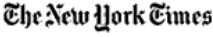



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Lawmakers From Coal States Seek to Delay Emission Limits

By [JOHN M. BRODER](#)
Published: March 4, 2010

WASHINGTON — Coal-country lawmakers moved Thursday to impose a two-year moratorium on potential federal regulation of carbon dioxide and other climate-altering gases.

Senator [John D. Rockefeller IV](#), Democrat of West Virginia, said the [Environmental Protection Agency](#) should refrain from issuing any new rules on greenhouse gas emissions from power plants and other major stationary sources for two years to allow Congress to pass comprehensive legislation on energy and [climate change](#).

Representatives Alan B. Mollohan and Nick J. Rahall II of West Virginia and Rick Boucher of Virginia, also Democrats, introduced a similar bill in the House.

The moves are the latest effort by members of both parties in Congress to slow or halt carbon regulation by the administration. Separate bills are before both houses that would essentially prevent the E.P.A. from issuing any greenhouse gas regulations.

[Lisa P. Jackson](#), the agency's administrator, wrote Mr. Rockefeller and seven other Democratic senators last week outlining her timetable for such regulation. She said that limits on carbon dioxide pollution from vehicles would be issued this year under an agreement negotiated last year with major automakers.

Limits for large coal-burning power plants and industrial facilities would be phased in beginning in 2011, with no restrictions on smaller sources until 2016.

But that timetable is apparently too fast for Mr. Rockefeller and other representatives of coal-producing regions.

"This is a positive change and good progress," Mr. Rockefeller said, referring to Ms. Jackson's timetable, "but I am concerned it may not be enough time. We must set this delay in stone and give Congress enough time to consider a comprehensive energy bill to develop the clean coal technologies we need."

He added that decisions with such a broad impact on the nation's economy and energy future should be made by elected representatives, not bureaucrats.

The E.P.A. said it was studying the Rockefeller proposal but that it was not as dismaying as the measure introduced by Senator Lisa Murkowski, Republican of Alaska, and several others that would ban any regulation of carbon dioxide, including emissions from vehicles.

"It is important to note that Senator Rockefeller's bill, unlike Senator Murkowski's resolution, does not attempt to overturn or deny the scientific fact that unchecked greenhouse gas pollution threatens the well-being of the American people," said Adora Andy, an E.P.A. spokeswoman, "nor would it threaten the historic clean cars program

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announced by the Obama administration last year.”

The agency’s proposed regulations are opposed not only by coal companies and their customers but also by a wide range of American industries that fear that new rules will impose huge costs and make it difficult for American manufacturers to compete with goods from countries without carbon dioxide limits.

Environmental groups generally support the prospect of E.P.A. regulation as a prod to Congress to impose carbon restrictions across the economy. Several issued statements opposing Mr. Rockefeller’s measure.

A version of this article appeared in print on March 5, 2010, on page A16 of the New York edition.

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