# U.S. Supreme Court Halts EPA's 'Good Neighbor' Pollution Plan Amid Split Decision



The U.S. Supreme Court has temporarily halted the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) "good neighbor" plan aimed at reducing air pollution that travels across state lines. The decision, made on June 27, 2024, saw a 5-4 split among the justices, with a conservative majority voting to stay the enforcement of the plan.

The EPA's regulation targets emissions from power plants and industrial sources in upwind states, which contribute to smog and other pollution in downwind states. The plan has been enforced in 11 states, including Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, New York, and others, where the EPA reported an 18% reduction in power plant emissions last year. However, it is contested by several Republican-led states and industry groups who argue it is costly and ineffective.

This decision follows earlier Supreme Court actions limiting the EPA's regulatory powers, including a 2022 ruling on carbon dioxide emissions from power plants. The pause on the "good neighbor" plan will remain while a federal appeals court in Washington, D.C., considers ongoing challenges from states like Ohio, Indiana, and West Virginia, as well as various industry representatives.

The case emerged as an emergency appeal, reflecting an urgent legal contention without complete lower court proceedings, drawing dissent from Justice Amy Coney Barrett and the court’s liberal members. The EPA contends the plan is crucial for reducing harmful emissions and protecting public health, especially for vulnerable groups such as children and the elderly.