

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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March 28, 2017

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AG Balderas & Coalition of Attorneys General Joint Statement on President Trump's Executive Order Concerning the Clean Power Plan

Santa Fe, NM – New Mexico Attorney General Hector Balderas and attorneys general of California, Hawaii, Iowa, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, and the District of Columbia, the chief legal officers of the cities of Boulder (CO), New York City, Philadelphia, and of Broward County (FL), and the City of South Miami (FL) issued the following statement today in response to President Trump's executive order that he described as paving the way to eliminating the Clean Power Plan rule:

“We strongly oppose President Trump's executive order that seeks to dismantle the Clean Power Plan. Addressing our country's largest source of carbon pollution—existing fossil fuel-burning power plants—is both required under the Clean Air Act and essential to mitigating climate change's growing harm to our public health, environments, and economies. We won't hesitate to protect those we serve—including by aggressively opposing in court President Trump's actions that ignore both the law and the critical importance of confronting the very real threat of climate change.”

Background:

On December 29, 2016, a broad coalition of states and localities called on President-Elect Trump to continue the federal government's defense of the Clean Power Plan in a letter, urging him to reject “misguided advice” from a group of attorneys general led by West Virginia to discard the Clean Power Plan.

The Clean Power Plan is the culmination of a decade-long effort by partnering states and cities to require mandatory cuts in the emissions of climate change pollution from fossil fuel-burning power plants under the Clean Air Act. The Clean Power Plan, along with the companion rule applicable to new, modified, and reconstructed power plants, will control these emissions by setting limits on the amount of climate change pollution that power plants can emit. The rule for existing plants is expected to eliminate as much climate change pollution as is emitted by more than 160 million cars a year – or 70 percent of the nation's passenger cars.

EPA adopted the Clean Power Plan through a multi-year stakeholder process that drew heavily on the experience of states and utilities in reducing power plant greenhouse gas emissions. A number of states have already taken a leading role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions by moving forward with their own programs. These states recognize that, on such a crucial issue that is already costing taxpayers billions of dollars in storm response and other costs, state action alone will not be enough and strong federal actions like the Clean Power Plan are needed.

In November 2015, a coalition of 25 states, cities and counties, intervened in defense of the Plan against legal challenge in the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals. The court heard oral argument en banc for a full day in late September; a decision is expected soon.

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