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## The Clean Power Plan and How it Will Change History

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# **The Clean Power Plan and How it Will Change History**

**By Abbie Andersen**

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In a country where 30% of the population still believes that man made climate change is a myth, president Obama has made a daring effort to help fix the damage our country has already inflicted on our planet. By creating The Clean Power Plan (CPP) we've taken a step in the right direction as a country. The action that we take to limit our emissions within the next 10 years will likely determine the course of the rest of our existence.

In our current situation humanity has no choice other than to act, and act quickly. We have passed the point of proactivity and have entered a time period of catching up. And we have a lot of catching up to do.

Climate change is not only one of the most controversial topics of our generation, but also one of the most important problems we need to solve. Our window of opportunity to act is getting smaller everyday. Many of the projected consequences of climate change are predicted for 2050, a mere 34 years away.

President Obama has created and proposed the CPP in an effort to take action. His plan aims to reduce America's emissions by 32% by 2030. This would put us below our emission levels from 2005.

Reducing the carbon emissions from power plants in our country alone will prevent up to 3,600 premature deaths, 1,700 heart attacks, 90,000 asthma attacks in children, and 300,000 missed work and schooldays according to ucsusa.org.

The economic impact will also be beneficial to our country. The transition to renewable energy will create tens of thousands of American jobs, which will come at a crucial time for our country.

Renewable energy has also already proven to be economical and switching over to more renewable sources will lower the cost even more.

Ucsusa.org estimates that the CPP could save the average American family nearly \$85 per year on energy bills by 2030 and would save enough energy to power over 30 million homes.

The CPP has been criticized for not being extensive enough. In a country where some of the most influential politicians believe that anthropogenic climate change is a hoax or that we're just experiencing global cyclical warming periods, any progressive piece of legislation in the green energy sector is monumental. Obama has had to work across bipartisan lines and has shown great leadership and compromise skills in making this piece of legislation. We live in a country where we are given the opportunity to participate in the political process, and we should take pride in having the ability to support politicians that are working to reduce the damage humans are inflicting on our planet.

President Obama's plan has also been criticized for not being realistic, but many states have already proven that they are interested and dedicated to the idea of transferring over to green energy. Twenty-nine states already have policies in place to increase electricity from renewable sources like wind and solar.

State level responsibility has proven to be crucial with other pieces of legislation such as the Clean Air Act. States are more familiar with the unique problems they face and can have a better understanding of how to solve them. The CPP allows for flexibility within the states and cooperation with other states to meet their goals. This is important and will increase the plan's chance of success.

The CPP quantifies the global social cost of carbon emissions, not just domestic costs. This behavior of global awareness will be the key to humanity's continued survival on this planet. This global approach also sets a vital standard for the governments of other nations to consider the impacts of their greenhouse gas emissions on a planetary scale. The political impact alone of this plan has a magnitude that far outreaches the monetary value of reducing our carbon emissions.

By allowing states to set flexible, unique goals for themselves but also allowing for cooperation amongst states it will do more than just reduce our global impact. I believe this plan allows for our country to unify and work towards a common goal while also imbedding a sense of patriotism that our country needs. Americans can take pride in being world leaders in the fight against global warming. We can proudly set the example for other nations to follow.

Our planet's climate has no boundaries and changes will affect everyone living here on Earth. Our world leaders need to step up and set the standard for global mindfulness and cooperation. Obama is making progressive strides towards this by implementing the Clean Power Plan. It is also vital that as constituents, we support government officials and legislation that promotes green energy and global awareness. I believe that the Clean Power plan will go down in history as one of the most impactful actions of our generation.