



Insight

Killing the Coal Industry

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U.S. economic growth didn't even [reach single digits](#) last quarter, yet the Obama Administration continues its attack on American energy. Federal coal leases have added over \$541 billion to the U.S. economy over the past 15 years. Despite this, President Obama made a promise in 2008 to "break" the coal industry in order to implement his climate legacy. During a 2008 interview [Obama stated](#), "If somebody wants to build a coal-powered plant, they can; it's just that it will bankrupt them, because they're going to be charged a huge sum for all that greenhouse gas that's being emitted."

Under President Obama, the EPA and the Department of the Interior have [implemented \\$312 billion in regulatory costs](#), heaping \$20 billion in annual costs just on the coal industry. These policies threaten to shut down the coal industry, which will contribute at least [\\$650 billion](#) to the U.S. economy over the next decade. The administration's regulatory assault against the coal industry has already put thousands of Americans out of work. Since President Obama took office, [over 180,000 coal miners have lost their jobs](#), equating to over \$9.7 billion in lost wages.

The leading democratic candidate in the presidential race plans on following Obama's footsteps to kill the coal industry. While speaking at a town hall last month, [Hillary Clinton stated](#) "We're going to put a lot of coal miners and coal companies out of business." In an attempt to smooth over these comments, Hillary's spokesperson insisted that she supports coal miners and has their best interests in mind.

Building on Obama's strategy to bankrupt the coal industry, Clinton's plan would eliminate the industry entirely and in its place [provide federal aid](#) to the now-unemployed individuals from that community. While the proposal includes money for retraining coal miners to work in other industries, most other positions they would be able to get in their communities pay far less than their current job.

The chart below demonstrates the chilling effect that the last five years alone have had on the coal industry. Rather than preventing the coal industry from succeeding, and eliminating much-needed jobs in America, policymakers should promise to relieve the regulatory pressure on the coal industry.

