

February 4, 2010

The Honorable Peter R. Orszag
Director
The Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Dr. Orszag,

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is currently reviewing the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) proposal to regulate coal combustion by-products (CCBs). As Members of the Illinois delegation, we respectfully request you to consider the impact the regulation of CCBs will have on jobs and the economy in Illinois.

Coal-fired power plants provide about half of the electricity used by Illinois consumers, including households, businesses, industry, hospitals, and schools. Illinois power producers use up to 60 percent of the CCBs these plants produce to create the cement, concrete, and other building materials that go into our roofs, bridges, and highways. This beneficial reuse of CCBs creates thousands of jobs across Illinois. The loss of these good-paying jobs would have a serious impact on Illinois' economy, which continues to experience 11.1% unemployment, which is above the national average.

In addition, regulating CCBs as hazardous waste will impose steep costs on Illinois energy consumers while producing little environmental benefit beyond what can be achieved through a non-hazardous waste authority. Hazardous waste regulation will require significant engineering changes, capital expenditures, and operating costs. These costs will be passed to consumers, increasing utility bills in a difficult economic climate. Finally, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) has found that Illinois' current approach to regulating CCBs as non-hazardous waste is effective and safe.

We strongly support regulations that allow for the continued reuse of CCBs and keep energy costs low. A reasonable rule designed to protect and support the economy will benefit the lives of Illinois residents and all Americans.

We appreciate your attention to this important issue, and we look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,

Congressman Jerry F. Costello
Congressman John M. Shimkus
Congressman Timothy V. Johnson
Congresswoman Debbie Halvorson
Congressman Daniel Lipinski
Congressman Bill Foster
Congressman Aaron Schock
Congressman Peter J. Roskam

cc: Mr. Cass R Sunstein, Administrator
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs

The Honorable Lisa P. Jackson, Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The Honorable Rahm Emanuel
White House Chief of Staff