



NATIONAL COAL ADVISORY – APRIL 2014

NCC SPRING MEETING PROGRAM SET MAY 13-14, WASHINGTON, DC

Plans are being finalized for the NCC's Spring Full Council Meeting and 30th "Pearl" Anniversary Celebration in Washington, DC. All NCC members should by now have received an event registration form. If you haven't received yours, please let me know asap ~ jgellici@NCC1.org.

The schedule of events is as follows:

Tuesday, May 13th
At the Mandarin Oriental Hotel ~

1-2 pm
NCC Communications Committee

All NCC members are welcomed

2:15-3:30 pm
CAC Executive Roundtable Session
 CAC & Executive Committee Members Only

3:45-5:30 pm
Executive/Finance Committee Joint Meeting
 Committee Members Only

At the Sequoia Restaurant ~
On the banks of the Potomac River

NCC 30th Anniversary Celebration
 NCC Members & Guests
SequoiaWebsite
 Please note that pre-registration is required for attendance at the reception. RSVP to info@NCC1.org or 202-223-1191 ext 11.



Wednesday, May 14th
At the Mandarin Oriental Hotel ~

9 am – 12:30 pm
NCC Full Council Meeting
 NCC Members & Guests

12:30-1:30 pm
NCC Networking Lunch
 NCC Members & Guests

Full Council Meeting Program

KEYNOTE ADDRESS
The Honorable Dr. Julio Friedmann
 Deputy Asst. Secretary Clean Coal Office of Fossil Energy
 U.S. Department of Energy

Fred Palmer
 Chair NCC CPC & Sr Vice President Peabody Energy
 Presentation on NCC Study ~ Assessment of the Existing Coal Fleet

Janet Gellici
 EVP & COO, NCC
 NCC 30th Anniversary Video Presentation
 ~ Thanks Jeff Miller
 Luxottica Retail

Robert Hilton, Vice President
 Power Technologies Govt Affairs, ALSTOM Power
 Enhancing the Efficiency of the Existing U.S. Coal Fleet

Michael J. Monea, President,
 CCS Initiatives, SaskPower (invited)
 CCS Retrofit Technology ~ Boundary Dam Integrated CCS Demonstration Project

Dr. Kirk Johnson, Director,
 Smithsonian Natural History Museum
 Presentation on Coal's Representation in Natural History Museum's Renovation

We'll conclude with some NCC business items. Look forward to seeing you next month.

Hotel Reservation Deadline
April 15th, 2014

Mandarin Oriental Hotel
1330 Maryland Ave SW
Washington DC

\$305 single/double occupancy Reservations
202-787-6140
[On-line Reservations](#)

NCC LEADERSHIP

John Eaves, NCC Chair
 President & CEO, Arch Coal

Jeff Wallace, NCC Vice Chair
 Vice President, Southern Co

Fred Palmer, Coal Policy Chair
 Senior VP, Peabody Energy

Bill Brownell, Esquire
Vice Chair Coal Policy
 Chair, Hunton & Williams
Executive Committee
 Mike Durham, President & CEO
 ADA Environmental Solutions
 Joe Hopf
 VP Wholesale Origination
 PPL Energy Plus
 Clark Harrison, Sr. Mgr. Bus. Dev.
 CH2M Hill
 Chris Jenkins, VP Coal & Auto
 CSX Transportation
 Holly Krutka, Executive Editor
 Shenhua Science & Technology Research Institute
 John Long, COO,
 Connemara Ltd.
 Rich Lopriore, President
 PSEG Fossil LLC
 Mike Sorensen, Sr. Mgr. Fuel
 Tri-State G&T
 Kathy Walker, President
 Elm Street Resources
Ex Officio
 Joe Craft, III, President
 Alliance Coal
 Mike Mueller
 VP Energy Mgt. & Trading
 Ameren Missouri
 Georgia Nelson, CEO
 PTI Resources LLC
Finance
 CHAIR ~ Gregory Workman
 Director Fuels
 Dominion Resources
 Robert Bibb, PE
 Bibb Engineers, Architects
 Paul Gatzemeier, CBCC
 Kathy Walton, Principal
 The Basic Industries Group
Communications
 CHAIR ~ David Surber
 Environmental TV Journalist
 VICE CHAIR ~ Bill Bissett
 Kentucky Coal Association
NCC Staff
 Janet Gellici, EVP & COO
 Hiranthie Stanford,
 Member & Meetings Manager
 Legal Counsel ~ Hunton & Williams
NationalCoalCouncil.org
1730 M Street, NW, Ste. 907
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 223-1191

KEMPER WOWS!

An Engineering Marvel & A Focal Point of Discussion

The Guardian recently featured an article entitled "Can Kemper become the first US power plant to use 'clean coal'?" [The Guardian March 12, 2014](#)

In the article, reporter Suzanne Goldenberg addresses the many challenges and opportunities represented by the Southern Company project, ranging from the environmental benefits of the plant's CO2 emissions reduction capability to the staggering costs of the facility to EPA and the environmental communities' assertions that Kemper proves CCS/CCUS is commercially viable and/or adequately demonstrated. A sampling of the comments:

Randall Rush, Chief Engineer for the Kemper County Energy Facility noted in The Guardian article that "The carbon footprint is essentially the same or maybe even less than a natural gas plant that doesn't have carbon capture." [Rush is featured in a video overview of the Kemper project accessible via a link in The Guardian article.]

NCC member John Thompson, Director of the Fossil Transition Project at the Clean Air Task Force (CATF) was cited: "It would be pretty hard to argue that this technology does not exist when it is standing there on 55 acres and many many storeys towering above you." CATF is noted as one of the few environmental groups endorsing the technology.



Whatever your perspective is on the Kemper facility, you can't help but be awed by the magnitude of the undertaking. Last month, I had the good fortune to visit the Kemper County Energy Facility to view first-hand what a tremendous undertaking is underway in Kemper County, Mississippi. As noted in The Guardian article, Kemper is a 582 MW facility that's expected to annually burn 4m tones of lignite coal mined at North American Coal Corporation's Liberty Mine adjacent to the Kemper plant. We were treated to a tour of both the plant and the mine. Thank you to all the folks at Kemper/Southern Company and the Liberty Mine for a memorable tour of an awesome facility.



COAL RESOURCES

Department of Energy
www.doe.gov
[Office of Fossil Energy](#)

National Energy
 Technology Laboratory
www.netl.doe.gov
[Coal & Power Systems](#)

EIA Coal Data Browser
www.eia.gov/coal/data/browser

House Energy & Commerce
 Committee Budget Hearing
[DOE Fiscal Year 2015 Budget](#)

House Energy & Commerce
 Committee Budget Hearing
[EPA Fiscal Year 2015 Budget](#)

Can Coal Ever Be Clean?
[National Geographic April 2014](#)

Coal-fired Power Plant
 Operators Consider Emissions
 Compliance Strategies
[Energy Info Administration](#)

Science Space & Technology
 Committee, Joint Energy &
 Environment Subcommittees
 Hearing on Science of
 Capture & Storage:
 Understanding EPA's Carbon
 Rules
[Hearing March 12, 2014](#)

Cleaner and Cheaper: Using
 the CAA to Sharply Reduce
 Carbon Pollution from Existing
 Power Plants
[NRDC Issue Brief Update](#)

"Climate Change
 Reconsidered" Release Event
 April 8th & 9th Washington, DC
[Heartland Institute](#)

Gellici Speaking Engagements
[Virginia Coal & Energy
 Alliance](#)

Kingsport, TN ~ May 20, 2014
[Washington Coal Club](#)
 Washington DC ~ May 22 2014
[Clearwater Clean Coal](#)
 Clearwater, FL ~ June 2, 2014
[American Coal Council](#)
 Coal Q&A Webcast
 June 19, 2014
[Power Experts 2014](#)
 Chicago ~ June 17-18, 2014

National Coal Council
NationalCoalCouncil.org

THE BUSINESS AT HAND



Where's My NCC Appointment Letter? Part 3

**The key to everything is patience.
You get the chicken by hatching the egg,
not by smashing it.**

Arnold H. Glasgow

I'm a book person. When confronted with a challenge, I head to a bookstore. I've just started reading a book entitled "The Power of Patience: How This Old-Fashioned Virtue Can Improve Your Life" by M.J. Ryan. In the opening pages, Ryan points out how we're becoming increasingly expectant of wanting something and wanting it RIGHT NOW.

We don't like to wait for our computers to boot, for the grocery clerk to finish with the customer in front of us, or for our Amazon package to show up on our front step. In fact, we're often willing to "pay" for the option to go faster ~ HOV lanes, Amazon Prime, cable upgrades, TSA Pre-Screen lines.

Ryan points out a few amusing instances of the "faster faster faster" syndrome:

- The average doctor visit now lasts 8 minutes.
- A popular all-you-can-eat buffet in Tokyo charges by the minute – the faster you eat, the cheaper it is.
- Politicians currently take a mere 8.2 seconds to answer a question, regardless of the complexity of the topic.

I don't mean to make light of the fact that we're still waiting on our official appointment letters to be issued. But unfortunately, there's not much we can do that we're not already doing to expedite the process. We're in continual contact with our liaisons at DOE and they're doing their best to work our list through the system. Thank you to those folks!

In the meantime, I'll just continue to remind myself that patience is a virtue and I'll keep reading about how all this practice being patience is going to improve my life.

NCC BUSINESS ITEMS

Chair's Advisory Committee Adds Another New Member

**The List Continues to Grow!
Join the CAC Today!**

Welcome to **Ameren Missouri** as our newest Chair's Advisory Committee Member!

Membership in the Chair's Advisory Committee (CAC) is open to all levels of NCC members who contribute to the NCC above their baseline dues level for the Council.

CAC members participate in special events and activities, including NCC, Inc.-hosted Executive Roundtable Sessions in which CAC members meet in small group discussions with key energy industry stakeholders. These invitation-only Roundtables are hosted in conjunction with each biannual meeting of the NCC, Inc. in Washington, DC.

At our upcoming **Executive Roundtable Session on May 13th**, we'll be meeting with leadership from the **Institute for 21st Century Energy/U.S. Chamber of Commerce**. We'll be discussing recommendations from the Institute's recent report – "**Solutions for Securing America's Future: Energy Works for US.**" We'll also be discussing principal recommendations from the NCC's Existing Coal Fleet Study.

In addition to participation in the Executive Roundtable Session, CAC members receive special recognition at NCC events and in NCC publications. We invite you to join the following companies in their CAC support for NCC. Contact me for more information (jgellici@NCC1.org). It's not too late to join today and participate in our May 13th Executive Roundtable Session.

THANK YOU 2014 CAC MEMBERS!
**ADA-ES, Ameren Missouri, Arch Coal
Peabody Energy
PPL EnergyPlus, PSEG Fossil
& Southern Company**

NCC Existing Coal Fleet Study Update

The NCC Existing Coal Fleet study is well underway; we anticipate having it completed in time for membership approval at our May 14th Full Council Meeting. The initial draft of the study was sent out on March 11th for review by the Study Review Team, comprised of volunteers from the Coal Policy Committee, NCC membership and industry associates. Comments received are now being incorporated into a revised draft that will be sent out to the Review Team for another comment period April 7-11.

Following receipt of comments on the second draft, our **lead study author Doug Carter** will finalize text by April 30th and that version of the study will be distributed to all Coal Policy Committee members prior to their meeting in Nashville on May 6th chaired by **CPC Chair Fred Palmer**. If you would like details about the Nashville meeting, please contact me at jgellici@NCC1.org or 202-223-1191.

WHO KNEW?*

HBCU & DOE In Its 30th Year

In 1984, the Office of Fossil Energy undertook an effort to expand university participation in its research programs through the initiation of the Historically Black Colleges & Universities (HBCU) Education Training Program. The initiative is designed to expand learning opportunities for university students and increase collaborative efforts between the nation's minority students and the fossil fuel industry. Since its inception, the program has expanded to include Other Minority Institutions (OMI) as well.



The HBCU/OMI Program provides a mechanism for cooperative research among minority-focused institutions, the private sector and the Federal government. The Program aims to generate fresh ideas and tap unique talent, define applicable fundamental scientific principles and develop advanced concepts for generating new and improved technologies across the full spectrum of fossil energy R&D programs.

Since its inception, the Program has emphasized improving the energy and environmental capabilities of advanced coal, oil, gas and environmental technologies. A special university-only competition requires professors to conduct cutting-edge research with students who are pursuing advanced degrees in engineering, chemistry and other technical disciplines.

For more information on the HBCU/OMI program and award winners for 2013 ~ [HBCU & OMI 2013 Award Winners](#)



*A regularly featured column on industry & university initiatives in support of clean coal technology development & commercialization.

WELCOME HIRANTHIE STANFORD NCC MEMBERSHIP & MEETINGS MANAGER



The National Coal Council is pleased to welcome **Hiranthie Stanford** as our new Membership and Meetings Manager. Hiranthie has 10 years' experience in meetings management and membership relations with the American Subcontractors Association, American Seed Trade Association and the Epilepsy Foundation. Her prior responsibilities included planning major events domestically and internationally, successfully implementing strategies for increasing member participation in conferences, soliciting event sponsorships and exhibitors, developing and implementing plans for recruiting and retaining members, preparing budgets and financial reports, developing promotional materials, editing publications, and supervising administrative staff.

Hiranthie is a member of the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) and earned a BS in Business Administration from Bowie State University in Maryland. Hiranthie is a take-charge individual with strong organization, multi-tasking and computer skills. Hiranthie lights up the room with her outgoing personality and has great interpersonal skills. You can welcome her at hstanford@NCC1.org. Welcome aboard, Hiranthie!

NCC MEMBER FOCUS

Association managers adore members who actively engage in their organizations ~ those members who attend most every meeting, volunteer to serve on committees, ask intelligent questions of guest speakers, agree to chair association programs. We like it even more when they do all of these things with ease and grace and patience. Sy Ali is that member and all members of the NCC benefit from his membership.

Sy Ali has served as a member of the National Coal Council since the late 1980s. As a member of the NCC's Coal Policy Committee, he has contributed copy for several reports and co-chaired an NCC report submitted to the Secretary of Energy.

Sy operates a consulting firm, Clean Energy Consulting. He recommends high efficiency, environmentally superior, power generation technologies to industry and government. He reviews proposals submitted for the ARPA, UTSR, SBIR/STTR programs. Sy also works as a consultant to the DOE's National Laboratories and serves as a board member for a coal to oil company and a solid oxide fuel cell company.

Sy's career includes having worked for leading organizations in various positions:

- GM/Rolls-Royce – Director, Advance Programs/Business Development on advanced gas turbines and jet engines. Projects included advanced turbine systems, solid oxide fuel cell/gas turbine hybrids and direct coal-fired gas turbines, for power generation. Sy has the unique experience of bringing a coal-fueled GM car to Washington from Indianapolis, providing the Deputy Secretary of Energy with an opportunity to drive it.
- Duke Energy (Public Service Indiana). Sy served as Executive Director promoting expanded use of coal for clean power generation, including the 3500 MW Gibson Power Station and the Wabash River Gasification plant.
- General Electric. Sy held various management positions, overseeing product initiatives such as jet engines for military and commercial aviation, nuclear, aerospace electronics and industrial power generation. He developed an early gasification product, which encouraged GE to enter into the gasification business.

Sy has presented testimony at various Congressional committee hearings, the US EPA, the DOE, and in Federal and State courts. He also testified before the European Commission, encouraging the EC's joint coordination with DOE energy projects.

Sy received a Ph.D. and has a professional engineer's license. He is a life member of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME), and an Associate Fellow of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics. At annual international gas turbine and aerospace conferences Sy regularly serves as session chair. He served as a member of the EPRI Advisory Committee and as a member of the State Corporation for Science and Technology for Indiana's governors. He has received several patents for advanced work on jet engines and gas turbines.



SY ALI, Ph.D.
PRINCIPAL
CLEAN ENERGY
CONSULTING

SY.ALI@CLEANENERGYCONSULTING.COM

Clean Energy Consulting provides expertise in electric power, aerospace, life sciences, the environment and regulatory policy.

CEC assists business and engineering customers with:

- **Project management**
- **Project planning and business plan development**
- **Implementing energy and aerospace projects**
- **Design and development**
- **Protecting the environment**
- **Participating in regulatory policy development**

CEC's principal, Dr. Ali has over 25 years of professional and management experience in the fields of Energy, Aerospace, Electric Power Generation (distributed and central), Cogeneration (combined heat & power), Environment (multi-media pollutants control) and Regulatory Policy Development/Implementation.

CLEAN ENERGY
CONSULTING

7971 BLACK OAK DRIVE
PLAINFIELD, IN 46168
317-839-6617

**The National Coal Council
is proudly celebrating its
30th “Pearl” Anniversary**

Join the Celebration!

Please Join Us

May 13th, 2014 , 6-8 pm

**Sequoia Restaurant
3000 K Street NW
Washington, DC**

**RSVP Required by Friday, May 2nd
info@NCC1.org or 202-223-1191 ext. 11
Sorry we cannot accommodate walk-in attendees.**

RSVP TODAY! info@NCC1.org

Thank You Sponsors!

Alliance Coal

Peabody Energy

Arch Coal & PPL EnergyPlus

Tri-State Generation & Transmission

CSX Transportation

COAL CURRENTS

Todd H. Cunningham, Contributing Editor

A brief survey of leading coal industry stories of the past month. Highlighted underlined text links to the cited articles. Right click on highlighted text and select the "Open Hyperlink" option to view the cited article.

CLIMATE CHANGE

EPA Sends Draft Carbon Emissions Standards to White House for Review

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has sent draft carbon emissions standards for power plants that are now in operation – a major element of President Obama's climate change agenda – to the White House for review. According to *National Journal's Energy Edge*, the prospective standards were transmitted to the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) on March 31; while some major rules "languish" at OIRA for considerable amounts of time, the publication noted, the President has called for EPA to propose the rule by June 1, so such delay seems unlikely in this case. Meanwhile, Reuters reported that [regulators in some coal-dependent states have been meeting](#) with each other and with EPA officials to discuss the pending rules and exchange ideas. A Kentucky official told the news service that input from such states is a "counterweight to 'unrealistic' proposals from some environmental groups."

"Window Closing" for Action on Greenhouse Emissions, Report Cautions

A new report from the world's largest general scientific society warned that the effects of human emissions of heat-trapping gases are already being felt, that the ultimate consequences could be dire, and that the window to do something about it is closing," *The New York Times* reported. The language in the American Association for the Advancement of Science's document is "sharper, clearer and perhaps more accessible than anything the scientific community has put out to date," a *Times* column indicated. It added that although there is general agreement among climate scientists that human-caused climate change is happening, enormous questions remain. The report avoids any specific recommendations about responses, the newspaper said, but "makes clear that [lowering \[greenhouse gas\] emissions, by some means, is the only way to lower the risks.](#)" The association plans a broad outreach campaign to offer "accurate information in simple language," according to *The Times*.

Gallup Poll Suggests Public's Divide on Climate Change Will Continue

While 60% of Americans agree that most scientists believe global warming is occurring, and most report experiencing abnormal weather conditions recently, more than 40% say the seriousness of the issue is generally exaggerated in the news, Gallup indicated. Reporting on a poll conducted in early March, the company said that while most Americans believe global warming is taking place, most do not think it will seriously affect their way of life. The seriousness of the issue is viewed through "the all-too-familiar prism of political party affiliation, Gallup noted. This suggests [it will continue to divide Americans](#) rather than allow Congress to develop a bipartisan approach to address the issue, the pollster indicated. However, a column in *The Week* on differing opinions on the subject contended that "[the market--not government regulation--is far likelier to provide a solution to lowering carbon emissions](#), and thus mitigating climate change."

BY THE NUMBERS

Projected Retirements of U.S. Coal Plants Rising Rapidly, EIA Reports

Last year's projections for coal-fired power plant retirements "are already old news," the Energy Department's Energy Information Administration (EIA) reported. [The numbers are ramping up rapidly](#), the statistical unit said. Previewing its upcoming *Annual Energy Outlook 2014*, reported in *Natural Gas Intelligence*, EIA said that since November 2013, an additional 5.4 gigawatts (GW) of coal-fired capacity has been slated for retirement, all in the eastern third of the U.S. The document projects 60 GW of coal-fired plant retirements by 2020, greatly increasing the last year's projection of 40 GW, EIA indicated. About 90% of the retirements are scheduled to occur by 2016, the first year of enforcement of the new federal Mercury and Air Toxics Standards (MATS), which become effective in April 2015. The size of the plants to be retired during the next 10 years is increasing, the DOE unit said, averaging 145 megawatts (MW), compared with the 97 MW average size of units retired in 2010 through 2012.

Coal Currents (continued)

ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION

Carbon Emissions Standards

Won't Impact Grid Reliability, EPA Chief Says

The EPA's upcoming carbon emissions standards for power plants will not jeopardize grid reliability by forcing retirement of coal-based power plants, Administrator Gina McCarthy underscored. Speaking at a conference in Houston, McCarthy said the regulations will recognize that "[conventional fuels like coal and natural gas are going to play a critical role in a diverse U.S. energy mix](#) for years to come," *National Journal's Energy Edge* reported. It noted the EPA chief's suggestion that climate regulations can follow the Clean Air Act's success in driving down pollution without stifling economic growth. The rules will provide states with flexibility, she added. Separately, *Energy Edge* reported that [the timeframe for reductions and the rule's flexibility would be critical](#) in light of emissions cuts already made. American Electric Power's CEO said he was encouraged by EPA's statements, but added that "the proof is when the rule comes out."

As Deadlines Near, Questions Remain on Potential Regulation of Coal Ash

While crucial deadlines in the Administration's efforts to regulate coal ash are approaching, the EPA "[hasn't made it clear exactly what its final rules will look like](#)," *Politico* reported. The publication pointed to obstacles such as potentially billions of dollars in costs to the utility industry, heavy political opposition, and the possibility that "someone in the White House isn't convinced," based on its major revisions to past drafts.

INTERNATIONAL INTEREST

White House Must Recognize Coal's Value at Home and Abroad: EPA Alumnus

The Obama Administration "isn't coming to grips with the global importance of coal," Winston Porter, former EPA Assistant Administrator wrote in a column for *The Hill*. Despite the President's "crusade" against the coal industry, the use of the fuel is surging globally," Porter wrote, and the President knows that the U.S. cannot fight climate change alone. And despite the Chief Executive's professed all-of-the-above energy approach, his actions send "one message: coal's days in the U.S. are numbered," the column underscored. Rather, [he should recognize coal's value here and abroad and get serious about advancing clean coal technology](#), the former EPA official wrote. Why? "It's irrational to cast aside our most abundant and affordable source of energy if the rest of the world has no intention of reducing emissions." According to Porter, a pragmatic energy strategy embraces the need for the U.S. to champion clean coal technology." Abandoning coal, he cautioned, is "a recipe for economic disaster."

U.S. Coal Exports to Europe May Rise as Result of Impasse in Ukraine

While U.S. coal exports to Europe had been expected to fall this year, due to economic weakness on the continent, [they could get a boost from the European Union](#) as the conflict in Ukraine has raised concerns about the group's energy security, *The Motley Fool* suggested. In 2013, Russia accounted for 30% of Europe's gas imports, and while that country's gas monopoly has not threatened to discontinue supply of the fuel, European leaders are proactively looking at ways to reduce this dependence, the *Fool* noted. Gas imports from the U.S. are not a near-term solution, it indicated, nor are nuclear power (political opposition) and renewables (costs). "In the near term, then, Germany and its partners in Europe have only one option if they want to cut reliance on Russian gas," the financial publication said. "That option is coal." This is good news for U.S. thermal coal exporters, it suggested.

Key dates include May 22, the deadline for EPA to finish its water pollution discharge standards for coal-fired power plants – which the agency has indicated it will not meet – and December 19, a court-set deadline to finish a separate rule regulating ponds where liquid coal ash is stored. *Politico* noted that House bills have been introduced in recent years to give states control over regulating coal ash ponds, although the Senate has been "relatively quiet." Meanwhile, it said, "some recent EPA moves have given hope to coal ash recyclers for a resolution sometime soon."

Media Turns Spotlight on Compliance, Coal Price Implications of MATS

Seventy percent (70%) of coal-fired power plants have pollution control equipment needed to meet the EPA's mercury and air toxics standards (MATS), the Energy Information Administration (EIA) reported. According to *Bloomberg BNA*, another 6% are planning to install pollution controls, while 8% intend to close rather than add the equipment. The remaining 16% are uncontrolled, EIA said, and [owners have yet to announce plans](#). *Bloomberg BNA* quoted Bracewell & Giuliani's Jeff Holmstead as saying "a significant amount of that 16% will ultimately have to shut down." Meanwhile, Platts reported that "[Coal pricing is likely to become increasingly volatile in the next few years](#) as the market absorbs a significant number of coal-fired power plant retirements resulting from the [MATS] rule." According to experts, Platts said, grid reliability will likely hold up, due to the industry's ability to curtail usage through demand response. At the same time, coal will be called upon to provide increased capacity in periods of peak demand, such as during the recent polar vortex.

Coal Currents (continued)**ON CAPITOL HILL****House OKs Measure to****Limit Regulation of Power Plants' GHG Emissions**

The House approved legislation that would limit the Obama Administration's efforts to regulate greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) from power plants. "The Electricity Security and Affordability Act" (H.R. 3826), sponsored by Rep. Ed Whitfield (R-Ky.), was approved by a vote of 229-183. It would require greater transparency in the EPA's process for crafting regulations limiting emissions from existing and new power plants alike. According to *National Journal's Energy Edge*, the bill would bar EPA from setting emissions limits for future power plants unless the agency could show that the standard had been met at several plants, using existing technology, for a full year. [The measure would also block new regulations for existing plants](#), planned for issuance this year, until Congress votes to set the effective date. Despite the House passage, the bill has negligible prospects for success in the Senate and the White House has threatened to veto any such legislation that clears Capitol Hill.

IN THE INDUSTRY**Harsh Winter, Gas Prices****May Spark Turnaround in Coal's Fortunes**

A comeback may be taking place in the coal sector, and reports from the fuel's end users contain "some leading indicators that may signal a turnaround in the months ahead," *The Motley Fool* suggested. Some industrial users are showing signs that coal demand may finally stabilize, it noted, and "even utilities are back to growing their coal usage." The *Fool* attributed the good news in part to the extremely harsh winter, which "reminded utilities of the value of their coal fleets," as well as a "sudden and sharp rally in natural gas prices" that makes coal look attractive to industrial end users. While the fuel "is by no means thriving," and rising political scrutiny makes the continued construction of coal-fired power plants seem unlikely, it acknowledged, "[The reality is that coal is very much a part of U.S. power generation.](#)" Predictions of its demise, the *Fool* concluded, "seem to be greatly exaggerated."

Hill Panel to Investigate**EPA's Decision Making on CCS Technologies**

Republicans on the House Energy and Commerce Committee are opening an investigation into the decision making process behind the EPA's consideration of carbon capture and storage (CCS) technologies as it developed GHG standards for new power plants. [In a letter to EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy](#), the lawmakers contended that the agency failed to follow a statutory requirement that barred it from using federally funded projects to demonstrate a technology's commercial viability. The industry has asserted that CCS technology is not feasible on a commercial scale and would significantly raise prices for consumers. On a separate front, Committee Republicans wrote several regional grid groups to ask [how the retirement of numerous coal-fired power plants could affect the transmission grid in coming winters](#). According to Platts, the members sought information about "affordability and reliability concerns going forward," given that many coal-fired units relied upon to meet the past winter's surge in demand are scheduled to retire soon.

Scaled-Up Carbon Capture Boosts**Kemper Plant's Importance to Energy Future**

Southern Company's Kemper power plant, nearing completion in Mississippi, is "[a \\$5 billion wager on an energy future that includes coal](#)," according to a *Tribune Washington Bureau* reporter. The 582-megawatt (MW) facility will be the nation's first to ramp up technology to remove carbon dioxide emissions on a large scale, the article noted; if it works as planned, up to 65% of potential emissions would be removed, far more than the EPA's proposed requirement of about 40%. The article indicated that Kemper has a new gasification system and an operating plan that "significantly scales up and combines all the technology," but described progress on the plant as "a white knuckle ride," behind schedule and over budget. The fate of four other planned carbon-capture plants in the U.S. remains unclear, the *Tribune* said; while the Energy Department is financing between 10% and 50% of costs, construction would have to begin by 2015, when funding runs out.

Todd H. Cunningham, who writes the "Coal Currents" column for the Council's monthly National Coal Advisory, is available for additional writing projects involving coal and other energy policy issues. For information on Todd's background and experience, see his LinkedIn profile at www.linkedin.com. To discuss your editorial needs, contact Todd via email at tcunningham03@comcast.net.