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**Affordable Electricity: Rural America’s Economic Lifeline**

**By the numbers:**

Important note: The job loss numbers detailed in this study are average job losses over a 20 year period from 2020 and 2040. They are NOT cumulative and are not a specific number of jobs lost each year. Peak job losses indicate the maximum number of jobs lost over the course of the study in a given year.

Although the proportional impact hits areas served by electric cooperative more harshly, nationally, electricity price increases lead to substantial job and GDP losses. In areas of the nation served by electric cooperatives, higher electricity prices are found to result in job losses and substantially decreased economic activity.

According to the study:

A 10% increase in electricity prices over the 2020 to 2040 period results in:

* A non-cumulative average job loss of 882,000 nationwide that peaks at 1.2 million by 2021
  + Of that, a non-cumulative average job loss of 360,000 in areas served by electric cooperatives that peaks at 499,000 by 2021
* A cumulative loss in national GDP of $2.8 trillion

A 25% increase in electricity prices over the 2020 to 2040 period results in:

* A non-cumulative average job loss of 1.5 million nationwide that peaks at 2.2 million by 2021
  + Of that, a non-cumulative average job loss of 614,000 in areas served by electric cooperatives that peaks at 893,000 by 2021
* A cumulative loss in national GDP of $5.4 trillion

**Talking Points:**

* Affordable electricity is vital to America’s economy. It serves as rural America’s economic lifeline.
* For 75 years, America’s not-for-profit electric cooperatives have been the guardians of rural America – bringing safe, affordable, and reliable power to more than 42 million Americans across 47 states. 75 percent of the nation’s landscape relies on electric co-ops for power.
* New federal regulations that result in higher electricity prices (like EPA’s CPP) take our country down the wrong path and reverse any progress made since the Great Recession.
* This study highlights the true cost of higher electricity prices – a cost that many in co-op nation cannot afford to pay and a cost policy makers in Washington would do well to remember.
* Higher electricity prices hit American families from both sides as they pay more out of their pocket to keep the lights on, while they simultaneously endure job losses and deal with less money in the family budget.
* Nationally, 23 percent of co-op households earn an annual income of less than $25,000. Every extra dollar they have to spend to keep the lights on is a dollar they can’t spend on gas, groceries, or other critical needs.
* Co-ops also keep the lights on in 93 percent of the persistent poverty counties across the US.
* Interestingly, a separate study conducted by NRECA this past February shows that the EPA’s Clean Power Plan would increase electricity prices by an average of10 percent across the nation.