

Utah: How Federal Clean Energy Policy Rollbacks Can Hurt the Economy and Health

Over the next decade, U.S. federal clean energy policies, including the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), and EPA regulations on power plants, were expected to deliver major economic, health, and climate benefits. However, since January 2025, the U.S. federal government has taken a wide range of steps to roll back these policies. In support of these actions, Congress is in the midst of developing and passing a budget reconciliation bill that includes a near-total repeal of the Inflation Reduction Act. Concurrently, on Wednesday, June 11, 2025, the EPA announced plans to weaken a Biden-era regulation that required power plants to slash pollutants, including toxic substances.

The Center for Global Sustainability (CGS) at the University of Maryland released a new analysis demonstrating how repealing key federal environmental and clean energy policies would negatively impact the economy and public health.

As a state with access to an abundance of clean energy resources, including wind, geothermal, and solar, **Utah is particularly vulnerable to rollbacks**. Over the past decade, in the midst of tremendous population and economic growth, Utah has worked to increase renewable energy availability and decrease greenhouse gas emissions.¹ This progress, as well as future action, is threatened by the rollback of U.S. federal clean energy policies that further incentivize economic growth in the state.

The Cost of Rollbacks in Utah

Federal clean energy policy rollbacks **cost Utah \$4.24 billion in GDP and \$646 million in household income in 2035** compared to under current policies. Cumulatively over the next decade, this adds up to **\$24.5 billion in GDP losses and \$4.21 billion in income losses**.

Clean Energy Projects Deliver Key Benefits in Utah²

Supplying the Park City area with clean drinking water requires significant energy, making the water utility, Mountain Regional Water, one of the largest power consumers in Summit County, Utah. Faced with high electricity demands and limited available land, the utility turned to an innovative solution. In Fall 2024, Mountain Regional Water completed Utah's first floating solar array, preserving valuable land while taking advantage of unused water surface.

The nearly 600-kilowatt array now floats on a holding pond adjacent to the Signal Hill Water Treatment Plant. It is expected to generate enough electricity to offset 92% of the plant's energy use and reduce energy costs by 80%. In addition to providing cost-effective, clean power, the solar array also enhances the water treatment process by curbing algae growth and minimizing evaporation.

The Inflation Reduction Act offers critical clean energy tax credits that, as a tax-exempt organization, Mountain Regional Water was able to access through Elective Pay. These clean energy tax credits made this innovative project possible, and Summit County residents will reap the benefits for years to come.

In addition to state impacts, the report found that federal climate policy rollbacks would result in:

- **A cumulative \$1.1 trillion loss in U.S. GDP by 2035**
- **A cumulative \$160 billion drop in disposable income by 2035**
- **An additional cumulative 22,800 deaths of Americans by 2035**
- **A nearly 10% higher annual PM2.5 concentration in 2035**
- **A \$206 average annual increase in household energy costs in 2035**

Authors: Alicia Zhao¹, Ryna Cui¹, Carla Campos Morales², Jiaxun Sun³, Wei Peng², Claire Squire¹, Kiara Ordonez Olazabal¹, Xiangjie Chen³, Xinyuan Huang², Kuishuang Feng³, Adriana Bryant¹, Laura Hinkle¹, Stephanie Vo¹, Michelle Faggert¹, Camryn Dahl¹, Nate Hultman¹

Download the report to learn more at go.umd.edu/ImpactsofFedClimateRollbacks