ST. LOUIS, Aug. 3, 2015 /PRNewswire/ -- Peabody Energy today urged further action by courts, Congress, states, consumer groups and industrial/residential electricity customers to turn back the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) rules to reduce carbon dioxide emissions on electricity generating plants.

Studies show the rules will punish American families and businesses with higher energy costs and damage electric reliability, while having no notable benefit even under climate theory. They would put our energy system at serious risk and further slow our nation's tepid economic growth. A technology path – not artificial caps and taxes – is the far better approach to address carbon concerns over time.

It is clear to us that the rules fail on legal, policy and practical grounds. Unprecedented early opposition to the rules has been advanced from members of Congress, governors, legislatures, attorneys general, and business and consumer groups.

Americans need relief from "pain at the plug" costs given record electricity rates even amid reduced oil and natural gas prices. Coal provides some of the lowest cost electricity in America and the economy, jobs and households will suffer if these rules move forward. Jurisdictions including Europe, Australia, Ontario and California that have tried such policies have suffered soaring electricity costs and economic harm.

The Administration is forcing utilities to increase use of renewables and other high-cost fuels, driving up electricity prices to new records. This past year was the most expensive year ever for electricity in the United States, and electricity rates have increased at twice the pace of household incomes since 2000. Mandating greater reliance on expensive, heavily subsidized renewables, which the plan will require, is also not the solution. After more than 60 years of propping up renewables with over $85 billion in subsidies, wind and solar only provide about 5 percent of U.S. electricity.

America's energy policy should be guided by the dire need for affordable energy faced by more than 100 million Americans who qualify for energy assistance. More than half of Americans also have said as little as a $20 increase in their monthly utility bill would cause hardship.

Peabody believes that we can achieve our environmental goals today with an alternative policy path:

1. Insistence on low-cost electricity;
2. Investment in efficiency improvements at existing plants;
3. Deployment of high-efficiency low emissions supercritical coal plants; and
4. Greater research and development to commercialize next-generation coal technologies including carbon capture, use and storage.

Today's advanced supercritical coal plants are in broad use globally and are equipped with technologies that can drive key emissions rates that are 75 percent lower than the U.S. coal fleet average. They also deliver a carbon dioxide emissions rate that is as much as 25 percent lower than the oldest coal plants in the U.S. fleet. Every new large supercritical plant offers the equivalent carbon benefit of removing 1 million cars from the road.

Peabody Energy (NYSE:BTU) is the world's largest private-sector coal company and a global leader in sustainable mining, energy access and clean coal solutions. The company serves metallurgical and thermal coal customers in more than 25 countries on six continents. For further information, visit PeabodyEnergy.com and AdvancedEnergyForLife.com.

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