ORAL ARGUMENT NOT YET SCHEDULED

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA CIRCUIT

State of West Virginia,) State of Texas, et al.,)	
Petitioners,)	No. 15-1363 and
v.)	consolidated cases
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, et al.,	
Respondents.	

JOINT REPLY OF STATE PETITIONERS ON MERITS BRIEFING PROPOSAL

State Petitioners (Case Nos. 15-1363, -1364, -1380, and -1409) join in full the Joint Reply Of Non-State Petitioners On Merits Briefing Proposal ("Joint Non-State Briefing Reply").

State Petitioners write separately only to emphasize their interest in a briefing schedule that allows oral argument to take place before the end of this Court's term in May 2016. The requirements and timeframe imposed by EPA under the Power Plan—designed to "aggressive[ly] transform[] . . . the domestic energy industry" —are causing the States ongoing, massive, and irreparable consequences on a scale they have never experienced from any federal environmental regulation.² It is thus critical to State Petitioners that oral argument occurs by May 2016, prior to this Court's several-month-long summer recess. As explained in the Joint Non-State Briefing Reply, bifurcation would facilitate such a prompt briefing schedule. But even if this Court is not inclined to grant bifurcation, State Petitioners stand ready to brief all ripe issues on any schedule this Court would set to make a May 2016 argument possible, requesting only that sufficient pages be afforded to address the unprecedented number of issues that the Power Plan raises. See Joint Non-State Briefing Reply 2-3 & n.2.

¹ White House Factsheet, Exh. B at 1, Joint States Stay Motion, ECF 1579999, No. 15-1363.

² See Joint States Stay Mot., ECF 1579999, No. 15-1363; Ok. Stay Mot., ECF 1580577, No. 15-1364; ND Stay Mot., ECF 1580920, No. 15-1380; Miss. DEQ Stay Mot., ECF 1582333, No. 15-1409; All States Stay Reply, ECF 1590286, No. 15-1363 (and consolidated cases).

EPA argues that the request for an expedited merits briefing schedule is "premature" in light of the pending stay motions, EPA Opp. 4, but the agency has it backwards. Were the States to wait until after resolution of the stay motions to request expedited merits briefing, EPA would argue then that it is too late to be asking this Court for a schedule permitting oral argument before the end of this Court's term in May 2016. Moreover, a May 2016 argument would become even more critical to the States if this Court were to deny their stay motions, given that this Court would not return from summer recess until September 2016. In that circumstance, the States would be forced to suffer many additional months of irreparable harm before they could obtain a resolution on the merits of their Petitions.

The States' request for expedited merits briefing thus has not been made "without regard to the pendency of the nine stay motions," EPA Opp. 1, but rather is fully consistent and should be considered together with those pleas for immediate relief from this Court. State Petitioners' stay motions ask this Court to stop the ongoing harms entirely. In contrast, expedited merits briefing would not stop the irreparable harms, but would reduce by potentially many months the length of the States' suffering in the event the stay is not granted. If this Court were to issue a stay, however, the need for an argument this term would, as EPA suggests, become less urgent.

Dated: December 31, 2015 Respectfully submitted,

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I hereby certify that on this 31st day of December, 2015, I caused the foregoing document to be electronically filed with the Clerk of the Court by using the Court's CM/ECF system. All registered CM/ECF users will be served by the Court's CM/ECF system. The following non-CM/ECF counsel will be served by U.S. mail:

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