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## Report: W.Va. coal jobs could rebound after 2020

by The Associated Press  
The Associated Press

CHARLESTON, W.Va. (AP) - A report by the West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy suggests the state is likely to continue losing coal industry jobs through 2020.

Center policy analyst Sean O'Leary estimates that coal employment in southern West Virginia would fall from about 16,000 in 2010 to 11,400 in 2020 before rebounding to 20,500 by 2035.

In northern West Virginia, O'Leary says the number of jobs would nearly double over the 25-year span to nearly 10,000 in 2035.

The think tank's findings were published Thursday.

O'Leary says the state's coal industry is changing and state leaders need to be ready for it. The center has proposed the formation of a task force to help communities look for economic alternatives to coal mining, among other things.

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