

JEFFERSON, Pa., Sept. 16, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- The federal government's regulatory policies regarding carbon emissions will have a detrimental impact on Pennsylvania in terms of lost jobs and higher electricity prices, the Pennsylvania Coal Alliance told the House Democratic Policy Committee today.

George Ellis, Coal Alliance president, speaking in Pennsylvania's largest coal-producing county, said recent policies of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency are causing the premature closing of coal plants.

"The added compliance costs for recently adopted EPA policies and the regulatory uncertainty about the scope and level of future regulations have led some generators to rethink their fuel options," Ellis said.

Plants at Hatfield's Ferry, Mitchell, Elrama, Armstrong, New Castle, Portland, Titus and Shawville are designated for retirement. Together they represent more than 5,000 megawatts of electricity, or about ten percent of Pennsylvania's currently installed electric capacity.

The impact of these plant closings will be felt in their communities and the surrounding region, not just in terms of the plant jobs lost but throughout the other sectors of the economy as well, he said. Additionally, removing such a significant proportion of coal-fueled electricity from the energy portfolio will mean higher electricity prices and will threaten the stability of the power grid.

"The bottom line is you cannot simply jettison coal from our generation mix and still expect to have an affordable and reliable source of electricity to help foster a growing economy," Ellis said. "There are environmental and pricing challenges inherent with using any existing energy source. If we shy away from using any of our domestic resources merely because they post

## PA Coal Alliance: Federal emissions policies hurt Pennsylvania's economy

Written by Australian Business

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challenges, we will find ourselves with fewer, more expensive and less reliable energy options."

Ellis noted that Pennsylvania is the nation's fourth-largest coal producer by volume and contributes about \$7 billion to the state's economy. The industry supports 41,500 direct and indirect jobs in the state, with a payroll of more than \$2.2 billion per year.

He also noted that technological advancements are paying off with significant reductions in various emissions, and that mining safety is at a higher level than at any point in history.

Coal also is the nation's largest indigenous fossil fuel, and utilizing it reduces the need for foreign energy sources, he said.

Greene County's economy, in particular, benefits significantly from the six major mines located there. They produce 65 percent of Pennsylvania's coal and represent half of the state's mining workforce. Three of the top four employers in Greene County are mining companies.

"The true path toward energy security and economic prosperity is a balanced energy policy that wisely utilizes all of our indigenous resources, including coal, through market-driven choices to satisfy demand," he said.

SOURCE Pennsylvania Coal Alliance