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Bevin, Paul Urge TVA Not to Retire Coal-fired Fire Power Unit in Western Kentucky

By [LISA AUTRY \(/PEOPLE/LISA-AUTRY\)](#) • 3 HOURS AGO

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Kentucky Governor Matt Bevin says closing the last coal-fired unit at the Paradise Fossil Plant in Muhlenberg County would be a "huge mistake." Bevin outlined his concerns this month in a letter to the Tennessee Valley Authority

(http://mediad.publicbroadcasting.net/p/wkyu/files/styles/x_large/public/201901/paradise_fossil_becca.jpg)

TVA's new gas fired facility, with the older coal units in background.

CREDIT BECCA SCHIMMEL, OHIO VALLEY RESOURCE

(<https://www.dropbox.com/s/gttj161ca3j67zc/WILLIAM%20JOHNSON%20TVA%20LETTER.pdf?dl=0>).

The TVA is considering closing the last remaining coal-powered unit after an environmental assessment projected it to have high future maintenance and environmental compliance costs.

The Paradise power plant in Drakesboro has been in operation since 1970. Units 1 and 2 were replaced with natural gas generation in 2017.

In a letter dated January 4 to TVA President Bill Johnson, Governor Bevin raised concerns about closing Unit 3, including the layoffs of about 130 TVA employees and the economic impact to Muhlenberg and surrounding counties.


As the new chairman of the Southern States Energy Board, the Republican governor reiterated his support for coal as an energy source, and not based just on economics, but on availability, reliability, security, and resiliency. He cited a study cautioning that the widespread closure of coal plants across the U.S. threatens grid stability in the event of a natural disaster and interruption in gas supply.

U.S. Senator Rand Paul of Kentucky has shared similar concerns with the TVA. The GOP lawmaker from Bowling Green submitted comments in December during a public comment period offered by the federal utility.

"Such action would not only prolong the war on coal, picking winners and losers in the energy sector, but it would also be contrary to the core mission of TVA to provide reliable, low-cost energy to those in its service area," wrote Paul.

The TVA board of directors could make a decision on the future of the Paradise Fossil Plant at its February meeting, although it may still be one member short. President Trump nominated John Ryder in February 2018. His nomination still awaits final confirmation by the U.S. Senate.

TAGS: [PARADISE FOSSIL PLANT \(/TERM/PARADISE-FOSSIL-PLANT\)](#)

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