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Trump, Zeldin Move to Overturn EPA's Carbon Mandate in Push for Energy Reform

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In a landmark policy shift, President Donald Trump and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Lee Zeldin have announced the formal repeal of the EPA's 2009 “endangerment finding” on greenhouse gases. The move, which Zeldin described as “the largest deregulatory action in the history of America,” aims to eliminate sweeping federal restrictions on emissions that have shaped energy policy for over a decade.

The original endangerment finding, issued under the Obama administration, classified carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases as threats to public health due to their contribution to climate change. This classification enabled the EPA to impose extensive regulations on industries, including power generation, manufacturing, and transportation.

Critics have long argued that the decision exceeded the agency's intended role and led to costly mandates with little measurable impact.

Zeldin's decision to roll back the regulation is being praised by advocates of energy independence and economic growth. Supporters say the reversal will reduce regulatory burdens on American manufacturers, energy producers, and consumers, ultimately lowering the cost of electricity and other essential goods. The repeal is also expected to ease restrictions on internal combustion vehicles, including the often-criticized stop-start engine feature that shuts off vehicles at red lights to cut emissions.

While the EPA originally argued that these regulations were necessary to combat climate change, recent data and admissions by the agency have raised doubts about the effectiveness of certain mandates. For instance, the stop-start feature has not demonstrated consistent emissions reductions in practice. Meanwhile, countries like China continue to ramp up coal production, highlighting the limited global impact of unilateral U.S. restrictions.

The administration's push to re-center energy policy around affordability and reliability aligns with broader efforts to support domestic industry and meet the growing power demands of sectors like artificial intelligence and high-tech manufacturing. Zeldin and Trump have emphasized that energy affordability remains one of the most pressing public health and quality-of-life issues in the United States.

Legal challenges are expected, particularly from lawmakers and environmental groups that support the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act, which categorized greenhouse gases as pollutants. However, congressional Republicans have signaled they intend to prioritize removing that language and supporting policies that promote U.S. energy independence when Congress reconvenes.

As the debate unfolds, the administration's action marks a clear shift toward pragmatic energy policy focused on economic resilience, rather than expansive environmental regulation.