



WIRES: Voice of the Electric Transmission Industry

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THE SUPREME COURT STAYS EPA'S CLEAN POWER PLAN – WHAT MEANING FOR HV TRANSMISSION DEVELOPMENT?

WASHINGTON, DC – In a surprise move, the U.S. Supreme Court issued a stay of EPA's widely-debated emission control rulemaking (Clean Power Plan or "CPP"). States are charged by EPA with developing implementation plans in anticipation of interim deadlines later this year. A 5-4 Court majority did not comment but granted relief from the rule until "disposition of petitions for review" in the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals or in the Supreme Court itself upon appeal, which could take up to three years.

WIRES has argued that, unlike the EPA's approach in the CPP, states should recognize the importance of transmission upgrades and expansions in reducing the cost of CPP implementation and providing such benefits as delivering low-cost, low-carbon energy resources to the market.

WIRES President Bob McKee of American Transmission Company said "Though the Supreme Court's stay is a significant development, the transmission planning related to CPP that is currently being undertaken by RTOs, states, transmission owners, and other stakeholders should continue apace. The initial compliance deadlines are not that far out into the future, and given the long lead time it takes to develop transmission, we should not delay the planning being done to identify the facilities that potentially would be needed as part of states' CPP compliance plans to meet the carbon reduction requirements in a cost-effective manner and to keep the grid reliable."

While the CPP will necessitate transmission upgrades and expansion, state and federal energy policies and ongoing industry changes make a stronger high voltage grid imperative, irrespective of the controversies surrounding or ultimate outcome of CPP.

Jim Hoecker, WIRES Counsel and former FERC Chairman, added that "the Court's action creates tremendous business uncertainty. Whether you support the CPP or not, the CPP provides a discernible glide path for implementing climate policy and also creates the likely need for substantial upgrades to and expansion of the high voltage network. This, then, creates the opportunity to reduce congestion and increase reliability, replace outdated transmission facilities, and integrate new technologies, including renewable energy. EPA says 'climate change can't be stayed;' well, neither can the urgent need for a truly 21st century transmission grid."

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WIRES is an international non-profit trade association of investor-, publicly-, and cooperatively owned transmission providers, transmission customers, regional grid managers, and equipment and service companies. WIRES promotes investment in electric transmission and progressive state and federal policies that advance energy markets, economic efficiency, and consumer and environmental benefits through development of electric power infrastructure. For more information, visit www.wiresgroup.com or contact Jim Hoecker at 202-378-2316.