

To: Jackson, Ryan[jackson.ryan@epa.gov]
From: POLITICO Pro Energy Whiteboard
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Subject: Perry: DOE grid study to ferret out policies hostile to coal

By Eric Wolff

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Energy Secretary Rick Perry said the grid reliability study his agency is conducting will look for ways to reverse policies he claimed were motivated by a desire to harm the coal industry.

Perry didn't specifically mentioned the Obama administration in his speech today to the Energy Information Administration annual conference, but he made it clear that he would pursue a different course.

"Over the last few years, grid experts have expressed concern about the erosion of critical baseload resources, specifically how it is dispatched and compensated," he said. "These are politically driven policies driven by a hostility to coal."

The Obama administration looked for ways to promote low-carbon energy sources in the name of fighting climate change. President Donald Trump, Perry and other Cabinet secretaries have questioned climate science and vowed to reinvigorate the coal industry.

"No reasonable person can deny the thumb — no the hand — that's been put on the scale in favor of certain political outcomes," Perry said.

Perry did not mention economic factors such as competition from cheap natural gas among the problems facing coal and nuclear generators. DOE's reliability study will focus on the "regulatory burden placed on baseload generation," he said.

At the same time, he stressed that DOE would "ensure that renewable energy finds its way into the grid," but that reliability would not be "tossed aside in the name of some political favorite."

Two climate protesters interrupted Perry's EIA speech, both demanding that Perry acknowledge that he was "a climate denier."

WHAT'S NEXT: Perry's grid study is expected in July.

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