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COLUMN
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Ready For West Virginia's Day in Court

In a few short days, on Tuesday, Sept. 27, my office will take the lead before a panel of nine judges and make our best case against President Obama's so-called "Clean Power Plan."

The Power Plan is an unlawful federal rule that forces states to stop using the most affordable, reliable form of energy — coal.

After years of preparation by my office — including an unprecedented victory at the U.S. Supreme Court that halted the Power Plan — West Virginia's legal arguments will finally be heard by one of our nation's most important federal courts.

This is a crucial moment in the battle against the Obama-Clinton war on coal families. My office is ready to fight.

Over the past year, I have led a large, bipartisan coalition of states — *a majority* of all states — to sue EPA over the legality of its job-killing Power Plan. West Virginia and its coalition was the first to file the lawsuit, which is why the case bears the name *West Virginia v. EPA*.

Unlike other so-called leaders, I was not content to surrender to Washington, D.C., just because the fight would be difficult and might upset President Obama and his liberal allies. As long as I am Attorney General, West Virginia will not sit on the sidelines in these battles — we will help lead them.

Our coalition is large and strong with labor unions, consumer groups, businesses, utilities, coal companies and a bipartisan coalition of 29 states and state agencies on our side.

We are united for the proposition that the President lacks the power to pick winners and losers in the energy market and that he cannot bypass the states' traditional role to manage energy resources.

Our fight against the Power Plan matters to every West Virginian because it will negatively impact so many people. This rule simply devastates coal, coal miners, coal retirees and their families and puts at risk thousands of good paying jobs and affordable energy for our state.

Not only that, but local communities and counties that rely on coal — including the tax revenue that coal generates for schools and roads — are harmed. Places like Boone County, among many others, were forced to slash their school funding because of the collapse of tax revenue from coal jobs. Moreover, local businesses that rely on coal jobs — from equipment supply and repair to the local grocery store — are all hurt by the radical Obama-Clinton EPA agenda.

Residents who work and live far from coal country are not exempt. As power plants are forced to use more expensive forms of energy like wind or solar, higher costs are passed onto the consumers by increasing electricity bills. Working families and retirees can least afford the higher electricity bills that result from EPA's Power Plan and other job-killing federal regulations.

This is why I fight.

And that's why we are ready to fight for West Virginia when we get our day in court. Because when the chips are down, West Virginians are always ready to stand up and defend what's right. We will always do everything in our power to defeat this out of control EPA.

Patrick Morrissey serves as attorney general for West Virginia.

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