

New Year for Coal

Date : December 29, 2016

This weekend, Americans from coast to coast will be saying au revoir, Auf wiedersehen, adiós and good bye to a tumultuous 2016 as we welcome in the New Year. And as we ring in 2017, let us take a moment to examine what we expect for affordable power next year and the years to come.

Looking back at this past November, after a historic and heated election cycle, Mr. Donald Trump was elected to be the 45th President of the United States along with a complementary Republican Congress. What this will definitively mean for coal as part of our nation's energy mix is anyone's guess, but by every indication, the future is bright.

[Throughout the campaign](#), Mr. Trump repeatedly said dismantling the previous administration's regulations and rulemaking would be a priority, and atop the list is President Obama's illegal Clean Power Plan. If implemented, the power plan would have: made coal-fired electricity cost-prohibitive, jeopardized our access to affordable power and caused electricity prices to skyrocket. [According to analysis from NERA Economic Consulting](#), the cost to comply with the regulation could have totaled nearly \$300 billion from 2022 to 2033 and would have caused double-digit electricity price increases in 41 states, with 28 states potentially facing peak year electricity price increases of at least 20 percent...*every year*.

When policy is implemented via executive order, [it can be erased via executive order](#). Fortunately, the signs point to Mr. Trump doing exactly that on energy policy.

[His campaign energy plan](#) specifically states the administration will "rescind all job-destroying Obama executive actions [and] will reduce and eliminate all barriers to responsible energy production," in addition to "unleash[ing] America's \$50 trillion in untapped shale, oil, and natural gas reserves, plus hundreds of years in clean coal reserves."

He has also [nominated](#) Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt for EPA Administrator, a staunch energy supporter in oil and gas-rich Oklahoma, who, [according to his own LinkedIn page](#), is "a leading advocate against the EPA's activist agenda." Mr. Pruitt has backed up his words with action. Throughout the legal fight to halt EPA's Power Plan, Mr. Pruitt has been a vocal opponent, [joining the coalition of state attorneys general suing over the plan](#).

Although nothing is certain, recent history and statements have shown promise that coal and coal-fired electricity will see an energy policy reversal that has hamstrung the industry for the last eight years. With that said, we are optimistic that affordable power will remain and will be a hallmark of American life in 2017 and beyond.