



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 105<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 143

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 1997

No. 160—Part II

## Senate

### TIME TO CLEAN UP AMERICA'S COAL-FIRED POWERPLANTS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the Senate will soon recess until the beginning of this Congress' second Session in January of 1998. That provides time to develop a thoughtful proposal on one of the most pressing environmental threats confronting the United States as a whole, and especially the Midwest and the Northeast: namely, the rivers of pollution that stream from the smokestacks of hundreds of old coal-fired powerplants, especially in the Midwest.

These powerplants are collectively the source of enormous amounts of air pollution. Mercury poisons lakes and streams, as well as the fish that swim in them. Oxides of nitrogen not only create groundlevel ozone that chokes

almost every major America city, but are transformed into acids that contribute to both acid rain and fine particulate matter. Together with the fine particles formed by sulfur dioxide emissions, they contribute to tens of thousands of unnecessary deaths. Finally, carbon-rich coal adds to global warming, which has increased the temperatures of Earth's air, oceans, and soils, while raising sea levels and triggering meltdowns of glaciers and ice-caps. If you want to see the effects of this pollution, you need only to hike to the top of Camel's Hump in the Green Mountains, or talk to the fishermen in Missisquoi Bay who catch fish contaminated with mercury, or measure the increasing acid deposition in pristine lakes within Vermont wilderness areas.

Mr. President, none of this is necessary and eliminating these problems need not trigger the sort of regional conflicts that characterized the sometimes bitter ten year struggle to enact a federal program to control acid rain. There are ways of burning coal so that it produces only a tiny fraction of the air pollution now being emitted by these powerplants. And, since virtually all of these powerplants are reaching the age at which significant investment is required to keep them on line, the nation has a unique and valuable opportunity to address the problem.

Steps should be taken not only to prevent further degradation of our environment, but also to ensure fairness in retail electricity competition. When Congress passed the Clean Air Act in

### NOTICE

Under the Rules for Publication of the Congressional Record, a final issue of the Congressional Record for the first session of the 105th Congress will be published on the 31st day after adjournment in order to permit Members to revise and extend their remarks.

All materials for insertion must be signed by the Member and delivered to the respective offices responsible for the Record in the House or Senate between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday (until the 10th day after adjournment). House Members should deliver statements to the Office of Floor Reporters (Room HT-60 of the Capitol) and Senate Members to the Office of Official Reporters of Debate (S-123 in the Capitol).

The final issue will be dated the 31st day after adjournment and will be delivered on the 33d day after adjournment. None of the material printed in the final issue of the Congressional Record may contain subject matter, or relate to any event, that occurred after the adjournment date.

Along with signed statements, House Members are requested, whenever possible, to submit revised statements or extensions of remarks and other materials related to House Floor debate on diskette in electronic form in ASCII, WordPerfect or MicroSoft Word format. Disks must be labeled with Members' names and the filename on the disk. All disks will be returned to Member offices via inside mail.

Senators statements should also be submitted electronically, either on a disk to accompany the signed statement, or by e-mail to the Official Reporters of Debate at "Record@Reporters".

Members of Congress desiring to purchase reprints of material submitted for inclusion in the Congressional Record may do so by contacting the Congressional Printing Management Division, at the Government Printing Office, on 512-0224.

By order of the Joint Committee on Printing.

JOHN WARNER, *Chairman.*

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



Printed on recycled paper.

S12567