

Federal Climate and Energy Activities Weekly Roundup
July 13 – July 17

Update on Senate Climate Legislation:

This week, the Committee on Environment and Public Works (EPW Committee) continued its series of hearings in advance of considering cap and trade legislation. EPW hearings focused on agriculture, transportation and US competitiveness, as these issues relate to climate change.

On July 14, the Committee held back-to-back hearings. In the first, which focused on agriculture and forestry, discussion centered on the potential costs of cap and trade for farmers. Democratic Committee members discussed how agriculture offsets under a cap and trade program could work best, while Republicans on the Committee took the opportunity to voice their concerns over the costs cap and trade could create for the nation's farmers.

In the second EPW Committee hearing that day, the Committee considered the role of transportation in climate change and reducing greenhouse gases. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood, testifying at the hearing, noted that more than one-third of the nation's greenhouse gas emissions are transportation-related. The Secretary promoted "livable communities" with well-developed mass transit opportunities and bicycle-friendly routes as a powerful solution to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. He expressed his support for mass transit and infrastructure projects funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, and his opposition to raising the federal gas tax as a means for funding mass transit and other infrastructure needs. Several Republicans on the Committee questioned the Secretary on the feasibility of affording new, cleaner public transit projects without raising the federal gas tax.

On July 16th, the Committee turned its attention to ensuring and enhancing U.S. competitiveness in light of cap-and trade. Testimony focused on the effect that legislation to mitigate climate change could have on the nation's job market and economic competitiveness with other countries. Chairman Boxer and fellow Democratic Committee members discussed how climate change legislation could spur job creation, pointing to the jobs that would be needed in a new clean energy economy. Ranking Member James Inhofe (R-OK) and fellow Republican Committee members countered by stating that the House climate change bill—upon which the Senate bill will be based—would cost the American economy 2.5 million net jobs, disproportionately affecting the industrial areas of the Midwest and the South. They contended these losses, along with increased energy costs for consumers, would further damage an already weakened national economy and stunt the nation's economic competitiveness, especially when compared with China and other developing nations with little to no emission standards.

Next week, the Committees on Foreign Relations and Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry will hold their own hearings on climate change and global security the role of agriculture and forestry in addressing climate change, respectively. EPW Committee Chairman Barbara Boxer (D-CA) is

expected to introduce cap and trade legislation in early September and move to markup in her committee shortly thereafter.

House Science and Technology Committee Hearing on Wind and Solar:

On July 14, the House Science and Technology subcommittee on Energy and Environment held a hearing to consider the Wind Energy Research and Development Act (HR 3165), introduced by Rep. Paul Tonko (D-NY). The bill would create a program within the Department of Energy that would provide \$200 million a year for five years to support wind energy research, development and deployment. The hearing included witnesses from the American Wind Energy Association and the Wind Science and Engineering Research Center at Texas Tech among others. The testimony focused on increasing financing for the wind and solar sectors, as well as the necessity to improve the nation's transmission infrastructure. Subcommittee Chairman Brian Baird (D-WA) noted that these ideas are critical to "create green jobs here in the United States" and "in combating the growing threats of global overheating and ocean acidification."

New Legislation

- The Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (H.R.3183) introduced July 13 by Rep. Ed Pastor (D-AZ). The bill would make appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes.

Status: Placed on the Union Calendar, Calendar No. 110.

- The Affordable Food and Fuel for America Act (H.R.3187) introduced by Rep. Joseph Crowley (D-NY). The bill would reduce and eliminate the tax credit for alcohol fuel mixtures and the tariff on imported ethanol.

Status: Referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means.

- (H.R.1622) introduced on March 19 by Rep. John Sullivan (R-OK). The bill would provide for a program of research, development, and demonstration on natural gas vehicles.

Status: Placed on the Union Calendar, Calendar No. 112.

- (H.R.2729) introduced June 4 by Rep. Ben Ray Lujan (D-NV). The bill would authorize the designation of National Environmental Research Parks by the Secretary of Energy, and for other purposes.

Status: Placed on the Union Calendar, Calendar No. 113.

- The Wind Energy Research and Development Act (H.R.3165) introduced July 9 by Rep. Paul D. Tonko (D-NY). The bill would provide for a program of wind energy research, development, and demonstration, and for other purposes.

Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Energy and Environment.

- (H.RES.645) introduced July 14 by Rep. Doris Matsui (D-CA). The bill would provide for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3183) making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes.

Status: On agreeing to the resolution Agreed to by the Yeas and Nays: 238 - 185 (Roll no. 539).

- The Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (H.R.3183) introduced by Rep. Ed Pastor (-AZ). The bill would make appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes.

Status: Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union rises leaving H.R. 3183 as unfinished business.

- (S.1462) introduced Senator Jeff Bingaman (D-NM). The bill would promote clean energy technology development, enhanced energy efficiency, improved energy security, and energy innovation and workforce development, and for other purposes.

Status: Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 110.