

June 19, 2019

ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL ISSUES STATEMENT ON EPA AFFORDABLE CLEAN ENERGY RULE

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul today issued the following statement regarding the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) finalization of its Affordable Clean Energy (ACE) rule and repeal Clean Power Plan, the historic carbon emissions rule intended to reduce dangerous greenhouse gas emissions from power plants around the country.

"As a country, we need to take meaningful action to address the devastating effects of climate change. The EPA's Affordable Clean Energy rule announced this morning is a giant step backward in that effort. The ACE rule is misguided policy that is neither safe, nor clean, nor affordable because it does nothing to combat climate change. I am committed to ensuring that this illegal and ineffective rule does not stand. The people of Illinois and around the country cannot afford the impact of unchecked climate change."

Background:

The Affordable Clean Energy Plan denies the devastating impacts on both the safety and health of Illinois' residents and economy. Currently, 34 of Illinois' 102 counties are under a state disaster proclamation due to one of the largest floods in recent state history. The flooding and heavy rains this spring have been particularly devastating for Illinois' farming families. Approximately 88 percent of Illinois' corn crop has been planted, and 70 percent of our soybean crop has been planted, compared to 100 percent and 95 percent, respectively, over the past five years. Climate change is predicted to cause a 15 percent loss in corn and soybean crop yields over the coming years.

Uncontrolled carbon pollution also damages one of Illinois' greatest natural assets, Lake Michigan. In 2015, Lake Michigan climbed to its highest level since 1998, the second-largest recorded gain over a 24-month span. Rapidly swinging water levels hurt the commercial shipping industry, recreational boaters, wildlife, and beachgoers. For example, for every inch the lake loses, a freighter must forgo 270 tons of cargo. High water also erodes beaches and damages property.

The ACE rule requires no reduction in carbon emissions until 2023. Based on EPA's own analysis, the ACE rule will result in increased emissions of carbon pollution in a number of states in 2025, 2030, and 2035. Additionally, the ACE rule will lead to an increased number of premature deaths and asthma attacks caused by increased emissions of criteria pollutants.

The Illinois Attorney General's Office has worked since 2003 to limit carbon pollution from fossil-fueled power plants. Most recently, the Illinois Attorney General's Office joined a coalition of states, counties, and cities in filing comments in opposition to the EPA's proposed repeal of the Clean Power Plan, and filed comments in opposition to the ACE as proposed. The coalition includes California, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, and Washington, as well as New York City, Boulder, Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, South Miami and Broward County, Fla.