

I voted Yes on H.R. 2273, the Coal Residuals Reuse and Management Act. The bill creates enforceable minimum federal standards for the regulation of coal ash, but regulation and enforcement of the standard would be left to the states. The bill specifically facilitates the recovery of coal ash by creating a state-based permit program, and state standards could be more stringent than the federal minimum.

Coal ash is produced when coal is burned to produce electricity. Most coal ash is already disposed of safely and the rest is [recycled](#) for use in other products. The EPA determined twice during the Clinton Administration that regulation of coal ash was unwarranted. However, recently the EPA has been considering designating coal ash as a “hazardous waste,” despite the fact that Department of Health and Human Services found that there were [no significant health impacts](#) from a release of coal ash in 2009.

However, we should be prepared to acknowledge new scientific facts should they arise. That is why I voted for amendments offered on the floor that would require states to notify the public and the EPA and offer the opportunity to comment before a state establishes a coal ash program, as well as require a report on the long-term impacts of state permit programs on human health and the environment.

The costs of regulating coal ash as a hazardous waste are significant. The EPA itself has calculated that regulation would cost [\\$1.5 billion annually](#) and one study shows that the resulting regulations would lead to loss of [up to 316,000 jobs annually](#)

. Those increased costs would be absorbed by consumers that rely on coal-fired power plants to power their homes and businesses.

Congress needs to act in this case. Designating coal ash as a hazardous waste simply doesn't make sense based on the facts. Having worked in the construction industry Upstate for almost 30 years, I know firsthand the many practical uses of coal ash in safe products that we use to build our roads, bridges, and infrastructure. That is why I voted Yes on H.R. 2273.

