



BUSINESS

2 groups oppose sale of West Virginia coal-fired plant

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CHARLESTON, W.VA. — Environmental advocates are urging West Virginia's Public Service Commission to reject two power companies' proposal to pay \$195 million for a 37-year-old coal-fired power plant, saying it will saddle 530,000 ratepayers with the expenses and market risks.

Monongahela Power Co. and Potomac Edison Co. this year proposed purchasing the 1,300-megawatt-capacity plant along the Ohio River near Belmont from Allegheny Energy Supply.

They called it "the least-cost source to meet a steadily increasing capacity shortfall" in the utilities' service areas that would initially cut average ratepayer bills by about \$12 annually.

In a brief to the commission, West Virginia Citizen Action Group and West Virginia Solar United Neighborhoods say the sale among FirstEnergy Corp. entities mainly shifts risks and costs from the corporation to customers whose rates would rise later.

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