

Repeal of Coal Ban Passes First Test

Posted by [Eric F. Swanson](#) on February 01, 2011

A bill to repeal Minnesota's current prohibition on new electric energy from coal fired plants passed its first test today, sailing through the House Environment, Energy and Natural Resources Committee on an 11 - 6 vote. HF 72, authored by Rep. Mike Beard received the support of all 10 Committee Republicans, along with DFL Rep. David Dill. Rep. Beard acknowledged having voted for the original bill, but stated that he now regretted that vote. He indicated that current law does not pick "winning" technologies, but "politically popular" ones. Reps. Hilty and Knuth spoke against the bill calling it a step backwards in Minnesota's efforts to address greenhouse gas concerns. In the end, the Committee's new Republican majority once again showed its strong dislike of government mandates, preferring to let the market choose winners and losers. The bill now moves to the House Commerce Committee. The Senate companion (SF 86, authored by Sen. Rosen) has not yet been scheduled for hearing.