



HR0536

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Illinois has been a leader in energy production
3 within the United States, in large part due to Illinois' vast
4 coal resources; and

5 WHEREAS, Illinois has the largest recoverable bituminous
6 coal reserves in the United States, a reserve base larger than
7 all but 6 countries in the world, and the ability to produce
8 all of America's electricity needs for 100 years or Illinois'
9 power needs for 600 years at current consumption rates; and

10 WHEREAS, Illinois is the largest electricity exporter in
11 the Midwest and one of the largest in the United States, and
12 nearly 45% of Illinois' energy comes from coal-burning plants
13 within the State; and

14 WHEREAS, Historically, the cost of electricity from coal
15 has been the most economical on the basis of dollars per
16 megawatt hour produced and price fluctuations for coal have
17 been much less than any other fuel source; and

18 WHEREAS, Coal power plants in the United States have met
19 the environmental challenges of the past 4 decades while
20 meeting the low-cost energy needs of the nation, as coal used
21 for electricity in the United States has increased by 165%

1 since 1970 while key emission rates have declined by 90%; and

2 WHEREAS, The Illinois coal industry is currently
3 responsible for over \$2,500,000,000 in annual economic
4 activity within the State, including employing roughly 5,000
5 miners with an average salary of \$85,000 a year, higher than
6 both the United States and Illinois median household incomes;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, The Illinois coal industry has faced increased
9 environmental regulations in the last 2 decades that resulted
10 in coal production going from 62 million tons of mined coal in
11 1990 to a low of 31 million tons in 2003 and a loss of 6,500
12 direct jobs during this time period; and

13 WHEREAS, The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 imposed
14 strict sulfur dioxide (SO₂) emission standards, making coal
15 mined in Illinois unusable without flue gas desulfurization
16 (FGD) equipment, often referred to as "scrubbers"; and

17 WHEREAS, Technology can be deployed that allows
18 high-sulfur Illinois coal to be burned efficiently while
19 meeting strict State and federal air emission standards;
20 specifically the State of Illinois should be encouraging the
21 retrofitting and use of advanced clean coal technologies such
22 as flue gas desulfurization, wet electro-static precipitators

1 (wet ESPs), and oxy-combustion; and

2 WHEREAS, All of the power plants in Illinois which now burn
3 Wyoming coal were originally designed for Illinois coal and the
4 choice of technology was driven in part by the lack of
5 certainty regarding the recovery of investments in wet
6 scrubbers; and

7 WHEREAS, It is costing Illinois consumers more than
8 \$1,000,000,000 annually to import coal from other states,
9 primarily from Wyoming, while Illinois coal is being exported
10 and used in other states in power plants with scrubbers; and

11 WHEREAS, Using Illinois coal within Illinois would lead to
12 substantial economic benefits by saving \$1,000,000,000 in
13 transportation costs and creating thousands of new jobs in
14 mining and ancillary industries in currently economically
15 depressed counties in central and southern Illinois and it
16 would create more State and local tax revenue; and

17 WHEREAS, Using Illinois coal within Illinois benefits the
18 environment as well as the economy by reducing CO2 emissions
19 through the use of higher rank coals and by reducing rail
20 traffic by 50,000,000,000 ton-miles annually; and

21 WHEREAS, The recent growth in Illinois coal production has

1 been due to considerable new investment in the Illinois coal
2 fields producing low cost coal and the retrofit of pollution
3 control technology in power plants throughout the United States
4 in response to changes in the Clean Air Act mandating reduced
5 air emissions; and

6 WHEREAS, The switch to Illinois coal will improve the
7 competitiveness of Illinois power generation as Illinois coal
8 has a lower delivered cost, stable pricing, and higher heat
9 content; once retrofitted with advanced technology, Illinois
10 power plants fired with Illinois coal should be more
11 competitive in electricity markets, thereby helping to insure
12 the continued generation of competitive power for both in-state
13 customers and the out-of-state electricity market; and

14 WHEREAS, Much of the State of Illinois overlays the Mount
15 Simon Sandstone, a saline filled, porous, deep geological
16 formation of enormous capacity that has been determined to be
17 one of the most significant carbon resources in the United
18 States and its development could result in expanded use of
19 Illinois coal in a carbon-constrained world; and

20 WHEREAS, It is vital that Illinois coal be considered part
21 of an "All of the Above" approach to energy production in order
22 to keep Illinois as a leader in energy production, job
23 creation, economic growth, and environmental protection;

1 therefore, be it

2 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
3 NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
4 urge the Illinois Commerce Commission prepare a report on the
5 cost and efficiency benefits of using Illinois coal at Illinois
6 coal-burning plants, including any legislative impediments and
7 the impact on residential and commercial ratepayer; and be it
8 further

9 RESOLVED, That we urge the Illinois Power Agency to prepare
10 a report on the effect that burning Illinois coal has on
11 reliability and capacity for the Midwest region and the
12 mechanisms that could be utilized to provide cost recovery of
13 incremental environmental investments to generators switching
14 to Illinois coal; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That we urge the Department of Commerce and
16 Economic Opportunity prepare a report on the economic benefits
17 and job creation potential from switching to Illinois coal and
18 the result of more coal production; and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That we urge the Illinois Environmental
20 Protection Agency prepare a report on the environmental impact
21 (including reduced CO2 emissions) of burning Illinois coal with
22 the use of flue gas desulfurization equipment, reduced rail

1 travel and associated CO2 emission reductions, more efficient
2 energy production as a result of Illinois coal's high energy
3 density and the potential for the development of the carbon
4 storage capacity of the Mount Simon Sandstone and the impact of
5 bringing Illinois air emission standards in line with those of
6 the federal government; and be it further

7 RESOLVED, That we urge the Illinois Department of Revenue
8 to prepare a report on the impact on State and local taxes from
9 Illinois power plants switching to Illinois coal; and be it
10 further

11 RESOLVED, That we urge the findings of those reports be
12 presented to the General Assembly and the Governor by October
13 1, 2015 for consideration and appropriate action; and be it
14 further

15 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
16 delivered to Governor Bruce Rauner, the Illinois Congressional
17 Delegation, and all the members of the General Assembly.