

# U.S. Senate Says No to "Clean Coal" & Nuclear

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- *From:* [xnichols@xxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:xnichols@xxxxxxxxxxx)
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U.S. Senate Says No to "Clean Coal" & Nuclear in RPS  
by Sara Parker, Staff Writer  
Washington, DC [RenewableEnergyAccess.com]

National Renewable Energy Portfolio (RPS) legislation introduced by Senator Pete Domenici (R-NM), which included clean coal technology and nuclear power alongside traditional sources of renewable energy, was voted down in the U.S. Senate this afternoon 56-29.

Domenici, ranking member of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, introduced an amendment yesterday to establish a National Clean Portfolio Standard (CPS) as an alternative to a proposal introduced by Senator Jeff Bingaman (D-NM). Bingaman's amendment calls for a National Renewable Portfolio (RPS) requiring 15 percent of electricity generated in the U.S. to come from renewables by 2020.

The legislation proposed by Domenici, which was co-authored by Senator Larry Craig (R-Idaho), expanded the standard to 20 percent as well as included clean coal technology and nuclear power—and argued it would bring more states into the clean energy fold.

"If we insist on forcing electricity generators to reach specific targets on the use of clean energy sources, then let's make sure we allow all clean sources to be considered," said Domenici yesterday addressing the U.S. Senate.

"The costs associated with a [Bingaman's] RPS would be prohibitive—over \$175 billion for our nation, according to one estimate. States that lack the natural resources to meet the mandate—primarily wind energy, which many states don't have—would bear the brunt of the costs. Regardless of whether some states would see savings from RPS, costs would still go up for consumers in states that don't meet the standard. For that reason, the RPS proposal is unfair and unaffordable," Domenici continued.

But with only 15 or 20 percent designated for traditional renewables such as solar, wind, biomass, geothermal and tidal, industry experts noted that adding clean coal technologies and nuclear power into the mix would only weaken a National RPS. In addition, nuclear power

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requires huge subsidies and clean coal technologies are at least 10 years away from being commercial, said Jim Rubens of the Union of Concerned Scientists in an interview with RenewableEnergyAccess.com this week.

"There is no reason to dilute the bill," said Rubens. "[Renewables] are ready for market now. They're cost competitive now and they don't require continuing operating and construction subsidies."

<http://www.renewableenergyaccess.com/rea/news/story?id=48960>