



## **ROBERT R. NORDHAUS**

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For four decades, Robert R. (Bob) Nordhaus was a thought leader in U.S. energy and environmental law and policy. Working within the Congress, the Executive Branch, law schools, and in private practice, Bob had far-reaching influence over the development and implementation of foundational laws. He died on December 24, 2016, at the age of 79.

A New Mexico native, Bob arrived in Washington, D.C., in 1963 after graduating from Stanford University and Yale Law School. He started his career in the House Office of Legislative Counsel and later served as committee counsel at the House Energy & Commerce Committee. In these positions, Bob crafted many of the laws that established the framework of modern energy and environmental law, including the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and the Clean Air Act of 1970. Bob drafted key provisions in the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975, which is the source of authority for the Corporate Average Fuel Economy Standards. He also drafted Section 111(d) of the Clean Air Act, which is the source of authority for the Clean Power Plan Rule. Bob drew respect on both sides of the aisle as a master legislative drafter.

Bob went from Congress to the Carter Administration, initially serving as Assistant Administrator at the Federal Energy Administration. In 1977, Bob became the first General Counsel of the newly-formed Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). He worked with then-FERC Chairman Charles Curtis to implement major Carter-era energy legislation, including the Natural Gas Policy Act (NGPA) and the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act (PURPA). The NGPA and PURPA revolutionized natural gas markets and competitive electricity markets. Bob also modernized and rationalized the administrative procedures of FERC, establishing the framework for today's FERC practice.

Bob left FERC in 1980 to practice law as a partner at Van Ness Feldman. Except for a three-year stint as General Counsel to the Department of Energy in the Clinton Administration, Bob remained at the firm. In private practice, he was a trusted adviser to businesses, public agencies, policy-makers, NGOs, and think tanks. Bob played a critical role in finding common ground among companies, activists, and policy-makers. He also taught several generations of young lawyers as an adjunct professor at the law schools of Georgetown (1980-1985) and George Washington University (2002-2016).

Bob authored several influential law review articles. His scholarship was wide-ranging, covering such issues as electricity markets, federal and state jurisdiction over electricity regulation, greenhouse gas regulation, regulation of natural gas markets, carbon capture and sequestration, and international emissions trading.

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