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EMMONS COUNTY RECORD

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Hoeven, Heitkamp secure millions in coal subsidies

Taxpayer dollars

North Dakota's two United States Senators have announced that taxpayers will be giving the coal industry more federal subsidies.

U.S. Senators John Hoeven and Heidi Heitkamp said Project Tundra, a technology project to retrofit existing power plants to capture carbon dioxide, has been awarded \$6 million from taxpayers by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE).

Hoeven serves as a member of the Senate Energy and Water Appropriations Committee and successfully included the funding for DOE's competitive grant program in the Fiscal Year 2017 appropriations legislation.

Following this, Sen. Hoeven secured a commitment from Energy Secretary Rick Perry to help advance pilot and demonstration efforts like Project Tundra and provided a letter of support for the project's grant application.

The project is being developed by Allete Clean Energy, Minnkota Power and BNI Coal in partnership with the Energy and Environmental Research Center (EERC) at the University of North Dakota (UND). The grant will allow the partnership to design and test the technology while also studying its feasibility to ensure that it is commercially-viable.

In other efforts to provide subsidies and tax breaks to the coal industry, Sen. Hoeven has reintroduced the CO Regulatory Certainty Act, legislation that aligns tax guidelines with existing federal regulations at the EPA to ensure CCS project developers can use the Section 45Q tax credit. His legislation would also extend another taxpayer subsidy, the refined coal tax credit.

Recently, Congress passed and President Trump signed into law Sen. Heitkamp's FUTURE Act, which is designed to help maintain a place for coal and natural gas in the nation's energy mix while spurring adoption of low-carbon technologies to transform carbon pollution into usable products.

The U.S. Department of Energy has announced \$44 million in taxpayer subsidies for carbon capture research.

Sen. Heitkamp recently announced another \$700,000 of taxpayer dollars to help design, build and operate a coal-powered pilot plant.

Among the beneficiaries of the various taxpayer subsidies is NACCO Industries, Inc., the holding company that owns North American Coal which has mining operations in North Dakota. NACCO had revenues of \$110.4 million and an adjusted operating profit of \$33.1 million in 2016.

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