# Excerpts from Trump State of the Union Fact Check January 30, 2018

**USDOL: 15 Coal Mining Fatalities In 2017; 8 In 2016**. According to the United States Department of Labor, there were 15 coal mining deaths in 2017, up from 8 in 2016. [United States Department of Labor, Coal Daily Fatality Report, 12/31/17]

Rhetoric: United States On The Verge of Being A Net Energy Exporter

**AP Fact Check: The Trump White House Has Predicted That Could Happen Sooner, By 2020. But That’s Not ‘Now.’** According to the Associated Press, “TRUMP: ‘We are now an exporter of energy to the world.’ THE FACTS: There’s nothing new in that: The U.S. has long exported all sorts of energy, while importing even more. If Trump meant that the U.S. has become a net exporter of energy, he’s rushing things along. The U.S. Energy Information Agency projects that the U.S. will become a net energy exporter in the next decade, primarily because of a boom in oil and gas production that began before Trump’s presidency. The Trump White House has predicted that could happen sooner, by 2020. But that’s not ‘now.’” [AP, 1/30/18]

**PolitiFact Rated Previous Statement That US Was A Net Energy Exporter As “False.”** According to PolitiFact, “Trump said that ‘we have become an energy exporter for the first time ever just recently.’ This statement is problematic regardless of how you interpret his statement -- gross energy exports, net energy exports, gross crude-oil exports, and net natural gas exports. The closest he would come to being accurate is if he were referring to net natural gas exports, but even there, it hasn’t happened yet, contrary to what his past-tense statement indicates. We rate the statement False.” [PolitiFact, 8/23/17]

Reality: Only If Energy Policy – Including Clean Power Plan – Remains The Same

**US On Path To Becoming Net Energy Explorer “Without Any Major Overhauling Of Federal Rules.”** According to Washington Post, “But it is notable that the United States is already on its way to becoming a net energy exporter (and has been for some time, according to previous EIA reports) without any major overhauling of federal rules so far.” [Washington Post, [1/6/17](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2017/01/06/trump-wants-energy-independence-we-may-already-be-on-the-verge-of-having-it/?utm_term=.ddfea7fa92a2)]

**EIA Prediction Assumed Current Economic Conditions And Energy-Related Policies Remained The Same**. According to Washington Post, “Under the reference scenario, which assumes that current economic conditions and energy-related policies remain the same, the report projects an increase in oil and gas production, which combined with an increase in natural gas exports and a decrease in oil imports indicates that the country could become a net energy exporter in the next 10 years.” [Washington Post, [1/6/17](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2017/01/06/trump-wants-energy-independence-we-may-already-be-on-the-verge-of-having-it/?utm_term=.ddfea7fa92a2)]

Reality:Fewer Natural Gas And Renewables Without Clean Power Plan

**WaPo: “In The Absence Of The Clean Power Plan, Coal Consumption Remains Much More Flat Over The Next Few Decades.”** According to Washington Post, “A scenario assuming the demise of the Clean Power Plan tells a slightly different story, however. In the absence of the Clean Power Plan, coal consumption remains much more flat over the next few decades, while energy-associated carbon dioxide emissions actually increase slightly between 2016 and midcentury.” [Washington Post, [1/6/17](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2017/01/06/trump-wants-energy-independence-we-may-already-be-on-the-verge-of-having-it/?utm_term=.ddfea7fa92a2)]

**EIA Administrator: Without The Clean Power Plan, You End Up Getting Less Natural Gas And Less Renewables.** According to Washington Post, “‘Without the Clean Power Plan, you end up getting less natural gas and less renewables [than in the reference scenario],’ Sieminski added.” [Washington Post, [1/6/17](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2017/01/06/trump-wants-energy-independence-we-may-already-be-on-the-verge-of-having-it/?utm_term=.ddfea7fa92a2)]

**EIA Predicts Slow Decline In Coal Production Despite Growth In Renewables And Natural Gas.** According to Scientific American, “Despite growth in natural gas and renewables, the EIA expects coal production will continue a slow but gradual decline, falling only 0.7 percent through 2050.” [Scientific American, [1/6/17](https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/u-s-on-track-to-become-net-energy-exporter/)]

Reality: Energy Independence Linked to Markets And Technology, Not Absence of CPP

**Scenarios That Result In Quicker Energy Independence Rely On Technological Progression And Price Of Oil, Not Clean Power Plan**. According to Washington Post, “Additionally, any scenarios included in the report that result in a quicker arrival at net energy exportation generally involve technological progression and changes in the price of oil, not the presence or absence of the Clean Power Plan.” [Washington Post, [1/6/17](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2017/01/06/trump-wants-energy-independence-we-may-already-be-on-the-verge-of-having-it/?utm_term=.ddfea7fa92a2)]

**“Even If The Trump Administration Kills The Rule, The Report Notes That Natural Gas And Renewables Will Still Continue To Expand, Albeit More Slowly.”** According to Washington Post, “And even if the Trump administration kills the rule, the report notes that natural gas and renewables will still continue to expand, albeit more slowly, and will remain the primary sources of new electricity generation capacity in the coming decades.” [Washington Post, [1/6/17](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2017/01/06/trump-wants-energy-independence-we-may-already-be-on-the-verge-of-having-it/?utm_term=.ddfea7fa92a2)]

**“Report Attributes The Dominance Of These Energy Sources To Low Natural Gas Prices And Falling Costs Of Renewables, As Well As The Incentives Provided By Federal Tax Credits For Wind And Solar.”** According to Washington Post, “This again speaks to the power of the private sector in the U.S. energy landscape — the report attributes the dominance of these energy sources to low natural gas prices and falling costs of renewables, as well as the incentives provided by federal tax credits for wind and solar.” [Washington Post, [1/6/17](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2017/01/06/trump-wants-energy-independence-we-may-already-be-on-the-verge-of-having-it/?utm_term=.ddfea7fa92a2)]

Rhetoric: Trump Administration Saved Coal Industry

Reality: Trump Can’t Bring Back Coal Industry

**NYT: Coal’s Decline Seems Impervious To Trump’s Promises**. According to the New York Times, “The fateful turn of events in Appalachian mining towns like Bobtown, isolated between craggy bluffs and wooded hills 70 miles south of Pittsburgh, illustrates the seemingly relentless downturn of the coal industry. While President Trump has offered some regulatory relief to the industry, market forces still dictate a gloomy future — one largely shaped by the glut of cheap natural gas yielded by the drilling boom in shale fields near here and across much of the nation.” [New York Times, [1/24/18](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/24/business/energy-environment/coal-miners.html)]

**Coal Producer Robert Murray Said Trump Can't Bring Industry Back To Where It Was.** According to an article in Fox Business, “President Trump has vowed to bring back coal mining jobs, but the CEO of one of America’s largest coal companies says that’s impossible. ‘You can’t bring [the coal industry] back to where it was,’ Robert Murray told the FOX Business Network’s Maria Bartiromo. ‘[Former President Obama] closed 411 coal-fired plants, this Clean Power Plan which [Trump] ended yesterday, would have closed 56 more plants.’” [Fox Business, [3/29/17](http://www.foxbusiness.com/features/2017/03/29/big-coal-producer-robert-murray-trump-cant-bring-industry-back-to-where-it-was.html)]

**NYT: “Coal Executives, However, Optimism And Expansion Plans Remain Guarded.”** According to an article in the New York Times, “For coal executives, however, optimism and expansion plans remain guarded. Regulatory relief could restore 10 percent of their companies’ lost market share at most, they say — nowhere near enough to return coal to its dominant position in power markets and put tens of thousands of coal miners to work.” [New York Times, [3/28/17](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/28/business/energy-environment/trump-coal-executive-order-impact.html?_r=0)]

**Spokesman For Cloud Peak Energy: “At The End Of The Day, Coal Will Still Have To Compete With A Host Of Other Fuels.”** According to an article in the New York Times, “‘At the end of the day, coal will still have to compete with a host of other fuels,’ said Rick Curtsinger, a spokesman for Cloud Peak Energy, one of the country’s leading coal producers. ‘Utilities’ long-term decisions are based on economics and the need for long-term certainty.’” [New York Times, [3/28/17](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/28/business/energy-environment/trump-coal-executive-order-impact.html?_r=0)]

**Executive Vice President Of Southwestern Energy: “It’s The Market That Drives.”** According to an article in the New York Times, “In addition, relaxing restrictions on flaring methane and hydraulic fracturing on federal lands could help some producers increase production. But shale oil and gas production in the United States is mostly done on private lands. Oil prices have fallen by half over the last three years, limiting the demand to drill on more federal land, at least for the moment. ‘It will depend on price,’ said Mark Boling, the executive vice president of Southwestern Energy, a major natural gas and oil producer. ‘It’s the market that drives.” [New York Times, [3/28/17](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/28/business/energy-environment/trump-coal-executive-order-impact.html?_r=0)]

* **“Mr. Boling Said The Administration’s Action Would Have No Impact On His Company’s Immediate Plans.”** According to an article in the New York Times, “Mr. Boling said the administration’s action would have no impact on his company’s immediate plans. And he expects the industry to continue efforts to capture more leaking methane, a powerful greenhouse gas, because of innovations in leak detection and repair equipment. ‘We still plan to drive methane emissions down because we think it’s part of our core business to be as efficient as possible in removing natural gas from the ground and getting it to our customers,’ he said. ‘We are definitely going to do that.’” [New York Times, [3/28/17](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/28/business/energy-environment/trump-coal-executive-order-impact.html?_r=0)]

**“Even Some Utilities That Did Not Support The Clean Power Plan Say They Will Continue To Make Long-Term Investments To Meet Their Customers’ Demands.”** According to an article in the New York Times, “Even some utilities that did not support the Clean Power Plan say they will continue to make long-term investments to meet their customers’ demands, which in many states include a greener energy mix. ‘We think the rule went beyond E.P.A.’s statutory authority and infringed on the rights of the states to manage the generating fleet,’ said Leo Denault, chief executive of Entergy, which has been working to lower its carbon emissions since the early 2000s. ‘That said, the potential of it rolling back does not change our commitment to being environmentally responsible.’” [New York Times, [3/28/17](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/28/business/energy-environment/trump-coal-executive-order-impact.html?_r=0)]

* **Chief Executive Of Entergy: “The Potential Of It Rolling Back Does Not Change Our Commitment To Being Environmentally Responsible.”** According to an article in the New York Times, “Even some utilities that did not support the Clean Power Plan say they will continue to make long-term investments to meet their customers’ demands, which in many states include a greener energy mix. ‘We think the rule went beyond E.P.A.’s statutory authority and infringed on the rights of the states to manage the generating fleet,’ said Leo Denault, chief executive of Entergy, which has been working to lower its carbon emissions since the early 2000s. ‘That said, the potential of it rolling back does not change our commitment to being environmentally responsible.’” [New York Times, [3/28/17](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/28/business/energy-environment/trump-coal-executive-order-impact.html?_r=0)]

**Chief Executive Of American Electric Power: Said They Would Still Have To Compete Against Natural Gas And Renewables When It Came Time To Replace Them**. According to an article in the New York Times, “Nicholas K. Akins, chief executive of American Electric Power, said that although federal policies under Mr. Trump could help extend the life of some aging coal plants, they would still have to compete against natural gas and renewables when it came time to replace them.” [New York Times, [3/28/17](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/28/business/energy-environment/trump-coal-executive-order-impact.html?_r=0)]

* **“This Industry Is Moving In A Direction That Really Moves Toward A Clean Energy Economy. That’s What Our Customers Expect, That’s What Our Shareholders Expect.”** According to an article in the New York Times, “‘Our plans remain the same,’ he said. ‘We’re going to invest over the next three years $1.5 billion in renewables, $9 billion in transmission to optimize the grid. This industry is moving in a direction that really moves toward a clean energy economy. That’s what our customers expect, that’s what our shareholders expect.’” [New York Times, [3/28/17](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/28/business/energy-environment/trump-coal-executive-order-impact.html?_r=0)]

Reality: Ending Clean Power Plan Would Not Bring Back Coal Jobs

**NYT: “Even Coal Executives Remain Muted In Their Optimism About The Clean Power Plan Rollback.”** According to the New York Times, “Even coal executives remain muted in their optimism about the Clean Power Plan rollback, which they say is nowhere near enough to return coal to its dominant perch atop power markets and put tens of thousands of coal miners to work.” [New York Times, [3/29/17](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/29/business/coal-jobs-trump-appalachia.html?smprod=nytcore-iphone&smid=nytcore-iphone-share&_r=1)]

**Trump's Executive Order Won't Save Coal Mining Jobs.** According to Bloomberg, “President Donald Trump is taking bold steps to boost the declining coal industry, but the moves won’t restore many of the jobs lost by coal miners in West Virginia, Ohio and Pennsylvania who helped the president win his job in the White House. Trump will sign an order Tuesday to dismantle the very foundations of his predecessor’s government-wide effort to combat climate change, according to details provided to Bloomberg News. It will resume the sale of coal from federal land, lift carbon dioxide limits on power plants and end Obama-era mandates that agencies consider global warming in a broad range of decisions. … Yet, as sweeping as the order is, it won’t immediately boost demand for coal, which is facing stiff competition from cheaper natural gas and a boom in wind and solar power. It comes as mining employment has been falling for decades as dozers and conveyor belts replaced humans with pickaxes and mules.” [Bloomberg, [3/27/17](https://www.bloomberg.com/politics/articles/2017-03-27/trump-s-order-won-t-resurrect-jobs-of-miners-key-to-his-campaign?utm_content=politics&utm_campaign=socialflow-organic&utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=social&cmpid%3D=socialflow-twitter-politics)]

**Tuesday Order Will Have Little Immediate Effect.** According to Politico, “Neither Pruitt nor Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke have any reinforcements nominated below them to help implement the order, leaving open the question of how quickly Trump’s order will yield any concrete results. And despite the lofty rhetoric coming out of the White House, Tuesday’s order will have relatively little immediate effect. Some efforts, like rewriting the Clean Power Plan and other regulations, will take years to complete and face vigorous legal challenges from environmental advocates and blue states all along the way.” [Politico, 3/28/17]

**Washington Post: “Coal In The Trump Age: Industry Has A Pulse, But Prospects For Jobs Are Weak.”** According to an article in the Washington Post, “The stocks of coal companies have enjoyed a ‘Trump bump,’ thanks to the president’s pledges to ‘bring the coal industry back’ and ‘put our great miners and steelworkers back to work.’ Half a dozen big companies have seized the moment to issue stock or sell bonds to raise money from investors willing to wager on the effects of a friendlier Trump administration. Peabody Energy, the nation’s biggest coal behemoth, hopes to win court approval to come out of bankruptcy in April. But the obstacles on the other side of the ledger remain daunting: Coal-fired power plants continue to shut their doors. Bountiful supplies of U.S. shale gas are keeping natural gas prices low and competitive, and renewable sources of power generation are growing rapidly. Though most experts expect U.S. coal sales and output to top last year’s levels, they also expect the decline to resume in 2018.” [Washington Post, [3/17/17](https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/coal-in-the-trump-age-industry-has-a-pulse-but-prospects-for-jobs-are-weak/2017/03/17/facc3218-0514-11e7-b9fa-ed727b644a0b_story.html?utm_term=.79450017b88b)]

**Energy Analyst At NASDAQ Advisory Services: “I Don’t Think You Will See Utilities Going Back To Investing In Coal.”** According to an article in the New York Times, “‘If the Clean Power Plan is reneged upon, I don’t think you will see utilities going back to investing in coal because they have already reduced their infrastructure and they already have commitments geared toward natural gas,” said Tamar Essner, an energy analyst at Nasdaq Advisory Services.” [New York Times, [3/28/17](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/28/business/energy-environment/trump-coal-executive-order-impact.html?_r=0)]

**USA Today: “Will Coal Jobs Suddenly Come Roaring Back? Don’t Bet On It. Will The Price Of Electricity Go Into Reverse? Not Likely.”** According to USA Today, “Will coal jobs suddenly come roaring back? Don’t bet on it. Will the price of electricity go into reverse? Not likely. Will increased federal land rights for oil and natural gas clear the way for more U.S. energy production? Yes, eventually. And fewer regulations for oil and natural gas could contribute to lower energy prices in the long run. Plus, lower fuel economy standards, which the Trump administration is contemplating as part of a separate review, could bolster gasoline demand.” [USA Today, [3/28/17](http://www.usatoday.com/story/money/2017/03/28/trump-energy-regulations-impact/99700640/)]

**Opinion: Trump’s Attack On Environmental Laws Won’t Save Coal Miners’ Jobs**. Accoding to an opinion piece in the LA Times, “Trump has repeatedly promised to bring jobs back to Coal Country, blaming federal regulations for the industry’s decades-long decline. That promise is akin to a politician 100 years ago pledging to restore the economic fortunes of blacksmiths and buggy whip makers. That politician would have been a fool or a liar. Trump may be both.” [LA Times, [3/29/17](http://www.latimes.com/opinion/topoftheticket/la-na-tt-coal-jobs-20170328-story.html)]

**Opinion: “Trump Claims That Killing Obama’s Climate Legacy Will Bring Back Coal Jobs. It’s A Ruse.”** According to an opinion piece in the Washington Post, “President Trump on Tuesday signed an executive order rolling back the Clean Power Plan, former president Barack Obama’s 2015 policy aimed at reducing the carbon emissions that cause climate change. He touted this as a big step in restoring American jobs — in particular, coal mining jobs, which are concentrated in areas carried by Trump in the 2016 election. But contrary to the White House spin, Tuesday’s action has little to do with improving the lives of Trump’s working-class base. It will do far more to promote the aims of the monied interests who backed his candidacy and now help shape White House policy.” [Washington Post, [3/28/17](https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/plum-line/wp/2017/03/28/trump-claims-that-killing-obamas-climate-legacy-will-bring-back-coal-jobs-its-a-ruse/?utm_term=.1aed82d71945)]

**Time: “Trump’s Pro-Coal Orders Are Doomed To Fail.”** According to an article in Time Magazine, “Donald Trump signed an executive order at the Environmental Protection Agency to undo widely-supported Obama-era climate policies. The Trump Administration is also seeking a 31 percent cut to the EPA’s budget and to eliminate most climate research programs at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. These cuts would dramatically slash funding for the nation’s leading climate research and environmental policing agencies. Between the executive order, the cuts and the Administration’s sweeping deregulatory agenda, it appears that the White House is trying to revive fossil fuels. Yet while the Administration could do a lot of damage to our health and businesses, its policies are doomed to fail because they ignore two crucial trends.” [Time Magazine, [3/29/17](http://time.com/4709796/trump-epa-climate-fossil-fuels/)]

**NYT: “Coal Miners Hope Trump’s Order Will Help. But Few Are Counting On It.”** According to an article in the New York Times, “Regulations certainly played a part in coal’s downturn, Mr. Stinson said. But only a part. Some of the fiercest coal country critics of the Obama administration have acknowledged as much. Robert E. Murray, an outspoken mining executive, recently suggested tempered expectations for a coal rebound. The Senate majority leader, Mitch McConnell, Republican of Kentucky, cautioned in November that the potential impact of a regulatory rollback would be ‘hard to tell.’ There are too many other, more decisive factors behind the decline in central Appalachian coal mining, said Sam Petsonk, a lawyer for Mountain State Justice, a legal aid organization in Charleston, W.Va.” [New York Times, [3/28/17](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/28/us/coal-miners-hope-trumps-order-will-help-but-few-are-counting-on-it.html)]

**Forbes: “Mass Employment In Coal Mining Is Never Coming Back, No Matter Trump's Promises Or Regulations.”** According to an article in Forbes, “It's an obvious truism that regulations which make a certain activity more expensive are going to reduce the amount of that activity. Supply curves do slope downwards, demand ones up, after all. Thus it is equally obvious that if we rescind those regulations creating that greater expense then, at the margin, there will be more of that activity again. And since activity is often linked to employment level we would think that Trump's rolling back some of the regulations which make coal mining more expensive will increase the employment of miners. And we would be right to think so. And yet the effect of that will be trivial because it's not in fact regulation which has been killing off mining as a source of mass employment. It's technological change and the change in regulation isn't going to affect that in the slightest.” [Forbes, [3/29/17](https://www.forbes.com/sites/timworstall/2017/03/29/mass-employment-in-coal-mining-is-never-coming-back-no-matter-trumps-promises-or-regulations/#51c7801a71e8)]

Rhetoric: Trump Will Eliminate Job-Killers That Don’t Protect The Environment

Reality: Clean Power Plan Would Add Half a Million Jobs

**Clean Power Plan Would Add 560,000 Jobs And Up To $52 Billion To The Gross Domestic Product.** According to the E2’s Opportunity Lost report, “The Trump Administration’s effort to unwind the Clean Power Plan (CPP) represents a failure to capitalize on the economic and environmental benefits of clean energy. Analysis shows that the CPP could create up to 560,000 jobs and add $52 billion to the gross domestic product (GDP) in 2030. From states with relatively small populations like Maine and Montana to highly populated states like Florida, the CPP could have substantial employment and economic benefits — benefits that would disappear with the Trump Administration’s repeal of the policy.” [E2, [6/21/17](https://www.e2.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/FINAL-CPP-jobs-report-6.21.17.pdf)]

Reality: Clean Power Plan and WOTUS Rule Would Protect Environment

**Clean Power Plan Would Cut Emissions From Power Sector By 30 Percent**. According to the EPA, “Nationwide, by 2030, the Clean Power Plan will help cut carbon pollution from the power sector by approximately 30 percent from 2005 levels. It will also reduce pollutants that contribute to the soot and smog that make people sick by over 25 percent.” [Environmental Protection Agency, Clean Power Plan Benefits, accessed [4/24/17](http://www2.epa.gov/carbon-pollution-standards/fact-sheet-clean-power-plan-benefits)]

**Clean Water Rule Protects Streams And Wetlands Critical To Public Health, Communities, And Economy**. According to the EPA, “In an historic step for the protection of clean water, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Army finalized the Clean Water Rule today to clearly protect from pollution and degradation the streams and wetlands that form the foundation of the nation’s water resources. The rule ensures that waters protected under the Clean Water Act are more precisely defined and predictably determined, making permitting less costly, easier, and faster for businesses and industry. The rule is grounded in law and the latest science, and is shaped by public input. The rule does not create any new permitting requirements for agriculture and maintains all previous exemptions and exclusions.” [EPA, [5/27/15](https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/clean-water-rule-protects-streams-and-wetlands-critical-public-health-communities-and)]