtful and straightforward answer to the potential rate shocks that could occur because of the EPA’s proposed rule. Regulatory overreach has defined this administration and it’s time we stood up to protect affordable energy.” Legal experts have also sounded the alarm on the administration’s plan. At a March subcommittee hearing, Laurence Tribe, noted legal expert and professor at Harvard Law School, criticized EPA’s plan for its blatant disregard of the Constitution, arguing that EPA “lacks the statutory and Constitutional authority to adopt its plan” and compared EPA’s overreach to “burning the Constitution.”

Click [here](#) to view the 200 organizations that support H.R. 2042.

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- See more at: <http://energycommerce.house.gov/press-release/house-stands-affordable-electricity-approving-bipartisan-ratepayer-protection-act#sthash.uWFgTycL.dpuf>