

ML Strategies' Energy & Environment Update: Week of 6/09/2014

June 10, 2014 | | By David Leiter

We shared with you last week details of the Environmental Protection Agency's June 2 proposed CO2 standards for existing power plants, as well as a broad set of initial reactions. Over the next few weeks, we will dive into some of the particulars of the complex rule. In the wake of the proposal's release, members of Congress, the electric utility industry, environmental and public health organizations, state and federal government agencies, and others have begun to prepare more lengthy analyses of the rule and its impacts. While they work on technical comments, we will look this week at some of the first studies. In subsequent weeks, we will address specific aspects of the rule.

Forty-one Republican senators, led by Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (D-KY) and Senate Environment and Public Works Committee Ranking Member David Vitter (D-LA), urged President Obama June 3 to withdraw the proposed rule, while senior White House officials strategized with Senate Democrats over how to defend the rule. White House Chief of Staff Denis McDonough and senior counselor John Podesta briefed Senate Democrats June 3 on the proposed regulations, and made themselves available to senators for more detailed meetings as well. As promised, Senator McConnell wasted no time in introducing legislation (S. 2414) to effectively block the agency's ability to issue CO2 regulations without first certifying that so doing would not harm the economy or raise energy prices. He called for Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) to immediately schedule a vote on the Coal Country Protection Act, and began the day June 4 with a failed procedural move aimed at forcing the chamber to take up his bill. Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV) said last week that he would prefer to have a vote on his legislation (S. 1905), which would prohibit regulations on existing power plants until Congress authorizes them and carbon capture and storage technologies have been successfully demonstrated at six sites for a year. The House cleared a companion bill March 6. Senator James Inhofe (R-OK) vowed to force a vote to overturn the limits, but opponents of the rule will have to wait until it is finalized next year before voting to disapprove the rule using fast-track procedures provided by the 1996 Congressional Review Act. Senator McConnell filed a similar resolution targeting an agency proposal that would limit CO2 emissions from future power plants, but the Government Accountability Office said May 29 that that the law's expedited procedures only apply to regulations in their final form.

The weekly *Energy & Environment Update* from ML Strategies provides an overview of what's happening on and off Capitol Hill and around the world that may impact energy and environmental policies and industry players. [Read the Update here.](#)

Authors

David Leiter