**Electric Co-op Talking Points**

**Presidential Statement on new Climate Change Regulations**

Electric cooperatives have serious concerns about President Obama’s misguided proposal to use the federal Clean Air Act (CAA) to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. If the President’s approach resembles dubious and dangerous plans forwarded by environmental activist groups, he will go far beyond stretching the law.  Co-ops urge the President to work with us, not against us, to address our nation’s energy needs.

* **Increase electric bills**

This new federal mandate—essentially a massive, backdoor tax increase—will increase monthly electric bills, forcing those who least can afford it to make hard choices that will negatively impact their quality of life. Energy taxes are inherently regressive, disproportionately affecting low-income, fixed-income, and rural consumers who already pay a higher percentage of their household budget for electricity.

Fundamentally, the President is asking Americans to make more sacrifices on the heels of the greatest economic hardship most of us have ever lived through by adding a costly new tax on our energy bills.

* **Jobs killer**

This proposal is also jobs killer. It will raise the cost of energy, goods, and services. It will hurt American competiveness and slow down the fragile economic recovery with more uncertainty and risk. It will cause businesses to forego investment to pay higher energy bills. The last thing this nation needs is a new obstacle for our manufacturing and agricultural businesses.

* **Glorious mess of regulations**

Using the CAA for the purpose of addressing climate change is also an overreach of historic scale. The law was never intended to be used this way. U.S. Rep. John Dingell, one of the Act’s principal authors, famously said using the CAA to regulate greenhouse gases would result in a “glorious mess.” The President is attempting to shoe-horn carbon regulations into this framework, and we will soon realize that the shoe just does not fit no matter how much we try to force it.

* **No affordable technology**

Studies by MIT and the Electric Power Research Institute provide ample data showing the monumental technological challenges and costs of reducing carbon emissions. At present, there is no commercially viable technology that can get this job done. Instead, the President’s blueprint punitively imposes economic penalties on the American public simply for using electricity.

* **Electric co-ops are focused on solutions**

Electric co-ops support a real “all of the above” energy strategy, not just a rhetorical one, in our effort to provide reliable, affordable power 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. While the White House pushes regulatory mandates, not-for-profit, consumer-owned electric co-ops have long argued for a balanced, technically realistic, and economically feasible approach to environmental and climate change policy. To that end we are seeking solutions by:

* Leading the electric utility industry in the deployment and use of demand response, smart grid, and other technologies to that enable more efficient energy management.
* Studying the feasibility of ground-breaking multi-pollutant control technologies for coal-fired power plants, which builds on our strong record of achievement in producing and delivering cleaner energy.
* Working hard to build a strong foundation for an affordable, secure, and clean energy future for the 42 million consumers we serve in 47 states.