



December 2015

## Summary of S.J. Res. 23 and S.J. Res. 24

### AN ASSAULT ON PUBLIC HEALTH AND MEANINGFUL CLIMATE ACTION

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Democratic Staff

S.J. Res. 23 and S.J. Res. 24 are part of the Republicans' ongoing attack on the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) efforts to cut carbon pollution and address dangerous climate change. These disapproval resolutions gut EPA's Clean Power Plan and carbon pollution standards for new and modified power plants. They would undermine the critical public health protections of the Clean Air Act, and would let the nation's biggest polluters continue to emit massive amounts of carbon pollution with impunity, jeopardizing the future of our children and grandchildren.

**EPA's Power Plant Rules:** As the Supreme Court has confirmed, the Clean Air Act gives EPA authority to control carbon pollution to address harms from climate change. On August 3, 2015, EPA finalized two critical rules: the Clean Power Plan that establishes emission guidelines for states to follow in developing plans to control carbon pollution from existing power plants, and final standards for limiting carbon pollution from new and modified power plants. These plants are the largest source of uncontrolled carbon pollution in the United States, and the Clean Power Plan will help cut carbon emissions from the power sector by 32% in 2030.

**S.J. Res. 23 & 24 Blocks the Clean Power Plan and Rules for New Coal-Fired Power Plants:** The Congressional Review Act (CRA) is an oversight tool that Congress may use to overturn a major rule issued by a federal agency by passing a joint resolution of disapproval. If S.J. Res. 23 & 24 are enacted, then the Clean Power Plan and EPA's rule for new power plants would not be implemented. And EPA would not be able to reissue these rules or rules that are substantially similar. This is particularly important since it would block this administration, or any future administration, from taking meaningful action to curb carbon emissions from power plants.

**S.J. Res. 23 & 24 Would "Just Say No" to Climate Action:** These resolutions are nothing more than Republicans' latest attempt to "just say no" to climate action. We cannot, and should not assume that ignoring this growing threat will cost nothing or make the problem go away. These disapproval resolutions would block EPA's critical power plant rules and would effectively prevent coal-fired power plants from ever having to clean up their carbon pollution. That's a recipe for climate disaster, and an abandonment of the clean air principles we've had in this country for more than 40 years.

**It Is Time to Act on Climate:** EPA's clean air rules are a critical part of our national strategy to reduce carbon pollution and protect the climate and strong U.S. action is essential to the global response to our changing climate. The Clean Power Plan and EPA's carbon pollution standards for new power plants demonstrate U.S. leadership and are key to our effort to secure an ambitious and lasting international climate agreement. EPA's power plant rules outline a path to cleaner air, better health, a safer climate, and a stronger economy. These disapproval resolutions would nullify EPA's rules and replace them with nothing.