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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**FROM THE OFFICE OF COMMISSIONER STAN WISE
NEWS RELEASE**

**STATEMENT ON RELEASE OF CARBON DIOXIDE RULES BY U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION AGENCY**

ATLANTA, June 2, 2014 -- The following is a statement from Georgia Public Service Commissioner Stan Wise in reaction to today's issuance of carbon dioxide rules by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency:

The Obama Administration continues its war on coal with the issuance of carbon dioxide rules for existing coal plants. These overreaching rules trump state authority, put energy users at risk to future price swings, ignores the investments and progress Georgians have made to improve the environment, and are a backdoor attempt to force federal renewable energy mandates.

Under our oversight, customers of our state's regulated electric utilities have spent more than \$5 billion in capital on environmental compliance since 1990, reducing some emissions by 95%. While tough on the average consumer, these investments have yielded environmental improvements in an incremental, measured, and cost-effective fashion.

In addition to emission controls, Georgia continues to rebalance its energy mix, the result of which has also reduced emissions, including CO₂. This Commission has overseen a shift from 62% coal, as recent as 2011, to 35% in 2013, without federal mandates to do so. The ongoing nuclear renaissance in Georgia will also reduce the demand on higher-emitting generation sources.

While these efforts mean our state is in a better position than others to comply with some version of these rules, by effectively taking coal off the table, the Administration is placing all of the state's energy consumers at risk of escalating prices and energy interruptions, with only slight reductions in carbon emissions to show for it. When natural gas commodity rates spike again, as they did over a decade ago, this fragile economic recovery could return to a downward spiral.

The Administration is also going beyond the authority given under the Clean Air Act in order to devise a back door attempt to federally-mandate renewable energy and energy efficiency

FROM THE OFFICE OF COMMISSIONER STAN WISE
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standards, without regard to the cost on consumers. The Clean Air Act specifically reserves flexible implementation options to the states where the best overall balance can and has been struck. Although the Administration claims to offer states a wide menu of options to achieve reductions, you can only choose from two entrées – cap and trade, which translates to higher electric rates when we southerners use our air conditioners, or more renewables like solar, which is not a substitute for the base load generation that coal provides.

These rules are simply the means to an end – the end of coal and an annual loss of \$10.5 billion in GDP and 59,700 jobs in our south Atlantic region alone, and the backdoor mandating of energy renewables.*

We look forward to working with our colleagues and policy-makers across the region in hopes that the final rule to be issued later next year is more pragmatic and consumer friendly.

Stan Wise, Georgia Public Service Commissioner

Commissioner Wise is serving his fourth six-year term on the Georgia Public Service Commission. He was first elected in 1994 and re-elected in 2000, 2006 and 2012. See his full bio at <http://www.psc.state.ga.us/content.aspx?c=/commissioners/stan-wise/>

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* Source: Figures are based on a study Commissioned by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce found here: <http://www.energyxxi.org/epa-regs>. The study, conducted before the final rule came out, included GDP and jobs figures that may have been based on a higher reduction goal than is contained in the current version of the rule; thus the final figures may or may not change when adjusted for the current reduction goal.