

**Federal Climate and Energy Activities Weekly Roundup
September 21—September 25**

Update on Senate Climate Legislation

Senate Environment and Public Works Committee (EPW) Chairman Barbara Boxer (D-CA) and Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman John Kerry (D-MA) announced September 24 that they would introduce climate change legislation on September 30. EPW hearings could begin as early as the week of October 5, and a markup is likely to occur later in October. Both Kerry and Agriculture Committee Chairman Blanche Lincoln are unlikely to hold separate markups of the bill in their committees, though both will be involved with crafting any provisions that fall under their committees' jurisdictions. However, Finance Committee Chairman Baucus this week said his committee would mark up portions of the bill dealing with international trade and allocation of emissions allowances. Baucus did not give a time line for action in his committee. Rather, he said he would wait until Senate Majority Leader Reid (D-NV) signals climate change legislation is moving forward. The Energy and Natural Resources Committee in June marked up an energy bill that will be combined with the climate change bill. As for floor schedule, Reid told reporters this week that "We're going to push climate as hard and as fast as we can." Last week he had indicated that floor consideration could slip into 2010.

World Leaders Discuss Climate Change at U.N. Summit and G-20 Talks

Two significant meetings of international leaders focusing at least in part on climate issues occurred this week. On September 22, the United Nations held a summit on climate change, followed by a meeting of the Group of 20 (G-20) nations on September 24 and 25. The U.N. Summit is part of a series of meetings focusing on climate negotiations in advance of the Copenhagen climate meeting this December. The intention of the Copenhagen meeting is to adopt a world climate strategy intended to replace the Kyoto Protocol. Speaking at the U.N. Summit, Chinese President Hu Jintao detailed steps China intends to make to address climate change, including conservation and efficiency, use of non-fossil fuels for energy production, re-forestation, and research into "green" technologies. He did not specify a specific emissions reduction target. President Obama, also speaking at the Summit, urged leaders to overcome obstacles to reaching a post-2012 climate agreement. He also announced that at the G-20 meeting, he would push for a phase-out of subsidies for fossil fuels by those nations. As of this writing, the Administration has not released details of its plan for phasing out those subsidies.

Senate Rejects Amendment to Delay EPA Regulation of Greenhouse Gases

The Senate passed the FY10 Interior-Environment spending bill on September 24, after rejecting an amendment by Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) that would have prevented the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) from regulating greenhouse gases (GHG) under the Clean Air Act during FY10. As noted above, the EPA has not yet released its final endangerment finding that GHGs pose a danger to human health, but it is expected to do so shortly. The endangerment finding is the first step in EPA regulating GHGs. The threat of EPA regulation is viewed by many as a means of prodding Congress into passing climate change legislation so as to reduce greenhouse gases

through the legislative process rather than allowing EPA to do so through its regulatory authority. Many members of Congress, including Murkowski, as well as many in industry have on occasion said that a legislative solution is far preferable to a regulatory approach.

EPA Releases Final Rule Requiring Emissions Reporting

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on September 22 released its final rule establishing a mandatory greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reporting program. The rule applies to entities emitting at least 25,000 tons of GHGs annually. Covered entities—which include fossil fuel suppliers, manufacturing facilities, and manufacturers of heavy-duty and off-road vehicles—would be required to report their emissions to EPA beginning in 2010.

House Committee Holds Hearing on Solar Energy

On September 24, the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming held a hearing on solar energy, including growth of the industry and concerns from environmentalists about land use and infrastructure.

NIST Releases Draft Smart Grid Standards

On September 24, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) within the Department of Commerce released a draft report detailing 77 “Smart Grid” standards. The standards are aimed at providing a framework for the development of the next generation of grid infrastructure that will be based on digital technologies, and allow for a more efficient and environmentally friendly grid system. NIST is allowing a 30-day comment period on the draft.

[Click here to access the draft report.](#)

New Legislation:

- H.R. 3644, introduced September 24 by Rep. Lois Capps (D-CA). The bill would direct the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to establish education and watershed programs, which advance environmental literacy, including preparedness and adaptability for the likely impacts of climate change in coastal watershed regions. The bill was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources.