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Subject: Updated invitation: OCIO MIB Holiday Party @ Wed Dec 13, 2017 1:30pm - 3pm (ocio_announcements@ios.doi.gov)
Start Date/Time: 2017-12-13T13:30:00-05:00
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To: heather_swift@ios.doi.gov[heather_swift@ios.doi.gov]
From: POLITICO Pro Energy
Sent: 2017-12-13T05:47:35-05:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Morning Energy: Biofuel, refiner backers seek deal at White House — Pruitt pushes LNG in Morocco — Murkowski upbeat on ANWR's fate in tax plan
Received: 2017-12-13T05:47:44-05:00

By Anthony Adragna | 12/13/2017 05:45 AM EDT

With help from Emily Holden, Alex Guillén, Eric Wolff, Ben Lefebvre and Sara Stefanini

LET'S MAKE A DEAL? The White House is hoping it can get out of a bind between its oil industry supporters and its agricultural supporters by bringing representatives for the two groups together today for a preliminary meeting on a grand bargain for the Renewable Fuel Standard, Pro's Eric Wolff [reports](#). Refiners, with some backing from unions, say they're drowning under heavy RFS compliance costs, and the biofuel industry insists it needs the mandates in the RFS to keep expanding and to grow advanced biofuels.

Who's attending? Aides from the pro-ethanol Sens. [Chuck Grassley](#), [Joni Ernst](#) and [Deb Fischer](#) will be there for the corn-state contingent, while staffers for Sens. [Ted Cruz](#) and [Pat Toomey](#) will make the case for refiners. Staff from EPA, the Department of Agriculture and the National Economic Council will also join.

What about Congress? Sen. [Jim Inhofe](#) declined Tuesday to offer any details on the plan he and Sen. [John Cornyn](#) are working on to address the issue, but said it would have to address the exploding cost of buying biofuel credits that EPA uses to ensure refiners are blending the required amounts of biofuel into the nation's fuel supply. "The RIN values are a huge consideration because you're talking about millions and millions. And it wasn't meant to be that way. Anytime you have a value system that jumps around from eight cents to 800 dollars, that shows it's a broken system," Inhofe said.

Important context: Senators like Grassley are desperate to get Bill Northey, the nominee to be USDA undersecretary for farm production and conservation, confirmed since he'll play a crucial role in crafting the farm bill that lawmakers are three months behind schedule in drafting, Pro Agriculture's Catherine Boudreau [reports](#). Cruz, who was upbeat after last week's meeting but declined comment on Northey, placed a hold on his selection recently after corn-state Republicans extracted concessions from EPA on the RFS.

Can there be a bargain, grand or petite? Ethanol producers have been deeply skeptical of any kind of deal to be made with the oil industry, which they feel wants to squeeze them out of the fuels market if at all possible. But it's not even clear what parameters there are for a deal. University of Illinois economist Scott Irwin [said on Twitter](#), the mandates in the RFS drive up RIN costs. You can't push down RIN costs without undermining the mandates. "There is no 'win-win' on the RFS concerning mandates and RINs," he wrote in a thread. "Lower RINs prices go with lower mandates and vice versa. Straightforward economics."

WELCOME TO WEDNESDAY! I'm your host Anthony Adragna, and API's Khary Cauthen was first to identify Erskine Bowles as the former White House chief of staff who lost consecutive Senate bids in North Carolina. For today: Sens. [Bernie Sanders](#), [Angus King](#) and Joe Lieberman are well-known third-party senators. Who was the last independent senator to serve before them? Send your tips, energy gossip and comments to aadragna@politico.com, or follow us on Twitter [@AnthonyAdragna](#), [@Morning_Energy](#) and [@POLITICOPro](#).

Faster, Smarter Legislative Tracking: Don't wait until 2018 to try *Legislative Compass*, POLITICO Pro's powerful, easy-to-use tool for federal and state legislative tracking. 2017 preferred pricing expires 12/31. [Start my trial](#).

NO MOORE: Sen.-elect Doug Jones [shocked the political world](#) by winning the Senate election in ruby-red Alabama on Tuesday evening, but it's worth pointing out he ran on a pretty [progressive platform](#) on environmental and climate change issues. His website says he "believe[s] in science" and opposed Trump's decision to leave the Paris accord. One thing to watch now is the committee shuffle: outgoing Sen. [Luther Strange](#) will vacate a spot on the Energy Committee (so some other Republican will get it).

HERE'S LOOKING AT YOU, PRUITT: EPA revealed Tuesday night that Administrator Scott Pruitt has been in Morocco this week promoting "the potential benefit of liquefied natural gas imports on Morocco's economy," as well as U.S.-Moroccan environmental cooperation. Pruitt's visit included a meeting with Morocco's energy minister to "discuss new and ongoing areas of collaboration under the Free Trade Agreement and the country's interest in importing LNG," according to EPA. The agency said he also met with top foreign affairs and justice officials. Morocco produces little natural gas and relies heavily on imports, although it also plans a major expansion of solar and wind power, according to the Energy Information Administration.

ROUNDUP FROM PARIS: The private sector took the center stage at the One Planet Summit in Paris Tuesday to show what they're willing and able to close the €179.6 billion (\$210.9 billion) a year gap between the investment needed to fulfill the goals of the Paris climate agreement and what's foreseen in policies adopted so far. POLITICO Europe's Sara Stefanini with [the roundup](#) and here's a sampling of the goings on:

— **Moving on from Trump:** Six months after Trump announced he wanted to leave the Paris agreement, the world is going ahead without him. "If we're here, so many of us today, it's because we've decided not to accept America's decision," French President Emmanuel Macron said [in a speech](#). Former U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry agreed when asked if non-state actors can make up for a lack of federal leadership: "It is possible, yes," he told reporters.

— **Carbon pricing in the Americas:** Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, the governors of California and Washington and the premiers of Alberta, British Columbia, Nova Scotia, Ontario and Quebec [launched](#) a cooperative framework on carbon pricing.

— **ING ditches coal:** Dutch bank ING said that by the end of 2025 it [will quit financing](#) utilities that are over 5 percent reliant on coal-fired power in their energy mix. The bank already does not finance companies that are over 10 percent reliant on coal — up from ING's pre-Paris threshold of 50 percent. Greenpeace applauded the latest announcement.

YOU CAN'T DO THAT! Democrats vowed to keep a watchful eye after GAO [found](#) the Trump administration illegally withheld \$91 million budgeted for the Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy program earlier this year, your ME host [reports](#). Top Senate Energy Democrat [Maria Cantwell](#) said in a statement: "The President cannot ignore statutory requirements or funding direction provided by Congress. I expect nothing less than Secretary [Rick] Perry's full compliance with the law." DOE ultimately relented and released all the funds.

AROUND CONGRESS — EPW LOOKS AT NRC: The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee gavel in at 9:45 a.m. to vote on R.D. James' nomination to run the Army Corps of Engineers and then holds an oversight hearing on the Nuclear Regulatory Commission immediately afterwards. Watch [here](#).

Looking at solar energy deployment: A House Science subcommittee holds a hearing at 2 p.m. entitled "Advancing Solar Energy Technology: Research Trumps Deployment." Witnesses include: Daniel Simmons, principal deputy assistant secretary with DOE's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy and Martin Keller, director of the National Renewable Energy Laboratory. Watch [here](#).

Natural Resources holds mega-markup: Lawmakers on House Natural Resources Committee hold a markup of 15 bills today at 10 a.m. More information [here](#).

Examining the future of North American energy trade: The House Energy and Natural Resources Energy Subcommittee holds a hearing entitled "The Impacts and Future of North American Energy Trade." Witnesses representing the National Association of Manufacturers, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, American Fuel and Petrochemical Manufacturers and Resources for the Future appear. Background [memo](#) and watch [here](#).

Congressional Democrats, including House Minority Leader [Nancy Pelosi](#) and Senate Minority Leader [Chuck Schumer](#), rally at 10:30 a.m. to push lawmakers to protect pensions, including those of retired miners, from cuts as they weigh end-of-year spending legislation.

INTERIOR STAFF SHUFFLE INVITES LAWSUIT: Interior Department employee Matt Allen has filed a FOIA lawsuit in an effort to determine why he and other senior employees were suddenly transferred earlier this year. Interior's Inspector General's office is already [investigating](#) Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's plans to shuffle dozens of Senior Executive Service employees, and another now-former employee [filed](#) a complaint with the Office of Special Counsel and [a lawsuit](#) after being reassigned. Allen, who became a BLM spokesman in the waning days of the Obama administration, was reassigned to a public affairs position at BSEE in September. "My client's demotion reeks of reprisal, and these documents will provide us the tools we require to prove that," plaintiff's lawyer Katherine Atkinson said in a press release. An Interior spokesperson was not immediately available to comment.

NOT GIVING UP: Senate EPW Chairman [John Barrasso](#) told ME Tuesday he's not giving up on Michael Dourson's nomination to run EPA's chemicals office even as [Republican defections](#) have put a damper on his confirmation prospects. "It's a question of how Sen. McConnell chooses to prioritize them," the Wyoming Republican said, downplaying the challenges facing Dourson, a former industry-funded toxicologist.

CURTAINS FOR GARRETT? Former New Jersey Rep. Scott Garrett, Trump's pick to run the Export-Import Bank, is likely to have his nomination blocked after Sen. [Mike Rounds](#) came out against his selection on Tuesday, Pro Financial Services' Zachary Warmbrodt [reports](#). "I believe him to be a proponent of the abolition of the bank rather than a reformer of the bank," Rounds said. "I'm looking for reformers, not abolitionists." Garrett's selection has been roundly criticized by the business community. The Senate Banking Committee has 12 Republicans and 11 Democrats, so Rounds' defection would sink the selection in committee.

MURKOWSKI UPBEAT ON ANWR'S PROSPECTS: Senate Energy Chairman [Lisa Murkowski](#) told ME Tuesday she's optimistic language opening ANWR to oil and gas drilling will make it into the final Republican tax package [H.R. 1 \(115\)](#), even though a dozen of her House colleagues [oppose](#) its inclusion. "I'm feeling pretty good about where we are with ANWR right now," she said. "We just need to make sure that we're able to come together as conferees and get a package that both bodies can support."

Speaking of which, Conservation Voters of Pennsylvania and PennFuture are running a [full page ad](#) in the Philadelphia Inquirer today urging Republican Reps. [Pat Meehan](#), [Ryan Costello](#) and [Brian Fitzpatrick](#) to vote against any final tax package that contains ANWR drilling. You'll remember they were three of the 12 House Republicans who said in the letter they opposed opening the Arctic area to oil and gas drilling.

Murkowski also said she wasn't ready to weigh in on whether Zinke's [use of helicopters](#) to attend Washington area events, like a horseback ride with Vice President Mike Pence, was appropriate until she got more information. "I think we all recognize that there is a responsibility that we have as lawmakers, when you're using the taxpayer dollar, that you do so in a responsible way and something that's not wasteful," she said. "But I also understand that there are sometimes requirements of the job that require you to perhaps take a different mode of transportation."

And she told your ME host she hadn't been following the ongoing battle between Patagonia and Zinke, but that she too had been irked by the outdoor clothing giant's advocacy for barring drilling in ANWR last year. "Last Christmas, I actually looked at the Patagonia catalog that came to my house," Murkowski said. "I didn't think they were marketing their outdoor clothing. It was a full on effort to build support for turning ANWR into wilderness ... It was enough to get me, as a consumer, riled up enough to say 'I'm not buying Patagonia products.'"

UNUSUAL MOVE IN VIRGINIA: A state panel granted the Atlantic Coast pipeline's water quality permits, but took the unusual step of delaying their effective date until soil and erosion control plans and stormwater management plans are finished, the Associated Press [reports](#). "While this is most definitely not what Dominion wanted and gives opponents of the pipeline more time to push for rejection, the [Virginia State Water Control Board] should have rejected the certificate outright," Lorne Stockman with Oil Change International said in a statement.

SOLAR FOR SAMARITANS: EPA says it's partnering with the non-governmental organizations in Puerto Rico to provide generators or solar panels to run drinking water pumps and wells that supply water to 3 percent of the population and are not managed by the island's government. EPA and other U.S. and Puerto Rican agencies are working with Water Mission, Samaritan's Purse, Project Hope and RCAP Solutions. Solar panels have been installed in four

communities and will be provided to four more before Christmas, EPA said in a press release.

More than two months after Hurricane Maria hit, about 43 percent of island residents didn't have power and 17 percent didn't have drinkable water, according to statistics issued on November 20 by the U.S. territory's government. The Natural Resources Defense Council [finds](#) that, according to government test results, more than two-thirds of the population was at potential risk of exposure to bacterial contamination in water systems.

MAIL CALL! SICK OF THOSE TALKING POINTS: The EPW Democrats asked Kathleen Hartnett White, nominee to lead the White House Council on Environmental Quality, to redo her responses to questions for the record after they contained identical language as previous nominees. Link [here](#).

DON'T DO IT! The Environmental Working Group is urging Toyota in [a letter](#) not to enter into a management partnership with EPA as Pruitt suggested the automaker was going to do at a congressional hearing last week. "By partnering with Mr. Pruitt's EPA, you are aiding and publicly aligning yourself with his irresponsible agenda," EWG President Ken Cook wrote, warning Toyota it risked "irreparable harm" to its brand by pairing with Pruitt.

LEARNING FROM THE DRUG COMPANIES? The Hamilton Project at Brookings is out with a report today arguing energy research and development could be improved by implementing some practices from the pharmaceutical industry. Those include: Creating a strong system of contract research, implementing consistent technical standards and offering better incentives for electric utilities to deploy and test new technologies. Link [here](#).

TAKE A GLANCE! Texans for Natural Gas is out with [an analysis](#) this morning finding that even as exports of natural gas have increased dramatically, prices have fallen. That goes against the previous [predictions](#) of the Energy Information Administration, which warned more exports would cause price spikes.

SPOTTED: Energy Secretary Rick Perry receiving the Ronald Reagan Award from the Texas Public Policy Foundation on Tuesday night. Pics [here](#) ... Zinke and his wife, Lola, walking through the White House's Christmas decorations. Pic [here](#).

LIGHTER CLICK: NRDC trustee Robert Redford made a video asking people to urge Congress to vote against the final tax package because of the provision opening ANWR to drilling. Watch [here](#).

QUICK HITS

— JEA wants out of struggling nuclear power deal, disputes negative credit report. [Jacksonville.com](#).

— Former Republican EPA chiefs blast controversial Alaska mining project. [The Hill](#).

— State panel urges temporary shutdown of Mackinac pipeline. [AP](#).

— National Park Service slashes number of free-access days from 10 to four in 2018. [Denver](#)

Post.

— Trump's Stand-In Bureaucrats May Have Overstayed Limits. [Bloomberg](#).

— Top Interior Official Stayed At Montana Resort That Secretary Zinke's Billionaire Friend And Donor Owns. [Huffington Post](#).

HAPPENING TODAY

9:45 a.m. — "[Oversight of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission](#)" and [Business Meeting](#), Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, Dirksen 406

10:00 a.m. — House Natural Resources Committee holds [markup](#) of 16 bills, Longworth 1324

10:30 a.m. — Congressional Democrats, including Leaders Schumer and Pelosi, rally to protect workers' pensions, Senate Visitors Center rooms 208-209

10:15 a.m. — "[The Impacts and Future of North American Energy Trade](#)," House Energy and Commerce Energy Subcommittee, Rayburn 2322

1:30 a.m. — "[Advancing U.S. Innovation by Reforming Patent and R&D Policy](#)," The Hamilton Project at Brookings, 1775 Massachusetts Ave. NW

2:00 p.m. — "[Advancing Solar Energy Technology: Research Trumps Deployment](#)," House Science, Space and Technology Energy Subcommittee, Rayburn 2318

THAT'S ALL FOR ME!

To view online:

<https://www.politicopro.com/newsletters/morning-energy/2017/12/biofuel-refiner-backers-seek-deal-at-white-house-049656>

Stories from POLITICO Pro

White House to host Senate staff for biofuels talks [Back](#)

By Eric Wolff | 12/12/2017 04:16 PM EDT

The White House will host a meeting Wednesday with Senate staffers in the hopes of striking a deal between oil refiners and biofuel producers who have clashed over the Renewable Fuel Standard, sources tell POLITICO.

A White House aide confirmed the meeting would take place. Sources said it's a preliminary conversation intended to explore whether a deal can be reached to both help refiners, who say they are struggling with the costs of complying with the RFS, and continue supporting the biofuel industry that has matured under the RFS.

Industry sources and Republican Senate aides say that staff for pro-ethanol Sens. [Chuck Grassley](#) (R-Iowa) and [Joni Ernst](#) (R-Iowa) will attend, and aides to Sens. [Ted Cruz](#) (R-Texas) and [Pat](#)

Toomey (R-Pa.) will be there to represent refiners. Staff from EPA, the Department of Agriculture, and the National Economic Council will also join the meeting.

A spokeswoman for Sen. Deb Fischer (R-Neb.) said her staff would also be attending the meeting, which was first reported by Reuters.

Midwestern senators scored a win when they forced EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt to backtrack on efforts to alter parts of the RFS, but Cruz forced the White House to get involved after he put a hold on Bill Northey, who is up for a USDA undersecretary position.

To view online [click here](#).

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Grassley: Senate Ag is 3 months behind in drafting farm bill [Back](#)

By Catherine Boudreau | 12/12/2017 11:10 AM EDT

Sen. Chuck Grassley said today that senators are three months behind schedule in drafting the next farm bill and that he had previously anticipated the Agriculture Committee would have advanced legislation before Christmas.

"We can't horse around any longer," Grassley told reporters during a conference call, adding that the farm bill should be finished in the first half of next year so producers have predictability.

Senate Agriculture Chairman Pat Roberts, during an [interview](#) on C-SPAN on Sunday, said he is aiming to have the panel finish a farm bill "blueprint" by February and to bring the measure to the Senate floor in early spring.

A factor that could thwart progress on drafting the farm bill is the uncertainty surrounding Bill Northey, the nominee to be USDA undersecretary for farm production and conservation, who has not been confirmed, Grassley said.

Northey, the Iowa agriculture secretary, continues to see his nomination held by Sen. Ted Cruz. He would oversee three agencies that implement key farm bill programs, including loans, commodity subsidies, crop insurance and conservation.

Cruz placed a hold on Northey in retaliation after corn-state lawmakers — Grassley included — used political power to stymie a recent effort by the EPA to weaken the Renewable Fuel Standard. Cruz and other oil-state lawmakers believe those changes create the potential for job losses among refiners, and held up Northey until a meeting with the White House could be arranged.

Cruz and company left a meeting with President Donald Trump on Thursday with a directive to find a compromise with their colleagues, but the Texas Republican did not comment on whether he'd let Northey advance.

Grassley said he hopes Northey doesn't get fed up with the politics of Washington and withdraw from consideration. He said he doesn't have any indication Northey would do that, however.

To view online [click here](#).

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Alabama earthquake: Democrat Jones wins [Back](#)

By Daniel Strauss | 12/12/2017 06:08 PM EDT

Democrat Doug Jones defeated Roy Moore in a special election earthquake Tuesday, flipping an Alabama Senate seat to Democrats for the first time in a quarter-century and dealing a huge political setback to President Donald Trump.

The Associated Press called the race for Jones, a former U.S. attorney, who had 49.9 percent of the vote to Moore's 48.4 percent with all precincts reporting — a difference of more than 21,000 votes.

Still, Moore declined to concede, saying there were still military and other votes that need to be counted. Alabama Secretary of State John Merrill told CNN it would be "highly unusual and highly unlikely" for the outstanding ballots to change the results of the race.

In Alabama, an automatic recount is triggered when the margin between the two candidates is under 0.5 percentage points. A candidate, however, has the option of seeking a recount if the margin is wider than that but has to pay for it, Merrill said.

Barring a miracle, all of that pointed to a victory for Jones.

"I am truly overwhelmed," the Democratic told ebullient supporters in a Birmingham hotel ballroom after the race was called. "At the end of the day, this entire race has been about dignity and respect. This campaign has been about the rule of law. This campaign has been about common courtesy and decency."

Jones' win — after Moore was accused of sexual assault and other misconduct by multiple women — will shrink Republicans' already tenuous Senate majority to 51-49, just as the party approaches final consideration of its sweeping tax bill and prepares for the 2018 midterm elections in a difficult political environment.

Moore's loss does relieve Senate Republicans from one burden: Considering whether they would expel him from the chamber if he won. But the party will have a reed-thin margin for error in the coming months as it tries to push through its agenda. And Moore's defeat was a major setback for Trump, who gave the candidate a full-throated endorsement in the final days of the race, in a state he carried with over 60 percent of the vote in 2016.

"Congratulations to Doug Jones on a hard fought victory," Trump tweeted. "The write-in votes played a very big factor, but a win is a win. The people of Alabama are great, and the Republicans will have another shot at this seat in a very short period of time. It never ends!"

The election is also a major defeat for the president's former chief strategist, Steve Bannon, who as the head of Breitbart led a bare-knuckles campaign to elect Moore and drag down Jones.

Bannon had cast the race as an existential showdown between the activist base and Washington elites, but only to wind up on the losing end.

The president set up the election as one with outsized consequences for his administration and the GOP, tweeting repeatedly that Alabama could not afford to elect Jones. Trump also praised Moore at a rally in nearby Pensacola, Florida, and the Republican National Committee injected late money into the race after Trump reengaged.

It was a surreal scene at Moore's election night gathering in Montgomery.

The night started out with tons of energy in the room, but it dissipated as the vote returns accumulated until eventually the room fell silent. After the race was called but before Moore delivered his concession speech, a man took the stage and sang Christmas hymns.

When Moore emerged, he would not say the race was over, telling supporters that he wanted to consult with the secretary of state's office about next steps.

"Part of the problem with this campaign is we've been painted in unfavorable and unfaithful light," Jones said. "We've been put in a hole, if you will."

Trump's late play for Moore went against the will of Senate Republicans, who abandoned Moore after women came forward to say that Moore had pursued relationships with them when they were teenagers and he was in his 30s, including one who described sexual contact with Moore when she was 14.

"The people of Alabama deemed Roy Moore unfit to serve in the U.S. Senate," said National Republican Senatorial Committee chairman Cory Gardner, who had called for Moore to be thrown out of the Senate if elected. "I hope Senator-elect Doug Jones will do the right thing and truly represent Alabama by choosing to vote with the Senate Republican Majority."

Steven Law, the president of the super PAC aligned with Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, blamed Bannon for Jones' victory.

"This is a brutal reminder that candidate quality matters regardless of where you are running," Law said in a statement. "Not only did Steve Bannon cost us a critical Senate seat in one of the most Republican states in the country, but he also dragged the President of the United States into his fiasco."

As Moore's campaign fought scandal, Jones became cause of national Democrats eager to defeat the Republican. Online donors flooded his campaign with money as Jones criss-crossed Alabama focusing on what he called "kitchen table issues" (and rarely mentioning his party). His TV ads blanketed the airwaves, hammering Moore as a sexual predator while also introducing Jones as a Second Amendment-supporting federal prosecutor who had convicted Ku Klux Klansmen involved in the bombing of Birmingham's 16th Street Baptist Church during the civil rights era.

Jones rode a surge of energy among black voters and got a key bump from white-collar suburbanites who often vote Republican but turned away from the controversial Moore. The GOP nominee's history of inflammatory comments about women, Muslims and LGBT people

had already damaged his standing — and the sexual misconduct allegations scared more voters away.

Moore still won college-educated white voters 57 percent to 41 percent, according to the National Election Pool exit poll — but the group shifted hard in Democrats' direction compared to past Alabama elections.

Trump prompted the special election by nominating former Sen. Jeff Sessions to be his attorney general. Jones will replace appointed Republican Sen. Luther Strange and will hold the Senate seat until 2020, when Sessions' old term expires.

Alex Isenstadt contributed to this report.

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GAO: Administration illegally withheld \$91 million in ARPA-E funds [Back](#)

By Anthony Adragna | 12/12/2017 05:17 PM EDT

The Trump administration violated federal law when it withheld \$91 million budgeted for the Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy program earlier this year, the GAO said in a [letter](#) released today.

House Science Committee ranking member [Eddie Bernice Johnson](#) (D-Texas) [asked](#) GAO to investigate in May amid [reports](#) the agency was withholding money for grants that were already approved. In a Nov. 29 letter to GAO, the agency confirmed all funds had been released to be dispensed.

"I hope that the Administration now understands that Federal agencies must provide lawfully directed appropriations to the programs to which they are dedicated," Johnson said in a statement. "It cannot attempt to shut down an agency or starve a program it doesn't like by withholding funds. It is illegal and we in Congress will not allow it."

ARPA-E, which the Trump administration proposed eliminating entirely in its budget this year, selects energy technology projects and awards funding as those ventures meet a series of development milestones.

The Energy Department didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

WHAT'S NEXT: Congress must decide how much funding to award ARPA-E in the future.

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Interior IG probing Zinke's senior staff reshuffle [Back](#)

By Esther Whieldon | 09/08/2017 05:09 PM EDT

The Interior Department's internal watchdog has launched a probe into Secretary Ryan Zinke's June reassignment of a number of senior executive staff, an official told POLITICO today.

The inspector general's office is auditing Zinke's decision to reassign dozens of senior executive service employees, including Joel Clement, who was moved from a managerial position involving climate change issues to a job collecting royalties from oil and gas companies. The office has begun interviewing key agency staff and asked the secretary's office to hand over documents, IG spokeswoman Nancy DiPaolo said.

The audit follows a request in July from Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.) and seven of her colleagues for Deputy Inspector General Mary Kendall to look into the matter.

Depending on what the audit uncovers, it could lead to a broader investigation to determine whether any laws were broken.

WHAT'S NEXT: DiPaolo said the IG hopes to wrap up its work within a few months.

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Interior official files whistleblower complaint over job reassignment [Back](#)

By Esther Whieldon and Ben Lefebvre | 07/19/2017 07:06 PM EDT

A former senior Interior Department official has filed a whistleblower complaint after the agency transferred him from a leadership position focused on climate change to a desk job collecting royalties from oil and gas companies.

In a complaint and disclosure filing with the Office of Special Counsel and in a Washington Post op-ed, former Interior Office of Policy Analysis Director Joel Clement claimed he was reassigned to a position at the Office of Natural Resources Revenue to stop him from publicly discussing climate change impacts on native Alaskan coastal communities.

Clement was among dozens of senior executive staff reassigned to other jobs in June.

Clement told POLITICO no Interior political staffers ever raised concerns about his activities prior to his reassignment. "It was kind of obvious to reassign the climate adaptation experts to the accounting office where they collect fossil fuel royalty checks. That was pretty flagrant, I would say, in terms of sending the message. So that message was received loud and clear that they wanted me to quit."

Clement said he'd like his old job back, and he hoped other staff would also complain.

Interior spokeswoman Heather Swift said the personnel moves were "conducted to better serve the taxpayer and the Department's operations."

Clement may have difficulty proving his case because agencies have wide discretion to reassign staff, according to Jeff Ruch, executive director of Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility. "It sounds like he's being retaliated against because of his job, not because of any disclosure he made," Ruch said. "He's suffering due to the nature of his job, and maybe because he did it too well."

Annie Snider contributed to this report.

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Dourson at risk of rejection as more Republicans lean no [Back](#)

By Nick Juliano and Anthony Adragna | 11/16/2017 05:55 PM EDT

President Donald Trump's nominee to a key chemical safety job at the EPA is at risk of rejection after Republican senators balked amid accusations that he is too eager to cover for companies peddling dangerous products.

North Carolina's two GOP senators have said they will vote against confirming Michael Dourson as an EPA assistant administrator, citing a record that included work on a chemical linked to cancer deaths near a Marine Corps base in their home state. And Maine Republican [Susan Collins](#) said Thursday that she is leaning no as well — a vote that would be enough to sink his nomination.

Democrats are optimistic about turning four additional Republicans who they believe should be in play based on contamination issues back home.

Republican leaders have not decided what to do about Dourson's nomination, Senate Majority Whip [John Cornyn](#) (R-Texas) said Thursday.

"We'll have to see whether it's a viable nomination, and with two against him obviously that doesn't leave us a lot of room," Cornyn told POLITICO. "We haven't made a decisions on that yet, but we'll be revisiting it."

Critics say Dourson, a former industry-funded toxicologist, regularly downplayed the risks of chemicals such as PFOA and trichloroethylene that are contaminating soil and water in communities across the country. Dourson has already begun working at EPA as a senior adviser to Administrator Scott Pruitt, an arrangement Democrats have condemned as improper.

"There are all these local contamination issues across the country that have been bubbling up recently or have been out there for years, and because Dourson is this hired gun ... he's almost by nature of his job been working on these really controversial chemicals," said Jack Pratt, chemicals campaign director for the Environmental Defense Fund, which opposes Dourson's nomination.

Republican North Carolina Sens. [Thom Tillis](#) and [Richard Burr](#) said Wednesday that they could

not support Dourson because of his past work as a toxicologist who was frequently hired by industry to rebut public health concerns about chemicals. Collins said Thursday that she is "leaning against" confirming him.

A legislative aide said Democrats are eyeing Republican Sens. [Jeff Flake](#) of Arizona, [Lisa Murkowski](#) of Alaska, [Bob Corker](#) of Tennessee and [Pat Toomey](#) of Pennsylvania, although Flake, Toomey and Corker told POLITICO they're still undecided.

"Sen. Toomey remains concerned about the PFOA issue in Bucks County and Montgomery County and remains dedicated to addressing it," a spokesman for the Pennsylvania Republican said, naming two Philadelphia-area counties where [toxic firefighting chemicals](#) leached into the ground from [two closed naval bases](#). Toomey is reviewing the nomination "with these concerns in mind," but the spokesman did not say how he plans to vote.

However, even if the nomination is pulled or rejected, Dourson will still be able to influence EPA's implementation of a major chemical safety law because he has already started working at the agency. Democrats have criticized that arrangement, though EPA says previous administrations allowed people to begin working there before being confirmed.

EPA's chemical safety office, which Dourson has been nominated to lead, has a heavy workload after Congress in 2016 passed a bipartisan law updating the Toxic Substances Control Act for the first time in nearly 40 years. The office has been charged with evaluating the safety of chemicals already in use and determining how to test new chemicals before they are allowed into the marketplace.

The near-universal support TSCA reform won in Congress last year may help explain the wariness among lawmakers about giving chemical industry allies too much of a foothold in EPA.

"They wanted to give the public some assurance that the products on their shelf are safe, and when you put the chemical industry in charge that's not going to happen," said Madeleine Foote, a legislative representative with the League of Conservation Voters.

Tillis and Burr stopped short of calling for Dourson to step down from his existing position at the agency. "I'll leave that up to the EPA to decide," Tillis told POLITICO.

Sen. [Joe Manchin](#) (D-W.Va.), who has supported several Trump nominees, said he would vote against Dourson but not object to him continuing to work at EPA.

Before joining EPA last month, Dourson was a professor at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine's Risk Science Center, and he founded the nonprofit Toxicology Excellence for Risk Assessment, which was often conducted industry-funded research. He also previously worked at EPA from 1980 to 1995. Past clients of Dourson and his research group have included Dow Chemical, Koch Industries and Chevron, according to [the Associated Press](#).

Critics say Dourson's research routinely concluded that chemicals were safer in far higher concentrations than those recommended by agencies like EPA, putting communities at greater risk of finding toxic substances like perchlorate, TCE or PFOA in their air or drinking water.

Pratt said Dourson's work followed a pattern.

"Over and over again these chemical companies would hire him, he'd look at the research, and say the standard that EPA or whatever regulatory body has is too strict — it should be looser," Pratt said.

EPA defended the nominee.

"Dr. Michael Dourson is a highly qualified scientist to lead EPA's Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution," EPA spokesman Jahan Wilcox said in a statement. "He worked at EPA for 15 years, founded a program that characterized the health hazards of chemicals, performed pro-bono work that saved a family near Cincinnati and his expertise on TCE contamination resulted in settlements that helped 130 families outside of San Francisco."

Dourson told the Environment and Public Works Committee at his confirmation hearing last month that he did not have a thumb on the scale.

"I can give you as many or more examples of situations where the science that we brought forward as a team actually lowered the safe dose or risk position for various sponsors," Dourson told Sen. [Tom Carper](#) (D-Del.) at the hearing. "If confirmed, I will rely on the guidance of EPA ethics officials."

Tillis and Burr said they could not support Dourson based on his record and North Carolina's history of chemical pollution problems, such drinking water at Camp Lejeune that was contaminated for decades by chemicals including trichloroethylene. TCE is one of the first 10 chemicals EPA must evaluate under the new safety law, but Dourson has previously endorsed health standards that are 1.5 to 15 times less protective than those backed by other researchers, [according to EDF](#).

Retired Marine Corps Master Sgt. Jerry Ensminger, whose daughter died of leukemia linked to the contaminated water at Camp Lejeune, met with Tillis and aides to Burr to urge their opposition, according to the [Wilmington Star News](#).

Among his other industry-funded work, Dourson [appeared](#) before an EPA scientific advisory panel session concerning the pesticide chlorpyrifos on behalf of CropLife America. He led a 2008 [paper](#) on acrylamide, which can form during high-temperature cooking of some starchy foods, that received funding from major food companies like Burger King, Frito-Lay and McDonald's. And he [studied](#) 1-bromopropane, a solvent linked to some neurological and reproductive disorders, in 2004 with funding from Albemarle Corp. and Ameribrom Inc.

In all cases, he recommended standards many factors less protective than public health and EPA research suggested.

He also has done work for industry-friendly state governments. In the early 2000s, Dourson helped West Virginia set drinking water guidance limits for PFOA, also known as perfluorooctanoic acid or C8, at 150 parts per billion. That was 150 times less protective than manufacturer DuPont's own internal standard of 1 part per billion and more than 2,000 times less protective than EPA's [recommendation](#) of 70 parts per trillion.

During his confirmation hearing, Dourson argued that the research had evolved significantly since his recommendation to West Virginia, saying that "the science has progressed, significantly advanced since the time of 2004 and the new science indicates a lower level." And he defended the integrity of his work overall.

"Throughout my career — with EPA, TERA and now with the University of Cincinnati — I have been objective in my work and applied sound science to come to my conclusions," Dourson said.

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Trump Ex-Im Bank nominee will likely be blocked [Back](#)

By Zachary Warmbrodt | 12/12/2017 04:20 PM EDT

Scott Garrett, President Donald Trump's pick to lead the Export-Import Bank, will likely be blocked by bipartisan opposition after he struggled to convince lawmakers that he should run an agency he once tried to kill in Congress.

Garrett's fate was all but sealed Tuesday when Sen. Mike Rounds (R-S.D.) said he would oppose the former congressman's confirmation when it comes up for a vote at the Senate Banking Committee on Dec. 19. The panel has 12 Republicans and 11 Democrats, and all the Democrats are expected to oppose Garrett.

"I believe him to be a proponent of the abolition of the bank rather than a reformer of the bank," Rounds told POLITICO. "I'm looking for reformers, not abolitionists."

Rounds had raised concerns that small contractors in his state could be hurt if their larger customers lost access to financing. U.S. companies rely on the agency to provide loan guarantees to the foreign buyers of American exports.

If Garrett's nomination were blocked or withdrawn, it would be a major victory for companies and manufacturing groups, including Boeing and the National Association of Manufacturers. They have fought to stop his Senate confirmation based on his record of trying to shut down the bank while serving in Congress.

Before losing reelection in his New Jersey district last year, Garrett said the bank "embodies the corruption of the free enterprise system." As he tried to save his nomination in recent months, he struck a less aggressive tone and pledged publicly to keep the bank running.

Garrett's attempts to shore up support fell flat, and opposition to his nomination could grow before next Tuesday's vote.

Other Republicans on the committee said they had not yet made up their minds.

Sen. Tim Scott (R-S.C.), whose vote is one of the most closely watched on the panel, represents

a state that's home to plants operated by Boeing and GE, two of the bank's most prominent beneficiaries. He has raised concerns with Garrett's record but has not announced how he would vote.

"My attention's all on the tax reform package," Scott said in an interview today. "I'm sure I'll have enough time before Tuesday to come to a decision."

Asked if Garrett will drop out or if the White House is looking for a new nominee, an administration official told POLITICO, "We plan on having a vote."

The administration has warned for months that if Garrett failed to advance then GOP lawmakers critical of the bank would hold up the confirmation of other nominees to head the agency. Sens. Pat Toomey (R-Penn.) and Richard Shelby (R-Ala.) have threatened to derail other Ex-Im appointees if Garrett were not cleared.

Four less controversial nominees for the bank's board are also scheduled for a committee vote on Dec. 19, and they're expected to move forward. Their confirmation would help the bank's board regain a quorum that's needed to approve transactions worth more than \$10 million.

Shelby said on Tuesday that if Garrett were blocked, "a lot of us will probably vote against all of them," but he conceded that "we're probably outliers — the minority."

In an interview Friday, White House director of legislative affairs Marc Short declined to say what the administration would do if Garrett fell short of the necessary votes in committee.

"There are some who look at it myopically and will say, 'Here's your challenge in committee,'" Short said. "But I think focusing on the committee in and of itself doesn't factor in other members of Congress who will oppose a different nominee."

Underscoring the wedge that the Export-Import Bank has driven between Republicans, manufacturers on Tuesday applauded Rounds for announcing his opposition, while conservative groups went on the attack.

"Sen. Rounds is placing special interests and lobbyists above the interests of the American people," Club for Growth President David McIntosh said. "A vote against Scott Garrett is a vote for business as usual in Washington. Rounds' opposition will serve to protect the swamp and its creatures rather drain it."

Andrew Restuccia contributed to this report.

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ANWR drilling in tax bill draws opposition from a dozen House Republicans [Back](#)

By Nick Juliano | 11/30/2017 06:33 PM EDT

A dozen House Republicans raised concerns today about a rider in the Senate tax bill that would allow drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

The lawmakers did not mention the tax bill by name in [their letter](#), and they stopped short of promising to pull their support if ANWR drilling is included. But they said they had "concerns with any proposal that would implement an oil and gas leasing program in the Refuge" and questioned whether new drilling there was necessary.

"Further, the resources beneath the Refuge's Coastal Plain simply are not necessary for our nation's energy independence," wrote Reps. [Brian Fitzpatrick](#), [Dave Reichert](#) and 10 of their GOP colleagues.

Six of the 12 lawmakers already voted against the House tax bill earlier this month, citing objections such as its elimination of the state and local tax deduction.

Opening ANWR is a priority for Sen. [Lisa Murkowski](#), a key swing vote in the upper chamber, which hopes to pass its version of the bill as soon as this week.

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Zinke booked government helicopters to attend D.C. events [Back](#)

By Ben Lefebvre | 12/07/2017 06:31 PM EDT

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke spent more than \$14,000 on government helicopters this summer to take himself and staff to and from official events near Washington, D.C., in order to accommodate his attendance at a swearing-in ceremony for his replacement in Congress and a horseback ride with Vice President Mike Pence, according to previously undisclosed official travel documents.

The travel logs, released to POLITICO via a Freedom of Information Act request, show Zinke using taxpayer-funded vehicles from the U.S. Park Police to help accommodate his political events schedule.

In a case detailed in the new documents, Zinke ordered a U.S. Park Police helicopter to take him and his chief of staff, Scott Hommel, to an emergency management exercise in Shepherdstown, W.Va., on June 21.

Zinke's staff justified the \$8,000 flight by saying official business would prevent him leaving Washington before 2 p.m., too late to make the two-hour drive to the exercise, according to the documents.

The event that prevented Zinke from leaving before 2 p.m. was the swearing-in ceremony for Rep. Greg Gianforte (R-Mont.), according to Zinke's [official Interior calendar](#). Gianforte, who won a special election for Zinke's old seat in May after assaulting a reporter, contributed along with his wife \$15,800 to Zinke's two congressional campaigns.

"Secretary Zinke's last engagement in Washington D.C. is at 2 p.m.," an Interior staffer wrote as justification for using the helicopter. "Driving to [the West Virginia event] would not enable him to be on time and fully participate as scheduled."

Interior defended the trips.

"The swearing in of the Congressman is absolutely an official event, as is emergency management training," Interior spokeswoman Heather Swift said in an email Thursday. "Shame on you for not respecting the office of a Member of Congress."

Zinke also ordered a Park Police helicopter to fly him and another Interior official to and from Yorktown, Va., on July 7 in order to be back in Washington in time for a 4 p.m. horseback ride with Pence. The trip cost about \$6,250, according to the documents.

The horseback ride through Rock Creek Park also included Sen. Roy Blunt (R-Mo.) and CMS Administrator Seema Verma, according to a [post](#) on Pence's Facebook page.

While in Yorktown, Zinke completed a walking tour of the local Revolutionary War battlefield and attended a boating industry roundtable discussion, according to the documents. The day before the trip, an Interior trip planner added to the schedule a 30-minute flyover of an area where Dominion Energy [is building](#) high-voltage electric transmission lines to run across the James River.

Interior officials originally estimated that driving to Yorktown would take about three hours, although one noted that "there is a major construction project on I-64, which will slow things down."

In an email to Interior travel scheduler Tim Nigborowicz, an Interior employee justified Zinke's using the helicopter instead of less expensive method by saying "the Secretary will be able to familiarize himself with the in-flight capabilities of an aircraft he is in charge of" and that the Park Police staff on board would "provide an added measure of security to the Secretary during his travel."

Interior officials certified ahead of the flight that Zinke's use of the helicopter would not compromise law enforcement obligations.

The Park Police helicopter, [Eagle One](#), is deployed for medevac and emergency response situations around Washington, a part of its mission Zinke praised later that month.

"U.S. Park Service helicopter pilot and crew provided a life-saving medevac flight during the attack on members of Congress during baseball practice," Zinke said in the July 25 [video](#) celebrating American Heroes Week.

The former Montana congressman and Navy SEAL is [already being investigated](#) by the Interior Department's Inspector General and the independent Office of Special Counsel for his [mixing of official travel and political events](#). Interior earlier this year released records documenting Zinke's use of charter and military aircraft, including a \$12,000 flight from Las Vegas to Montana that allowed him to give a speech for a hockey team owned by a major campaign donor.

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To: heather_swift@ios.doi.gov[heather_swift@ios.doi.gov]
From: Christopher Flavelle (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Sent: 2017-12-08T12:18:12-05:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Re: Joel Clement
Received: 2017-12-08T12:18:21-05:00

So, not retaliation, you're saying.

Christopher Flavelle
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Washington, DC, 20005

From: heather_swift@ios.doi.gov At: 12/08/17 12:17:19
To: [Christopher Flavelle \(BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:\)](mailto:Christopher.Flavelle@BLOOMBERG/NEWSROOM:)
Subject: Re: Joel Clement

The President signed an executive order to reorganize the federal government for the future and the Secretary has been absolutely out front on that issue. In fact, he mentioned a Department-wide, front lines-focused reorganization on his first day address to all employees.

The purpose of the Senior Executive Service is to ensure that the executive management of the government of the United States is responsive to the needs, policies, and goals of the Nation and otherwise is of the highest quality. Senior executives are the highest paid employees in the federal government and signed up for the SES knowing that they could be called upon to work in different positions at any time. Congress meant for the SES to be a mobile force that are capable of taking on different assignments to meet the needs of the agency. Personnel moves among the Senior Executive Service are being conducted to better serve the taxpayer and the Department's operations.

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Best,

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To: heather_swift@ios.doi.gov[heather_swift@ios.doi.gov]
From: Christopher Flavelle (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Sent: 2017-12-08T12:23:02-05:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Re: Joel Clement
Received: 2017-12-08T12:23:10-05:00

Ok, thanks again

Sent from Bloomberg Professional for iPhone

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----- Original Message -----

From: Heather Swift <heather_swift@ios.doi.gov>
To: CHRISTOPHER FLAVELLE
At: 08-Dec-2017 12:21:19

correct

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To: [Christopher Flavelle \(BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM: \)](mailto:Christopher_Flavelle_(BLOOMBERG/_NEWSROOM:_)_)
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To: Christopher Flavelle[cflavelle@bloomberg.net]
From: Swift, Heather
Sent: 2017-12-08T12:16:25-05:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Re: Joel Clement
Received: 2017-12-08T12:17:12-05:00

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To: Christopher Flavelle[cflavelle@bloomberg.net]
From: Swift, Heather
Sent: 2017-12-08T12:20:26-05:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Re: Joel Clement
Received: 2017-12-08T12:21:13-05:00

correct

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To: HEATHER_SWIFT@IOS.DOI.GOV[HEATHER_SWIFT@IOS.DOI.GOV]
From: Christopher Flavelle (BLOOMBERG/ NEWSROOM:)
Sent: 2017-12-08T12:13:52-05:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Joel Clement
Received: 2017-12-08T12:14:11-05:00

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To: heather_swift@ios.doi.gov[heather_swift@ios.doi.gov]
Cc: Marjorie Pritchard[marjorie.pritchard@globe.com]
From: Clegg, Ellen
Sent: 2017-11-25T12:30:32-05:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Response from the Boston Globe Editorial Page
Received: 2017-11-25T12:30:45-05:00

Heather,

Marjorie Pritchard shared your email with me. The Globe's editorial represents an opinion based on reporting in other media outlets, on document research, and on interviews with sources. Much of the source material – reporting by the New York Times, the Washington Post, and POLITICO – was linked in the piece. Reports by Reuters, the Chicago Tribune, and the Associated Press were also reviewed. We do not intend to retract our opinion; you are welcome to write a letter to the editor to rebut The Globe's institutional position.

Whitefish Energy does in fact have ties to Secretary Zinke. As Richard Perez-Pena reported in the New York Times on Oct. 27, 2017, Secretary Zinke and Andy Techmanski, the chief executive of Whitefish Energy, know each other, and the secretary's son worked on a Whitefish job over the summer.

POLITICO reviewed records from Interior made public after a FOIA by The Western Values Project that documented last-minute requests from Lola Zinke related to travel and high-level dinners. It is our opinion, legitimately drawn, that these requests caused extra work for staffers and, as the editorial noted (and as POLITICO's Ben Lefebvre reported on Nov. 21, 2017) raised questions about misuse of government resources. Washington Post reporters Lisa Rein and Drew Harwell reported on Nov. 16, 2017 that Deputy Inspector General Mary Kendall sent the secretary's office an alert that her investigation into allegations of improper travel has been stymied by "absent or incomplete documentation for several pertinent trips." This memo stated that Interior Department officials have not shown evidence that they have been able to "distinguish between personal, political and official travel" or cost-analysis documents to justify his choice of military or charter flights, according to the Post's reporting on Kendall's alert.

This same Kendall memo shows that the travel of Lola Zinke is also being reviewed; according to the Post, "Kendall wrote that the department's documentation was so lacking that investigators cannot determine 'the full extent' of her travel and how it was paid for." In addition to the last-minute requests reported by POLITICO, this very investigation of Lola Zinke's travel constitutes a burden on government resources, in the Globe's opinion. When that investigation concludes, please let us know.

Harwell and Rein also reported in the Post on Sept. 28, 2017: "Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke chartered a flight from Las Vegas to near his home in Montana this summer aboard a plane owned by oil-and-gas executives, internal documents show. The flight, along with private flights during a trip to the Virgin Islands, could propel Zinke into the growing debate over the costs of travel by Cabinet secretaries, some of whom have chosen expensive charter jets and military planes at high expense to taxpayers over the cheaper option of flying commercial." That flight, from Las Vegas to Kalispell, cost taxpayers \$12,375, according to an Interior Department spokeswoman (and I assume that spokeswoman is you, and that you were correctly quoted.) Commercial flights are much cheaper.

The use of the term "cleaned house" is a legitimately drawn opinion based on facts reported by the New York Times about Interior staff reassignments. On July 25, 2017, Coral Davenport and Nicholas Fandos of the Times reported:

"Between 7 and 8 p.m. on June 15, at least two dozen senior career officials at the Interior Department received emails informing them that they would be reassigned to new positions. While it is not unusual for new administrations to make personnel moves, some of the transferred employees said the moves appeared intended to undermine the department's work on environmental priorities." The story continues:

"Joel Clement, a climate change expert, received an email reassigning him to a position in an office overseeing fees and royalties from fossil fuel drilling. 'I'm the climate change guy, and they moved me to the accounting office that collects fossil fuel royalties,' said Mr. Clement, who went public with his complaints in a Washington Post opinion article last week. 'They couldn't have found a job less suited for me, or that sent a clearer signal that they were trying to get me to quit.'

"On Monday, Senator Maria Cantwell of Washington, the ranking Democrat on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, sent a letter to the Interior Department's deputy inspector general, calling for an investigation into the personnel moves.

"The appointments and the policies have drawn cheers from the oil industry. 'You're hearing a desire to promote oil and natural gas opportunities on all lands, and on federal lands,' said Erik Milito, the director of upstream issues for the American Petroleum Institute, which lobbies for oil companies. 'And doing so on federal lands is a great way to bring in more revenue.'"

On Nov. 20, 2017, Anne Gearan of the Washington Post reported that President Trump called elephant hunting a “horror show” and “strongly suggested he will permanently block imports of elephant trophies from two African nations despite his administration’s earlier approval of the practice.” That story said: “Following strong bipartisan criticism of the administration’s decision to allow imports of trophy carcasses for the first time since the practice was halted under the Obama administration, Trump had moved Friday to put the imports on hold.” This followed an initial story by Darryl Fears and Juliet Eilperin of the Post on Nov. 17, 2017, headlined: “Trophies from elephant hunts in Zimbabwe were banned in the US; Trump just reversed that”

Like the Post story, our editorial characterized the import of trophies from Zimbabwe and Zambia as a reversal of a ban under President Obama. Our editorial opinion is reasonable, given the fact base. Under the Obama administration, elephant hunting trophies were allowed in South Africa, as you mention, because USFWS determined that South Africa had proved its management of elephants enhanced the endangered population. In 2015, the Obama administration determined that Zimbabwe had not provided sufficient proof and halted such imports.

Finally, illegal ivory sales in Massachusetts involve both imported trophies from hunts, as well as ivory from illegal poaching. There are concerns at the state level, in Massachusetts and elsewhere, about this trade in ivory objects, its impact on conservation of the endangered African elephant, and its role in funding terror in African nations. Ivory is often sold on Craigslist without clear provenance; the Massachusetts bills in the state legislature would address the sale of ivory acquired by any means.

You observe that the Obama administration racked up bills for charter flights, and attribute other failings to Obama’s leadership of the Interior Department. But the Trump administration took office 11 months ago vowing to “drain the swamp” – which a reasonable mind might interpret as putting an end to some of these practices. It is our editorial opinion that the current leadership of the Interior Department is continuing these questionable travel practices, making partisan staff changes without regard to individual expertise, and sending confusing signals on import of elephant trophies. We do not intend to retract our editorial opinion, but we would consider a letter to the editor; letters should be addressed to Matthew.Bernstein@globe.com. If Secretary Zinke would be interested in writing an op-ed piece on how he intends to protect national parks and national monuments in an era when there is a call for expanded oil and gas exploration on federal lands, kindly send a draft to Marjorie Pritchard, whose email you have.

Sincerely,

Ellen Clegg

Editorial Page Editor

The Boston Globe

Office: 617-929-3339

To: Juan Carlos Rodriguez[jc.rodriguez@law360.com]
Cc: Interior Press[interior_press@ios.doi.gov]
From: Swift, Heather
Sent: 2017-11-16T09:05:43-05:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Re: Joel Clement lawsuit
Received: 2017-11-16T09:06:34-05:00

Hi Juan, just a reminder, all inquiries regarding litigation should go to DOJ.

-

Heather Swift
Department of the Interior
@DOIPressSec
Heather_Swift@ios.doi.gov | Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

On Wed, Nov 15, 2017 at 7:34 PM, Juan Carlos Rodriguez <jc.rodriguez@law360.com> wrote:

Hi,
My name is Juan Carlos Rodriguez and I'm a reporter at Law360. Sorry for the late email, I am just starting to write this story about the FOIA lawsuit Joel Clement filed yesterday (complaint attached). Does DOI have any comment?

Thanks.

--

Juan Carlos Rodriguez
Senior Environment Reporter

Legal News & Data
111 West 19th Street
5th Floor
New York, NY 10011
Office: [646-783-7197](tel:646-783-7197)

Cell: [505-353-2277](tel:505-353-2277)

[Follow me on Twitter](#)

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To: Hinson, Alex[alex_hinson@ios.doi.gov]
Cc: Eli Nachmany[eli_nachmany@ios.doi.gov]; Laura Rigas[Laura_Rigas@ios.doi.gov]; Heather Swift[heather_swift@ios.doi.gov]; John Bockmier[john_bockmier@ios.doi.gov]
From: Newell, Russell
Sent: 2017-11-15T10:47:15-05:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Re: *DRAFT DOI Daily Report
Received: 2017-11-15T10:47:22-05:00

good here.

Russell Newell
Deputy Director of Communications
U.S. Department of the Interior
(202) 208-6232
@Interior

On Wed, Nov 15, 2017 at 9:48 AM, Hinson, Alex <alex_hinson@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

INTERIOR DAILY COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

NEWS TO SHARE:

Indianz: Secretary Ryan Zinke among those excited to take part in #RockYourMocs this year

"It's #RockYourMocs week and thousands across the nation are expressing Native pride by wearing moccasins to work, to school and just about anywhere... Among those who are excited to take part this year is Secretary Ryan Zinke. He plans to sport a pair of Crow moccasins as he works at the Department of the Interior, the parent agency of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, on Wednesday. "Thanks to the Crow for the mocs!" Zinke wrote in a post on Twitter. The Crow Tribe is based in Montana, Zinke's home state."

Associated Press: Utah Sen. Orrin Hatch's office says President Donald Trump is expected to significantly downsize two sprawling Utah national monuments

"President Donald Trump is expected to significantly downsize two sprawling Utah national monuments that protect more than 3 million acres of the state's red rock country, Utah Sen. Orrin Hatch's office said Tuesday. Ron Dean, Hatch's Central and Eastern Utah Director, testified during a meeting in Utah of a state legislative public lands committee that he expects Bears Ears National Monument will be cut by at least 80 percent of its current size, while Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument will be reduced by about 40 percent to 60 percent. Trump told Hatch and Utah's governor last month that he would follow the recommendation of Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke and shrink both monuments, but the White House and Zinke's office have not offered details about how they'd redraw the monument boundaries. Dean said Tuesday that while he hasn't seen Zinke's recommendations, he could speak with "some certainty" on how much of a reduction Hatch's office expected to see."

E&E News: Trump's 'energy dominance' transforms Alaska's future

"Today, Murkowski's committee is due to mark up her bill allowing exploration in the Arctic refuge's coastal plain. If the measure is approved by Congress, it would almost certainly be signed into law by the president (E&E Daily, Nov. 9). In the year since Trump's election, the federal government has begun a radical reversal of President Obama's ambitious wildlife

preservation policies for Alaska. During his eight years in the White House, Obama blocked seismic studies on ANWR's coastal plain. He outlawed oil and gas development in most of the Arctic Ocean and in Bristol Bay along Alaska's southwestern coast. And he placed almost half of the 22.8-million-acre National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A) off-limits to development. In total, Obama preserved at least 170 million acres of federal lands in Alaska. But all that is changing under Trump. As Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke declared in May, today Alaska "is open for business."

CORRECTING THE RECORD:

Huffington Post: Whistleblower Sues Interior Department For Information On Staff Shuffle

"A scientist-turned-whistleblower who resigned from the Interior Department in October citing agency chief Ryan Zinke's "poor leadership" and "resume of failure" is suing to obtain information concerning his own reassignment and that of several of his former colleagues. Joel Clement told HuffPost he has been "completely stonewalled" in his attempts to get documents via Freedom of Information Act requests and was left with no choice but to file suit against the department. "They are bringing this on themselves," he said by phone Tuesday. Clement sounded the alarm on the Trump administration in July, alleging that he was transferred to a position for which he had no qualifications because he warned about the dangers of climate change. A seven-year Interior employee, Clement was among dozens of senior agency staff reassigned in June as part of a sweeping reorganization that a spokesperson claimed would "better serve the taxpayer and the department's operations."."

Regarding the shuffling of SES at DOI:

- The President signed an executive order to reorganize the federal government for the future and the Secretary has been absolutely out front on that issue. In fact, he mentioned a Department-wide, front lines-focused reorganization on his first day address to all employees.
- The purpose of the Senior Executive Service is to ensure that the executive management of the government of the United States is responsive to the needs, policies, and goals of the Nation and otherwise is of the highest quality. Senior executives are the highest paid employees in the federal government and signed up for the SES knowing that they could be called upon to work in different positions at any time. Congress meant for the SES to be a mobile force that are capable of taking on different assignments to meet the needs of the agency. Personnel moves among the Senior Executive Service are being conducted to better serve the taxpayer and the Department's operations.

OTHER TOP STORIES:

Morning Consult: Senate Minority Whip to Meet With Zinke After Hold on Interior Nominees

"Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke will meet with a group of Democratic senators on Tuesday about his recommendations to President Donald Trump to reduce the size of certain national

monuments, according to a Senate aide. Sen. Dick Durbin (D-Ill.), the second-ranking Democrat in the Senate, requested the meeting on Oct. 23, along with other Democrats. A public letter last week announcing a hold on four Interior Department nominees prompted Zinke to respond and schedule the meeting, Durbin's press secretary, Emily Hampsten, said on Tuesday. "First, what is his legal basis for believing that this president should change the designation of national monuments in the Antiquities Act?" Durbin said Tuesday in a brief interview. "Hope that he'll tell us, I don't think there is a legal basis for it."

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Alex Hinson

Deputy Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

To: Eli Nachmany[eli_nachmany@ios.doi.gov]; Laura Rigas[Laura_Rigas@ios.doi.gov]; Russell Newell[russell_newell@ios.doi.gov]; Heather Swift[heather_swift@ios.doi.gov]; John Bockmier[john_bockmier@ios.doi.gov]
From: Hinson, Alex
Sent: 2017-11-15T09:48:50-05:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: *DRAFT DOI Daily Report
Received: 2017-11-15T09:48:57-05:00

INTERIOR DAILY COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

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Alex Hinson

Deputy Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

To: Heather Swift[heather_swift@ios.doi.gov]; Laura Rigas[laura_rigas@ios.doi.gov]
From: Goklany, Indur
Sent: 2017-11-15T09:01:40-05:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Fwd: Question
Received: 2017-11-15T09:02:07-05:00

Here is the inquiry I received. Thanks.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Michael Bastasch** <mike@dailycallernewsfoundation.org>
Date: Tue, Nov 14, 2017 at 3:14 PM
Subject: Question
To: Indur_Goklany@ios.doi.gov

Hi Indur,

I hope all is well. I was reading this story in EE News about Joel Clement, who used to work in OPA with you before resigning and claiming to be a whistleblower.

<https://www.eenews.net/stories/1060066499>

So, he's filed a FOIA lawsuit against Interior, which includes requests for emails and memos you sent since election day 2016.

Given that, I was wondering if you'd be willing to talk about Mr. Clement. He's claiming the Trump administration tried to silence him by moving to an office that collects fossil fuels revenues -- apparently an insult to DOI's "climate guy."

We can talk on background or off the record if you'd prefer.

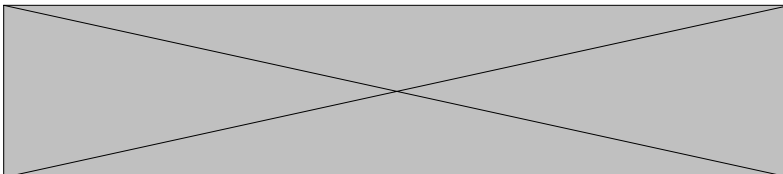
Let me know. Thanks!

Best,

Mike

--

Michael Bastasch
Daily Caller News Foundation



To: heather_swift@ios.doi.gov[heather_swift@ios.doi.gov]
From: POLITICO Pro Energy
Sent: 2017-11-14T15:47:57-05:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Afternoon Energy, presented by Chevron: Date set for Exxon oral arguments — Trump nominee moves to Senate — Today in EPA settlements
Received: 2017-11-14T15:48:14-05:00

By Kelsey Tamborrino | 11/14/2017 03:46 PM EDT

With help from Esther Whieldon, Darius Dixon and Alex Guillén

MARK YOUR CALENDARS: A federal judge has set a date for oral arguments on whether to dismiss Exxon Mobil's suit against attorneys general Eric Schneiderman and Maura Healey. The lawsuit stems from the state AG's investigations into Exxon's historical knowledge of climate change science, and whether the oil giant fraudulently hid those risks from investors, Alex Guillén [reports](#). Exxon alleged in its harassment suit that the investigations were politically motivated. Judge Valerie Caproni of the U.S. District Court for Southern New York will hear arguments at 11 a.m. on Nov. 30 in New York.

IEA: RENEWABLES WILL RISE: Renewables will make up two-thirds of global investments in new power plants by 2040, according to International Energy Agency's "[World Energy Outlook](#)," out today. That's because dropping costs for clean energy technologies make them the cheapest source of generation for many countries, POLITICO Europe's Anca Gurzu [reports](#).

IEA also found that green energy will account for 40 percent of global electricity needs by 2040, "and global energy needs are expected to rise more slowly than in the past but still expand by 30 percent between today and 2040 — the equivalent of adding another China and India to today's global demand, it said." The report predicts oil demand growth to remain robust up until the mid-2020s, mainly driven by a boost in supply from the U.S.

Welcome to Afternoon Energy. I'm your host Kelsey Tamborrino. Send your thoughts, news and tips to ktamborrino@politico.com, mdaily@politico.com and njuliano@politico.com, and keep up with us on Twitter at [@kelseytam](https://twitter.com/kelseytam), [@dailym1](https://twitter.com/dailym1), [@nickjuliano](https://twitter.com/nickjuliano), [@Morning_Energy](https://twitter.com/Morning_Energy) and [@POLITICOPro](https://twitter.com/POLITICOPro).

**** A message from Chevron:** Advanced technology is helping us find safer ways to deliver energy. We're piloting a program that uses drones to monitor tanks and pipelines. Watch the video: <http://politi.co/2yPsOFP> **

A LONG DECEMBER: House Speaker [Paul Ryan](#) suggested today Republicans might miss the Dec. 8 funding deadline that is quickly approaching, instead forcing the government into another stopgap spending bill, Pro Budget & Appropriations' Sarah Ferris reports. "We might need a little more time to give the appropriators time to write their bills, but we don't intend on going into next year," Ryan told reporters, simultaneously confirming for the first time plans for another continuing resolution. Ryan said he is eyeing a short-term measure to avert a shutdown

after funding expires, Sarah reports. That bill could last several weeks — likely past Christmas — though the speaker said it would not extend past Jan. 1. More [here](#).

TODAY IN EPA SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS:

— Massachusetts-based ENEL Green Power North America, which produces electricity from hydropower and renewable sources, has agreed to pay EPA a civil penalty of \$76,997 to resolve self-reported violations of the Clean Water Act and several other laws, according to a [notice](#) in Wednesday's Federal Register. Among other things, the company says it did not prepare or implement an Oil Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasure Plan, as required under the CWA, at 18 facilities in 11 states. The agency will take comment for 30 days and relay those comments to EPA's Environmental Appeals Board, which has authority over approving the deal.

— EPA has proposed a [deal](#) that will end a battle with Veolia, a company that operates three commercial hazardous waste incinerators in Sauget, Ill. The company [raised](#) two technical issues with a Title V air permit EPA issued the company in January. In its proposed settlement, EPA says it will ask EPA to remand the permit for reworking, and in return Veolia will install activated carbon injection systems onto two incinerators that don't otherwise have any pollution controls for vapor phase mercury emissions.

NERC PROBES CONCERNS ABOUT GAS DEPENDENCE: The chief electric reliability organization said the months-long leak of the Aliso Canyon natural gas storage facility "raised awareness" about the growing dependency the grid has on gas. "The more natural gas infrastructure is put in service, the more resilient the totality of that infrastructure," NERC wrote in a [new report](#). "Pipeline systems in restructured wholesale electric market areas generally have less firm transportation agreements for natural gas supply, pipeline transportation, and underground storage service compared to systems in vertically integrated markets." It also presses for the consideration of fuel diversity in grid planning processes, as well as air permit waivers, dual fuel capability, back-up pipeline capacity and alternative power supplies. Still, the report says that the shutdown of the Aliso Canyon was a "relatively unique situation" because it's not on the interstate natural gas pipeline system like similar facilities.

MAIL CALL — OPPOSE ARCTIC DEVELOPMENT: A bipartisan group of former assistant secretaries at Interior for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, as well as former directors of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, have written to the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee to oppose the potential development in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. "Simply put, we don't need to develop the Arctic Refuge — one of the costliest, and riskiest places to develop energy resources — to promote American energy security," they write. "We all have substantial experience in balancing economic development and environmental protection. We know the need and value of thoughtful compromise. We have the experience to recognize the opposite." Read it [here](#).

TRUMP SENDS INTERIOR WATER, SCIENCE TSAR NOMINATION TO SENATE: The White House today sent the Senate President Donald Trump's nomination of Timothy Petty, a Sen. [Jim Risch](#) (R-Idaho) staffer and former Interior Department official, to be the agency's assistant secretary on water and science. Petty heads up water, natural resources, environment and several other issues in Risch's office and previously served as acting assistant secretary and

deputy assistant secretary for water and science during the George W. Bush administration. The White House had announced the nomination late Monday.

LAWSUIT FILED AGAINST DOI: Joel Clement, who quit his job at the Interior Department after being reassigned this year, filed a lawsuit today demanding the release of records related to the movement of career Senior Executive Service employees like him, after the agency failed to release the documents following multiple FOIA requests. "We know these documents exist and we know the public has a right to see them, but Secretary Zinke and his staff are determined to work in secret and take the 'public' out of public service," Clement said in a statement. Read the lawsuit here.

REPORT OUT ON CCS: The Global Carbon Capture and Storage Institute on Monday released its annual report, titled "The Global Status of CCS: 2017," which looks into the global progress of carbon capture and storage technologies. The report found 12 of the 17 operating large-scale CCS facilities are located in the U.S. or Canada, with two U.S. large-scale carbon capture facilities — Petra Nova and Illinois Industrial — coming online in 2017. The report also found that in order to meet targets set by the Paris climate agreement, 14 percent of cumulative emissions reductions by 2060 must derive from CCS. Read the report here.

QUICK HITS:

- Standing Rock casino sees recovery after pipeline protest, AP via Beaumont Enterprise.
- EPA auditing Houston's use of water infrastructure project fund, Houston Chronicle.
- Report: African-Americans taking brunt of oil industry pollution, Reuters.
- Tested EPA Air chief to advance Trump rollbacks, Bloomberg BNA.

WIDE WORLD OF POLITICS:

- Moore expulsion idea splits Senate Republicans
- Trump returns home from Asia with few clear wins
- House Republicans still bullish on tax bill after whip effort

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To view online:

<https://www.politicopro.com/newsletters/afternoon-energy/2017/11/date-set-for-exxon-oral-arguments-025545>

Stories from POLITICO Pro

Judge to hold arguments in Exxon suit against New York, Massachusetts AGs Back

By Alex Guillén | 11/14/2017 11:56 AM EDT

A federal judge said today she will hold oral arguments on Nov. 30 over whether to dismiss Exxon Mobil's lawsuit against the New York and Massachusetts attorneys general, Eric Schneiderman and Maura Healey.

The dispute stems from Schneiderman and Healey's investigations into Exxon's historical knowledge of climate change science and whether the company fraudulently hid those risks from investors. Exxon alleged in its harassment suit that the investigations were politically motivated and sought to prevent being forced to release internal documents under the AGs' subpoenas.

Both Schneiderman and Healey earlier this year asked Judge Valerie Caproni of the U.S. District Court for Southern New York, an Obama appointee, to toss the suit.

The AGs argued that litigation over their subpoenas should play out in state courts, not federal courts. The attorneys general also noted Exxon has already voluntarily complied with the subpoenas.

WHAT'S NEXT: Caproni will hear arguments on whether to dismiss Exxon's suit on "certain threshold grounds" at 11 a.m. on Nov. 30 in New York.

To view online [click here](#).

[Back](#)

IEA: Renewables set to become cheapest electricity source [Back](#)

By Anca Gurzu | 11/14/2017 09:39 AM EDT

Renewables will make up two-thirds of global investments in new power plants by 2040, as rapidly dropping costs for clean energy technologies make them the cheapest source of generation for many countries, according to the [International Energy Agency's](#) (IEA's) World Energy Outlook released today.

Green energy will account for 40 percent of global electricity needs by 2040, and 80 percent of new generation capacity in the European Union, the agency said.

Wind power is expected to become the EU's leading source of electricity soon after 2030 due to strong projected growth both on- and offshore, according to the IEA's New Policies Scenario, which assessed existing and announced policies.

Global energy needs are expected to rise more slowly than in the past but still expand by 30 percent between today and 2040 — the equivalent of adding another China and India to today's global demand, it said.

A big chunk of that increase is due to growing electricity use, with more electric cars on the road and a growing share of electrical appliances with smart energy features.

China can play a key role in shaping the global picture, with its policies potentially accelerating the clean energy transition, the IEA said.

However, the shift to clean fuels does not mean it's the end of oil. The World Energy Outlook predicts oil demand growth to remain robust up until the mid-2020s, mainly driven by a boost in supply from the U.S.

This article first appeared on [POLITICO.EU](#) on Nov. 14, 2017.

To view online [click here](#).

[Back](#)

GOP leaders consider punting again on government funding [Back](#)

By Sarah Ferris | 11/14/2017 11:34 AM EDT

House Speaker [Paul Ryan](#) said this morning that Republicans might miss next month's key funding deadline, forcing the government into another stopgap spending bill.

Ryan said he is eyeing a short-term measure to avert a shutdown after funding expires on Dec. 8. That bill could last several weeks — likely past Christmas — though the speaker said it would not extend past Jan. 1.

"We might need a little more time to give the appropriators time to write their bills, but we don't intend on going into next year," Ryan told reporters, for the first time confirming plans for another continuing resolution.

The GOP's aggressive timeframe for tax reform has put other priorities, like government spending, on the back burner for weeks.

The impending funding bill has been on hold as congressional leaders continue to negotiate overall spending limits for the fiscal year that began Oct. 1, seeking to strike a deal to reset caps set in 2011.

Several key Republican appropriators have warned that a continuing resolution may have to last into January or even February as they work out a final deal after receiving overall funding figures from leadership.

But defense hawks are adamantly opposed to any stopgap bill, which they say hamstring the Pentagon. And Ryan assured today that leaders are taking the defense budget into account as they sketch out the legislative timeline.

"We're not talking about going into next year," Ryan said. "We're talking about getting it done this year, for many reasons, the military chief among them."

To view online [click here](#).

[Back](#)

Moore expulsion idea splits Senate Republicans [Back](#)

By Seung Min Kim and John Bresnahan | 11/13/2017 11:40 AM EDT

Senate Republicans are escalating their demands for embattled Alabama Senate candidate Roy Moore to leave the race, including a growing faction calling for him to be expelled if he wins next month.

But some senior Republicans are wary that the chorus of anti-Moore sentiment from Washington will only embolden Moore and his supporters. The former Alabama Supreme Court justice won the Republican primary battering Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and the GOP establishment.

Sen. Cory Gardner of Colorado, chairman of the National Republican Senatorial Committee, raised the specter of expulsion in a Monday statement. Later, retiring Sen. Jeff Flake of Arizona told reporters he would support Democrat Doug Jones over Moore and that expelling Moore should remain on the table.

But other top party leaders weren't as quick to embrace the idea of expelling Moore from the chamber, which has been attempted but not completed in well more than a century and could raise serious questions about the Senate defying the will of voters. Other Republicans fear the precedent of booting a senator who hasn't violated any Senate rules or is not facing criminal charges.

When asked about a potential expulsion vote, Senate Majority Whip John Cornyn of Texas, who earlier said Alabama voters would have the "final judgment" on Moore, declined to weigh in and merely noted: "There hadn't been an election yet."

Alabama Sen. Richard Shelby said that if Moore is elected, "we will seat him."

"What will happen then, none of us know," Shelby said. He cautioned that before expelling a member, "there are a lot of steps that have to happen. You would look at all the evidence."

Still, Shelby, who backed Sen. Luther Strange in Alabama's Republican primary, said Monday's news conference with yet another woman accusing the candidate of sexual assault was "very disturbing," adding "she looked believable."

The Senate Ethics Committee would take the lead in any expulsion proceedings if Senate Republicans were to decide to pursue that option. A senator can technically be expelled for any reason, according to former Senate historian Don Ritchie. Two-thirds, or 67 senators, would be needed to vote in favor for it to succeed. The last expulsion from the Senate happened in 1862.

The floodgates against Moore opened Monday morning, when Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell told reporters in Louisville that he believes the women who have accused Moore of sexual misconduct and went further than he did last week in calling Moore to get out of the race.

"I think he should step aside," McConnell said Monday, adding: "I believe the women, yes."

Republicans are exploring their options, although they are extremely limited. GOP senators are increasingly talking up the possibility of a write-in campaign by Strange, though the appointed senator doesn't appear to be interested and comes with his own baggage that led to his primary loss against Moore.

McConnell confirmed that party officials are also exploring whether to pursue a write-in bid to try to retain the Senate seat in the deeply conservative state. "We'll see" if it's Strange, he said.

Strange said Monday night that "right now," he was "highly unlikely" to pursue a write-in bid.

"I made my case during the election, now it's really going to be up to people in our state to sort this out," Strange said. "A lot of these allegations are new, it's an unfolding story."

Another name that has surfaced is Attorney General Jeff Sessions, who held the Senate seat for two decades before his elevation to the Cabinet, though there is no indication he is interested in returning to the chamber.

The idea of removing Moore from office if he wins drew a range of responses from Republican senators.

Sen. Todd Young (R-Ind.) tweeted that if Moore doesn't withdraw immediately from the race, "we need to act to protect the integrity of the Senate." A spokeswoman declined to elaborate whether the freshman senator meant expulsion.

But others were more explicit.

"I believe the individuals speaking out against Roy Moore spoke with courage and truth, proving he is unfit to serve in the United States Senate and he should not run for office," Gardner said. "If he refuses to withdraw and wins, the Senate should vote to expel him, because he does not meet the ethical and moral requirements of the United States Senate."

Several Senate Republicans have called on Moore to get out of the race since late last week, including Sens. Steve Daines of Montana, Mike Lee of Utah and Bill Cassidy of Louisiana. On Monday, Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) said he agrees with McConnell and that Strange would be "an excellent alternative."

Cornyn also announced Monday he was withdrawing his endorsement of Moore, adding that the best course of action is "to leave the final judgment in the hands of Alabama voters."

"I have now read Mr. Moore's statement and listened to his radio interview in which he denies the charges," Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine) tweeted Monday. "I did not find his denials to be convincing and believe that he should withdraw from the Senate race in Alabama."

Collins later told reporters that talk about expelling Moore was "premature."

But there are no signs the pressure from Washington will sway Moore, the defiant former judge who was twice removed from the state's highest court.

Shortly after McConnell's remarks on Monday, Moore's campaign account tweeted: "The person who should step aside is @SenateMajLdr Mitch McConnell. He has failed conservatives and must be replaced. #DrainTheSwamp."

Polls had already shown a surprisingly close race between Moore and Jones even before the allegations broke. The most recently released survey, conducted by the Republican-leaning firm JMC Analytics and Polling, shows Jones leading Moore by 4 percentage points.

Democrats, who had already been closely watching the campaign and quietly deploying resources down south, are still concerned about any perception that the race will become nationalized and further galvanize Moore supporters.

"It's an Alabama race that they're running," Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) said Monday. "They're involved. If they ask us for things, we're going to try to help them, but it's an Alabama race that the Jones campaign is running on its own."

Meanwhile, a fifth Alabama woman publicly accused Moore of misconduct on Monday afternoon.

Appearing with attorney Gloria Allred at a press conference in New York, Beverly Young Nelson recounted how Moore, now 70, assaulted her when she was a waitress at a restaurant that the then-district attorney of Etowah County frequented.

Fighting through tears, Nelson recounted how one night, Moore forced himself on her in his car behind the restaurant in Gadsden.

After she screamed at him to stop, she said, "Instead of stopping, he began squeezing my neck, attempting to force my head onto his crotch. I continued to struggle."

"I thought he was going to rape me," Nelson said.

"At some point he gave up," she continued. "And he then looked at me and he told me, he said, 'You're just a child, and I am the district attorney of Etowah County, and if you tell anyone about this, no one will ever believe you.'"

After Nelson gave her statement, Allred presented Nelson's high school yearbook from 1977, carrying a note from Moore, which is signed, "Roy Moore, D.A." She was 15 years old at the time. Allred said she had spoken with Nelson's sister, mother and husband, who all said they knew about the alleged assault.

Ahead of the news conference, Moore's campaign chairman Bill Armistead released a statement aimed at trying to rebut the coming accusations.

"Gloria Allred is a sensationalist leading a witch hunt, and she is only around to create a spectacle," Armistead said. "We've said this before and we'll say it again: Judge Moore is an innocent man and has never had any sexual misconduct with anyone."

Gabriel Debenedetti contributed from New York, and Elana Schor from Washington.

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Trump returns home from Asia with few clear wins [Back](#)

By Andrew Restuccia | 11/14/2017 01:23 PM EDT

MANILA, Philippines - In Trumpian terms, President Donald Trump's Asia tour was a rousing success.

He was warmly welcomed by his closest friend in the region, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, with a round of celebrity golf and he got to give a prime-time address to the National Assembly in Seoul, South Korea. He was welcomed to Beijing by Chinese President Xi Jinping with a "state visit plus" that featured an opera performance inside the Forbidden City followed by a lavish state dinner complete with a video featuring Trump's granddaughter singing in Mandarin. And to cap it off, Trump was serenaded by Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte.

"It was a red carpet like nobody, probably has ever received," Trump bragged in Manila. "And that really is a sign of respect, perhaps for me a little bit, but really for our country."

And yet, as he flies home to Washington, former diplomats and Asia experts were talking about how China came out ahead - and they noted he is returning to Washington largely empty-handed.

"The principal takeaway from Trump's big Asia trip: virtually zero progress on any issue that matters to the Americans," Eurasia Group president Ian Bremmer wrote in a report. "Ultimately, that's the biggest win for China."

After a marathon series of bilateral meetings and photo-ops, the president failed to extract major new concessions from Asian leaders on his twin goals of arresting North Korea's nuclear weapons program and rebalancing America's trade relationship with China and other nations in the region—and made next to no public reference to human rights, Chinese territorial claims in the South China Sea or other touchy issues that have been raised in previous presidential visits.

While both China and Russia reaffirmed their existing commitments to crack down on North Korea, neither country used the opportunity of Trump's visit to commit to any new measures, like backing up an offer Trump made during his Seoul speech to start a direct dialogue with North Korean dictator Kim Jong Un.

And none of the nations Trump visited pledged to launch new bilateral trade negotiations with the U.S. -while 11 countries reached an agreement while Trump was in the region to bring the Trans-Pacific Partnership into force without the United States, which withdrew from the deal at Trump's order immediately after he took office in January.

Trump nevertheless claimed an overall win as he prepared to head home.

"We've had a tremendously successful trip. Tremendous amounts of work was done on trade, not only on the deals — and we have at least \$300 billion worth of deals, but that will be, I think, way triple that number in a fairly short period of time," Trump said Tuesday in Manila, his final stop of the trip.

More important than the unconfirmed dollar figure, the president said, was the message he conveyed throughout his trip that "the United States is open for trade, but we want reciprocal trade." He reiterated his regular criticism of past administrations, saying his predecessors allowed the U.S. to be taken advantage of on the world economic stage.

Trump said his five-nation trip had also strengthened U.S. relationships, noting especially that ties with the Philippines, which Trump said were "horrible" under President Barack Obama, had been repaired.

"We all worked hard. But I think the fruits of our labor are going to be incredible," Trump said. "Whether it's security of our nations, whether it's security of the world, or whether it's trade. And it's going to really amount to a lot."

Trump repeated when pressed later by reporters aboard Air Force One to identify the biggest accomplishments of the trip that the administration has convinced many of the countries on the trip to buy U.S. equipment to improve their domestic security.

The president, who cast the purchases as a win for American workers, upped his initial estimate, saying that he thought the \$300 billion total "is going to be quadrupled very quickly, so that's over a trillion dollars' worth of stuff."

He also focused on his relationship-building efforts. "I think we made a lot of progress, just in terms of relationship," Trump said. "I think we have done a really fantastic job."

Earlier Tuesday, he tweeted: "Made many good friends!"

White House aides said that building stronger relationships with key Asian countries was one of the major goals of the journey, and they joined the president in painting the trip as an unbridled success. At its core, the aides insisted, the five-country Asia tour gave the president an opportunity to improve ties with Xi and other key Asian leaders, while outlining a more detailed foreign policy vision to the world.

Top advisers traveling with Trump also believe the trip will pay dividends in the coming weeks and months, as the president leverages his relationships to advance his priorities. And they believe Trump sent a clear message to the world that the U.S. is not going to settle for unfair trade deals.

Trump is slated to deliver what he characterized as a "major" post-Asia statement on trade at the White House this week. He is not expected to announce new trade deals with other countries, according to aides, who also doubted the president will unveil stiff tariffs on exports into the United States. Instead, Trump is expected to expand on his calls for "free, fair and reciprocal" trade.

"After my tour of Asia, all Countries dealing with us on TRADE know that the rules have changed. The United States has to be treated fairly and in a reciprocal fashion. The massive TRADE deficits must go down quickly!" Trump tweeted on Tuesday afternoon before departing from Manila.

But Trump's critics fear the president has been blinded by the constant flattery. And they are aghast that the president didn't strike a stronger tone with China. Trump neatly avoided confronting world leaders with spotty human rights records and he opted not to blame Xi for the U.S.-China trade imbalance, instead putting the responsibility at the feet of previous administrations.

He even seemed to develop a rapport with Duterte, who has launched a bloody war on drugs that has resulted in thousands of deaths, at one point patting the authoritarian leader on the knee and later touting their "great relationship."

"Trump delivered too many mixed messages between the fawning over Xi Jinping, America First, and the free and open Indo-Pacific," said Ely Ratner, who served as an adviser to Vice President Joe Biden on Asia. "This will leave the region confused about the direction of U.S. policy, contrary to the central goal of reassuring the region about the U.S. commitment to Asia."

Trump aides said privately that the president made a strategic decision to win over the leaders by playing nice, largely casting aside his sometime-acerbic personality in exchange for the trappings of a diplomat.

Trump's rhetoric throughout the trip contrasted sharply with his remarks during the campaign and even in the early days of his presidency. During his inaugural address in January, Trump outlined a protectionist vision: "We must protect our borders from the ravages of other countries making our products, stealing our companies, and destroying our jobs. Protection will lead to great prosperity and strength."

In Asia, the president signaled his openness to global collaboration.

"Today, I am here to offer a renewed partnership with America to work together to strengthen the bonds of friendship and commerce between all of the nations of the Indo-Pacific, and together, to promote our prosperity and security," the president said at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum in Danang, Vietnam.

As Trump crisscrossed Asia, the administration sought to show progress was being made.

After Trump's swing through China, the White House released a statement noting that Beijing and Washington agreed to fully implement United Nations sanctions on North Korea and "reaffirmed their commitment to achieving the goal of full, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula."

But neither of those measures amounted to a breakthrough, and they largely echoed China's previous statements.

The White House did make several key announcements, including hundreds of millions in business agreements with China. But those agreements were largely non-binding and did not

address Trump's broader complaints about the trade imbalance between the U.S. and China.

Even Secretary of State Rex Tillerson acknowledged to reporters during the trip that the U.S. had made little progress with China on trade.

"I would say there's a lot of work left to do to progress trade to the point that it will achieve President Trump's objectives and our objective, which is to rebalance what has really occurred over many years, this trade imbalance itself," Tillerson said in Beijing.

Asked by a reporter on Tuesday if the Asia trip had been a success, Tillerson ignored the question and said simply, "Thank you."

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House Republicans confident on tax bill [Back](#)

By Aaron Lorenzo, Rachael Bade and John Bresnahan | 11/14/2017 09:34 AM EDT

House Republicans are stepping up their whip effort behind a major tax-cut package, with top leaders expressing confidence they'll have the votes to pass the measure on Thursday.

With many Republicans calling it a "make-or-break" moment for their majority, House GOP leaders and Ways and Means Committee Chairman Kevin Brady are sounding decidedly bullish. President Donald Trump, returning from a 12-day Asia trip, will meet with House Republicans before the vote.

Speaker Paul Ryan and other top Republicans are so confident that they can pass the bill that they are resisting efforts by Trump to include a repeal of Obamacare's individual mandate in the package. They've also rejected attempts by blue-state Republicans to revise their proposal to limit state and local tax deductions.

"We're pushing this bill as we have it," Ryan told reporters on Tuesday morning following a GOP members-only meeting in the Capitol. Ryan told his members that if they pass their bill this week, Congress can finish work on the issue by the end of the year, GOP sources said.

Ryan noted the Senate Finance Committee is just beginning, and he expects further changes in the legislation following House-Senate negotiations.

Chief Deputy Whip Patrick McHenry (R-N.C.) said he felt "very good" about the whip check. And a half-dozen deputy whips echoed those comments after huddling with White House chief economic adviser Gary Cohn in the basement of the Capitol, where there was no talk of delaying the vote.

Indeed, party leaders and aides said the process has gone surprisingly well — a sign of how desperate Republicans are to notch a legislative victory after their failure to repeal Obamacare.

"We're gonna pass this bill, yes," insisted House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.).

Debate on the House floor is expected to begin Wednesday, with final passage set for Thursday.

"It's probably the most unified we've been in a while," added Rep. Doug Collins (R-Ga.). "We all have our issues, and we know the Senate is going to do something different. But I think everyone is very focused and we know we need to get this thing done."

But a bloc of Republicans from the Northeast and California are openly opposing the bill because of the state and local tax deduction issue. Despite meeting with leaders on Monday night, the proposal has not been altered. Ryan, McCarthy and Majority Whip Steve Scalise (R-La.) clearly feel they have 218 votes without these Republicans.

"I'm still a no, my position hasn't changed," said Rep. Peter King (R-N.Y.). Rep. Frank LoBiondo (R-N.J.) added that leadership "hasn't changed" the bill at all, and he remains opposed.

The mostly positive GOP vibes — arguably their first since this summer's failure to repeal Obamacare — comes as Trump returns to Washington on Tuesday. Some Republicans have worried privately that the president could upset the talks with off-the-cuff tweets or statements. Many Republicans were relieved that Trump was gone for much of the House's legislative work on the bill.

As if on cue, Trump tweeted Monday morning that while he is "proud" of Congress' tax reform progress, he still wants it to include a repeal of Obamacare's individual mandate as part of the bill — and slash the top individual rate from 39.6 percent in the House to 35 percent.

"How about ending the unfair & highly unpopular Indiv Mandate in OCare & reducing taxes even further? Cut top rate to 35% w/all of the rest going to middle income cuts?" he wrote.

While Brady said Monday that such changes "remains under consideration," Ryan and other senior House Republicans say neither is going to happen. Many Republicans agree in theory with Trump on rescinding the individual mandate. But House leaders worry that adding controversial health care policy into the mix would sink their tax bill.

Cutting the top individual rate to 35 percent is also unlikely due to the sheer cost — money Republicans can't spare if they want to circumvent Democrats and pass the tax bill by a majority vote in the Senate. Trump originally urged the House to keep the top rate at 39.6 percent, and Republicans are trying to sell their bill as a boon to the middle class, not the wealthy.

Most Republican supporters of Trump's ideas aren't prepared to fight for them at this point — if only because they want to move the process along. House Freedom Caucus Chairman Mark Meadows (R-N.C.) said that while he'd prefer to include the individual mandate repeal, he and his fellow conservatives aren't going to hold up the tax bill this week.

The group, typically a thorn in leadership's side, has given leaders rare space to write and negotiate the tax bill. While the caucus did not endorse the tax bill during its weekly meeting Monday evening, Meadows said he believes members are mostly "cautious yeses."

"I do fully expect that the bill will move forward and pass on Thursday, based on our whip count and based on the general understanding of where the rest of the conference is," Meadows said. "If anything, it's just a cautious 'yes' on moving the process forward with the full understanding that there's still a number of issues that have to be worked out before final passage."

Meadows said the group has a number of outstanding concerns that need to be addressed in conference committee.

"Some of the private conversations have indicated a greater willingness to look at changing it in conference," he said, "and ultimately the reason why we believe we have that is we have enough votes to make sure it doesn't pass on final passage if they're not addressed."

Despite caution where Trump is concerned, Republican leaders have invited the president to come rally the House GOP conference Thursday morning before passage. The White House also stands at the ready to make any calls necessary to get the bill over the finish line.

Cohn told lawmakers at the whip meeting that "the president is happy with the progress, and supportive of the House bill," according to Rep. Roger Williams (R-Texas). Rep. Joe Barton (R-Texas) said the plan is to vote Thursday at 5:30 p.m.

Cohn said he was in touch daily with Trump about the tax bill, sometimes multiple times a day, as the president traveled around Asia.

GOP leaders, meanwhile, are still working behind the scenes to bolster their numbers. They met Monday night with lawmakers from high-tax states like New York and New Jersey, who are currently opposed to the legislation.

It is unlikely that leaders can win over those members, whose constituents rely on the state and local tax deduction. But Rep. Devin Nunes (R-Calif.), a Ways and Means member close with leaders, predicted that there aren't enough opponents from high-tax states to defeat the bill.

After Rep. Darrell Issa (R-Calif.) came out against the legislation last week, GOP leaders worried that other California Republicans would follow suit. So far, that hasn't happened.

Rep. Doug LaMalfa (R-Calif.) said he supports the Republican legislation, though he expects it to be improved in conference committee in order to win his vote on final passage.

"That's the one that better have the right things in it," LaMalfa said.

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To: Michael Doyle[mdoyle@eenews.net]
From: Heather Swift
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Importance: Normal
Subject: Re: Joel Clement Sues DOI
Received: 2017-11-14T13:06:01-05:00

DOJ

Heather Swift
Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

On Nov 14, 2017, at 12:04 PM, Michael Doyle <mdoyle@eenews.net> wrote:

From: Kendra Barkoff [<mailto:kbarkoff@skdknick.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, November 14, 2017 11:51 AM
To: Kendra Barkoff <kbarkoff@skdknick.com>
Subject: Joel Clement Sues DOI

Dear Reporters,

After months being stonewalled by U.S. Interior Secretary Zinke and the Department of the Interior (DOI) today Katherine Atkinson on behalf of her client, Joel Clement, the first Trump Administration whistleblower filed a lawsuit demanding the release of records relating to the movement of career SES Interior employees. For months, DOI has refused to turn over a single document after more than 30 FOIA requests.

“The Freedom of Information Act was passed in order to reassure Americans that their government was capable of operating in an open and transparent manner,” said Joel Clement. “It is remarkable the extent to which the Trump Administration is working to keep their deliberations behind closed doors. We know these documents exist and we know the public has a right to see them, but Secretary Zinke and his staff are determined to work in secret and take the ‘public’ out of public service.” Read the lawsuit [HERE](#).

Please let me know if you are interested in speaking with Joel or Katherine.

Kendra

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To: Heather Swift[heather_swift@ios.doi.gov]
From: Michael Doyle
Sent: 2017-11-14T13:06:02-05:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: RE: Joel Clement Sues DOI
Received: 2017-11-14T13:06:30-05:00

A-OK

From: Heather Swift [mailto:heather_swift@ios.doi.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, November 14, 2017 1:05 PM
To: Michael Doyle <mdoyle@eenews.net>
Subject: Re: Joel Clement Sues DOI

DOJ

Heather Swift
Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

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To: Swift, Heather[heather_swift@ios.doi.gov]
From: Michael Doyle
Sent: 2017-11-14T12:04:12-05:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: FW: Joel Clement Sues DOI
Received: 2017-11-14T12:04:33-05:00

From: Kendra Barkoff [<mailto:kbarkoff@skdknick.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, November 14, 2017 11:51 AM
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To: Swift, Heather[heather_swift@ios.doi.gov]
From: Shedlowski, Kirby-Lynn
Sent: 2017-10-13T14:24:13-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: All Q&A
Received: 2017-10-13T14:24:28-04:00
[QA 10.13.pdf](#)

Here are all the questions that came in during the Q&A.

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[Grand Canyon News Releases](#)

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From: Heather Swift
Sent: 2017-10-13T14:25:28-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Fwd: All Q&A
Received: 2017-10-13T14:25:40-04:00
[ATT00001.htm](#)
[QA 10.13.pdf](#)

Heather Swift
Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Shedlowski, Kirby-Lynn" <kirbylynn_shedlowski@nps.gov>
Date: October 13, 2017 at 11:24:13 AM MST
To: "Swift, Heather" <heather_swift@ios.doi.gov>
Subject: All Q&A

Here are all the questions that came in during the Q&A.

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To: Laura Rigas[laura_rigas@ios.doi.gov]
Cc: Eli Nachmany[eli_nachmany@ios.doi.gov]; Russell Newell[russell_newell@ios.doi.gov]; Heather Swift[heather_swift@ios.doi.gov]
From: Hinson, Alex
Sent: 2017-10-13T10:02:01-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Re: *DRAFT DOI Daily Report
Received: 2017-10-13T10:02:09-04:00

INTERIOR DAILY COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

NEWS TO SHARE:

US News and World Report: Zinke to Visit Grand Canyon to Discuss Harassment Survey

“Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke and acting Park Service Director Mike Reynolds will be at Grand Canyon National Park to discuss efforts to combat the problems. Widespread reports of misconduct have tarnished the image of the Park Service and the Interior Department. A sexual harassment scandal forced the retirement of a Grand Canyon superintendent in May 2016 and led the park to abolish its river district. Investigators also have uncovered problems at many of the nation's premier parks, including Yellowstone, Yosemite, Canaveral National Seashore and Florida's De Soto National Memorial.”

Correcting the Record:

NewsDay: Blowing the whistle on the Trump denial of climate change

“In June, Clement was removed as director of policy analysis, his memo says, and reassigned to auditing “when I have no background in that field.” He filed for whistleblower protection under federal law. According to the Los Angeles Times, he’s one of about 50 people shuffled at the Interior Department, which is responsible for the management and conservation of federal land. This apparent sidelining of senior voices is troubling and just the most recent example among federal employees.”

CNN-Opinion (Joel Clement): Secretary Zinke, it's time to call it quits

“Secretary Ryan Zinke, last week I turned in my US Department of the Interior credentials and reluctantly walked away from public service. Today, I call on you to do the same and resign as secretary of the Interior. Since you were sworn in on March 1, you have demonstrated contempt for the agency's mission and its devoted employees. As I described in my resignation letter, I quit my position because of your spectacularly poor leadership, reckless waste of taxpayer dollars and disregard for the dangers of climate change -- all of which are putting American well-being and the economy at risk.”

- **Statement on Clement:** The Department does not comment on ongoing matters such as whistleblower complaints. We look forward to working with the Office of Special Counsel to address any questions they might have about this matter.

- **Regarding the shuffling of SES at DOI:** The President signed an executive order to reorganize the federal government for the future and the Secretary has been absolutely out front on that issue. In fact, he mentioned a Department-wide, front lines-focused reorganization on his first day address to all employees. The purpose of the Senior Executive Service is to ensure that the executive management of the government of the United States is responsive to the needs, policies, and goals of the Nation and otherwise is

of the highest quality. Senior executives are the highest paid employees in the federal government and signed up for the SES knowing that they could be called upon to work in different positions at any time. Congress meant for the SES to be a mobile force that are capable of taking on different assignments to meet the needs of the agency. Personnel moves among the Senior Executive Service are being conducted to better serve the taxpayer and the Department's operations.

Washington Examiner: Special flag flown over Interior Department when Ryan Zinke is in the building

“Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke has resurrected a military tradition at his department by requiring that a special flag be flown over its headquarters to mark whenever he is in the building, according to a report Thursday. The blue banner, featuring the Interior's bison seal and seven white stars representing the department's bureaus, is hoisted by a security staffer when Zinke enters his downtown Washington offices before being pulled down when he leaves, per the Washington Post. A spokeswoman for Zinke told the newspaper that the custom — not adopted by any other Trump Cabinet official — was “a major sign of transparency.” Secretary of State Rex Tillerson also has a personal flag, but it flies atop of Foggy Bottom whether Tillerson is present or not.”

Newsweek: LIKE QUEEN ELIZABETH, TRUMP'S ZINKE HAS DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR FLY SPECIAL FLAG JUST FOR HIM

“When Queen Elizabeth visits Buckingham Palace a flag is raised to mark her visit—President Donald Trump’s Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke has been getting similar pomp and circumstance every day when he heads to work. When Zinke enters the Department of the Interior in Washington, a member of the security staff heads to the roof to raise a special flag, The Washington Post reported Thursday. The flag—depicting a bison—is then lowered when Zinke leaves for the day. It also travels with him when he heads anywhere in the U.S. on official business.”

TIME: President Trump's Interior Secretary Makes His Staff Raise a Special Flag When He's Around

“If any citizens are interested in the whereabouts of Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, some unusual flags outside his agency’s headquarters may offer some information—for those that know how to decode them. Zinke has revived an obscure military tradition, according to the Washington Post, that involves staffers raising and lowering a special secretarial flag whenever he enters or leaves the building.”

MSNBC: A new frontrunner in the ‘Trump’s Oddest Cabinet Member’ contest

“Donald Trump has assembled quite a motley crew for his cabinet, and choosing its strangest member is challenging. But Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke is clearly making a name for himself – and not necessarily in a good way. As regular readers know, the Republican’s troubles have been steadily intensifying. It looked bad, for example, when Zinke gave a motivational speech to a Republican donor’s hockey team, before taking a \$12,000 flight home. It didn’t help when we learned the private plane belongs to “the executives of a Wyoming oil-and-gas exploration firm.”

Washington Post: Where’s Zinke? The interior secretary’s special flag offers clues.

“A security staffer takes the elevator to the seventh floor, climbs the stairs to the roof and hoists a special secretarial flag whenever Zinke enters the building. When the secretary goes home for the day or travels, the flag — a blue banner emblazoned with the agency’s bison seal flanked by

seven white stars representing the Interior bureaus — comes down. In Zinke's absence, the ritual is repeated to raise an equally obscure flag for Deputy Secretary David Bernhardt. Responding this week to questions from The Washington Post, a spokeswoman for Zinke, a former Navy SEAL commander, defended the Navy flag-flying tradition as "a major sign of transparency."

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###

On Fri, Oct 13, 2017 at 9:41 AM, Laura Rigas <laura_rigas@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

I would.

Laura Keehner Rigas
Communications Director
U.S. Department of the Interior
(202) 897-7022 cell
@Interior

On Oct 13, 2017, at 9:40 AM, Hinson, Alex <alex_hinson@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

****Do we want to add a few other hit articles about the flag? No bulletin intelligence this morning.**

INTERIOR DAILY COMMUNICATIONS REPORT NEWS TO SHARE:

US News and World Report: Zinke to Visit Grand Canyon to Discuss Harassment Survey

"Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke and acting Park Service Director Mike Reynolds will be at Grand Canyon National Park to discuss efforts to combat the problems. Widespread reports of misconduct have tarnished the image of the Park Service and the Interior Department. A sexual harassment scandal forced the retirement of a Grand Canyon superintendent in May 2016 and led the park to abolish its river district. Investigators also have uncovered problems at many of the nation's premier parks, including Yellowstone, Yosemite, Canaveral National Seashore and Florida's De Soto National Memorial."

Correcting the Record:

CNN-Opinion (Joel Clement): Secretary Zinke, it's time to call it quits

"Secretary Ryan Zinke, last week I turned in my US Department of the Interior credentials and reluctantly walked away from public service. Today, I call on

you to do the same and resign as secretary of the Interior. Since you were sworn in on March 1, you have demonstrated contempt for the agency's mission and its devoted employees. As I described in my resignation letter, I quit my position because of your spectacularly poor leadership, reckless waste of taxpayer dollars and disregard for the dangers of climate change -- all of which are putting American well-being and the economy at risk."

- **Statement on Clement:** The Department does not comment on ongoing matters such as whistleblower complaints. We look forward to working with the Office of Special Counsel to address any questions they might have about this matter.
- **Regarding the shuffling of SES at DOI:** The President signed an executive order to reorganize the federal government for the future and the Secretary has been absolutely out front on that issue. In fact, he mentioned a Department-wide, front lines-focused reorganization on his first day address to all employees. The purpose of the Senior Executive Service is to ensure that the executive management of the government of the United States is responsive to the needs, policies, and goals of the Nation and otherwise is of the highest quality. Senior executives are the highest paid employees in the federal government and signed up for the SES knowing that they could be called upon to work in different positions at any time. Congress meant for the SES to be a mobile force that are capable of taking on different assignments to meet the needs of the agency. Personnel moves among the Senior Executive Service are being conducted to better serve the taxpayer and the Department's operations.

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Alex Hinson

Deputy Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

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Alex Hinson

Deputy Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

To: Hinson, Alex[alex_hinson@ios.doi.gov]
Cc: Eli Nachmany[eli_nachmany@ios.doi.gov]; Russell Newell[russell_newell@ios.doi.gov]; Heather Swift[heather_swift@ios.doi.gov]
From: Laura Rigas
Sent: 2017-10-13T09:41:22-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Re: *DRAFT DOI Daily Report
Received: 2017-10-13T09:41:29-04:00

I would.

Laura Keehner Rigas
Communications Director
U.S. Department of the Interior
(202) 897-7022 cell
@Interior

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Alex Hinson

Deputy Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

To: Eli Nachmany[eli_nachmany@ios.doi.gov]; Russell Newell[russell_newell@ios.doi.gov]; Laura Rigas[Laura_Rigas@ios.doi.gov]; Heather Swift[heather_swift@ios.doi.gov]
From: Hinson, Alex
Sent: 2017-10-13T09:40:25-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: *DRAFT DOI Daily Report
Received: 2017-10-13T09:40:32-04:00

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Alex Hinson

Deputy Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

To: heather_swift@ios.doi.gov[heather_swift@ios.doi.gov]
From: POLITICO Pro Energy
Sent: 2017-10-06T16:21:04-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Afternoon Energy, presented by Chevron: EPA readies the rollback — Oversight Democrats looking into retaliation at interior — Perry: Power rule was just a conversation starter
Received: 2017-10-06T16:21:18-04:00

By Eric Wolff | 10/06/2017 04:19 PM EDT

With help from Adam Behsudi

EPA SET TO ROLLBACK CLEAN POWER PLAN: The Trump administration is set to rescind former President Barack Obama's most important climate regulation, the Clean Power Plan, arguing that the carbon dioxide standards for power plants violated federal law and could cost consumers as much as \$33 billion, according to a draft proposal obtained by Pro's Emily Holden. Besides withdrawing the rule, EPA will soon serve formal notice of its plans to take comments on ideas for replacing it, probably with efficiency standards for coal plants.

Miles to go: Any new policies will be years in the making, since EPA will grind through the formal process of rescinding the regulation while seeking suggestions from the public on possible replacements. The agency will also face inevitable legal challenges from environmental groups and Democratic-leaning states.

Greens think Pruitt has it wrong: Climate advocates and many think tanks and academics say Trump and Pruitt are simply wrong to argue that shifting to cleaner sources of energy would wreck the U.S. economy. Recent analysis shows the power sector has moved faster than expected to lower carbon levels, due to low renewable energy and natural gas costs that make it uneconomic to run coal plants.

So does Gina McCarthy: Former EPA chief Gina McCarthy slammed the move. "A proposal to repeal the Clean Power Plan without any timeline or even a commitment to propose a rule to reduce carbon pollution, isn't a step forward, it's a wholesale retreat from EPA's legal, scientific and moral obligation to address the threats of climate change," she said in a statement.

WELCOME TO AFTERNOON ENERGY AND HAPPY FRIDAY! I'm your guest host redux, Eric Wolff, filling in for Kelsey Tamborrino. Send your thoughts, news and tips to ktamborino@politico.com, mdaily@politico.com and njuliano@politico.com, and keep up with us on Twitter at [@Esthernow](https://twitter.com/Esthernow), [@kelseytam](https://twitter.com/kelseytam), [@dailym1](https://twitter.com/dailym1), [@nickjuliano](https://twitter.com/nickjuliano), [@Morning_Energy](https://twitter.com/Morning_Energy) and [@POLITICOPro](https://twitter.com/POLITICOPro).

**** A message from Chevron:** We're piloting a program that uses drones to keep an eye on Chevron wells, tanks, and pipelines—all to keep DOERS and what they're doin' safer. Watch the video: <http://politi.co/2xO60oe> **

PERRY: POWER RULE WAS JUST A CONVERSATION STARTER: Energy Secretary Rick Perry says his decision last week directing FERC to review a proposal to allow full-cost

recovery for power plants that maintain 90 days of fuel on site was only a request that federal regulators "consider" changing the power markets, Pro's Darius Dixon [reports](#). Speaking at a Veterans in Energy event in Arlington, Va., Perry said the message was: "You really need to take a look at this. ... Let's have this conversation about making sure that we have an energy foundation that's stable, resilient. And I happen to think that coal and nuclear should be a part of that," he said, adding that those industries need to be "vibrant."

But not, like, a long conversation over candlelight: AE notes that the DOE proposal comes with a 60-day timeline.

Tuesday, Game on: Darius also [reports](#) that the proposal will officially appear in the pages of the Federal Register on Tuesday.

EPA: INDUSTRIAL GHG EMISSIONS DOWN 2 PERCENT: Greenhouse gas emissions from the U.S. industrial sector dropped 2 percent to 2.99 billion metric tons in 2016, EPA [reported](#) Thursday. The decline was led by power plants, which saw emissions drop by 4.7 percent from 2015.

REPORT: INTERIOR WORKED WITH INDUSTRY TO UNDO ROYALTIES RULE: CloudPeak Energy, a mammoth Wyoming coal mining firm, pushed Interior to race to undo an Obama-era royalties rule that could have cost it millions, The Washington Post [reports](#). The rule was intended to prevent coal companies from avoiding payments by selling coal at low cost to its own subsidiaries, a maneuver that cost the government \$75 million a year. According to over 1,000 pages of email obtained by the Post, Interior took a meeting with CloudPeak and other executives on the rule in February. Days later an Interior official wrote, "RIP rule."

OVERSIGHT DEMOCRATS LOOKING INTO RETALIATION AT INTERIOR: Rep. [Elijah Cummings](#) (D-Md.) sent a [letter](#) today to Interior Sec. Ryan Zinke seeking information on senior bureaucrats reassigned by Interior. "I am writing to request documents relating to the reassignment of numerous Senior Executive Service (SES) employees and career civil servants within the Department of the Interior, including Joel Clement, one of the department's foremost policy experts on climate change," Cummings wrote. Clement was [the whistleblower](#) who filed a complaint after the agency transferred him from a leadership position focused on climate change to a desk job collecting royalties from oil and gas companies.

STATE OFFICIAL: LNG GROWTH A WIN FOR U.S., LATIN AMERICA: As the market for liquefied natural gas continues to expand, a State Department official and energy experts agree: LNG can provide more energy and economic security. "I think it's a win-win for our region," Sue Saarnio, acting deputy assistant secretary at the State Department's energy resources bureau, said Thursday at an Atlantic Council event on LNG in Latin America.

The U.S. exports more than 40 percent its LNG to Latin America, making the region the biggest customer for U.S. shippers. That share has grown in the past decade as interest in LNG as an oil alternative has grown and as multiple Latin American countries — including Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia and Argentina — have faced extensive droughts that have affected their energy systems, particularly hydropower. The Trump administration has previously expressed support for expanding exports of liquefied natural gas — a market that is globally expanding by 4 percent to 6 percent every year.

BLM MAKIN' BANK: BLM [reports](#) \$170 million in bonus bids for federal leases sales in the third quarter, putting it on a pace to exceed last year's full-year mark of \$316 million. "These successful lease sales reflect our sound energy policy, which draws from the vast, untapped energy reserves right here in America," acting BLM Director Michael Nedd said in a statement.

TRUCKIN': Those enormous wind turbines don't just grow out of the landscape, you know. Gizmodo scared up this video of a trucker with a 200-foot trailer [making a sharp right](#) on a turn that was not exactly intended to handle that kind of equipment.

QUICK HITS

— "They were really worried about creationists and the oil companies," [Mother Jones](#).

— Solar's courting Puerto Rico, and the ravaged island Is all ears, [Bloomberg](#).

— Coal mogul Murray heaps praise on Perry's plan to help plants, [Bloomberg](#).

WIDE WORLD OF POLITICS

— Trump [rolls back](#) Obamacare birth control mandate.

— Sessions [outlines](#) broad exemptions for religious freedom.

— Inside Tim Murphy's [reign of terror](#).

**** A message from Chevron:** This is a story about energy, safety, and some truly high-flyin' doin'. We're piloting a program that uses drones, HD imaging, and thermal mapping to help keep a close eye on Chevron wells, tanks, and pipelines—all to keep DOERS and what they're doin' safer. Watch the video: <http://politi.co/2xO60oe> **

To view online:

<https://www.politicopro.com/tipsheets/afternoon-energy/2017/10/epa-readies-the-rollback-024960>

Stories from POLITICO Pro

Draft: Trump's EPA set to repeal Obama's big climate rule [Back](#)

By Emily Holden | 10/06/2017 11:16 AM EDT

The Trump administration is set to rescind former President Barack Obama's most important climate regulation, arguing that the greenhouse gas standards for power plants violated federal law and could cost consumers as much as \$33 billion, according to a draft proposal obtained by POLITICO.

The 43-page document — expected to be unveiled in the coming days — fulfills a major campaign promise by President Donald Trump, who has attacked Obama's rule as a job-killer, labeled man-made climate change a "hoax" and held a Rose Garden ceremony in June to announce his plans to withdraw from the Paris climate agreement.

Thomas Pyle, president of the industry-backed American Energy Alliance, praised the news as a "big win for American workers and families," describing Obama's rule as "a federal takeover [of] our electricity grid."

But Gina McCarthy, who oversaw the rule's creation as Obama's second-term EPA administrator, called Trump's move "a wholesale retreat from EPA's legal, scientific and moral obligation to address the threats of climate change."

"They're adding more pollution into our air and threatening public health at a time when the threats of climate change are growing and the costs are growing immeasurably higher on our children and their future," she said in a statement Friday.

Any concrete results from Trump's decision will be years in the making, as the EPA grinds through the formal process of rescinding the regulation while seeking suggestions from the public on possible replacements. The agency will also face inevitable legal challenges from environmental groups and Democratic-leaning states.

And all the while, scientists have warned, time is dwindling for the U.S. and other nations to forestall the most catastrophic storms, floods, droughts, epidemics and mass migrations expected to be triggered by a warming planet.

Obama's 2015 Clean Power Plan, the centerpiece of his hopes for a legacy on climate change, aimed to reduce the power industry's carbon dioxide pollution levels 32 percent below 2005 levels by 2030. The regulation was the United States' first major effort toward meeting its pledges to help curb climate change, following years in which the U.S had rejected the 1997 Kyoto climate accord and Congress failed to pass cap-and-trade legislation during Obama's first term.

The rule set goals for each state that were aimed at hastening the country's shift away from coal-fired power and toward more natural gas, wind, solar and energy efficiency, using tools that would have encouraged steps by consumers and a wide swath of the economy. Obama's EPA maintained it was on solid legal ground, despite its reliance on a seldom-used provision of the Clean Air Act.

In its draft proposal, Trump's EPA argues that the regulation is illegal because it doesn't focus solely on what coal plants alone could do to cut their carbon emissions.

The withdrawal also discounts many of the health and economic benefits that Obama's EPA has contended the rule would achieve, as POLITICO [reported](#) Thursday night. The Obama administration had estimated that the social benefits of reducing carbon levels, slowing climate change and ratcheting down illness-causing air pollution would far outweigh the costs.

POLITICO, Bloomberg and The Washington Post have previously reported details of the proposal.

More than half the states and dozens of fossil-fuel reliant industries sued over the rule, and the Supreme Court froze implementation in 2016 amid those challenges. One of the top plaintiffs attacking the rule was then-Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt, who is now Trump's EPA

administrator.

Besides withdrawing the rule, EPA will soon serve formal notice of its plans to take comments on ideas for replacing it, probably with efficiency standards for coal plants. Writing a new proposal would take years and would be a sign that Pruitt — who has questioned the human role in changing the climate — acknowledges EPA's legal obligation to regulate greenhouse gas emissions.

EPA has not determined whether it will replace the rule nor "if it will do so, when it will do so and what form that rule will take," according to the withdrawal text prepared for the Federal Register. The agency will solicit feedback in a separate advanced notice of proposed rulemaking.

Some conservative groups have pressed for Pruitt to simply erase Obama's rule and offer no replacement at all. But that would force the Trump administration to attack the mainstream science about climate change, opening a battle many Republicans are convinced it would lose.

Even so, Trump's conservative and pro-fossil fuel supporters praised the news that he was taking the plunge to rescind Obama's rule.

"By saving an estimated 240 million tons of annual coal production, the administrator's action helps to safeguard more than 27,000 mining jobs and almost 100,000 additional jobs throughout the supply chain," said a statement from Hal Quinn, CEO of the National Mining Association.

In contrast, climate advocates and many think tanks and academics say Trump and Pruitt are simply wrong to argue that shifting to cleaner sources of energy would wreck the U.S. economy. Recent analysis shows the power sector moving faster than expected to lower carbon levels, due to low renewable energy and natural gas costs that make it uneconomic to run coal plants.

To view online [click here](#).

[Back](#)

Perry: Pricing rule was meant to spark 'conversation' [Back](#)

By Darius Dixon | 10/06/2017 11:43 AM EDT

Energy Secretary Rick Perry said today that the economic woes of the nation's coal and nuclear power industries helped spur the Energy Department's controversial electric grid resiliency pricing rule proposal to regulators at FERC.

Perry said his decision last week directing FERC to review a proposal that would funnel money to power plants with 90 days of fuel on site was more of a request that federal regulators "consider" the issue of price formation in the power markets they oversee.

Speaking at a Veterans in Energy event in Arlington, Va., Perry said the message to FERC was: "You really need to take a look at this."

"Let's have this conversation about making sure that we have an energy foundation that's stable,

resilient. And I happen to think that coal and nuclear should be a part of that," he said, adding that those industries need to be "vibrant."

Perry also noted that much of the energy industry doesn't play by the principles of a so-called free market.

"There is no free market [in energy] and anyone who stands up and says, 'You all are affecting the free market.' Well, there is no free market," he said. Anyone who argues that there is, Perry added, "is not, with all due respect, educated to what the reality in the market is."

The nuclear industry is in a particularly fraught position, Perry said. "We have created so many regulations and changed the rules so many times for the nuclear energy industry that they are holding on with their fingernails."

WHAT'S NEXT: DOE's rule will [publish](#) on Tuesday. But FERC is [collecting](#) initial comments through Oct. 23.

To view online [click here](#).

[Back](#)

DOE pricing proposal to be published Tuesday [Back](#)

By Darius Dixon | 10/06/2017 09:42 AM EDT

The Energy Department's grid resiliency price rule is scheduled to be published in the Federal Register on Tuesday, kicking off a 60-day deadline for FERC to take "final action" or issue an interim final rule, according to a [pre-publication notice](#) released this morning.

FERC would likely have to act on the proposal in some way by Dec. 11.

The notice set for publication on Tuesday is separate from the comments FERC is [collecting](#) through Oct. 23.

WHAT'S NEXT: Comments on the DOE proposal are likely to be due Nov. 27 unless FERC adjusts that timeline.

To view online [click here](#).

[Back](#)

Interior official files whistleblower complaint over job reassignment [Back](#)

By Esther Whieldon and Ben Lefebvre | 07/19/2017 07:06 PM EDT

A former senior Interior Department official has filed a whistleblower complaint after the agency transferred him from a leadership position focused on climate change to a desk job collecting royalties from oil and gas companies.

In a [complaint](#) and [disclosure](#) filing with the Office of Special Counsel and in a Washington Post [op-ed](#), former Interior Office of Policy Analysis Director Joel Clement claimed he was [reassigned](#) to a position at the Office of Natural Resources Revenue to stop him from publicly discussing climate change impacts on native Alaskan coastal communities.

Clement was among dozens of senior executive staff reassigned to other jobs in June.

Clement told POLITICO no Interior political staffers ever raised concerns about his activities prior to his reassignment. "It was kind of obvious to reassign the climate adaptation experts to the accounting office where they collect fossil fuel royalty checks. That was pretty flagrant, I would say, in terms of sending the message. So that message was received loud and clear that they wanted me to quit."

Clement said he'd like his old job back, and he hoped other staff would also complain.

Interior spokeswoman Heather Swift said the personnel moves were "conducted to better serve the taxpayer and the Department's operations."

Clement may have difficulty proving his case because agencies have wide discretion to reassign staff, according to Jeff Ruch, executive director of Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility. "It sounds like he's being retaliated against because of his job, not because of any disclosure he made," Ruch said. "He's suffering due to the nature of his job, and maybe because he did it too well."

Annie Snider contributed to this report.

To view online [click here](#).

[Back](#)

Trump rolls back Obamacare birth control mandate [Back](#)

By Brianna Ehley | 10/06/2017 11:21 AM EDT

The Trump administration will allow virtually any employer to claim a religious or moral objection to Obamacare's birth control coverage mandate under a sweeping rollback announced Friday.

The new policies, which take effect immediately, reignite a fierce battle over one of the health care law's most controversial provisions and quickly drew legal challenges. The requirement to provide FDA-approved contraception at no cost was long opposed by religious groups that heavily favored Trump, and has been wrapped up in litigation for more than five years.

"The United States has a long history of providing conscience protections in the regulation of health care for entities and individuals with objections based on religious beliefs or moral convictions," the administration wrote in new rules.

The American Civil Liberties Union said it will file a lawsuit on Friday to block the long-

anticipated rules from the Trump administration, and California Attorney General Xavier Becerra also announced plans to sue. Women's health groups for months have been preparing lawsuits against the new policies, which they say will enable employers to deny their workers access to needed care.

The Trump administration said it was acting to protect individuals and groups from being forced to violate their religious beliefs as it downplayed concerns that more women would struggle to afford birth control.

"The attempts by the previous administration to provide some protections were inadequate," said a senior HHS official of the Obama administration's efforts to provide workarounds for religious groups. "They are being rebuffed here."

The administration issued two rules — one outlining how an employer could claim an exemption for religious beliefs, the other outlining an exemption for sincerely held moral convictions — on the same day Attorney General Jeff Sessions called for sweeping protections for religious freedom in a government-wide memo that could have far-reaching implications.

The new birth control rules hew closely to a draft that leaked in May and drew swift condemnation from Democrats, public health groups and women's health care advocates.

"Today's outrageous rules by the Trump Administration show callous disregard for women's rights, health, and autonomy, said Fatima Goss Graves, president and CEO of the National Women's Law Center. "By taking away women's access to no-cost birth control coverage, the rules give employers a license to discriminate against women. We will take immediate legal steps to block these unfair and discriminatory rules."

It's unclear how many organizations will now look to drop birth control coverage from their insurance plans. In the aftermath of the Supreme Court's 2014 *Hobby Lobby* ruling that closely held private companies could seek an exemption on religious grounds, only a few dozen employers requested one from the Obama administration, POLITICO found last year.

The birth control coverage mandate is broadly supported by the general public, polling has found over the years. And it appears to have reduced women's spending on contraception. One study estimated that women saved \$1.4 billion on birth control pills in 2013 as a result of the coverage requirement. About 55 million women have directly benefited from no-cost birth control, according to an Obama administration report released last year.

"Any move to decrease access to these vital services would have damaging effects on public health and women's health," said Haywood Brown, director of the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

Trump hinted at his plan to roll back the birth control mandate this spring as he signed an executive order on religious freedom, but the regulation had been tied up at his budget office for more than four months. By weakening the mandate, Trump is unilaterally paring back a small piece of Obamacare detested by his conservative base, which has grown increasingly frustrated with the GOP's inability to fulfill its longstanding promise to repeal the health care law.

The Affordable Care Act's birth control mandate took effect in 2012 after the Obama administration accepted a recommendation from an independent panel to require plans to cover it at no cost to women. The administration exempted houses of worship and unsuccessfully tried to make accommodations for religiously affiliated groups to allow their employees to still receive the coverage from a third party. But those groups rejected the accommodations and filed dozens of lawsuits, leading to two separate Supreme Court challenges, including the *Hobby Lobby* decision.

The Supreme Court last year ordered the Obama administration and religiously affiliated organizations, such as universities and charities, to reach agreement on an accommodation that would let employees of such groups have access to no-cost contraception. They never resolved the issue.

Advocates for religious groups called the rule a major step forward after years of fighting the mandate.

"Today President Trump delivered a huge victory for conscience rights and religious liberty in America," said Susan B. Anthony List President Marjorie Dannenfelser in a statement. "No longer will Catholic nuns who care for the elderly poor be forced by the government to provide abortion-inducing drugs in their health care plans."

The Trump administration argues that women have affordable contraceptive options should employers drop coverage, and that several government programs provide free or subsidized contraception for low-income women, including Title X family planning grants.

But women's health advocates say that program is already underfunded, and other Trump administration priorities — including stalled plans to repeal Obamacare and defund Planned Parenthood — would further erode access to affordable birth control.

"President Trump's shameful war on women rages on," said Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-Ill.) in a statement. "By ending the birth control mandate, the President and his Administration are allowing employers to stand in the way of women accessing the healthcare that they and their doctors have deemed necessary."

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Sessions outlines broad exemptions for religious freedom [Back](#)

By Josh Gerstein | 10/06/2017 11:46 AM EDT

Attorney General Jeff Sessions issued government-wide legal guidance Friday that urges sweeping protection for religious freedom and could impact a series of pending policy decisions involving health care, LGBT rights and even disaster relief.

Sessions billed the 25-page memo directed to all federal agencies as a response to an executive order President Donald Trump signed in May, promoting efforts to promote "religious liberty."

That order triggered a major showdown within the administration as religious and social conservatives pressed for treatment that could essentially allow them to ignore anti-discrimination requirements, particularly in the area of sexual orientation, while more moderate forces warned that upending existing protections would trigger an uproar that could derail other administration priorities.

The new Justice Department guidance takes a muscular view of religious freedom rights, but officials said that the document is a neutral description of existing law and not an effort to weigh in on particular policy issues.

"Religious liberty is not merely a right to personal religious beliefs or even to worship in a sacred place," Sessions wrote. "Except in the narrowest of circumstances, no one should be forced to choose between living out his or her faith and complying with the law. Therefore, to the greatest extent practicable and permitted by law, religious observance should be reasonably accommodated in all government activity, including employment, contracting and programming."

The legal analysis was unveiled as the Trump administration is considering or pursuing a series of moves that could broaden the rights of the religious, including allowing churches more latitude to enter political campaigns without jeopardizing their tax exemptions and permitting religious institutions to receive more types of disaster relief funds.

The administration also announced Friday that businesses of all sizes with religious or moral objections to providing contraception coverage or other preventative services under Obamacare will be allowed to opt out of that requirement.

Officials have also debated whether to revoke or alter a policy banning federal contractors from discriminating on the basis of sexual orientation. Trump opted against such a move in May, but LGBT rights advocates remain on guard against such a step.

White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders defended the administration's announcements Friday as clearly in line with Supreme Court precedent.

"The president believes that the freedom to practice one's faith is a fundamental right in this country — and I think all of us do — and that's all that today was about. Our federal government should always protect that right, and as long as Donald Trump is president he will," Sanders said. "The Supreme Court's already made clear what their position is, and it supports what this administration has done."

However, the discussions on religious freedom accommodations and the new legal guidance trudge into an area that has proved searing in the past for one particular high-ranking Trump administration official: Vice President Mike Pence.

As governor of Indiana in 2015, Pence signed a religious freedom law that appeared to give businesses broad rights to deny service to gays and lesbians, and perhaps others. An uproar followed, with many business leaders warning that the move could harm the state economically. Within days, he reversed himself and endorsed a revised measure designed to assuage concerns about discrimination.

A Justice Department official who briefed reporters on the new legal guidance insisted that it does not amount to a license to discriminate.

"It doesn't legalize discrimination at all," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

However, the legal memo suggests that the government's legal authority to forbid racial discrimination may not be as strong as its authority to target other forms of discrimination, such as bias against women or LGBT individuals.

"The government may be able to meet that [legal] standard with respect to race discrimination ... but may not be able to with respect to other forms of discrimination," Sessions' memo says.

Critics said the guidance could result in LGBT individuals, women or others facing discrimination in federal programs.

"Religious freedom is a fundamental American value," said Maggie Garrett of Americans United for Separation of Church and State. "It doesn't mean you can use religion as an excuse to discriminate or harm others. That's exactly what these guidelines set up."

While the Justice Department policy repeatedly discusses the need to treat religious organizations equally with secular ones, Garrett said that discussion essentially ignores the fact that the Constitution's ban on establishment of religion means the government can't pay to build churches or mosques.

"There is the Establishment Clause which is fundamental to religious freedom," she said. "If it's taxpayer money being used to build a church, what's more establishing of religion than that? And what about the rights of other taxpayers not to pay for another person's religion?"

Prominent religious conservatives hailed Sessions' memo and the simultaneous announcement that employers were free to drop Obamacare's contraception requirement.

"President Trump is demonstrating his commitment to undoing the anti-faith policies of the previous administration and restoring true religious freedom," said Tony Perkins of the Family Research Council.

"President Trump and the Department of Justice are putting federal government agencies on notice: You will not only respect the freedom of every American to believe but live according to those beliefs," Perkins added. "As President Trump continues to follow through on his promises on these core issues, he will continue to have the support of social conservatives on his policy initiatives."

The new Justice Department guidance also holds out the possibility that all corporations, not just small or closely held family businesses, may have religious freedom rights that must be accommodated under federal law.

Protection granted by the Religious Freedom Restoration Act "extends not just to individuals, but also to organizations, associations and at least some for-profit corporations," the attorney general's memo says.

Some Democrats said Trump's claim to be interested in a broad approach to religious freedom was bizarre and disingenuous in light of his calls during the presidential campaign for a ban on Muslims entering the U.S.

"A President who calls for all Muslims to be denied entry into our country cannot credibly defend 'religious liberty,' and certainly cannot use it as an excuse to discriminate against women and LGBTQ individuals and other minorities," said Sen. Patrick Leahy of Vermont. "Our government should not be in the discrimination business - period. It's shameful."

The guidance is vague on one point important to many law enforcement agencies: the degree to which religious affiliation can be used for profiling or targeting of potential suspects.

Such profiling seemed to be at the root of Trump's call for a Muslim ban, the new Justice Department memo appears to advocate religious freedom protections so robust that they could impact authorities' ability to target a violent religious sect or a particular ideology with religious components.

Former federal terrorism prosecutor Andy McCarthy said the Trump administration's legal positions could complicate or doom efforts to focus on Muslims with extreme views, such as a desire to impose Sharia law.

"If [that] is just another form of Islam, and must be treated as a religion like any other interpretation of Islam (or any other religious creed), then screening and other forms of preemptive surveillance become difficult if not impossible under the constitutional guidelines that the Justice Department seeks to fortify," McCarthy said.

A Justice official said the guidance doesn't attempt to resolve such questions.

"It makes the point that you cannot discriminatorily enforce federal law but it does not weigh in on how that would apply with respect to a particular situation ... with law enforcement," said the official.

Sessions also issued a separate directive Friday that seeks to impose closer scrutiny of the religious freedom impact of rules issued by agencies across the federal government. The memo requires that anytime a proposed federal agency action is sent to the Justice Department by the Office of Management and Budget for review, Justice's Office of Legal Policy and Civil Rights Division will vet the move for any potential adverse impact on religious freedom protections.

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Inside Tim Murphy's reign of terror [Back](#)

By Rachael Bade, Jake Sherman and John Bresnahan | 10/05/2017 11:02 PM EDT

Rep. Tim Murphy, a staunch anti-abortion advocate, thought he could withstand the media furor that engulfed him after reports that he'd encouraged his extramarital lover to end her apparent

pregnancy.

He was wrong.

Just one day after announcing he would retire after the 2018 election, Murphy reversed course and told Speaker Paul Ryan he was resigning effective Oct. 21. Murphy's abrupt decision ended a 15-year career on Capitol Hill in a shocking manner. The 65-year-old Pennsylvania Republican was so safe in his conservative district that Democrats hadn't even fielded an opponent against him during the past two election cycles.

Ironically, Murphy's swift collapse came not because of text messages he sent to a woman with whom he was having an extramarital affair, encouraging her to have an abortion as first reported by the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette on Tuesday. In fact, fears among senior Republicans about a potential wave of negative stories on how Murphy ran his congressional office were what ultimately pushed him out the door.

Multiple top House Republicans during the past 24 hours pressured Murphy to resign once it became clear that the House Ethics Committee might have to investigate allegations tied to his reported mistreatment of staffers. Numerous GOP sources were aware of systemic problems in Murphy's office, including high staff turnover, which had been the topic of gossip and speculation for years.

The Post-Gazette had reported on a June 2017 memo in which Murphy's longtime chief of staff, Susan Mosychuk, warned the Pennsylvania Republican that he was mistreating and "harassing" staff, causing 100 percent turnover.

But Mosychuk is a source of controversy herself.

A number of former Murphy staffers told POLITICO that it was Mosychuk's behavior that drove them to leave Murphy's office. And these ex-aides said the combination of Murphy and Mosychuk — who had a close personal relationship, according to GOP lawmakers and staffers — made the situation intolerable. Mosychuk was promoted to Murphy's chief of staff in 2004, just a year after becoming his legislative director.

According to these aides, Mosychuk regularly engaged in brutal verbal abuse of lower-ranking aides, from calling aides "worthless" and their work "garbage" to asking derisively, "Do you or do you not have a fucking college degree?"

Ex-staffers said Mosychuk kept white noise machines throughout Murphy's congressional office so constituents waiting in the front room couldn't hear her screaming. If Mosychuk was angry at staffers, she would make them take the stairs instead of the elevator, so they couldn't ride with her, according to one former employee who witnessed it.

Mosychuk would even call staffers out of their bathroom breaks to demand they return to the office, or yell at them for taking too long to use the restroom. Many younger aides did not take lunch breaks, eating at their desks because they were scolded for leaving. One new employee quit after just a couple days because he was dressed down for using a paper clip instead of a staple on a briefing packet, multiple sources said.

"It was one of the worst places I have ever worked in my life. There was screaming. Intimidation. Nothing you ever did was right," Nick Rodondo, Murphy's former district director, told Pittsburgh radio station KDKA's "Marty Griffin Show."

Rodondo said the two of them were fond of each other — he said he saw them feed each other at events — but terrible to many others.

"Susan Mosychuk was no better than [Murphy]. She wrote that memo to cover her butt," he continued. "I know, Marty. I know what these people are like. To call them creeps is an affront to creeps."

Prior to his resignation, POLITICO had begun seeking information from Murphy office's about whether Mosychuk earned more in outside income than was allowed under House rules. For several years, she received payments from Murphy's congressional office as well as his campaign.

During 2008, Mosychuk was paid \$231,500 — \$156,500 for her official duties and \$75,000 from the campaign, according to House disbursement records and her annual financial disclosure form. But permissible outside income for top aides that year was capped at \$25,830, according to the House Ethics Committee.

In 2010, Mosychuk earned nearly \$158,600 for her congressional duties and reported more than \$47,000 in income from the campaign, according to her disclosure report. House rules capped such outside income at \$26,550 that year.

Mosychuk, through a Murphy spokeswoman, said she took "leave without pay" from her official duties to do campaign work and was therefore allowed to earn more than the ethics threshold permits.

"Ms. Mosychuk's salary and compensation is documented, reported and in full compliance with all the rules prescribed by the House Committee on Ethics," Carly Atchison, Murphy's communications director, said in a statement. "As a matter of public record, this includes both her congressional salary and compensation earned from the campaign while on [leave without pay] status in 2008 and 2010, fully documented and compliant with House rules."

However, House disbursements records show Mosychuk was paid every quarter of that year and does not appear to have taken more than a few weeks off. The only time her pay dipped in 2008 was in the third quarter, when she earned about \$7,000 less than her usual salary, a loss of roughly two weeks' pay. Mosychuk was paid \$75,000 from Murphy's reelection campaign that year, far more than she could have normally earned during such a short period for political work.

In the third quarter of 2010, Mosychuk similarly made about \$8,000 less than her usual quarterly earnings, though she earned \$47,000 from the Murphy re-election committee. Again, this suggests Mosychuk was being paid an inordinate amount for political work covering a relatively brief time-frame.

Mosychuk did not respond to questions about her political work.

Ethics experts said that such a high campaign salary for what would have been a relatively short time on leave might violate the spirit, if not the letter, of House rules.

"There is a rule about outside income, and it is a serious matter to violate that rule," said Larry Noble, senior director and general counsel at Campaign Legal Center, a campaign watchdog group.

Murphy's office did not respond to the allegations of Mosychuk's alleged verbal abuse of former workers. Some said they've gone to therapy or that it took years to rebuild their self-confidence.

"I tried to forget all of it because it was so horrible," said one former Murphy employee. "Screaming was an everyday thing. The manipulation and the mind games. ... Everybody in that office was depressed."

Another former staffer called it a "culture of intimidation" while a third said, "It took me a long time to have any confidence in myself."

Murphy's career started to unravel in early September, when he was forced to admit to an affair with Shannon Edwards, a Pittsburgh-area psychologist half his age. Edwards' husband had sought to depose the congressman as part of their divorce proceedings. Murphy fought the deposition, which would expose the affair to his constituents, but lost in court.

On Tuesday, the scandal erupted when the Post-Gazette reported that Murphy had suggested Edwards get an abortion during a pregnancy scare, citing leaked text messages between the two.

"And you have zero issue posting your pro-life stance all over the place when you had no issue asking me to abort our unborn child just last week when we thought that was one of the options," Edwards texted to Murphy in late January, according to the Post-Gazette.

Edwards was responding to a Facebook post by Murphy, touting his anti-abortion position in Congress. Murphy is a member of the House Pro-Life Caucus and voted this week for legislation to ban abortions after 20 weeks.

The story also highlighted a toxic work environment in Murphy's office, pointing to Mosychuk's memo, which she titled: "Office Conduct and Behavior: Harassment/Legal Compliance." Mosychuk accused Murphy of causing 100 percent turnover in the office because of a "pattern of sustained inappropriate behavior."

Mosychuk warned Murphy that his actions could be seen as "harassment" of staffers. She highlighted two June incidents in which Murphy was "storming around as we walked in, and as we sat down for prep — having just arrived literally moments ago — you started in on the [legislative director] and verbally abused him, harassed him, chastised him and criticized all his work products."

"You called many of the work products that he literally gave up his weekend to produce as 'useless,'" Mosychuk wrote in the memo. "You pushed other documents off the table onto the floor because they weren't what you wanted. Then you got angry and demanded we find the documents that you had just thrown on the ground."

Several ex-employees who spoke with POLITICO, however, said that while Murphy was a tough boss, Mosychuk was the real reason they quit their jobs. They were flabbergasted that Mosychuk dressed down Murphy for conduct she regularly engaged in herself.

"The description in the memo is not what he does; it's what she would do," said one ex-staffer. "She was the one who would verbally abuse staff. He was bad, but you can deal with a tough member. She was literally terrorizing people."

Murphy's and Mosychuk's treatment of staff has long been known on Capitol Hill. Senior Republican lawmakers and aides said they often sympathized with people who worked there after hearing horror stories.

One former staffer said another aide in the different Capitol office once insisted on doing something nice for her because "I know you work in Murphy's office and could use something good." That same staffer would later go on to encourage people coming into the Murphy office for interviews, or applying to work for the congressman, to turn around and run.

"I would say, 'You don't want to be here unless you're going to be homeless tomorrow,'" she said.

Asked why they never reported these actions to the Office of Compliance, which oversees employment matters in Congress, two former staffers said they looked into the matter but were afraid it'd get back to Mosychuk and that she and Murphy would ruin their careers.

"It's not like a private company where you have an HR department," said one former Murphy employee. "It was a culture of abuse and a culture of corruption. There really is no oversight."

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INTERIOR DAILY COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

NEWS TO SHARE:

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“The Bureau of Land Management has proposed that the Interior Department cancel the withdrawal of more than a million acres of federal lands from new mining claims within a formally designated renewable energy development zone in the Southern California desert, multiple sources have confirmed to E&E News. Formally canceling the two-year withdrawal from new mining claims signals the first step in a broader effort by Interior to eventually dismantle federal participation in the 22.5-million-acre Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP) that it partnered on with the state of California, sources said.”

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“The Bureau of Land Management, an Interior agency, said a recent analysis showed that mining or grazing would not pose a significant threat to the sage grouse, a ground-dwelling, chicken-like bird that roams across vast areas of the West. The proposal would affect less than one-tenth of 1 percent of sage grouse-occupied range across 11 states from California to the Dakotas, officials said. The change comes as the Trump administration moves to reconsider an Obama-era plan to protect the sage grouse, a quirky bird with long, pointed tail feathers and known for the male's elaborate courtship display in which air sacs in the neck are inflated to make a popping sound.”

Palm Beach Post: Interior secretary says Trump committed to Everglades restoration

“Repairing the Herbert Hoover Dike around Lake Okeechobee and restoring the Everglades are important to President Donald Trump, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke said Thursday after visiting a construction project along the lake. Zinke plans to visit Big Cypress National Preserve in the Everglades on Friday and Everglades National Park on Saturday. “On behalf of President Trump, this is a priority,” Zinke said after inspecting repairs to a culvert along the dike on the east side of the lake. Trump has proposed spending \$82 million on rehabilitating the dike in 2018, up from about \$68 million approved by Congress in 2017.”

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“The Interior Department employee who blew the whistle on the Trump administration for reassigning him from measuring climate change to a different department has resigned. Joel Clement, who worked at Interior for more than seven years and continued on in his new accounting role for three months, said he left after losing all hope things would change.”

- **Statement on Clement:** The Department does not comment on ongoing matters such as whistleblower complaints. We look forward to working with the Office of Special Counsel to address any questions they might have about this matter.

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- **Secretary Zinke's Statement:** I believe taxpayers absolutely have a right to know how much official government travel costs. It's common sense. At the Department we make those documents available to the public. Using tax dollars wisely and ethically is a big responsibility and is at the heart of good government. There are some times when Interior - regardless of the administration - has to utilize charter services because we often travel to

areas that don't have a lot of flight options. Since being sworn in, I've used a charter on three occasions:

- On a trip organized by the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee in the Arctic Circle
- Flying overnight to Montana to speak at the Western Governors Conference and hold a bipartisan round table discussion concerning Western issues and President Trump's Energy initiative.
- and traveling between two of the islands that make up the United States Virgin islands. As you're aware the Interior Department oversees federal policy for the U.S. Territories and the events marked the 100-year anniversary of the territory joining the United States. As the only Senate confirmed member of Interior, I was honored to represent President Trump and accompany Governor Mapp and the Prime Minister of Denmark on this historic occasion.

I also took military air with Secretary Purdue so he and I could meet with wildfire crews battling a dangerous Type 1 wildfire that had already taken the life of one firefighter. I also fly military air when I travel with the President and Vice President. All of this travel was done only after it was determined by multiple professionals at the Department that no commercial options existed to meet the schedule. And as importantly, the flights were only booked after extensive due diligence by the career professionals in the Department's General Law and Ethics divisions. Every single trip I take is pre-approved by them. We are continually looking at ways to lower costs at the Department, and also looking at ways to increase revenues. I will always be honest and upfront about travel – in fact you can follow it on Twitter.

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Alex Hinson

Deputy Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

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reviewed and approved in advance by both the Departmental Ethics Office and the Division of General Law. In short, the trip - including the Secretary's address to the hockey developmental squad - was completely compliant with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations." --**Joint Statement from Melinda Loftin (Department of the Interior Designated Agency Ethics Official and Director of the Departmental Ethics Office) and Edward Keable (Deputy Solicitor - General Law). Both are career members of the Senior Executive Service.**

• **Secretary Zinke's Statement:** I believe taxpayers absolutely have a right to know how much official government travel costs. It's common sense. At the Department we make those documents available to the public. Using tax dollars wisely and ethically is a big responsibility and is at the heart of good government. There are some times when Interior - regardless of the administration - has to utilize charter services because we often travel to areas that don't have a lot of flight options. Since being sworn in, I've used a charter on three occasions:

- On a trip organized by the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee in the Arctic Circle
- Flying overnight to Montana to speak at the Western Governors Conference and hold a bipartisan round table discussion concerning Western issues and President Trump's Energy initiative.
- and traveling between two of the islands that make up the United States Virgin islands. As you're aware the Interior Department oversees federal policy for the U.S. Territories and the events marked the 100-year anniversary of the territory joining the United States. As the only Senate confirmed member of Interior, I was honored to represent President Trump and accompany Governor Mapp and the Prime Minister of Denmark on this historic occasion.

I also took military air with Secretary Purdue so he and I could meet with wildfire crews battling a dangerous Type 1 wildfire that had already taken the life of one firefighter. I also fly military air when I travel with the President and Vice President. All of this travel was done only after it was determined by multiple professionals at the Department that no commercial options existed to meet the schedule. And as importantly, the flights were only booked after extensive due diligence by the career professionals in the Department's General Law and Ethics divisions. Every single trip I take is pre-approved by them. We are continually looking at ways to lower costs at the Department, and also looking at ways to increase revenues. I will always be honest and upfront about travel – in fact you can follow it on Twitter.

##

--
Alex Hinson

Deputy Press Secretary

Department of the Interior

To: interior_press@ios.doi.gov[interior_press@ios.doi.gov]
From: Heather Swift
Sent: 2017-10-05T17:50:10-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Fwd: Comment about Joel Clement's resignation
Received: 2017-10-05T17:51:36-04:00

Heather Swift
Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Green, Miranda" <Miranda.Green@turner.com>
Date: October 5, 2017 at 3:52:11 PM EDT
To: Heather Swift <heather_swift@ios.doi.gov>
Subject: Comment about Joel Clement's resignation

Hi Heather,

I'm wondering if you guys can provide a response or comment on the resignation of Joel Clement from the Interior. For the majority of the time that Clement was at Interior he studied the impact of rising sea levels on Native American tribes in Alaska. Until July he was the director of the Office of Policy Analysis. Then he was reassigned without notice to be a senior adviser at the department's Office of Natural Resources Revenue -- a position he labels an accounting job.

He says he resigned because he felt that he was pushed out, by being reassigned to an area he was not trained to work in.

Thanks,
Miranda

--

Miranda Green
Political Writer, Breaking News
CNNPolitics.com
O: 202-772-2728 | C: 202-734-8963
Miranda.Green@turner.com
@mirandacgreen

To: Heather Swift[heather_swift@ios.doi.gov];
miranda.green@turner.com[miranda.green@turner.com]
Cc: Interior Press[interior_press@ios.doi.gov]
From: Hinson, Alex
Sent: 2017-10-05T17:57:19-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Re: Comment about Joel Clement's resignation
Received: 2017-10-05T17:58:25-04:00

Miranda,

Statement on Clement: The Department does not comment on ongoing matters such as whistleblower complaints. We look forward to working with the Office of Special Counsel to address any questions they might have about this matter.
Regarding the shuffling of SES at DOI: The President signed an executive order to reorganize the federal government for the future and the Secretary has been absolutely out front on that issue. In fact, he mentioned a Department-wide, front lines-focused reorganization on his first day address to all employees. The purpose of the Senior Executive Service is to ensure that the executive management of the government of the United States is responsive to the needs, policies, and goals of the Nation and otherwise is of the highest quality. Senior executives are the highest paid employees in the federal government and signed up for the SES knowing that they could be called upon to work in different positions at any time. Congress meant for the SES to be a mobile force that are capable of taking on different assignments to meet the needs of the agency. Personnel moves among the Senior Executive Service are being conducted to better serve the taxpayer and the Department's operations.

On Thu, Oct 5, 2017 at 5:50 PM, Heather Swift <heather_swift@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

Heather Swift
Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Green, Miranda" <Miranda.Green@turner.com>
Date: October 5, 2017 at 3:52:11 PM EDT
To: Heather Swift <heather_swift@ios.doi.gov>
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Miranda

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Miranda Green

Political Writer, Breaking News

CNNPolitics.com

O: 202-772-2728 | C: 202-734-8963

Miranda.Green@turner.com

@mirandacgreen

--

Alex Hinson

Deputy Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

To: Heather Swift[heather_swift@ios.doi.gov]
From: Green, Miranda
Sent: 2017-10-05T15:52:11-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Comment about Joel Clement's resignation
Received: 2017-10-05T15:52:51-04:00

Hi Heather,

I'm wondering if you guys can provide a response or comment on the resignation of Joel Clement from the Interior. For the majority of the time that Clement was at Interior he studied the impact of rising sea levels on Native American tribes in Alaska. Until July he was the director of the Office of Policy Analysis. Then he was reassigned without notice to be a senior adviser at the department's Office of Natural Resources Revenue -- a position he labels an accounting job.

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Miranda

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Miranda Green
Political Writer, Breaking News
CNNPolitics.com
O: 202-772-2728 | C: 202-734-8963
Miranda.Green@turner.com
@mirandacgreen

To: Russell Newell[russell_newell@ios.doi.gov]; Heather Swift[heather_swift@ios.doi.gov]; Laura Rigas[Laura_Rigas@ios.doi.gov]
From: Hinson, Alex
Sent: 2017-10-05T15:58:33-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: *DRAFT DOI Daily Comms
Received: 2017-10-05T15:58:36-04:00
[WH Daily comms update 10-5.docx](#)

INTERIOR
WASHINGTON
10/5/2017

DAILY COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

TO: White House Cabinet Affairs Communications

FROM: Heather Swift & Laura Rigas

SUBJECT: Communications Update

Press Inquiries:

- Many small inquiries and logistical inquiries.
- ** Multiple inquires on travel**
 - o **DOI Statement:** “The Interior Department under the Trump Administration has always and will always continue to work to ensure all officials follow appropriate rules and regulations when traveling, including using government coach class fare options at all times appropriate and feasible, to ensure the efficient use of government resources.”
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- **** Multiple inquires on BLM Methane Rule****
 - o **DOI Statement:** “The BLM had suspended upcoming compliance deadlines in its waste prevention rule, requirements that otherwise would be required to be met by January 17, 2018, pending the outcome of litigation in Wyoming challenging the lawfulness of the rule. The rule otherwise was in effect. Yesterday the district court in the Northern District of California invalidated that suspension, which means the compliance deadlines would need to be met by the January 2018 deadline. Today BLM published a proposed rule that would extend those compliance deadlines by one year, until January 2019. The public will have 30 days to comment on that proposed rule.”

Top Stories

- **Reuters:** [U.S. interior secretary raised political funds on government trip: report](#)
- **Politico:** [Trump's Interior chief 'hopping around from campaign event to campaign event'](#)
- **Washington Post:** [Notes from closed meeting show how Interior aims to weaken environmental laws](#)
- **THE HILL:** [Zinke under federal investigation for speech to NHL team: report](#)
- **Portland Press Herald:** [With scathing letter, climate scientist from Maine quits Interior Department](#)

Top Issues and Accomplishments

- Interior continues to support all Hurricane Harvey, Hurricane Irma, and Hurricane Maria efforts. All bureaus are executing their emergency plans and assisting in Hurricane relief.
- Yesterday, Interior hosted the first Royalty Policy Committee (RPC) meeting. The meeting was open press and the readout press release can be seen [HERE](#).
- Today, BLM issued their report on sagebrush focal area habitat. The press release can be seen [HERE](#).
- This week and weekend, Secretary Zinke is in Florida. There will 3 media opportunities throughout the trip in Florida, with the first this afternoon (10/5).

###

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Alex Hinson

Deputy Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

To: Heather Swift[heather_swift@ios.doi.gov]
From: Hinson, Alex
Sent: 2017-10-04T16:34:26-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Re: DRAFT DOI Daily Comms
Received: 2017-10-04T16:34:32-04:00

ok, sending now

On Wed, Oct 4, 2017 at 4:33 PM, Heather Swift <heather_swift@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

Ok don't wait for that. Just seND this

Heather Swift
Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

On Oct 4, 2017, at 4:29 PM, Hinson, Alex <alex_hinson@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

Yes, RPC just finished and I'll have test of readout shortly.

On Wed, Oct 4, 2017 at 4:25 PM, Heather Swift <heather_swift@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

Can you just add links to the press releases sent today

Heather Swift
Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

On Oct 4, 2017, at 4:23 PM, Hinson, Alex <alex_hinson@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

INTERIOR
WASHINGTON
10/4/2017

DAILY COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

TO: White House Cabinet Affairs Communications

FROM: Heather Swift & Laura Rigas

SUBJECT: Communications Update

Press Inquiries:

- Many small inquiries and logistical inquiries.
- ** Multiple inquires on travel**
 - o **DOI Statement:** “The Interior Department under the Trump Administration has always and will always continue to work to ensure all officials follow appropriate rules and regulations when traveling, including using government coach class fare options at all times appropriate and feasible, to ensure the efficient use of government resources.”
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Top Stories

- **Wall Street Journal:** [Government to Reopen Sage Grouse Lands for Potential Mining Projects](#)
- **Washington Post:** [Interior Department whistleblower resigns, calling Ryan](#)

Zinke's leadership a failure

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###

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Alex Hinson

Deputy Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

<WH Daily comms update 10-4.docx>

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Alex Hinson

Deputy Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

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Alex Hinson

Deputy Press Secretary

Department of the Interior

To: Hinson, Alex[alex_hinson@ios.doi.gov]
From: Heather Swift
Sent: 2017-10-04T16:36:35-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Re: DOI Daily Comms
Received: 2017-10-04T16:36:43-04:00

TY

Heather Swift
Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

On Oct 4, 2017, at 4:35 PM, Hinson, Alex <alex_hinson@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

INTERIOR
WASHINGTON
10/4/2017

DAILY COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

TO: White House Cabinet Affairs Communications

FROM: Heather Swift & Laura Rigas

SUBJECT: Communications Update

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###

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Alex Hinson

Deputy Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

<WH Daily comms update 10-4.docx>

To: Swift, Heather[heather_swift@ios.doi.gov]
Cc: Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov[Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov]
From: Colin S. Woodard
Sent: 2017-10-04T18:49:57-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Re: Interview request - Portland Press Herald
Received: 2017-10-04T18:50:38-04:00

Hi Heather -

Am writing a piece right now on Clement's resignation. Would the department wish to comment on the contents of his resignation letter?

Many thanks,

Colin

Colin Woodard
State & National Affairs Writer
Portland Press Herald and *Maine Sunday Telegram*
207-317-6278

From: Swift, Heather <heather_swift@ios.doi.gov>
Sent: Thursday, July 20, 2017 2:44:52 PM
To: Colin S. Woodard
Cc: Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov
Subject: Re: Interview request - Portland Press Herald

Regarding the op-ed:

The Department does not comment on ongoing matters such as whistleblower complaints. We look forward to working with the Office of Special Counsel to address any questions they might have about this matter.

Regarding the shuffling of SES at DOI:

The President signed an executive order to reorganize the federal government for the future and the Secretary has been absolutely out front on that issue. In fact, he mentioned a Department-wide, front lines-focused reorganization on his first day address to all employees.

The purpose of the Senior Executive Service is to ensure that the executive management of the government of the United States is responsive to the needs, policies, and goals of the Nation and otherwise is of the highest quality. Senior executives are the highest paid employees in the federal government and signed up for the SES knowing that they could be called upon to work in different positions at any time. Congress meant for the SES to be a mobile force that are capable of taking on different assignments to meet the needs of the agency.

Personnel moves among the Senior Executive Service are being conducted to better serve the taxpayer and the Department's operations.

-

Heather Swift
Department of the Interior
@DOIPressSec
Heather_Swift@ios.doi.gov | Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

On Thu, Jul 20, 2017 at 11:46 AM, Colin S. Woodard <cwoodard@pressherald.com> wrote:

Greetings -

I'm a reporter at Maine's largest paper and writing today on Joel Clement and his "whistleblower" OpEd. As you may know, he mentions being a Maine native at the end of the piece.

I'd like to speak to someone at DOI for a response to his allegations and also comment about the wisdom of reassigning various senior personnel to positions for which their expertise does not appear relevant. Can you help me with that?

Many thanks,

Colin

Colin Woodard
State & National Affairs Writer
Portland Press Herald and *Maine Sunday Telegram*
207-317-6278

To: heather_swift@ios.doi.gov[heather_swift@ios.doi.gov]
From: E&E News
Sent: 2017-10-04T16:39:31-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: October 4 -- E&E News PM is ready
Received: 2017-10-04T16:43:00-04:00

[Read today's E&E News PM on the web](#)

AN E&E NEWS PUBLICATION

To access please enter:

Username: heather_swift@ios.doi.gov

Password: doi

E&E NEWS PM — Wed., October 4, 2017

 [READ FULL EDITION](#)

1. INTERIOR:

Climate policy whistleblower resigns

Top Interior Department official-turned-whistleblower Joel Clement resigned today, pledging to continue to be an "outspoken advocate for action" from outside the agency.

THIS AFTERNOON'S STORIES

2. EPA:

Strategic plan mum on climate, big on 'federalism'

3. EPA:

Air nominee, senator clash over climate change

4. ENDANGERED SPECIES:

FWS about-faces, drops plan to protect Pacific walrus

5. NATIONAL MONUMENTS:

Grijalva tries legislative maneuver to get review details

6. EPA:

Pa. water official to run Mid-Atlantic office

7. DOE:

Senate panel advances 2 nominees

8. WHITE HOUSE:

Rule rollbacks part of federal culture — Trump's reg czar

9. SUPERFUND:

Court rules DOD on hook for cleanup at Calif. aeronautics plant

UPCOMING HEARINGS AND MARKUPS

10. CALENDAR:

Activity for October 2 - October 8, 2017

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To send a press release, fax 202-737-5299 or email editorial@eenews.net.

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E&E News

122 C Street NW 7th Floor Washington, DC 20001

Phone: 202-628-6500 Fax: 202-737-5299

www.eenews.net

To: Heather Swift[heather_swift@ios.doi.gov]; Russell Newell[russell_newell@ios.doi.gov]; Laura Rigas[Laura_Rigas@ios.doi.gov]
From: Hinson, Alex
Sent: 2017-10-04T16:23:48-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: DRAFT DOI Daily Comms
Received: 2017-10-04T16:23:56-04:00
[WH Daily comms update 10-4.docx](#)

INTERIOR
WASHINGTON
10/4/2017

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###

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Alex Hinson

Deputy Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

To: scott_hommel@ios.doi.gov[scott_hommel@ios.doi.gov]
From: E&E News
Sent: 2017-10-04T16:36:15-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: October 4 -- E&E News PM is ready
Received: 2017-10-04T16:38:19-04:00

[Read today's E&E News PM on the web](#)

AN E&E NEWS PUBLICATION

To access please enter:

Username: scott_hommel@ios.doi.gov

Password: doi

E&E NEWS PM — Wed., October 4, 2017

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3. EPA:

Air nominee, senator clash over climate change

4. ENDANGERED SPECIES:

FWS about-faces, drops plan to protect Pacific walrus

5. NATIONAL MONUMENTS:

Grijalva tries legislative maneuver to get review details

6. EPA:

Pa. water official to run Mid-Atlantic office

7. DOE:

Senate panel advances 2 nominees

8. WHITE HOUSE:

Rule rollbacks part of federal culture — Trump's reg czar

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Court rules DOD on hook for cleanup at Calif. aeronautics plant

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E&E News

122 C Street NW 7th Floor Washington, DC 20001

Phone: 202-628-6500 Fax: 202-737-5299

www.eenews.net

To: Brittany Patterson[bpatterson@eenews.net]
Cc: Interior Press[interior_press@ios.doi.gov]
From: Heather Swift
Sent: 2017-10-04T16:39:44-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Re: Comment on Joel Clement's resignation
Received: 2017-10-04T16:39:59-04:00

The Secretary is traveling.

Heather Swift
Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

On Oct 4, 2017, at 4:38 PM, Brittany Patterson <bpatterson@eenews.net> wrote:

Hi Team,

I'm really sorry for the very short notice (writing for PM so we go live at 4:30 p.m.), but do you comment regarding Joel Clement's resignation letter? Has the Secretary received it?

Thanks,
Brittany

Dear Secretary Zinke,

I hereby resign my position as Senior Advisor at the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI).

The career men and women of DOI serve because they believe in DOI's mission to protect our nation's natural and cultural resources and they believe that service to this country is a responsibility and an honor. I'm proud to have served at DOI alongside such devoted public servants, and I share their dedication to the mission and country, so it is with a heavy heart that I am resigning as a senior official at the Department. I have three reasons for my resignation:

Poor Leadership. I blew the whistle on the Trump administration because I believe you unlawfully retaliated against me for disclosing the perilous impacts of climate change upon Alaska Native communities and for working to help get them out of harm's way. The investigations into my whistleblower complaints are ongoing and I hope to prevail. Retaliating against civil servants for raising health and safety concerns is unlawful, but there are many more items to add to your resume of failure: You and President Trump have waged an all-out assault on the civil service by muzzling scientists and policy experts like myself; you conducted an arbitrary and sloppy review of our treasured National Monuments to score political points; your team has compromised tribal sovereignty by limiting programs meant to serve Indians and Alaska Natives; you are

undercutting important work to protect the western sage grouse and its habitat; you eliminated a rule that prevented oil and gas interests from cheating taxpayers on royalty payments; you cancelled the moratorium on a failed coal leasing program that was also shortchanging taxpayers; and you even cancelled a study into the health risks of people living near mountaintop removal coal mines after rescinding a rule that would have protected their health.

You have disrespected the career staff of the Department by questioning their loyalty and you have played fast and loose with government regulations to score points with your political base at the expense of American health and safety. Secretary Zinke, your agenda profoundly undermines the DOI mission and betrays the American people.

Waste of Taxpayer Dollars. My background is in science, policy, and climate change. You reassigned me to the Office of Natural Resources Revenue. My new colleagues were as surprised as I was by the involuntary reassignment to a job title with no duties in an office that specializes in auditing and dispersing fossil fuel royalty income. They acted in good faith to find a role for me, and I deeply appreciate their efforts. In the end, however, reassigning and training me as an auditor when I have no background in that field will involve an exorbitant amount of time and effort on the part of my colleagues, incur significant taxpayer expense, and create a situation in which these talented specialists are being led by someone without experience in their field. I choose to save them the trouble, save taxpayer dollars, and honor the organization by stepping away to find a role more suited to my skills. Secretary Zinke, you and your fellow high-flying Cabinet officials have demonstrated over and over that you are willing to waste taxpayer dollars, but I'm not.

Climate Change Is Real and It's Dangerous. I have highlighted the Alaska Native communities on the brink in the Arctic, but many other Americans are facing climate impacts head-on. Families in the path of devastating hurricanes, businesses in coastal communities experiencing frequent and severe flooding, fishermen pulling up empty nets due to warming seas, medical professionals working to understand new disease vectors, farming communities hit by floods of biblical proportions, and owners of forestlands laid waste by invasive insects. These are just a few of the impacts Americans face. If the Trump administration continues to try to silence experts in science, health and other fields, many more Americans, and the natural ecosystems upon which they depend, will be put at risk.

The solutions and adaptations to these impacts will be complex, but exponentially less difficult and expensive than waiting until tragedy strikes – as we have seen with Houston, Florida, the US Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico – and there is no time to waste. We must act quickly to limit climate change while also preparing for its impacts. Secretary Zinke: It is well known that you, Deputy Secretary David Bernhardt, and President Trump are shackled to special interests such as oil, gas, and mining. You are unwilling to lead on climate change, and cannot be trusted with our nation's natural resources.

So for those three compelling reasons – poor leadership, waste, and your failures on climate change, I tender my resignation. The best use of my skills is to join with the

majority of Americans who understand what's at stake, working to find ways to innovate and thrive despite the many hurdles ahead. You have not silenced me; I will continue to be an outspoken advocate for action, and my voice will be part of the American chorus calling for your resignation so that someone loyal to the interests of all Americans, not just special interests, can take your job.

My thoughts and wishes are with the career women and men who remain at DOI. I encourage them to persist when possible, resist when necessary, and speak truth to power so the institution may recover and thrive once this assault on its mission is over.

Joel Clement
4 October, 2017

Brittany Patterson
Reporter, E&E News' *Climatewire*
bpatterson@eenews.net
O: 202-446-0417
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E&E NEWS

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<https://www.eenews.net> | [@EENewsUpdates](#)
Energywire, Climatewire, Greenwire, E&E Daily, E&E News PM

To: Heather Swift[heather_swift@ios.doi.gov]
From: Hinson, Alex
Sent: 2017-10-04T16:29:38-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Re: DRAFT DOI Daily Comms
Received: 2017-10-04T16:29:45-04:00

Yes, RPC just finished and I'll have test of readout shortly.

On Wed, Oct 4, 2017 at 4:25 PM, Heather Swift <heather_swift@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

Can you just add links to the press releases sent today

Heather Swift
Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

On Oct 4, 2017, at 4:23 PM, Hinson, Alex <alex_hinson@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

INTERIOR
WASHINGTON
10/4/2017

DAILY COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

TO: White House Cabinet Affairs Communications

FROM: Heather Swift & Laura Rigas

SUBJECT: Communications Update

Press Inquiries:

- Many small inquiries and logistical inquiries.
- ** Multiple inquires on travel**
 - o **DOI Statement:** “The Interior Department under the Trump Administration has always and will always continue to work to ensure all officials follow appropriate rules and regulations when traveling, including using government coach class fare options at all times appropriate and feasible, to ensure the efficient use of government resources.”
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- o **Regarding the shuffling of SES at DOI:** The President signed an executive order to reorganize the federal government for the future and the Secretary has been absolutely out front on that issue. In fact, he mentioned a Department-wide, front lines-focused reorganization on his first day address to all employees. The purpose of the Senior Executive Service is to ensure that the executive management of the government of the United States is responsive to the needs, policies, and goals of the Nation and otherwise is of the highest quality. Senior executives are the highest paid employees in the federal government and signed up for the SES knowing that they could be called upon to work in different positions at any time. Congress meant for the SES to be a mobile force that are capable of taking on different assignments to meet the needs of the agency. Personnel moves among the Senior Executive Service are being conducted to better serve the taxpayer and the Department's operations.

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- **Wall Street Journal:** Government to Reopen Sage Grouse Lands for Potential Mining Projects
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Alex Hinson

Deputy Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

<WH Daily comms update 10-4.docx>

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Alex Hinson

Deputy Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

To: Hinson, Alex[alex_hinson@ios.doi.gov]
From: Heather Swift
Sent: 2017-10-04T16:33:17-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Re: DRAFT DOI Daily Comms
Received: 2017-10-04T16:33:25-04:00

Ok don't wait for that. Just send this

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Deputy Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

<WH Daily comms update 10-4.docx>

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Alex Hinson

Deputy Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

To: Hinson, Alex[alex_hinson@ios.doi.gov]
Cc: Russell Newell[russell_newell@ios.doi.gov]; Laura Rigas[Laura_Rigas@ios.doi.gov]
From: Heather Swift
Sent: 2017-10-04T16:25:19-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Re: DRAFT DOI Daily Comms
Received: 2017-10-04T16:25:37-04:00

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Department of the Interior

<WH Daily comms update 10-4.docx>

To: heather_swift@ios.doi.gov[heather_swift@ios.doi.gov]
From: POLITICO Pro Energy
Sent: 2017-09-22T05:43:06-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Morning Energy, presented by the Nuclear Energy Institute: Solar boom faces major challenge today before ITC — Schatz on how hurricanes shape climate debate — More climate references axed from EPA pages
Received: 2017-09-22T05:44:01-04:00

By Anthony Adragna | 09/22/2017 05:41 AM EDT

With help from Eric Wolff, Doug Palmer, Darius Dixon and Emily Holden

SOLAR TRADE CASE GETS MOMENT IN THE SUN : The U.S. International Trade Commission will vote today on whether U.S. solar manufacturers were economically harmed by imports of low-cost solar panels and solar cells. The case has solar installers and developers on edge, as they believe tariffs stemming from a determination could be ruinous for their industry. The Solar Energy Industries Association believes higher panel costs could make many projects uneconomic, and ultimately eliminate of 88,000 jobs — one-third of the \$19 billion industry's workforce. But Suniva and SolarWorld USA, the companies that filed the complaint, believe tariffs will give U.S. solar manufacturing a chance to blossom and ultimately lead to a solar boom.

The nitty gritty: The two companies are requesting comprehensive import relief under Section 201 of the 1974 Trade Act, a "safeguard" provision that's legal under WTO rules but often challenged in practice. For the industry to get relief, the ITC must agree that solar products are being imported "in such increased quantities as to be a substantial cause of serious injury or the threat of serious injury to a U.S. industry." Only two of the four commissioners who will hear the case (two additional commission slots need to be filled) need to vote in the affirmative for the case to go to the remedy phase. In the event of a 2-2 tie, both sides will make recommendations for tariffs.

Trump effect: Once injury is determined, the final call goes to President Donald Trump, who is widely expected to slap tariffs on the imports that are largely shipped by Chinese companies' from plants in several Asian countries.

WTO: The last time the U.S. used this broad authority to impose a quota or tariff, it was a 2002 safeguard action on steel imports under President George W. Bush. The EU, Japan, Korea, China, Switzerland, Norway, New Zealand and Brazil brought the case to the WTO. The United States lost that case and had to remove its steel safeguard duties to avoid trade retaliation.

Governors urge rejection of petition: Four governors — Brian Sandoval of Nevada, John Hickenlooper of Colorado, Charlie Baker of Massachusetts and Ray Cooper of North Carolina — urged the ITC to reject the petition (though they misidentified SolarWorld as SunWorld) in their [letter](#) to ITC Chairman Rhonda Schmittlein, Pro Trade's Doug Palmer [reports](#). "As governors representing states with a robust solar industry, we write to express our opposition to Suniva and SunWorld's (sic) Section 201 petition," the governors said. "At a time when our

citizens are demanding more clean energy, the tariff could cause America to lose out on 47 gigawatts of solar installations, representing billions of dollars of infrastructure investment in our states."

TGIF MES AMIES! I'm your host Anthony Adragna, and the State Department's Erwin Rose was first to identify President Barack Obama as the first-ever host of Passover Seder at the White House. For today: What famous congressman stopped by *Cheers* for a beer in a 1983 episode? Send your tips, energy gossip and comments to aadragna@politico.com, or follow us on Twitter [@AnthonyAdragna](https://twitter.com/AnthonyAdragna), [@Morning_Energy](https://twitter.com/Morning_Energy) and [@POLITICOPro](https://twitter.com/POLITICOPro).

READY TO RESPOND IN PUERTO RICO: EPA said Thursday initial reports showed a "devastating" situation in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Staff intends to travel to Puerto Rico as soon as air travel is possible and among their first priorities is "assessing facilities where there are known hazardous substances" to make sure those areas are safe for surrounding residents.

Trump declared a major disaster Thursday, freeing up additional federal resources to respond to the storm that knocked out power to the entire island of Puerto Rico. "Ships with additional supplies en route to PR & making ALL efforts to reach our most vulnerable citizens," Resident Commissioner [Jenniffer Gonzalez tweeted](#).

HALEY: VENEZUELA OIL EMBARGO 'NOT OFF THE TABLE': She declined to firmly back the idea, but U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley told reporters Thursday the U.S. had not ruled out enacting an oil embargo against Venezuela. "If things don't improve, all those options are always there, and so that's what we're watching to see," she said. "It's not off the table, I can tell you that." She didn't respond to a similar question about pushing for an oil embargo against North Korea.

IF YOU HAPPEN TO BE IN RALEIGH: There's a rare opportunity to hear from EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt's staff today at the Association of Air Pollution Control Agencies annual meeting in Raleigh, N.C. Speaking at a regulatory roundtable event are Samantha Dravis, Pruitt's senior policy counsel, and Brittany Bolen, senior deputy associate administrator within the Office of Policy. Mary Neumayr, chief of staff at the White House Council on Environmental Quality, is also expected to provide an update on the administration's activity. Mandy Gunasekara, Pruitt's senior advisor on air activities, offered her own update Thursday. Full schedule [here](#).

ME INTERVIEW — SEN. BRIAN SCHATZ: One of the strongest climate hawks in Congress, the Hawaii Democrat was one of the few Democrats to [explicitly link](#) recent hurricanes to a changing climate. ME caught up with him about how extreme weather may alter the congressional climate conversation.

Whether it's appropriate to talk climate change after severe weather: "I'm not trying to score political points, but when the biggest unexpected costs for the federal government are severe weather events — and the most harmful recent events from California to Montana to Texas to Florida to Puerto are getting more frequent and severe — you just have to admit what's happening and try to do something about it together."

What impact the severe weather is having on Republicans: "It is impacting their thinking. I don't think it's going to impact the way they talk about climate change. It is impacting the way they talk about severe weather. There's a space here if we're careful with our language and we're respectful of different points of view to work together on clean energy and also on severe weather adaptation."

Why he's so concerned with Trump's EPA picks: "It's not just you're getting a Bush-era person who leans more to the right on these issues. You're getting people whose mission in their professional lives is to gut the underlying statute that they're responsible for implementing."

**** A message from the Nuclear Energy Institute:** Nuclear is doing more than ever before. It's powering the grid, boosting the economy by billions, creating jobs, propelling space travel and even helping doctors. It's moving us forward in ways we never thought possible. Explore all nuclear energy is doing at discovernuclear.com. **

CLIMATE REMOVED FROM MORE EPA PAGES: EPA has stripped climate change language from web pages about its SmartWay program, which is meant to help companies improve their freight transportation efficiency, according a watchdog group tracking agency website changes. The Environmental Data & Governance Initiative [reports](#) that EPA has nixed references to "carbon," and "greenhouse gases" in favor of more general terms, like "pollution." The group says the agency also reduced emphasis on SmartWay's international efforts, including work with a United Nations environment program. Most of the changes appear to have occurred between late March and May, EDGI said.

TOM CARPER, CARPENTERS FAN: Sen. [Tom Carper](#), top Democrat on the Environment and Public Works Committee, cautiously applauded Pruitt's decision to post his schedules online but said he still wouldn't endorse moving additional EPA nominees without agency responses to oversight requests. "I hope that this is a step in the right direction, but, as the song goes, '[we've only just begun](#),'" Carper said in a statement. "I am hopeful that Administrator Pruitt will continue to focus on responses to my other outstanding requests for information."

GOP CHAIRMAN: MAYBE YOU SHOULD MOVE: The federal government should not have to continue to foot the bill for properties that flood repeatedly, Financial Services Chairman [Jeb Hensarling](#) said on CNBC's "[Squawk Box](#)." "At some point, God is telling you to move," the Texas Republican said. "If all we do is force federal taxpayers to build the same home in the same fashion in the same location and expect a different result, we all know that is the classic definition of insanity,

BROWN SPEAKING ON CANADIAN CLIMATE COOPERATION: California Gov. Jerry Brown hosts a press availability this morning at 9:45 a.m. along with Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne and Quebec Premier Philippe Couillard to discuss efforts to address climate change between Canadian provinces and the most populous U.S. state.

HEARING SET FOR PHMSA NOMINEE: The Senate Commerce Committee announced Thursday it would hold a Sept. 27 hearing to consider the nomination of Howard Elliott, a 40-year veteran of the U.S. freight rail industry, to run the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration. It'll also mull the selection of Timothy Gallaudet to be assistant Commerce secretary for oceans and atmosphere, the No. 2 position at NOAA. Details [here](#).

MAIL CALL! GROUP TO DOJ: YOU SETTLED TOO LOW: Clean Water Action wants DOJ to reconsider a settlement reached with California farmer John Duarte, arguing its unjustifiably low penalties set an awful precedent for future Clean Water Act cases. "Failure to seek these appropriate remedies is a failure to enforce the Clean Water Act," the group writes in [a letter](#). For those whose minds need refreshing, DOJ reached the \$1.1 million settlement in the [long-standing litigation over wetlands destruction](#) back in August.

LEAVE THEM BE: On the two-year anniversary of the Obama administration deciding the sage grouse didn't warrant Endangered Species Act protection, several dozen local elected Western officials today sent Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke [a letter](#) urging him to leave existing protection plans in place. "We urge you to listen to us, as well as the governors, ranchers, sportsmen, industry officials, conservationists and other stakeholders who invested years of work into these management plans — and allow those plans to stay intact," they write. The Wilderness Society released its [own memo](#) on Zinke's possible actions.

More for Zinke's eyes: A group of archeologists, rangers, and professors from across the West are out with a report urging Zinke and BLM not to grant oil and gas industry leases in the Greater Chaco landscape. Read it [here](#).

ATTRACTIONS YET TO COME: House lawmakers will as soon as next week vote on a broad sportsmen's package that includes a controversial provision easing regulations on the purchases of gun silencers, POLITICO's John Bresnahan [reports](#). The Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act [H.R. 3668 \(115\)](#), introduced by Rep. [Jeff Duncan](#), revises federal regulations on silencers. Democrats argue the measure would make it possible to obtain a silencer without going through a background check, although Republicans dispute that.

RICHARD BRANSON BASHES TRUMP OVER CLIMATE: Virgin's Richard Branson [told CNN](#) Thursday that while "you can never be 100 percent sure about links" between climate change and hurricanes, "we've had four storms within a month, all far greater than that have ever, ever, ever happened in history." Branson, who rode out Hurricane Irma on his private island, said: "Ninety-nine percent of scientists know it's real. The whole world knows it's real except for maybe one person in the White House."

MEETING JERSEY'S CLIMATE CHALLENGE: It'll take "significant new policies and enhancements of current strategies" for New Jersey to hit its goal of achieving 80 percent emissions reductions by 2050 from 2006 levels but there are multiple approaches available to do so, according to a [new report](#). Among the many options cited: Setting an interim emissions reduction goal; rejoining the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative and increasing the state's renewable portfolio standard. The Georgetown Climate Center, Rutgers and the World Resources Institute worked together on the report.

MOVING ON OVER: Outgoing Tennessee Valley Authority Inspector General Richard Moore is being [sworn in](#) today as the U.S. attorney for the Southern District of Alabama. Trump nominated Moore for the job in June and the Senate confirmed him last week. Deputy IG Jill Matthews will now become TVA's acting IG. Moore has been the TVA watchdog since 2003, and had previously spent 17 years as an assistant DA in the office he'll now lead.

INTERIOR WHISTLEBLOWER WINS COURAGE AWARD: Joel Clement, who filed a whistleblower [complaint](#) in July alleging he'd been [transferred within Interior](#) to prevent him from discussing climate change, received the Callaway Award for Civic Courage on Thursday stemming from those actions. "I hope the recognition I receive for blowing the whistle on the Trump administration inspires others within the federal civil service to do the same; the continued health and safety of Americans depends upon it," he said in a statement.

NEW MAP TRACKS ANTI-FOSSIL FUEL FIGHT: The Fossil Fuel Resistance Mapping Project, launched with the support of 350.org and the Power Shift Network Thursday, tracks local activities and protests to resist proposed pipelines, fracking wells and other fossil fuel infrastructure. Check it out [here](#).

PROTECTION NEEDED: The Hispanic Access Foundation released a report with the top 10 list of places important to the Latino community that it says deserve federal protection. Read it [here](#).

MOVER, SHAKER: Pete Maysmith joins the League of Conservation Voters as its new senior vice president of campaigns where he'll oversee electoral efforts that topped \$45 million last cycle. He joins from Conservation Colorado.

QUICK HITS

- Montana preparing to take over after EPA asbestos cleanup. [AP](#).
- Canada deploys 'multi-pronged' lobbying to counter Trump's EPA cuts. [National Observer](#).
- Ohio EPA Hikes Penalties Against Rover Pipeline To \$2.3 Million. [WOSU](#).
- Russia wants to protect itself from climate change—without reducing carbon emissions. [Science](#).
- Flint Water Crisis Likely Increased Fetal Deaths, Study Shows. [Huffington Post](#).
- U.S. oil prices settle lower as traders look to OPEC to further tighten global supplies. [MarketWatch](#).
- Former EPA official warns of potential food contamination after hurricanes. [CNBC](#).

HAPPENING TODAY

10:00 a.m. — "[Statoil's Climate Roadmap](#)," Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1616 Rhode Island Avenue, NW

10:30 a.m. — API, ACC, AF&PA, SIFMA, NAM, NRF and USCIB holds press call on the impact of NAFTA on U.S. economic growth, investment and job creation, RSVP: SammonB@api.org

11:00 a.m. — International Trade Commission [holds vote](#) on solar trade petition seeking to impose steep tariffs, Main Hearing Room, 500 E Street SW

1:30 p.m. — Solar Energy Industries Association holds conference call following ITC vote, RSVP: ahobson@seia.org

THAT'S ALL FOR ME!

**** A message from the Nuclear Energy Institute:** Nuclear energy does amazing things every day. It adds billions to the economy. It powers cities, that power business, that power thousands of high quality jobs. With a little help from nuclear energy, we're propelling space travel to the farthest reaches of the galaxy. And nuclear energy is even helping doctors diagnose and treat patients. Nuclear is doing all of these things while keeping the air clean. Explore all the extraordinary things nuclear is doing to help push us forward at discovernuclear.com. Nuclear. Power the Extraordinary. **

To view online:

<https://www.politicopro.com/tipsheets/morning-energy/2017/09/solar-boom-faces-major-challenge-today-before-itc-024717>

Stories from POLITICO Pro

4 governors urge ITC to reject tariffs on solar products [Back](#)

By Doug Palmer | 09/21/2017 06:11 PM EDT

Four governors today made a last-minute effort to prevent President Donald Trump from getting the chance to impose tariffs on solar products — and in the process misidentified one of the companies involved in the case.

The move came on the eve of a critical U.S. International Trade Commission vote on Friday in a complaint brought by Suniva and SolarWorld. The ITC must decide whether U.S. solar producers have been seriously injured, or are threatened with serious injury, by a surge of imports from China and other suppliers.

The panel will have until late October to recommend a relief plan if it finds injury, which Trump could then follow or he could craft his own. U.S. law allows up to four years of initial protection.

The four governors — Brian Sandoval of Nevada, John Hickenlooper of Colorado, Charlie Baker of Massachusetts and Ray Cooper of North Carolina — said they were concerned about the impact of import restrictions and related measures on their states' economies. However, they misidentified SolarWorld as SunWorld in a [letter](#) to ITC Chairman Rhonda Schmidlein.

"As governors representing states with a robust solar industry, we write to express our opposition to Suniva and SunWorld's Section 201 petition," the governors said. "At a time when our citizens are demanding more clean energy, the tariff could cause America to lose out on 47 gigawatts of solar installations, representing billions of dollars of infrastructure investment in our states."

The ITC currently has two vacancies, so just four commissioners will decide the case. In the case of a tie, Trump would still be able impose relief if he decides it's needed.

Only commissioners who find injury can make remedy recommendations to the president, according to an [ITC fact sheet](#).

To view online [click here](#).

[Back](#)

DOJ settles high-profile Clean Water Act case with farmer [Back](#)

By Annie Snider | 08/15/2017 02:41 PM EDT

The Department of Justice today announced a \$1.1 million settlement with a California farmer over wetlands destruction, ending a case that agricultural groups and property rights activists had criticized as federal overreach under the Clean Water Act.

John Duarte and Duarte Nursery Inc. agreed to pay \$330,000 in civil penalties and fund \$770,000 in restoration work to compensate for damage to 22 acres of protected streams and wetlands on his property. The agreement allows Duarte to return most of the site back to agricultural use and seek future determinations about whether streams and wetlands on the property are subject to federal protections.

Duarte was found guilty by a federal district court judge last year of violating the Clean Water Act by hiring a consultant to conduct "deep ripping" through waterways protected under the 1972 water law. Most farming practices, including plowing, are exempted from the law's permitting requirements, but deep ripping is not.

"Today's agreement affirms the Department of Justice's commitment to the rule of law, results in meaningful environmental restoration, and brings to an end protracted litigation," said Jeffrey Wood, acting assistant attorney general for the Justice Department's Environment and Natural Resource Division. The DOJ emphasized that "this case is not (and will not be used as) a pretext for federal prosecution of farmers who engage in normal plowing on their farms."

In a statement, Duarte said settling was a "difficult decision" that he came to "reluctantly" given the risks that an even greater penalty would have posed to his business.

WHAT'S NEXT: The settlement agreement is subject to 30 days of public comment and must ultimately be approved by the court.

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House GOP pushes to loosen gun rules [Back](#)

By John Bresnahan | 09/21/2017 05:31 PM EDT

House GOP leaders are moving forward with plans to vote on two gun-related measures in the coming weeks, the first time Congress has taken up the controversial issue since Donald Trump became president.

A bill easing regulations on the purchases of gun silencers — also known as suppressors — could reach the House floor as early as next week.

Another measure allowing concealed carry permit holders to take their weapons to other states is also expected to move through the House Judiciary Committee and onto the floor this fall, possibly in October, according to GOP lawmakers and aides.

Both proposals are almost certain to pass the House, despite intense opposition from gun-control groups. In the Senate, Democrats will likely block the measures. Trump would almost certainly sign such bills if they ever got to his desk.

Nearly five years after the tragic shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, left 20 children dead and spurred an impassioned debate over expanding background checks for gun sales, the GOP-controlled Congress and the Trump administration are clearly moving in the opposite direction. Republican congressional leaders and Trump administration officials — at the urging of the National Rifle Association and other gun-rights groups — are looking to roll back restrictions on guns imposed during the Obama era.

The push for looser gun rules comes as Rep. Steve Scalise (R-La.) is still recovering from a gunshot wound he suffered at a congressional baseball practice in June.

Gun-control groups — including those tied to Michael Bloomberg, the former New York City mayor and publishing billionaire — claim that the NRA and its allies on Capitol Hill and inside the Trump administration are really looking to help the gun industry, which has seen its sales slump since President Barack Obama left office and Trump was sworn in.

The Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act, introduced by Rep. Jeff Duncan (R-S.C.), may come up for a House vote as early as next week.

The Duncan legislation includes language revising federal regulations on silencers, which currently have tougher purchasing requirements than guns. Democrats contend that Duncan's bill would make it possible to obtain a silencer without going through a background check, although Republicans insist that's not true.

Another provision makes it more difficult for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives to classify certain ammunition as "armor piercing." Regulations on interstate transportation of weapons would be revised as well.

Duncan and other proponents of his bill say silencers are popular with recreational shooters and hunters. The South Carolina Republican points out 40 states allow hunters to use such devices.

Duncan's bill has already been approved by the Natural Resources Committee. The Judiciary Committee, which also has jurisdiction, apparently is not going to act on the legislation but will allow it instead to go straight to the floor.

"Sportsmen are the foundation of the conservation movement in the United States, yet some radical organizations seek to limit access to this pastime by restricting the Second Amendment, as well as land and game management," Duncan said in a statement.

While some law-enforcement officials and organizations oppose any effort to loosen the restrictions on silencers, Jim Pasco, head of the Fraternal Order of Police, says his group has no objections to the proposal. The FOP claims to be the nation's largest police union.

"With respect to the silencer provision, we have taken a position that we do not object to that provision," said Pasco. "The reasoning is because silencers are not — and have not been in the recent past — a law enforcement problem."

Pasco said his organization has pushed for language allowing silencers to be traceable, which has been added to the bill.

The NRA has thrown its considerable political muscle behind the Duncan bill as well.

"Allowing law-abiding citizens to purchase suppressors without paying a \$200 government tax and submitting extensive paperwork, but while undergoing an instant background check, will have a positive impact on the public health issue of hearing loss," said Jennifer Baker, an NRA spokeswoman. "The fact that the world's largest organization of sworn law enforcement officers expresses zero opposition to the bill debunks the gun lobby's false claims the bill poses a public safety risk."

But Peter Ambler, executive director of Americans for Responsible Solutions, a gun-control group founded by former Rep. Gabby Giffords (D-Ariz.), said the "vast majority" of gun owners don't support any move to loosen silencer regulations, according to polls.

"The NRA poured unprecedented amounts of political money into the 2016 elections," Ambler said. "They're trying to ram this through when the country is distracted by the health-care debate. Most Americans oppose this bill, most major law-enforcement organizations oppose the bill."

Ambler said Duncan's bill could potentially allow purchases of silencers without any background check at guns shows or through private transactions.

Just as controversial is a bill by Rep. Richard Hudson (R-N.C.) to allow concealed-carry permit holders to take their weapons with them to another state, as long as that state also allows concealed carry.

Concealed-carry permit holders would also be allowed to take their weapons onto some federal land, such as national parks.

Hudson's bill currently has 212 co-sponsors, including several Democrats, and it is expected to easily clear the House once it reaches the floor. A Judiciary Committee mark-up could come in October or early November, with a vote by the full House shortly thereafter.

Hudson insists his bill would not override any other state, municipal or local regulations on concealed carry. Sen. John Cornyn (R-Texas) has introduced a similar bill in the Senate.

In a statement, Hudson said his bill "would allow law-abiding citizens with a state-issued concealed carry license or permit to conceal a handgun in any other state that allows concealed carry. It also allows law-abiding residents of Constitutional carry states the ability to carry in

other states that recognize their own residents' right to concealed carry."

But ARS' Ambler said Hudson's bill would essentially create a "50 state" gun license, arguing that if someone received a concealed carry permit in one state, they would be allowed to carry their weapon into every state.

A number of states also have stricter permitting for a concealed-carry holder than is required to pass a federal background check. For instance, more than half the states prevent someone with a domestic violence or stalking conviction from obtaining such permits. Ambler said Hudson's bill would essentially pre-empt those restrictions.

Ambler added that gun purchasers could "permit shop," meaning obtain a concealed carry permit from a state that issues permits to nonresidents, as Florida and nine other states do.

"Even if your state has stronger laws and does not allow concealed carry, you would still be able to bring your gun into that state," Ambler insisted. "It undermines the way we permit firearms in this country."

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Interior official files whistleblower complaint over job reassignment [Back](#)

By Esther Whieldon and Ben Lefebvre | 07/19/2017 07:06 PM EDT

A former senior Interior Department official has filed a whistleblower complaint after the agency transferred him from a leadership position focused on climate change to a desk job collecting royalties from oil and gas companies.

In a [complaint](#) and [disclosure](#) filing with the Office of Special Counsel and in a Washington Post [op-ed](#), former Interior Office of Policy Analysis Director Joel Clement claimed he was [reassigned](#) to a position at the Office of Natural Resources Revenue to stop him from publicly discussing climate change impacts on native Alaskan coastal communities.

Clement was among dozens of senior executive staff reassigned to other jobs in June.

Clement told POLITICO no Interior political staffers ever raised concerns about his activities prior to his reassignment. "It was kind of obvious to reassign the climate adaptation experts to the accounting office where they collect fossil fuel royalty checks. That was pretty flagrant, I would say, in terms of sending the message. So that message was received loud and clear that they wanted me to quit."

Clement said he'd like his old job back, and he hoped other staff would also complain.

Interior spokeswoman Heather Swift said the personnel moves were "conducted to better serve the taxpayer and the Department's operations."

Clement may have difficulty proving his case because agencies have wide discretion to reassign staff, according to Jeff Ruch, executive director of Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility. "It sounds like he's being retaliated against because of his job, not because of any disclosure he made," Ruch said. "He's suffering due to the nature of his job, and maybe because he did it too well."

Annie Snider contributed to this report.

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Yes, very	Somewhat	Neutral	Not really	Not at all

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This email was sent to heather_swift@ios.doi.gov by: POLITICO, LLC 1000 Wilson Blvd. Arlington, VA, 22209, USA

To: Halper, Evan[Evan.Halper@latimes.com]
Cc: Heather Swift[heather_swift@ios.doi.gov]
From: Hinson, Alex
Sent: 2017-09-21T15:48:41-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Re: LA Times circling back -- on deadline
Received: 2017-09-21T15:48:48-04:00

Hey Evan,

Statement on the whistleblower

The Department does not comment on ongoing matters such as whistleblower complaints. We look forward to working with the Office of Special Counsel to address any questions they might have about this matter.

Regarding the shuffling of SES at DOI:

The President signed an executive order to reorganize the federal government for the future and the Secretary has been absolutely out front on that issue. In fact, he mentioned a Department-wide, front lines-focused reorganization on his first day address to all employees.

The purpose of the Senior Executive Service is to ensure that the executive management of the government of the United States is responsive to the needs, policies, and goals of the Nation and otherwise is of the highest quality. Senior executives are the highest paid employees in the federal government and signed up for the SES knowing that they could be called upon to work in different positions at any time. Congress meant for the SES to be a mobile force that are capable of taking on different assignments to meet the needs of the agency.

Personnel moves among the Senior Executive Service are being conducted to better serve the taxpayer and the Department's operations.

Thanks!

On Thu, Sep 21, 2017 at 3:45 PM, Halper, Evan <Evan.Halper@latimes.com> wrote:

thank you.

From: Heather Swift <heather_swift@ios.doi.gov>
Sent: Thursday, September 21, 2017 3:43:46 PM
To: Halper, Evan
Cc: alex_hinson@ios.doi.gov
Subject: Re: LA Times circling back -- on deadline

Sorry Evan - I was wheels up. Alex will send you the Department's statement.

Heather Swift
Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

On Sep 21, 2017, at 2:41 PM, Halper, Evan <Evan.Halper@latimes.com> wrote:

I did not receive any response to this request, sent six hours ago. I can push deadline if you plan to respond. Please let me know. Thanks.

From: Halper, Evan
Sent: Thursday, September 21, 2017 9:12 AM
To: Interior_press@ios.doi.gov
Cc: Heather Swift
Subject: LA Times questions -- civil service
Importance: High

Good morning:

I am reaching out for comment from for a story about the civil service under the Trump administration. My specific questions:

1. What is your response to the allegations made in the Joel Clement whistle blower complaint?
2. What was the strategy behind reassigning 50 SES employees?
3. What is your response to concerns raised by lawmakers that the reassignments were intended to push senior managers to quit or sideline those who had worked on projects out of step with the president and secretary's politics?
4. Have you publicly disclosed which managers were reassigned and why? Will you?
5. Are more waves of reassignments coming?

You can reach me at 916.201.6398, if you would prefer to discuss in an interview instead of email. My deadline is 3:30 p.m. Appreciate your attention to this.

Best,

Evan Halper

National Reporter

Los Angeles Times

916.201.6398 (cell)

--

Alex Hinson

Deputy Press Secretary
Department of the Interior
C: 202-641-5381

To: Heather Swift[heather_swift@ios.doi.gov]
Cc: alex_hinson@ios.doi.gov[alex_hinson@ios.doi.gov]
From: Halper, Evan
Sent: 2017-09-21T15:45:06-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Re: LA Times circling back -- on deadline
Received: 2017-09-21T15:45:16-04:00

thank you.

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National Reporter
Los Angeles Times
916.201.6398 (cell)

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Cc: heather_swift@ios.doi.gov[heather_swift@ios.doi.gov]
From: Halper, Evan
Sent: 2017-09-21T15:41:16-04:00
Importance: High
Subject: LA Times circling back -- on deadline
Received: 2017-09-21T15:41:28-04:00

I did not receive any response to this request, sent six hours ago. I can push deadline if you plan to respond. Please let me know. Thanks.

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National Reporter
Los Angeles Times
916.201.6398 (cell)

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Cc: alex_hinson@ios.doi.gov[alex_hinson@ios.doi.gov]
From: Heather Swift
Sent: 2017-09-21T15:43:46-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Re: LA Times circling back -- on deadline
Received: 2017-09-21T15:43:56-04:00

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Heather Swift
Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

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Evan Halper
National Reporter
Los Angeles Times
916.201.6398 (cell)

To: Heather Swift[heather_swift@ios.doi.gov]
From: Michael Doyle
Sent: 2017-09-21T10:59:30-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: FW: Today: Joel Clement to be Awarded Callaway Award for Civic Courage
Received: 2017-09-21T11:00:03-04:00

FYI

From: Kendra Barkoff [mailto:kbarkoff@skdknick.com]
Sent: Thursday, September 21, 2017 10:48 AM
To: Kendra Barkoff <kbarkoff@skdknick.com>
Subject: Today: Joel Clement to be Awarded Callaway Award for Civic Courage

Today: Joel Clement to be Awarded Callaway Award for Civic Courage

Award given for Clement's courage blowing the whistle on the Trump Administration

For Immediate Release:

Date: September 21, 2017

Contact: Kendra Barkoff

Email: kbarkoff@skdknick.com

Washington, DC – Today, Thursday, September 21, Joel Clement, the civil servant who recently filed a [whistleblower complaint](#) against the Department of the Interior, will be awarded the Callaway Award for Civic Courage for standing up to the Trump Administration. The award will be presented at a ceremony at the Carnegie Institute for Science.

“I am deeply honored to be a recipient of the Callaway Award, and humbled by the courage and tenacity of past recipients,” said Joel Clement. “I hope the recognition I receive for blowing the whistle on the Trump Administration inspires others within the federal civil service to do the same; the continued health and safety of Americans depends upon it.”

Clement is the former director of the Office of Policy Analysis at the U.S. Interior Department. He is a scientist and policy expert who worked extensively on climate change issues and specifically the threat that climate change poses to Alaska Native communities. On June 15, he was one of about 50 senior department employees who received letters informing them of involuntary reassignments. Clement continues to work for the federal government in his new role as a senior advisor for the Office of Natural Resources Revenue – the agency responsible for collecting and dispersing royalty income from oil, gas and mining companies.

Joel is receiving the Callaway award for upholding the highest standards of his civil service oath as a senior federal official. In June, he blew the whistle on the Trump

Administration's Interior Department for using personnel reassignment to shut down climate change programs, muzzle scientists and undermine subject matter experts. Multiple investigations of the Department of the Interior are now underway as a result of his efforts.

About the award:

The Joe A. Callaway Award for Civic Courage was established by Mr. Callaway in 1990. The Award recognizes individuals in any area of endeavor who, with integrity and at some personal risk, take a public stance to advance truth and justice, and who challenged prevailing conditions in pursuit of the common good. Toward this end, Mr. Callaway endowed The Shafeek Nader Trust for the Community Interest with a special fund to administer this annual award honoring citizens for their civic courage.

This year's award winners also include: Megan Rice, Michael R. Walli and Greg Boertje-Obed, who courageously waged peace against nuclear weapons by taking their non-violent message of conscience inside the highly-guarded Y-12 Weapons Complex in Oak Ridge, TN.

Past award winners include Robert MacLean from the Federal Air Marshal Service, who fought for federal government employee free speech rights to ensure airline passenger safety, winning a groundbreaking January 2015 Supreme Court decision, and Larry Criscione, reliability and risk Engineer at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission Office of Research, for blazing a courageous path for public health and safety.

###

To: scott_hommel@ios.doi.gov[scott_hommel@ios.doi.gov]
From: POLITICO Pro Energy
Sent: 2017-09-22T05:43:11-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Morning Energy, presented by the Nuclear Energy Institute: Solar boom faces major challenge today before ITC — Schatz on how hurricanes shape climate debate — More climate references axed from EPA pages
Received: 2017-09-22T05:44:18-04:00

By Anthony Adragna | 09/22/2017 05:41 AM EDT

With help from Eric Wolff, Doug Palmer, Darius Dixon and Emily Holden

SOLAR TRADE CASE GETS MOMENT IN THE SUN : The U.S. International Trade Commission will vote today on whether U.S. solar manufacturers were economically harmed by imports of low-cost solar panels and solar cells. The case has solar installers and developers on edge, as they believe tariffs stemming from a determination could be ruinous for their industry. The Solar Energy Industries Association believes higher panel costs could make many projects uneconomic, and ultimately eliminate of 88,000 jobs — one-third of the \$19 billion industry's workforce. But Suniva and SolarWorld USA, the companies that filed the complaint, believe tariffs will give U.S. solar manufacturing a chance to blossom and ultimately lead to a solar boom.

The nitty gritty: The two companies are requesting comprehensive import relief under Section 201 of the 1974 Trade Act, a "safeguard" provision that's legal under WTO rules but often challenged in practice. For the industry to get relief, the ITC must agree that solar products are being imported "in such increased quantities as to be a substantial cause of serious injury or the threat of serious injury to a U.S. industry." Only two of the four commissioners who will hear the case (two additional commission slots need to be filled) need to vote in the affirmative for the case to go to the remedy phase. In the event of a 2-2 tie, both sides will make recommendations for tariffs.

Trump effect: Once injury is determined, the final call goes to President Donald Trump, who is widely expected to slap tariffs on the imports that are largely shipped by Chinese companies' from plants in several Asian countries.

WTO: The last time the U.S. used this broad authority to impose a quota or tariff, it was a 2002 safeguard action on steel imports under President George W. Bush. The EU, Japan, Korea, China, Switzerland, Norway, New Zealand and Brazil brought the case to the WTO. The United States lost that case and had to remove its steel safeguard duties to avoid trade retaliation.

Governors urge rejection of petition: Four governors — Brian Sandoval of Nevada, John Hickenlooper of Colorado, Charlie Baker of Massachusetts and Ray Cooper of North Carolina — urged the ITC to reject the petition (though they misidentified SolarWorld as SunWorld) in their [letter](#) to ITC Chairman Rhonda Schmittlein, Pro Trade's Doug Palmer [reports](#). "As governors representing states with a robust solar industry, we write to express our opposition to Suniva and SunWorld's (sic) Section 201 petition," the governors said. "At a time when our

citizens are demanding more clean energy, the tariff could cause America to lose out on 47 gigawatts of solar installations, representing billions of dollars of infrastructure investment in our states."

TGIF MES AMIES! I'm your host Anthony Adragna, and the State Department's Erwin Rose was first to identify President Barack Obama as the first-ever host of Passover Seder at the White House. For today: What famous congressman stopped by *Cheers* for a beer in a 1983 episode? Send your tips, energy gossip and comments to aadragna@politico.com, or follow us on Twitter [@AnthonyAdragna](https://twitter.com/AnthonyAdragna), [@Morning_Energy](https://twitter.com/Morning_Energy) and [@POLITICOPro](https://twitter.com/POLITICOPro).

READY TO RESPOND IN PUERTO RICO: EPA said Thursday initial reports showed a "devastating" situation in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Staff intends to travel to Puerto Rico as soon as air travel is possible and among their first priorities is "assessing facilities where there are known hazardous substances" to make sure those areas are safe for surrounding residents.

Trump declared a major disaster Thursday, freeing up additional federal resources to respond to the storm that knocked out power to the entire island of Puerto Rico. "Ships with additional supplies en route to PR & making ALL efforts to reach our most vulnerable citizens," Resident Commissioner [Jenniffer Gonzalez tweeted](#).

HALEY: VENEZUELA OIL EMBARGO 'NOT OFF THE TABLE': She declined to firmly back the idea, but U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley told reporters Thursday the U.S. had not ruled out enacting an oil embargo against Venezuela. "If things don't improve, all those options are always there, and so that's what we're watching to see," she said. "It's not off the table, I can tell you that." She didn't respond to a similar question about pushing for an oil embargo against North Korea.

IF YOU HAPPEN TO BE IN RALEIGH: There's a rare opportunity to hear from EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt's staff today at the Association of Air Pollution Control Agencies annual meeting in Raleigh, N.C. Speaking at a regulatory roundtable event are Samantha Dravis, Pruitt's senior policy counsel, and Brittany Bolen, senior deputy associate administrator within the Office of Policy. Mary Neumayr, chief of staff at the White House Council on Environmental Quality, is also expected to provide an update on the administration's activity. Mandy Gunasekara, Pruitt's senior advisor on air activities, offered her own update Thursday. Full schedule [here](#).

ME INTERVIEW — SEN. BRIAN SCHATZ: One of the strongest climate hawks in Congress, the Hawaii Democrat was one of the few Democrats to [explicitly link](#) recent hurricanes to a changing climate. ME caught up with him about how extreme weather may alter the congressional climate conversation.

Whether it's appropriate to talk climate change after severe weather: "I'm not trying to score political points, but when the biggest unexpected costs for the federal government are severe weather events — and the most harmful recent events from California to Montana to Texas to Florida to Puerto are getting more frequent and severe — you just have to admit what's happening and try to do something about it together."

What impact the severe weather is having on Republicans: "It is impacting their thinking. I don't think it's going to impact the way they talk about climate change. It is impacting the way they talk about severe weather. There's a space here if we're careful with our language and we're respectful of different points of view to work together on clean energy and also on severe weather adaptation."

Why he's so concerned with Trump's EPA picks: "It's not just you're getting a Bush-era person who leans more to the right on these issues. You're getting people whose mission in their professional lives is to gut the underlying statute that they're responsible for implementing."

**** A message from the Nuclear Energy Institute:** Nuclear is doing more than ever before. It's powering the grid, boosting the economy by billions, creating jobs, propelling space travel and even helping doctors. It's moving us forward in ways we never thought possible. Explore all nuclear energy is doing at discovernuclear.com. **

CLIMATE REMOVED FROM MORE EPA PAGES: EPA has stripped climate change language from web pages about its SmartWay program, which is meant to help companies improve their freight transportation efficiency, according a watchdog group tracking agency website changes. The Environmental Data & Governance Initiative [reports](#) that EPA has nixed references to "carbon," and "greenhouse gases" in favor of more general terms, like "pollution." The group says the agency also reduced emphasis on SmartWay's international efforts, including work with a United Nations environment program. Most of the changes appear to have occurred between late March and May, EDGI said.

TOM CARPER, CARPENTERS FAN: Sen. [Tom Carper](#), top Democrat on the Environment and Public Works Committee, cautiously applauded Pruitt's decision to post his schedules online but said he still wouldn't endorse moving additional EPA nominees without agency responses to oversight requests. "I hope that this is a step in the right direction, but, as the song goes, '[we've only just begun](#),'" Carper said in a statement. "I am hopeful that Administrator Pruitt will continue to focus on responses to my other outstanding requests for information."

GOP CHAIRMAN: MAYBE YOU SHOULD MOVE: The federal government should not have to continue to foot the bill for properties that flood repeatedly, Financial Services Chairman [Jeb Hensarling](#) said on CNBC's "[Squawk Box](#)." "At some point, God is telling you to move," the Texas Republican said. "If all we do is force federal taxpayers to build the same home in the same fashion in the same location and expect a different result, we all know that is the classic definition of insanity,

BROWN SPEAKING ON CANADIAN CLIMATE COOPERATION: California Gov. Jerry Brown hosts a press availability this morning at 9:45 a.m. along with Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne and Quebec Premier Philippe Couillard to discuss efforts to address climate change between Canadian provinces and the most populous U.S. state.

HEARING SET FOR PHMSA NOMINEE: The Senate Commerce Committee announced Thursday it would hold a Sept. 27 hearing to consider the nomination of Howard Elliott, a 40-year veteran of the U.S. freight rail industry, to run the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration. It'll also mull the selection of Timothy Gallaudet to be assistant Commerce secretary for oceans and atmosphere, the No. 2 position at NOAA. Details [here](#).

MAIL CALL! GROUP TO DOJ: YOU SETTLED TOO LOW: Clean Water Action wants DOJ to reconsider a settlement reached with California farmer John Duarte, arguing its unjustifiably low penalties set an awful precedent for future Clean Water Act cases. "Failure to seek these appropriate remedies is a failure to enforce the Clean Water Act," the group writes in [a letter](#). For those whose minds need refreshing, DOJ reached the \$1.1 million settlement in the [long-standing litigation over wetlands destruction](#) back in August.

LEAVE THEM BE: On the two-year anniversary of the Obama administration deciding the sage grouse didn't warrant Endangered Species Act protection, several dozen local elected Western officials today sent Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke [a letter](#) urging him to leave existing protection plans in place. "We urge you to listen to us, as well as the governors, ranchers, sportsmen, industry officials, conservationists and other stakeholders who invested years of work into these management plans — and allow those plans to stay intact," they write. The Wilderness Society released its [own memo](#) on Zinke's possible actions.

More for Zinke's eyes: A group of archeologists, rangers, and professors from across the West are out with a report urging Zinke and BLM not to grant oil and gas industry leases in the Greater Chaco landscape. Read it [here](#).

ATTRACTIONS YET TO COME: House lawmakers will as soon as next week vote on a broad sportsmen's package that includes a controversial provision easing regulations on the purchases of gun silencers, POLITICO's John Bresnahan [reports](#). The Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act [H.R. 3668 \(115\)](#), introduced by Rep. [Jeff Duncan](#), revises federal regulations on silencers. Democrats argue the measure would make it possible to obtain a silencer without going through a background check, although Republicans dispute that.

RICHARD BRANSON BASHES TRUMP OVER CLIMATE: Virgin's Richard Branson [told CNN](#) Thursday that while "you can never be 100 percent sure about links" between climate change and hurricanes, "we've had four storms within a month, all far greater than that have ever, ever, ever happened in history." Branson, who rode out Hurricane Irma on his private island, said: "Ninety-nine percent of scientists know it's real. The whole world knows it's real except for maybe one person in the White House."

MEETING JERSEY'S CLIMATE CHALLENGE: It'll take "significant new policies and enhancements of current strategies" for New Jersey to hit its goal of achieving 80 percent emissions reductions by 2050 from 2006 levels but there are multiple approaches available to do so, according to a [new report](#). Among the many options cited: Setting an interim emissions reduction goal; rejoining the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative and increasing the state's renewable portfolio standard. The Georgetown Climate Center, Rutgers and the World Resources Institute worked together on the report.

MOVING ON OVER: Outgoing Tennessee Valley Authority Inspector General Richard Moore is being [sworn in](#) today as the U.S. attorney for the Southern District of Alabama. Trump nominated Moore for the job in June and the Senate confirmed him last week. Deputy IG Jill Matthews will now become TVA's acting IG. Moore has been the TVA watchdog since 2003, and had previously spent 17 years as an assistant DA in the office he'll now lead.

INTERIOR WHISTLEBLOWER WINS COURAGE AWARD: Joel Clement, who filed a whistleblower [complaint](#) in July alleging he'd been [transferred within Interior](#) to prevent him from discussing climate change, received the Callaway Award for Civic Courage on Thursday stemming from those actions. "I hope the recognition I receive for blowing the whistle on the Trump administration inspires others within the federal civil service to do the same; the continued health and safety of Americans depends upon it," he said in a statement.

NEW MAP TRACKS ANTI-FOSSIL FUEL FIGHT: The Fossil Fuel Resistance Mapping Project, launched with the support of 350.org and the Power Shift Network Thursday, tracks local activities and protests to resist proposed pipelines, fracking wells and other fossil fuel infrastructure. Check it out [here](#).

PROTECTION NEEDED: The Hispanic Access Foundation released a report with the top 10 list of places important to the Latino community that it says deserve federal protection. Read it [here](#).

MOVER, SHAKER: Pete Maysmith joins the League of Conservation Voters as its new senior vice president of campaigns where he'll oversee electoral efforts that topped \$45 million last cycle. He joins from Conservation Colorado.

QUICK HITS

- Montana preparing to take over after EPA asbestos cleanup. [AP](#).
- Canada deploys 'multi-pronged' lobbying to counter Trump's EPA cuts. [National Observer](#).
- Ohio EPA Hikes Penalties Against Rover Pipeline To \$2.3 Million. [WOSU](#).
- Russia wants to protect itself from climate change—without reducing carbon emissions. [Science](#).
- Flint Water Crisis Likely Increased Fetal Deaths, Study Shows. [Huffington Post](#).
- U.S. oil prices settle lower as traders look to OPEC to further tighten global supplies. [MarketWatch](#).
- Former EPA official warns of potential food contamination after hurricanes. [CNBC](#).

HAPPENING TODAY

10:00 a.m. — "[Statoil's Climate Roadmap](#)," Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1616 Rhode Island Avenue, NW

10:30 a.m. — API, ACC, AF&PA, SIFMA, NAM, NRF and USCIB holds press call on the impact of NAFTA on U.S. economic growth, investment and job creation, RSVP: SammonB@api.org

11:00 a.m. — International Trade Commission [holds vote](#) on solar trade petition seeking to impose steep tariffs, Main Hearing Room, 500 E Street SW

1:30 p.m. — Solar Energy Industries Association holds conference call following ITC vote, RSVP: ahobson@seia.org

THAT'S ALL FOR ME!

**** A message from the Nuclear Energy Institute:** Nuclear energy does amazing things every day. It adds billions to the economy. It powers cities, that power business, that power thousands of high quality jobs. With a little help from nuclear energy, we're propelling space travel to the farthest reaches of the galaxy. And nuclear energy is even helping doctors diagnose and treat patients. Nuclear is doing all of these things while keeping the air clean. Explore all the extraordinary things nuclear is doing to help push us forward at discovernuclear.com. Nuclear. Power the Extraordinary. **

To view online:

<https://www.politicopro.com/tipsheets/morning-energy/2017/09/solar-boom-faces-major-challenge-today-before-itc-024717>

Stories from POLITICO Pro

4 governors urge ITC to reject tariffs on solar products [Back](#)

By Doug Palmer | 09/21/2017 06:11 PM EDT

Four governors today made a last-minute effort to prevent President Donald Trump from getting the chance to impose tariffs on solar products — and in the process misidentified one of the companies involved in the case.

The move came on the eve of a critical U.S. International Trade Commission vote on Friday in a complaint brought by Suniva and SolarWorld. The ITC must decide whether U.S. solar producers have been seriously injured, or are threatened with serious injury, by a surge of imports from China and other suppliers.

The panel will have until late October to recommend a relief plan if it finds injury, which Trump could then follow or he could craft his own. U.S. law allows up to four years of initial protection.

The four governors — Brian Sandoval of Nevada, John Hickenlooper of Colorado, Charlie Baker of Massachusetts and Ray Cooper of North Carolina — said they were concerned about the impact of import restrictions and related measures on their states' economies. However, they misidentified SolarWorld as SunWorld in a [letter](#) to ITC Chairman Rhonda Schmidlein.

"As governors representing states with a robust solar industry, we write to express our opposition to Suniva and SunWorld's Section 201 petition," the governors said. "At a time when our citizens are demanding more clean energy, the tariff could cause America to lose out on 47 gigawatts of solar installations, representing billions of dollars of infrastructure investment in our states."

The ITC currently has two vacancies, so just four commissioners will decide the case. In the case of a tie, Trump would still be able impose relief if he decides it's needed.

Only commissioners who find injury can make remedy recommendations to the president, according to an [ITC fact sheet](#).

To view online [click here](#).

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DOJ settles high-profile Clean Water Act case with farmer [Back](#)

By Annie Snider | 08/15/2017 02:41 PM EDT

The Department of Justice today announced a \$1.1 million settlement with a California farmer over wetlands destruction, ending a case that agricultural groups and property rights activists had criticized as federal overreach under the Clean Water Act.

John Duarte and Duarte Nursery Inc. agreed to pay \$330,000 in civil penalties and fund \$770,000 in restoration work to compensate for damage to 22 acres of protected streams and wetlands on his property. The agreement allows Duarte to return most of the site back to agricultural use and seek future determinations about whether streams and wetlands on the property are subject to federal protections.

Duarte was found guilty by a federal district court judge last year of violating the Clean Water Act by hiring a consultant to conduct "deep ripping" through waterways protected under the 1972 water law. Most farming practices, including plowing, are exempted from the law's permitting requirements, but deep ripping is not.

"Today's agreement affirms the Department of Justice's commitment to the rule of law, results in meaningful environmental restoration, and brings to an end protracted litigation," said Jeffrey Wood, acting assistant attorney general for the Justice Department's Environment and Natural Resource Division. The DOJ emphasized that "this case is not (and will not be used as) a pretext for federal prosecution of farmers who engage in normal plowing on their farms."

In a statement, Duarte said settling was a "difficult decision" that he came to "reluctantly" given the risks that an even greater penalty would have posed to his business.

WHAT'S NEXT: The settlement agreement is subject to 30 days of public comment and must ultimately be approved by the court.

To view online [click here](#).

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House GOP pushes to loosen gun rules [Back](#)

By John Bresnahan | 09/21/2017 05:31 PM EDT

House GOP leaders are moving forward with plans to vote on two gun-related measures in the coming weeks, the first time Congress has taken up the controversial issue since Donald Trump became president.

A bill easing regulations on the purchases of gun silencers — also known as suppressors — could reach the House floor as early as next week.

Another measure allowing concealed carry permit holders to take their weapons to other states is also expected to move through the House Judiciary Committee and onto the floor this fall, possibly in October, according to GOP lawmakers and aides.

Both proposals are almost certain to pass the House, despite intense opposition from gun-control groups. In the Senate, Democrats will likely block the measures. Trump would almost certainly sign such bills if they ever got to his desk.

Nearly five years after the tragic shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, left 20 children dead and spurred an impassioned debate over expanding background checks for gun sales, the GOP-controlled Congress and the Trump administration are clearly moving in the opposite direction. Republican congressional leaders and Trump administration officials — at the urging of the National Rifle Association and other gun-rights groups — are looking to roll back restrictions on guns imposed during the Obama era.

The push for looser gun rules comes as Rep. Steve Scalise (R-La.) is still recovering from a gunshot wound he suffered at a congressional baseball practice in June.

Gun-control groups — including those tied to Michael Bloomberg, the former New York City mayor and publishing billionaire — claim that the NRA and its allies on Capitol Hill and inside the Trump administration are really looking to help the gun industry, which has seen its sales slump since President Barack Obama left office and Trump was sworn in.

The Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act, introduced by Rep. Jeff Duncan (R-S.C.), may come up for a House vote as early as next week.

The Duncan legislation includes language revising federal regulations on silencers, which currently have tougher purchasing requirements than guns. Democrats contend that Duncan's bill would make it possible to obtain a silencer without going through a background check, although Republicans insist that's not true.

Another provision makes it more difficult for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives to classify certain ammunition as "armor piercing." Regulations on interstate transportation of weapons would be revised as well.

Duncan and other proponents of his bill say silencers are popular with recreational shooters and hunters. The South Carolina Republican points out 40 states allow hunters to use such devices.

Duncan's bill has already been approved by the Natural Resources Committee. The Judiciary Committee, which also has jurisdiction, apparently is not going to act on the legislation but will allow it instead to go straight to the floor.

"Sportsmen are the foundation of the conservation movement in the United States, yet some radical organizations seek to limit access to this pastime by restricting the Second Amendment, as well as land and game management," Duncan said in a statement.

While some law-enforcement officials and organizations oppose any effort to loosen the restrictions on silencers, Jim Pasco, head of the Fraternal Order of Police, says his group has no objections to the proposal. The FOP claims to be the nation's largest police union.

"With respect to the silencer provision, we have taken a position that we do not object to that provision," said Pasco. "The reasoning is because silencers are not — and have not been in the recent past — a law enforcement problem."

Pasco said his organization has pushed for language allowing silencers to be traceable, which has been added to the bill.

The NRA has thrown its considerable political muscle behind the Duncan bill as well.

"Allowing law-abiding citizens to purchase suppressors without paying a \$200 government tax and submitting extensive paperwork, but while undergoing an instant background check, will have a positive impact on the public health issue of hearing loss," said Jennifer Baker, an NRA spokeswoman. "The fact that the world's largest organization of sworn law enforcement officers expresses zero opposition to the bill debunks the gun lobby's false claims the bill poses a public safety risk."

But Peter Ambler, executive director of Americans for Responsible Solutions, a gun-control group founded by former Rep. Gabby Giffords (D-Ariz.), said the "vast majority" of gun owners don't support any move to loosen silencer regulations, according to polls.

"The NRA poured unprecedented amounts of political money into the 2016 elections," Ambler said. "They're trying to ram this through when the country is distracted by the health-care debate. Most Americans oppose this bill, most major law-enforcement organizations oppose the bill."

Ambler said Duncan's bill could potentially allow purchases of silencers without any background check at guns shows or through private transactions.

Just as controversial is a bill by Rep. Richard Hudson (R-N.C.) to allow concealed-carry permit holders to take their weapons with them to another state, as long as that state also allows concealed carry.

Concealed-carry permit holders would also be allowed to take their weapons onto some federal land, such as national parks.

Hudson's bill currently has 212 co-sponsors, including several Democrats, and it is expected to easily clear the House once it reaches the floor. A Judiciary Committee mark-up could come in October or early November, with a vote by the full House shortly thereafter.

Hudson insists his bill would not override any other state, municipal or local regulations on concealed carry. Sen. John Cornyn (R-Texas) has introduced a similar bill in the Senate.

In a statement, Hudson said his bill "would allow law-abiding citizens with a state-issued concealed carry license or permit to conceal a handgun in any other state that allows concealed carry. It also allows law-abiding residents of Constitutional carry states the ability to carry in

other states that recognize their own residents' right to concealed carry."

But ARS' Ambler said Hudson's bill would essentially create a "50 state" gun license, arguing that if someone received a concealed carry permit in one state, they would be allowed to carry their weapon into every state.

A number of states also have stricter permitting for a concealed-carry holder than is required to pass a federal background check. For instance, more than half the states prevent someone with a domestic violence or stalking conviction from obtaining such permits. Ambler said Hudson's bill would essentially pre-empt those restrictions.

Ambler added that gun purchasers could "permit shop," meaning obtain a concealed carry permit from a state that issues permits to nonresidents, as Florida and nine other states do.

"Even if your state has stronger laws and does not allow concealed carry, you would still be able to bring your gun into that state," Ambler insisted. "It undermines the way we permit firearms in this country."

To view online [click here](#).

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Interior official files whistleblower complaint over job reassignment [Back](#)

By Esther Whieldon and Ben Lefebvre | 07/19/2017 07:06 PM EDT

A former senior Interior Department official has filed a whistleblower complaint after the agency transferred him from a leadership position focused on climate change to a desk job collecting royalties from oil and gas companies.

In a [complaint](#) and [disclosure](#) filing with the Office of Special Counsel and in a Washington Post [op-ed](#), former Interior Office of Policy Analysis Director Joel Clement claimed he was [reassigned](#) to a position at the Office of Natural Resources Revenue to stop him from publicly discussing climate change impacts on native Alaskan coastal communities.

Clement was among dozens of senior executive staff reassigned to other jobs in June.

Clement told POLITICO no Interior political staffers ever raised concerns about his activities prior to his reassignment. "It was kind of obvious to reassign the climate adaptation experts to the accounting office where they collect fossil fuel royalty checks. That was pretty flagrant, I would say, in terms of sending the message. So that message was received loud and clear that they wanted me to quit."

Clement said he'd like his old job back, and he hoped other staff would also complain.

Interior spokeswoman Heather Swift said the personnel moves were "conducted to better serve the taxpayer and the Department's operations."

Clement may have difficulty proving his case because agencies have wide discretion to reassign staff, according to Jeff Ruch, executive director of Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility. "It sounds like he's being retaliated against because of his job, not because of any disclosure he made," Ruch said. "He's suffering due to the nature of his job, and maybe because he did it too well."

Annie Snider contributed to this report.

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Importance: Normal
Subject: DOI Daily Report
Received: 2017-11-15T10:48:55-05:00

INTERIOR DAILY COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

NEWS TO SHARE:

Indianz: Secretary Ryan Zinke among those excited to take part in #RockYourMocs this year

"It's #RockYourMocs week and thousands across the nation are expressing Native pride by wearing moccasins to work, to school and just about anywhere... Among those who are excited to take part this year is Secretary Ryan Zinke. He plans to sport a pair of Crow moccasins as he works at the Department of the Interior, the parent agency of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, on Wednesday. "Thanks to the Crow for the mocs!" Zinke wrote in a post on Twitter. The Crow Tribe is based in Montana, Zinke's home state."

Associated Press: Utah Sen. Orrin Hatch's office says President Donald Trump is expected to significantly downsize two sprawling Utah national monuments

"President Donald Trump is expected to significantly downsize two sprawling Utah national monuments that protect more than 3 million acres of the state's red rock country, Utah Sen. Orrin Hatch's office said Tuesday. Ron Dean, Hatch's Central and Eastern Utah Director, testified during a meeting in Utah of a state legislative public lands committee that he expects Bears Ears National Monument will be cut by at least 80 percent of its current size, while Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument will be reduced by about 40 percent to 60 percent. Trump told Hatch and Utah's governor last month that he would follow the recommendation of Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke and shrink both monuments, but the White House and Zinke's office have not offered details about how they'd redraw the monument boundaries. Dean said Tuesday that while he hasn't seen Zinke's recommendations, he could speak with "some certainty" on how much of a reduction Hatch's office expected to see."

E&E News: Trump's 'energy dominance' transforms Alaska's future

"Today, Murkowski's committee is due to mark up her bill allowing exploration in the Arctic refuge's coastal plain. If the measure is approved by Congress, it would almost certainly be signed into law by the president (E&E Daily, Nov. 9). In the year since Trump's election, the federal government has begun a radical reversal of President Obama's ambitious wildlife preservation policies for Alaska. During his eight years in the White House, Obama blocked seismic studies on ANWR's coastal plain. He outlawed oil and gas development in most of the Arctic Ocean and in Bristol Bay along Alaska's southwestern coast. And he placed almost half of the 22.8-million-acre National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A) off-limits to development. In total, Obama preserved at least 170 million acres of federal lands in Alaska. But all that is changing under Trump. As Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke declared in May, today Alaska "is open for business."

CORRECTING THE RECORD:

Huffington Post: Whistleblower Sues Interior Department For Information On Staff Shuffle

"A scientist-turned-whistleblower who resigned from the Interior Department in October citing agency chief Ryan Zinke's "poor leadership" and "resume of failure" is suing to obtain

information concerning his own reassignment and that of several of his former colleagues. Joel Clement told HuffPost he has been “completely stonewalled” in his attempts to get documents via Freedom of Information Act requests and was left with no choice but to file suit against the department. “They are bringing this on themselves,” he said by phone Tuesday. Clement sounded the alarm on the Trump administration in July, alleging that he was transferred to a position for which he had no qualifications because he warned about the dangers of climate change. A seven-year Interior employee, Clement was among dozens of senior agency staff reassigned in June as part of a sweeping reorganization that a spokesperson claimed would “better serve the taxpayer and the department’s operations.”.”

Regarding the shuffling of SES at DOI:

- The President signed an executive order to reorganize the federal government for the future and the Secretary has been absolutely out front on that issue. In fact, he mentioned a Department-wide, front lines-focused reorganization on his first day address to all employees.
- The purpose of the Senior Executive Service is to ensure that the executive management of the government of the United States is responsive to the needs, policies, and goals of the Nation and otherwise is of the highest quality. Senior executives are the highest paid employees in the federal government and signed up for the SES knowing that they could be called upon to work in different positions at any time. Congress meant for the SES to be a mobile force that are capable of taking on different assignments to meet the needs of the agency. Personnel moves among the Senior Executive Service are being conducted to better serve the taxpayer and the Department's operations.

OTHER TOP STORIES:

Morning Consult: Senate Minority Whip to Meet With Zinke After Hold on Interior Nominees

“Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke will meet with a group of Democratic senators on Tuesday about his recommendations to President Donald Trump to reduce the size of certain national monuments, according to a Senate aide. Sen. Dick Durbin (D-Ill.), the second-ranking Democrat in the Senate, requested the meeting on Oct. 23, along with other Democrats. A public letter last week announcing a hold on four Interior Department nominees prompted Zinke to respond and schedule the meeting, Durbin’s press secretary, Emily Hampsten, said on Tuesday. “First, what is his legal basis for believing that this president should change the designation of national monuments in the Antiquities Act?” Durbin said Tuesday in a brief interview. “Hope that he’ll tell us, I don’t think there is a legal basis for it.”

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Alex Hinson

Deputy Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

From: Hinson, Alex
Sent: 2017-10-13T10:19:23-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: DOI Daily Report
Received: 2017-10-13T10:19:29-04:00

INTERIOR DAILY COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

NEWS TO SHARE:

US News and World Report: Zinke to Visit Grand Canyon to Discuss Harassment Survey

“Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke and acting Park Service Director Mike Reynolds will be at Grand Canyon National Park to discuss efforts to combat the problems. Widespread reports of misconduct have tarnished the image of the Park Service and the Interior Department. A sexual harassment scandal forced the retirement of a Grand Canyon superintendent in May 2016 and led the park to abolish its river district. Investigators also have uncovered problems at many of the nation's premier parks, including Yellowstone, Yosemite, Canaveral National Seashore and Florida's De Soto National Memorial.”

Correcting the Record:

NewsDay: Blowing the whistle on the Trump denial of climate change

“In June, Clement was removed as director of policy analysis, his memo says, and reassigned to auditing “when I have no background in that field.” He filed for whistleblower protection under federal law. According to the Los Angeles Times, he’s one of about 50 people shuffled at the Interior Department, which is responsible for the management and conservation of federal land. This apparent sidelining of senior voices is troubling and just the most recent example among federal employees.”

CNN-Opinion (Joel Clement): Secretary Zinke, it's time to call it quits

“Secretary Ryan Zinke, last week I turned in my US Department of the Interior credentials and reluctantly walked away from public service. Today, I call on you to do the same and resign as secretary of the Interior. Since you were sworn in on March 1, you have demonstrated contempt for the agency's mission and its devoted employees. As I described in my resignation letter, I quit my position because of your spectacularly poor leadership, reckless waste of taxpayer dollars and disregard for the dangers of climate change -- all of which are putting American well-being and the economy at risk.”

- Statement on Clement:** The Department does not comment on ongoing matters such as whistleblower complaints. We look forward to working with the Office of Special Counsel to address any questions they might have about this matter.
- Regarding the shuffling of SES at DOI:** The President signed an executive order to reorganize the federal government for the future and the Secretary has been absolutely out front on that issue. In fact, he mentioned a Department-wide, front lines-focused reorganization on his first day address to all employees. The purpose of the Senior Executive Service is to ensure that the executive management of the government of the United States is responsive to the needs, policies, and goals of the Nation and otherwise is of the highest quality. Senior executives are the highest paid employees in the federal government and signed up for the SES knowing that they could be called upon to work in different positions at any time. Congress meant for the SES to be a mobile force that are

capable of taking on different assignments to meet the needs of the agency. Personnel moves among the Senior Executive Service are being conducted to better serve the taxpayer and the Department's operations.

Washington Examiner: Special flag flown over Interior Department when Ryan Zinke is in the building

“Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke has resurrected a military tradition at his department by requiring that a special flag be flown over its headquarters to mark whenever he is in the building, according to a report Thursday. The blue banner, featuring the Interior's bison seal and seven white stars representing the department's bureaus, is hoisted by a security staffer when Zinke enters his downtown Washington offices before being pulled down when he leaves, per the Washington Post. A spokeswoman for Zinke told the newspaper that the custom — not adopted by any other Trump Cabinet official — was “a major sign of transparency.” Secretary of State Rex Tillerson also has a personal flag, but it flies atop of Foggy Bottom whether Tillerson is present or not.”

Newsweek: LIKE QUEEN ELIZABETH, TRUMP'S ZINKE HAS DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR FLY SPECIAL FLAG JUST FOR HIM

“When Queen Elizabeth visits Buckingham Palace a flag is raised to mark her visit—President Donald Trump’s Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke has been getting similar pomp and circumstance every day when he heads to work. When Zinke enters the Department of the Interior in Washington, a member of the security staff heads to the roof to raise a special flag, The Washington Post reported Thursday. The flag—depicting a bison—is then lowered when Zinke leaves for the day. It also travels with him when he heads anywhere in the U.S. on official business.”

TIME: President Trump's Interior Secretary Makes His Staff Raise a Special Flag When He's Around

“If any citizens are interested in the whereabouts of Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, some unusual flags outside his agency’s headquarters may offer some information—for those that know how to decode them. Zinke has revived an obscure military tradition, according to the Washington Post, that involves staffers raising and lowering a special secretarial flag whenever he enters or leaves the building.”

MSNBC: A new frontrunner in the ‘Trump’s Oddest Cabinet Member’ contest

“Donald Trump has assembled quite a motley crew for his cabinet, and choosing its strangest member is challenging. But Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke is clearly making a name for himself — and not necessarily in a good way. As regular readers know, the Republican’s troubles have been steadily intensifying. It looked bad, for example, when Zinke gave a motivational speech to a Republican donor’s hockey team, before taking a \$12,000 flight home. It didn’t help when we learned the private plane belongs to “the executives of a Wyoming oil-and-gas exploration firm.”

Washington Post: Where’s Zinke? The interior secretary’s special flag offers clues.

“A security staffer takes the elevator to the seventh floor, climbs the stairs to the roof and hoists a special secretarial flag whenever Zinke enters the building. When the secretary goes home for the day or travels, the flag — a blue banner emblazoned with the agency’s bison seal flanked by seven white stars representing the Interior bureaus — comes down. In Zinke’s absence, the ritual is repeated to raise an equally obscure flag for Deputy Secretary David Bernhardt. Responding this week to questions from The Washington Post, a spokeswoman for Zinke, a

former Navy SEAL commander, defended the Navy flag-flying tradition as “a major sign of transparency.”

- **DOI Statement:** "Ryan Zinke is proud and honored to lead the Department of the Interior, and is restoring honor and tradition to the department, whether it's flying the flag when he is in garrison or restoring traditional access to public lands. Furthermore, flying the secretarial flag is a major sign of transparency. There is no doubt of when the secretary is in HQ or working in the field."

Politico: Dems move to shield whistleblowers who report pricey travel

“House Democrats on Thursday sought to expand whistleblower protections for federal workers who call out superiors for “improper use of air transportation,” following the mounting questions about Trump administration officials’ use of expensive forms of travel. Lawmakers offered the proposal as part of a debate over broader whistleblower protection. It was rejected by Republicans, as expected, but forced GOP lawmakers to vote on an issue that has drawn increasing scrutiny, as several Trump Cabinet members have faced criticism for regular use of chartered or military jets.”

DOI Statement: “The Interior Department under the Trump Administration has always and will always continue to work to ensure all officials follow appropriate rules and regulations when traveling, including using government coach class fare options at all times appropriate and feasible, to ensure the efficient use of government resources.”

- **DOI Ethics Statement:** "The Scheduling Office meets regularly with the Departmental Ethics Office and the Division of General Law to ensure that all travel is thoroughly reviewed and approved in advance and that it is fully compliant with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations. Consistent with this process, the trip was reviewed and approved in advance by both the Departmental Ethics Office and the Division of General Law. In short, the trip - including the Secretary's address to the hockey developmental squad - was completely compliant with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations." --**Joint Statement from Melinda Loftin (Department of the Interior Designated Agency Ethics Official and Director of the Departmental Ethics Office) and Edward Keable (Deputy Solicitor - General Law). Both are career members of the Senior Executive Service.**

- **Secretary Zinke’s Statement:** I believe taxpayers absolutely have a right to know how much official government travel costs. It’s common sense. At the Department we make those documents available to the public. Using tax dollars wisely and ethically is a big responsibility and is at the heart of good government. There are some times when Interior - regardless of the administration - has to utilize charter services because we often travel to areas that don’t have a lot of flight options. Since being sworn in, I’ve used a charter on three occasions:

- On a trip organized by the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee in the Arctic Circle
- Flying overnight to Montana to speak at the Western Governors Conference and hold a bipartisan round table discussion concerning Western issues and

President Trump's Energy initiative.

- and traveling between two of the islands that make up the United States Virgin islands. As you're aware the Interior Department oversees federal policy for the U.S. Territories and the events marked the 100-year anniversary of the territory joining the United States. As the only Senate confirmed member of Interior, I was honored to represent President Trump and accompany Governor Mapp and the Prime Minister of Denmark on this historic occasion.

I also took military air with Secretary Purdue so he and I could meet with wildfire crews battling a dangerous Type 1 wildfire that had already taken the life of one firefighter. I also fly military air when I travel with the President and Vice President. All of this travel was done only after it was determined by multiple professionals at the Department that no commercial options existed to meet the schedule. And as importantly, the flights were only booked after extensive due diligence by the career professionals in the Department's General Law and Ethics divisions. Every single trip I take is pre-approved by them. We are continually looking at ways to lower costs at the Department, and also looking at ways to increase revenues. I will always be honest and upfront about travel – in fact you can follow it on Twitter.

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Alex Hinson

Deputy Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

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From: Mashburn, Lori
Sent: 2017-10-06T13:31:31-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Fwd: DOI Cabinet Affairs Report for 10/6
Received: 2017-10-06T13:32:25-04:00
[DAILY UPDATE FOR CABINET AFFAIRS 10-06-17.docx](#)

**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR DAILY UPDATE FOR CABINET AFFAIRS –
10/06/17**

Lori Mashburn, White House Liaison

STATUS OF THE SECRETARY

10/6 Florida cont'd –

- Big Cypress National Preserve Tour
 - o Tour Clyde Butcher Gallery
 - o Visit National Preserve Hurricane Cleanup Activity (assist in cleanup at Fire Prairie Trail)
- Everglades City, FL – Tour Damaged Everglades National Park Sites & meet with NPS staff
 - o All Southern Florida NPS Employee Meeting
- Tour Damaged Big Cypress National Preserve Headquarters Facilities

10/7 Florida cont'd –

- Everglades, FL -- Python Briefing at Ernest F. Coe Visitor Center
- Flamingo, FL – View Hurricane Damaged Areas, Meet Impacted Employees, Commercial Operators
- Homestead, FL – Incident Command Center Visit

10/8, Florida cont'd –

- Biscayne National Park Tour Park and Hurricane Clean Up
 - o Tour Park Islands, Stiltsville, Convoy Point Visitor Center

NEXT WEEK:

10/10 DC – Internal Meetings

Corps Network Meeting

Interview with History Channel

10/11 DC - Remarks at Congressional Coal Caucus

Meeting with National Geographic President Gary Knell

Lexington, NC – Remarks at Congressional Sportsmen Foundation Gala

10/12-14 Grand Canyon, AZ – National Park Foundation Board of Director's Meeting

Speech to National Park Service addressing sexual harassment

(Tent) Sportsmen Board formation announcements

STATUS OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

TODAY: The Deputy Secretary is in Washington, DC.

Meeting with Recreation Industry CEOs

Meeting with Deputy Secretary of Transportation Jeffrey Rosen

WH COMMS REPORT (submitted Thursday, 10/5)

Press Inquiries:

- Many small inquiries and logistical inquiries.
- ** Multiple inquires on travel**
 - **DOI Statement:** “The Interior Department under the Trump Administration has always and will always continue to work to ensure all officials follow appropriate rules and regulations when traveling, including using government coach class fare options at all times appropriate and feasible, to ensure the efficient use of government resources.”
- ** Multiple inquires on Joel Clement, the Whistleblower**
 - **Statement on Clement:** The Department does not comment on ongoing matters such as whistleblower complaints. We look forward to working with the Office of Special Counsel to address any questions they might have about this matter.
 - **Regarding the shuffling of SES at DOI:** The President signed an executive order to reorganize the federal government for the future

and the Secretary has been absolutely out front on that issue. In fact, he mentioned a Department-wide, front lines-focused reorganization on his first day address to all employees. The purpose of the Senior Executive Service is to ensure that the executive management of the government of the United States is responsive to the needs, policies, and goals of the Nation and otherwise is of the highest quality. Senior executives are the highest paid employees in the federal government and signed up for the SES knowing that they could be called upon to work in different positions at any time. Congress meant for the SES to be a mobile force that are capable of taking on different assignments to meet the needs of the agency. Personnel moves among the Senior Executive Service are being conducted to better serve the taxpayer and the Department's operations.

- **** Multiple inquires on BLM Methane Rule****
 - **DOI Statement:** “The BLM had suspended upcoming compliance deadlines in its waste prevention rule, requirements that otherwise would be required to be met by January 17, 2018, pending the outcome of litigation in Wyoming challenging the lawfulness of the rule. The rule otherwise was in effect. Yesterday the district court in the Northern District of California invalidated that suspension, which means the compliance deadlines would need to be met by the January 2018 deadline. Today BLM published a proposed rule that would extend those compliance deadlines by one year, until January 2019. The public will have 30 days to comment on that proposed rule.”

Top Stories

- **Reuters:** [U.S. interior secretary raised political funds on government trip: report](#)
- **Politico:** [Trump's Interior chief 'hopping around from campaign event to campaign event'](#)
- **Washington Post:** [Notes from closed meeting show how Interior aims to weaken environmental laws](#)
- **THE HILL:** [Zinke under federal investigation for speech to NHL team: report](#)
- **Portland Press Herald:** [With scathing letter, climate scientist from Maine quits Interior Department](#)

Top Issues and Accomplishments

- Interior continues to support all Hurricane Harvey, Hurricane Irma, and Hurricane Maria efforts. All bureaus are executing their emergency plans and assisting in Hurricane relief.

- Yesterday, Interior hosted the first Royalty Policy Committee (RPC) meeting. The meeting was open press and the readout press release can be seen [HERE](#).
- Today, BLM issued their report on sagebrush focal area habitat. The press release can be seen [HERE](#).
- This week and weekend, Secretary Zinke is in Florida. There will 3 media opportunities throughout the trip in Florida, with the first this afternoon (10/5).

AGENCY MEDIA

WEEK AHEAD October 4 thru October 12, 2017 (Submitted 10/4)

U.S. Department of the Interior

Secretarial-level Announcements/Events/Interviews

- **October 2-8:** Secretary Zinke is traveling to South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida for multiple events. The main focus of this trip will be to visit with DOI personnel aiding in hurricane preparation and recovery efforts and to view damage to DOI assets. On Oct. 2, he will visit Fort Sumter Visitor Education Center to meet with staff and tour Fort Sumter National Monument. On Tues., Oct 3, he will hold an all-hands meeting with DOI Regional Directors in Atlanta. On Wed., Oct 4, he will tour Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge in Folkston, GA. On Thurs., Oct 5 he will visit Lake Okeechobee & Herbert Hoover Dike with Florida Governor Rick Scott. He will also tour Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge. On Friday, Oct. 7, he will visit Big Cypress National Preserve and participate in Hurricane clean-up efforts, as well as tour damaged Everglades National Park Sites and hold briefing with all southern Florida National Park employees. On Saturday, Oct. 7, he will tour Everglades National Park and hold a media availability with Senator Marco Rubio and TBD Congressional delegation. On Sunday, Oct. 8, he will visit Biscayne National Park Headquarters and assess and assist with hurricane clean-up efforts.
- **October 11:** Secretary Zinke will give remarks to the Congressional Coal Caucus

Interior Social Media Updates

- **October 10: Department-level video:** DOI to release a video highlighting national wildlife refuges for National Wildlife Refuge Week.
- **October 11: Department-level blog post:** DOI to publish a blog post on tips for fishing on public lands.

National Park Service

- **October 6: Local NPS Release:** War in the Pacific NHP, American

Memorial Park superintendent announcement. PWR aiming to release by the end of the week.

• **October TBD: National NPS Release:** Historic Preservation Tax Credits: NPS and/or DOI announcement of annual Rutgers report on NPS Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program economic impact. Tax credits 2016 contributed \$12.3 billion in output to the U.S. economy, added \$6.2 billion in GDP. Historic preservation tax incentives encourage investments in historic preservation and revitalization of communities small and large across the country.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

- **October TBD: Local FWS Release:** FWS will announce the final listing of four Everglades plants—the Everglades bully, Florida pineland crabgrass, pineland sandmat and Florida prairie-clover, plants that occur in south Florida. This action is not controversial.
- **October TBD: Local FWS Release:** FWS will announce a six-month extension of the final determination of list the Louisiana pine snake, found in Louisiana and Texas. While the Louisiana pine snake listing is controversial, the six-month extension is not expected to be controversial.

Bureau of Land Management

- **October 10–11:** BLM-AK Fire Service will host the Alaska Wildfire Coordinating Group Interagency Fall Review in Fairbanks. The annual interagency review is a forum for federal, state, local and tribal wildland fire partners, land managers and agency administrators to focus on the response to this season's fires, issues with the Wildland Fire Decision Support system and fire management plans and other issues of interest to various agencies in Alaska.
- **October 11:** BLM-WY Casper Field Office will meet with local ranchers to discuss their concerns about tribal consultation on split-estate and wells built on private surface that intersect both private and federal minerals in Douglas.

CONGRESSIONAL

UPCOMING HNRC HEARING: The House Natural Resources Federal Lands Subcommittee will hold a legislative hearing on a series of bills. DOI will be sending a NPS witness for the Subcommittee Chairman's (McClintock) bill, HR3907. Written statements will be provided on the remaining bills.

Timing: 10 am, October 11, 2017

Contact: Micah Chambers, Deputy Director, Congressional Affairs

UPCOMING HOUSE SMALL BUSINESS HEARING: The House Small Business Committee will be holding an oversight hearing on the Federal government's compliance to the Paperwork Reduction Act. The committee has requested FWS provide a witness within the context of complying with the ESA. The witness will be Steve Guertin, Deputy Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Timing: 11 am, October 11, 2017

Contact: Micah Chambers, Deputy Director, Congressional Affairs

UPCOMING HNRC HEARING: The House Natural Resources Water, Power, and Oceans Subcommittee is hosting a legislative hearing on two bills: Rep. Calvert, H.R. ____, the "Endangered Species Consolidation Act of 2017" and Rep. McMorris Rodgers, H.R. 3144, "To provide for operations of the Federal Columbia River Power System pursuant to a certain operation plan for a specified period of time, and for other purposes." Chairman Calvert's bill will be supported by the Department, but will likely receive some opposition from Commerce. Alan Mikkelsen, the Acting Commissioner for the Bureau of Reclamation, is set to testify on behalf of the Department.

Timing: October 12, 2017

Contact: Amanda Kaster, Policy Adviser, Congressional Affairs

POLITICAL APPOINTEE UPDATE

DOI politicals on board = 59

3 PAS confirmed as of 9/18.

4 nominated awaiting confirmation:

- Pending Senate floor vote: Susan Combs, Assistant Secretary Policy Management and Budget.
- Pending Senate floor vote: Brenda Berman, Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation.
- Pending Senate floor vote: Joe Balash, Assistant Secretary, Land and Minerals
- Pending Senate floor vote: Ryan Douglas Nelson, Solicitor

Overall:

- Schedule C: 33 of 68 onboard; 4 starting; 6 in process
- NC-SES: 23 of 44 onboard; 2 starting; 4 in process
- PAS: 3 Confirmed; 4 Announced; 15 of 17 Submitted to PPO

SECRETARY SPEAKING INVITATIONS

Accepted

10/11 – Congressional Sportsmen Foundation event (Lexington, NC)

10/13 – National Park Foundation BOD Meeting (Grand Canyon, AZ)

10/21 – DEPA BOD Meeting (CA)

Oct (TBC date) - Weyrich Lunch (DC)

Open (date TBC)- Americans for Tax Reform (DC)

Open (date TBC)- Detroit Economic Club

Outstanding Invitations in Process

10/11 - Remarks at 2nd National Wildlife Refuge System Expo co-hosted by the Congressional Wildlife Refuge Caucus and the Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement (CARE) (DC)

10/15-17 – Heritage Annual President's Club Meeting (DC)

10/15 - National Congress of American Indians 74 Annual Convention (Milwaukee, WI)

10/30-11/3 – International Mining and Resources Conference (Melbourne, Australia)

Declining

10/10 – Natural Areas Conference (Ft. Collins, CO)

10/10 – American Sport fishing Association Annual Meeting (Clearwater Beach, FL)

10/13 - Public Land & Resources Law Review's Public Land Law Conference (Missoula, MT)

10/15-17 – Heritage Annual President's Club Meeting (DC)

10/16 - Carlsbad Mayor's Energy Summit (Carlsbad, NM)

10-16-17 Americans For Tax Reform Coalition Leaders Summit (Miami Beach, FL)

10/17 – Folsom Dam Joint Federal Project Completion Ceremony (Folsam, CA)

10/17 – National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers (San Antonio, TX)

10/18 - Environmental Law Institute (ELI) 2017 Award Dinner (DC)

10/19 – USO Gala (Washington, DC)

10/19 – Grand Junction Petroleum and Mining Club (Grand Junction, CO)

10/20 - TXOGA Lone Star Energy Forum (Woodlands, TX)

10/26 - Montana Chamber Annual Meeting (Great Falls, MT)

10/28 – Cattle Producers of Washington Annual Meeting (Airway Heights, WA)

10/31 - George B. Hartzog, Jr. Awards and Speaker Program Clemson University (SC)

11/4 Governor Reynolds Annual Pheasant Hunt

11/7-9 National Ranger Council Annual Meeting (Gettysburg, PA)

11/8 – WY Governor Annual Business Forum (Cheyenne, WY)

11/9 - America First Energy Conference hosted by Heartland Institute (Houston, TX)

11/9 - Bass Fishing Hall of Fame Induction Dinner at the Wonders of Wildlife (Springfield, MO)

11/14 – George Rogers Clark National Historical Park Quarter Launch (Vincennes, Indiana)

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (new)

The National Weather Service (NWS) forecasts isolated showers tonight with partly cloudy skies through the weekend for Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. These storms may cause some localized flooding, frequent lightning, and gusty, erratic winds. Heat indices across the lower altitudes will exceed 100 degrees Fahrenheit, which could lead to heat related illnesses for more vulnerable populations. (A Tropical Storm Nate synopsis follows Hurricane Maria response/recovery reporting.)

The Department of Homeland Security reports that, in Puerto Rico, 33 of the 51 Puerto Rico Aqueduct and Sewer Authority wastewater treatment plants are working on generator power, and 18 are non-operational at this time. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has assessed 560 of 800 pump stations and determined that approximately 250 are overflowing sewage caused by a lack of power or pumping problems. The island-wide Boil Water Advisory remains in effect. Sixty-five of 67 hospitals are reportedly open, and one hospital is closed. Electrical power has been restored to 16 hospitals, with an additional 49 operating on generator power. More than 837 of the 1,100 retail gas stations are operational.

Stabilization efforts continue for the Guajataca Dam spillway, and evacuations remain in effect. The San Juan International and the Aguadilla Airports have both been

reopened. The Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) has coordinated a delivery of 10 million liters of water on a barge from the Dominican Republic to Puerto Rico. The first of the deliveries are expected today.

In the U.S. Virgin Islands, potable water supplies in St. Thomas and St. John are now down to a four day supply, while St. Croix is down to three days. The territory-wide Boil Water Advisory remains in effect. Roadways are 95-percent passable and there are no full closures on any major roadways on St. Thomas and St. John. Most highways are open on St. Croix. All traffic signals on St Thomas and St Croix are completely destroyed.

While more than 31,000 households in Texas and Florida remain in temporary housing, Gulf Coast states continue monitoring the development and path of Tropical Storm Nate.

Team members of DOI Maria Quick Response Teams (QRT) 1 and 2 that demobilized Wednesday arrived safely in Orlando, Florida. These team members are in travel status back to their home units. All remaining QRTs will demobilize from Puerto Rico on Monday, October 9.

NPS reports that parks impacted by Irma are beginning to establish final stabilization measures. At Christiansted National Historic Site, a request has been made for a Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Team and electricians. Two Law Enforcement Officers (LEOs) from the Pacific West Region (PWR) Special Event Team (SET) from St. John will report to St. Croix to support security needs there. NPS personnel are coordinating plans to secure museum collections which are located on St. Croix and St. John. At Virgin Islands National Park, several assessments were made in regard to hosting a floating hotel barge at Cruz Bay at the NPS dock to support NPS workers at St. John as well as FEMA and other stabilization crews from the federal government. An NPS Arrowheads Hotshot Crew has been requested in order to support debris clearance at St. John. The team will fly to St. Croix and ferry to St. John. At San Juan National Historic Site, cleanup activities around the fort continue. The majority of the Emergency Incident Management Team (EIMT) is co-located with the FEMA interagency command post located at the Convention Center due to a generator failure at the San Juan site. The Motor Vessel (M/V) Fort Jefferson is back in port after delivering personnel and their property back to San Juan. This vessel will likely remain in Puerto Rico and the Caribbean for the next few weeks as missions continue to develop for stabilization of NPS park units. The CISM Team continues to provide assistance to staff and families as needed. A full transition has been made to restore network connectivity at San Juan using a connection from the USGS building.

At Big Cypress National Preserve, high water inside facilities are complicating stabilization operations, visitor access, and reopening plans. Saw operations and debris removal continues. At Everglades National Park, construction and saw crews continue cleanup and debris removal around the housing units, the campgrounds, and the boat ramps in the Flamingo area. Sandbagging has been authorized in the

Shark Valley area to combat the rise in water levels. Boat operators continue the process of marking underwater debris, hazards to navigation, and displaced vessels in the Gulf Coast and Key Largo areas. A crane is being utilized to insert a membrane filter at the wastewater treatment plant. At Cumberland Island National Seashore, the park museum is open, but the remainder of the park is closed. Arborist and saw crews continue to work to clear the main road. Repair work continues at the Visitor Center and mainland docks. At Fort Pulaski National Monument, the Visitor Center and Museum have reopened, but all other facilities in the park will remain closed until repairs of the water system have been completed. The installation of the water tank was completed yesterday.

FWS reports that cleanup efforts continue at FWS Caribbean Stations as employees work to stabilize employee residences and provide support to the community. While communication challenges persist, the team will continue to conduct welfare checks and distribute necessities to employees and family members, conduct damage assessments, provide security, and coordinate aviation support to various Emergency Support Functions. Sandy Point National Wildlife Refuge has experienced some vandalism.

USGS reports that there are 37 personnel on Puerto Rico, and all personnel are currently accounted for. USGS has two people in the field retrieving surge sensors, and 13 personnel performing gage damage assessments and repairs. There is one person performing remote analysis of imagery to identify significant landslide impacts in Puerto Rico. USGS is coordinating with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the National Weather Service for prioritizing gages for assessment and repair.

The Director of the Office of Emergency Management (OEM), Lisa Branum, accompanied by representation from the OEM Preparedness and Response Division and the Office of Insular Affairs, arrived in the U.S. Virgin Islands yesterday in coordination with local DOI response personnel. The team aims to assist with and attain DOI asset damage assessments, promote intra-agency coordination and response/recovery planning with OEM assistance, and further DOI coordination with the Joint Field Office and the Federal Coordinating Officer. The team is tentatively scheduled to transition to Puerto Rico on Saturday.

Twenty-six employees from DOI Bureaus and Offices are currently supporting the FEMA Surge Capacity Force. The group is comprised of volunteers supporting recovery efforts in Puerto Rico, Texas, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Mississippi, Nevada, and Alabama. OEM is working with FEMA to deploy an additional 5 DOI employees on October 8 and 16 employees on October 12.

The Small Business Administration (SBA) is working with 62 DOI employees in order to place them roles with the SBA to provide support to hurricane victims. These personnel may be deployed as early as next week. DOI is working to identify other resources that can support the SBA mission in the coming weeks.

There are 169 personnel supporting interagency efforts in response to Hurricanes

Irma and Maria.

Tropical Storm Nate

At 5:00 a.m. EDT, Tropical Storm Nate was located approximately 275 miles south-southeast of Cozumel, Mexico, and moving toward the northwest at 14 miles per hour (mph). This general motion, with an increase in forward speed, is expected during the next day or two. The storm will move across the northwestern Caribbean Sea today and reach the eastern coast of the Yucatan Peninsula later tonight. Nate will then move into the southern Gulf of Mexico and approach the northern Gulf Coast Saturday evening. Maximum sustained winds are 45 mph, with higher gusts. Strengthening is forecast during the next 48 hours, and Nate is expected to become a hurricane by the time it reaches the central Gulf of Mexico.

A Hurricane Watch is in effect from Morgan City, Louisiana to the Mississippi/Alabama border, Metropolitan New Orleans, and for Lake Pontchartrain and Lake Maurepas, Louisiana. A Tropical Storm Watch is in effect from the Mississippi and Alabama border to the Okaloosa, Florida/Walton County Line, and west of Morgan City to Intracoastal City, Louisiana. A Storm Surge Watch is in effect from Morgan City, Louisiana, to the Alabama and Florida border, and the northern and western shores of Lake Pontchartrain, Louisiana.

Nate is expected to produce from 3 to 6 inches of rain, with a maximum of up to 12 inches, in the U.S. Central Gulf Coast States.

The Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement reports that offshore oil and gas operators in the Gulf of Mexico are evacuating platforms and rigs in preparation for Tropical Storm Nate. The BSEE Hurricane Response Team is activated and monitoring operators' activities. The team will continue to work with offshore operators and other state and federal agencies until operations return to normal and the storm is no longer a threat to Gulf of Mexico oil and gas activities.

Based on data from offshore operator reports submitted as of October 5, personnel have been evacuated from a total of 6 production platforms, 0.81 percent of the 737 manned platforms in the Gulf of Mexico. No personnel have been evacuated from the 20 rigs operating in the Gulf. One DP rig has moved off location out of the storm's path as a precaution. This number represents 5.56 percent of the 18 DP rigs currently operating in the Gulf. From operator reports, it is estimated that approximately 14.55 percent of the current oil production in the Gulf of Mexico has been shut-in, which equates to 254,607 barrels of oil per day. It is also estimated that approximately 6.42 percent of the natural gas production, or 206.71 million cubic feet per day in the Gulf of Mexico has been shut-in.

OUTSIDE MEDIA OF INTEREST (new)

Trump Administration To Reconsider Sage Grouse Conservation Plans.

The Hill (10/5, Henry) reports that the Interior Department has "begun the process of

reconsidering and potentially revising a 2015 plan to protect the greater sage grouse, a Western bird that has seen its habitat dwindle.” In a notice published Thursday, the Bureau of Land Management “said it would review land use provisions in the federal sage grouse conservation plan, which limits new development on some of the sage grouse’s range in 10 western states and defines ways to expand its habitat there.” BLM is “also set to reverse an Obama administration effort to block mining on 10 million acres of land in six Western states.” The ban was “part of the administration’s efforts to protect the sage grouse.”

The AP (10/5, Daly) reports that the BLM “said a recent analysis showed that mining or grazing would not pose a significant threat to the sage grouse.” According to officials, “the proposal would affect less than one-tenth of 1 percent of sage grouse-occupied range across 11 states from California to the Dakotas.”

Lake Okeechobee Dike Repairs ‘Priority’ For Trump, Zinke Says.

The Palm Beach (FL) Post (10/5, Bennett) reports that “repairing the Herbert Hoover Dike around Lake Okeechobee and restoring the Everglades are important to President Donald Trump, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke said Thursday after visiting a construction project along the lake.” Trump has “proposed spending \$82 million on rehabilitating the dike in 2018, up from about \$68 million approved by Congress in 2017.” Zinke said, “From President Trump, we want it done yesterday. He wants to win, so anything I can do to remove the regulations, streamline the process, to get it moving quicker — we can do it right. The Army Corps of Engineers is the best this country has as far as engineering goes. So I’m comfortable if they’re given the green light they can complete the task quicker.”

House Dems Want DOI Monument Review Info Released.

Law360 (10/5, Phillis) reports that claiming “the process has been far too secretive, 26 House Democrats introduced a resolution Wednesday that would direct Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke to release information on the Trump administration’s review of national monuments.” Rep. Raul M. Grijalva, “and his colleagues said that Zinke has not been open about the administration’s monument review process.”

Notes From Closed Meeting Show How Interior Aims To Weaken Environmental Laws.

The Washington Post (10/5, Fears) reports that near the end of September, Bureau of Land Management officials “hosted a conference with state, county and local government representatives to discuss ways to loosen environmental rules.” BLM “hosts told attendees and those joining the invitation-only meeting remotely that they wanted to streamline a powerful law that protects wildlife and public land, the National Environmental Policy Act.” But “at least two groups not on the invitation list obtained the call-in information for the meeting and secretly sat in and took notes, which one group provided to The Washington Post.” Leah Baker, the BLM division chief for planning and NEPA, said in an interview Tuesday, “We’re seeking a better decision-

making process that's more productive and getting decisions faster. We heard through this process that we should try and streamline regulations ... and that the agency leaves a little to be desired in how effectively we coordinate" with states and local governments.

The Media Are Missing Trump's Much-Needed Regulatory Relief.

In an op-ed for the Washington Examiner (10/5, Harbin), Americans for Prosperity VP of External Affairs Christine Harbin states that "American consumers, businesses, and families have all paid the price" for decades of creating additional federal regulations without removing any. The Trump Administration's efforts "in regulatory relief" have "not grabbed a lot of headlines in the media, but they have had significant impact in peeling back the regulatory state left over from President Barack Obama and prior administrations." Consistent with these efforts, "Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke has reined in restrictive land use policies of previous administrations and reduced red tape to domestic energy production." Harbin encourages President Trump and Congress to continue these regulation streamlining efforts so that the federal government "works better for all Americans."

BIA Floats Rule Changes For Tribal Land-Into-Trust Bids.

Law360 (10/5, Westney) reports that John Tahsuda III, the principal deputy assistant secretary for the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, "sent a letter to Native American tribal leaders Wednesday that laid out proposed changes to the process tribes must follow to request that the federal government take their land into trust, including provisions that could make it harder for tribes to launch off-reservation casinos."

BLM Proposal Would Revive Mining In Renewable Energy Zone.

E&E Publishing (10/5, Streater) reports that the Bureau of Land Management has "proposed that the Interior Department cancel the withdrawal of more than a million acres of federal lands from new mining claims within a formally designated renewable energy development zone in the Southern California desert," according to multiple sources. According to the sources, "formally canceling the two-year withdrawal from new mining claims signals the first step in a broader effort by Interior to eventually dismantle federal participation in the 22.5-million-acre Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP) that it partnered on with the state of California." A draft submitted by acting BLM Director Mike Nedd "argues that the cost of between \$4 million and \$6 million to conduct the environmental impact statement evaluating the withdrawal is cost prohibitive and necessitates a cancellation of the withdrawal, formally published in the Federal Register in December.":

Additional Coverage: New York Submits "Area For Consideration" Identifying Four Potential Wind Development Sites Off Atlantic Coast.

Additional coverage that New York has asked the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management "to consider identifying and leasing at least four new Wind Energy Areas

off New York's Atlantic Coast" was provided by the Windpower Engineering & Development (10/5, Froese).

"Takings" Outcome Seen As Win For Tribes.

The Klamath Falls (OR) Herald And News (10/5, Dillemoth) reports that "the Klamath Tribes shared positive reactions on Wednesday to the outcome of the 'takings' opinion, viewing the outcome filed Sept. 29 by Judge Marian Blank Horn as a win for tribal water rights in the Klamath Basin." The decision "denies Klamath Basin irrigators compensation of upward of \$30 million sought through the lengthy case stemming from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's water shutoffs in 2001." The judge "noted in the opinion the superiority of the in-stream water rights deemed "time-immemorial" held by the Klamath, Yurok and Hoopa Valley Tribes over irrigators with junior water user rights." Don Gentry, tribal chairman, said, "We are pleased with the decision. This affirmation of the Tribes' water rights should be another positive step towards the healing and restoration of our tribal treaty fisheries."

Exxon Evacuating Staff From U.S. Gulf Platform Ahead Of Nate.

Reuters (10/5, Scheyder) reports ExxonMobil is evacuating all staff from its Lena platform in the Gulf of Mexico ahead of Tropical Storm Nate. Reuters (10/5, Scheyder) reports BP is shutting in all oil and natural gas production from its platforms in the Gulf. The company is also evacuating staff from its four platforms in the area. Reuters (10/5, Scheyder) reports Chevron started shutting in its Gulf oil and natural gas production. The company is closing the Blind Faith, Genesis, Jack/St. Malo, Petronius and Tahiti facilities and evacuating staff. Reuters (10/5, Scheyder) reports Anadarko is shutting in production at the Horn Mountain and marlin platforms on Friday. Non-essential personnel are being evacuated from the company's Constitution, Holstein, Lucius and Marco Polo platforms.

Interior Department Rejects 25 Endangered Species Petitions, Including Several Linked To Climate Change.

The Washington Post (10/5, Mooney, Grandoni) reports that the Fish and Wildlife Service on Thursday "declined 25 separate petitions to list a variety of species as endangered or threatened, including the high-profile Pacific walrus, which is contending with sharp climate change trends in the Arctic where it spends much of its life atop floes of floating sea ice." The FWS "also declined a listing petition for the Florida Keys mole skink, a subspecies of lizard that lives on beaches and in coastal forests that face rising seas and were just swept by Hurricane Irma." The article notes that "other rejected listings included Bicknell's thrush, a songbird that lives at high mountain altitudes, the Big Blue Springs cave crayfish, and the Kirtland's snake." In addition, "fourteen separate species of Nevada springsnails were also rejected for listing."

Congress Moves Closer To Allowing Oil And Gas Drilling In Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

The Washington Examiner (10/5, Siegel) reports Congress is moving towards allowing oil and gas drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge as both chambers made progress on budget legislation on Thursday. The House passed its 2018 budget resolution, which instructs the National Resources Committee to approve legislation reducing the deficit by \$5 billion over 10 years. The Senate Budget Committee approved its 2018 budget resolution that contains a similar provision intended to facilitate drilling in the ANWR. E&E Daily (10/5) reports Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer is warning Republicans that they will have a tough time passing the budget if they move to open drilling in the ANWR to help pay for tax cuts. Schumer said, "I think it's going to be a tough fight for them to do it. There are some Republicans who at least expressed privately some distaste for opening up ANWR."

For The First Time Ever, LGBT Pride Flag Will Fly On Federal Land.

Newsweek (10/5, Ziv) reports that "a rainbow flag will soon fly at the Stonewall National Monument in Manhattan, the first such flag to be permanently placed on federal land and maintained by the National Park Service, activists announced on Thursday." Michael Petrelis, "the LGBT and AIDS activist who initiated the effort," said, "It is a victory for our community to have these symbolic colors flying majestically over our Stonewall, designated as a National Monument by President Obama, even as our LGBTQ brothers and sisters are under attack by the current regime in power."

Researchers: Pythons Changed Mosquito's Diet In Everglades.

The AP (10/5) reports that "University of Florida researchers have more data showing invasive Burmese pythons decimating populations of native mammals in the Everglades." Entomology professor Nathan Burkett-Cadena "led a team collecting *Culex cedecei* mosquitoes in Everglades National Park." The researchers "analyzed animal DNA in the mosquitoes' guts to determine what they had bitten." According to Burkett-Cadena, "rats now make up three-quarters of the mosquitoes' diet because pythons have eaten so many other mammals."

GAO: NMI Faces Labor Shortages, Fiscal Risks.

Marianas Variety (10/5, Villahermosa) reports that "the CNMI's economic outlook has improved, but it faces growing labor shortages that may affect its ability to repay public debt, the U.S. Government Accountability Office said in a report titled 'U.S. Territories: Public Debt Outlook.'" The GAO "reiterated its earlier finding that removing all permitted foreign workers from the CNMI would result in a GDP decline of 26 to 62 percent — 'a relatively large negative effect on the economy.'" In its most recent report, the GAO said "planned reductions in permitted workers could worsen the effect on GDP going forward and hamper the territory's ability to repay existing debt."

FEDERAL REGISTER LISTINGS:

Notices approved 10/4 and 10/5, but left off earlier reports.

BLM REG0007470 08/15/2017 10/05/2017 Notice of Public Meeting: Coeur d'Alene

Resource Advisory Council

BLM REG0007498 09/29/2017 10/04/2017 Notice of Cancellation of Withdrawal Application and Withdrawal Proposal and Notice of Termination of Environmental Impact Statement for the Sagebrush Focal Area Withdrawal in ID, MT, NV, OR, UT & WY

BLM REG0007485 10/02/2017 10/04/2017 Notice of Intent to Amend Greater Sage Grouse Related Land Use Plans

Lori K. Mashburn
White House Liaison
Department of the Interior
202.208.1694

From: Hinson, Alex
Sent: 2017-10-06T10:06:06-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: DOI Daily Report
Received: 2017-10-06T10:06:11-04:00

INTERIOR DAILY COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

NEWS TO SHARE:

E&E News: BLM proposal would revive mining in renewable energy zone

“The Bureau of Land Management has proposed that the Interior Department cancel the withdrawal of more than a million acres of federal lands from new mining claims within a formally designated renewable energy development zone in the Southern California desert, multiple sources have confirmed to E&E News. Formally canceling the two-year withdrawal from new mining claims signals the first step in a broader effort by Interior to eventually dismantle federal participation in the 22.5-million-acre Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP) that it partnered on with the state of California, sources said.”

U.S. News and World Report: Feds Remove Protections for 10M Acres of Sage Grouse Habitat

“The Bureau of Land Management, an Interior agency, said a recent analysis showed that mining or grazing would not pose a significant threat to the sage grouse, a ground-dwelling, chicken-like bird that roams across vast areas of the West. The proposal would affect less than one-tenth of 1 percent of sage grouse-occupied range across 11 states from California to the Dakotas, officials said. The change comes as the Trump administration moves to reconsider an Obama-era plan to protect the sage grouse, a quirky bird with long, pointed tail feathers and known for the male's elaborate courtship display in which air sacs in the neck are inflated to make a popping sound.”

Palm Beach Post: Interior secretary says Trump committed to Everglades restoration

“Repairing the Herbert Hoover Dike around Lake Okeechobee and restoring the Everglades are important to President Donald Trump, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke said Thursday after visiting a construction project along the lake. Zinke plans to visit Big Cypress National Preserve in the Everglades on Friday and Everglades National Park on Saturday. “On behalf of President Trump, this is a priority,” Zinke said after inspecting repairs to a culvert along the dike on the east side of the lake. Trump has proposed spending \$82 million on rehabilitating the dike in 2018, up from about \$68 million approved by Congress in 2017.”

Correcting the Record:

CNN: Interior Department whistleblower resigns after reassignment from climate change duties

“The Interior Department employee who blew the whistle on the Trump administration for reassigning him from measuring climate change to a different department has resigned. Joel Clement, who worked at Interior for more than seven years and continued on in his new accounting role for three months, said he left after losing all hope things would change.”

- **Statement on Clement:** The Department does not comment on ongoing matters such as whistleblower complaints. We look forward to working with the Office of Special Counsel to address any questions they might have about this matter.

- **Regarding the shuffling of SES at DOI:** The President signed an executive order to reorganize the federal government for the future and the Secretary has been absolutely out front on that issue. In fact, he mentioned a Department-wide, front lines-focused reorganization on his first day address to all employees. The purpose of the Senior Executive Service is to ensure that the executive management of the government of the United States is responsive to the needs, policies, and goals of the Nation and otherwise is of the highest quality. Senior executives are the highest paid employees in the federal government and signed up for the SES knowing that they could be called upon to work in different positions at any time. Congress meant for the SES to be a mobile force that are capable of taking on different assignments to meet the needs of the agency. Personnel moves among the Senior Executive Service are being conducted to better serve the taxpayer and the Department's operations.

Politico: Trump's Interior chief 'hopping around from campaign event to campaign event'

"The secretary is already under investigation by his department's inspector general over his use of taxpayer-funded private planes for some of the trips, and the Justice Department's Office of Special Counsel is looking into an activist group's allegations that he violated the Hatch Act, the law limiting political activism by federal employees. The White House has cracked down on Cabinet members' travel habits following former HHS Secretary Tom Price's resignation on Friday, which occurred after POLITICO reported on his own expensive flights."

- **DOI Statement:** "The Interior Department under the Trump Administration has always and will always continue to work to ensure all officials follow appropriate rules and regulations when traveling, including using government coach class fare options at all times appropriate and feasible, to ensure the efficient use of government resources."
- **DOI Ethics Statement:** "The Scheduling Office meets regularly with the Departmental Ethics Office and the Division of General Law to ensure that all travel is thoroughly reviewed and approved in advance and that it is fully compliant with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations. Consistent with this process, the trip was reviewed and approved in advance by both the Departmental Ethics Office and the Division of General Law. In short, the trip - including the Secretary's address to the hockey developmental squad - was completely compliant with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations." **--Joint Statement from Melinda Loftin (Department of the Interior Designated Agency Ethics Official and Director of the Departmental Ethics Office) and Edward Keable (Deputy Solicitor - General Law). Both are career members of the Senior Executive Service.**
- **Secretary Zinke's Statement:** I believe taxpayers absolutely have a right to know how much official government travel costs. It's common sense. At the Department we make those documents available to the public. Using tax dollars wisely and ethically is a big responsibility and is at the heart of good government. There are some times when Interior - regardless of the administration - has to utilize charter services because we often travel to areas that don't have a lot of flight options. Since being sworn in, I've used a charter on three occasions:

- On a trip organized by the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee in the Arctic Circle
- Flying overnight to Montana to speak at the Western Governors Conference and hold a bipartisan round table discussion concerning Western issues and President Trump's Energy initiative.
- and traveling between two of the islands that make up the United States Virgin islands. As you're aware the Interior Department oversees federal policy for the U.S. Territories and the events marked the 100-year anniversary of the territory joining the United States. As the only Senate confirmed member of Interior, I was honored to represent President Trump and accompany Governor Mapp and the Prime Minister of Denmark on this historic occasion.

I also took military air with Secretary Purdue so he and I could meet with wildfire crews battling a dangerous Type 1 wildfire that had already taken the life of one firefighter. I also fly military air when I travel with the President and Vice President. All of this travel was done only after it was determined by multiple professionals at the Department that no commercial options existed to meet the schedule. And as importantly, the flights were only booked after extensive due diligence by the career professionals in the Department's General Law and Ethics divisions. Every single trip I take is pre-approved by them. We are continually looking at ways to lower costs at the Department, and also looking at ways to increase revenues. I will always be honest and upfront about travel – in fact you can follow it on Twitter.

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Alex Hinson

Deputy Press Secretary
Department of the Interior

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downey_magallanes@ios.doi.gov[downey_magallanes@ios.doi.gov];
(b)(6) - Bernhardt
From: Heather Swift
Sent: 2017-09-21T11:03:40-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Fwd: Today: Joel Clement to be Awarded Callaway Award for Civic Courage
Received: 2017-09-21T11:03:48-04:00

FYI

Today: Joel Clement to be Awarded Callaway Award for Civic Courage

Award given for Clement's courage blowing the whistle on the Trump Administration

For Immediate Release:

Date: September 21, 2017

Contact: Kendra Barkoff

Email: kbarkoff@skdknick.com

Washington, DC – Today, Thursday, September 21, Joel Clement, the civil servant who recently filed a [whistleblower complaint](#) against the Department of the Interior, will be awarded the Callaway Award for Civic Courage for standing up to the Trump Administration. The award will be presented at a ceremony at the Carnegie Institute for Science.

“I am deeply honored to be a recipient of the Callaway Award, and humbled by the courage and tenacity of past recipients,” said Joel Clement. “I hope the recognition I receive for blowing the whistle on the Trump Administration inspires others within the federal civil service to do the same; the continued health and safety of Americans depends upon it.”

Clement is the former director of the Office of Policy Analysis at the U.S. Interior Department. He is a scientist and policy expert who worked extensively on climate change issues and specifically the threat that climate change

poses to Alaska Native communities. On June 15, he was one of about 50 senior department employees who received letters informing them of involuntary reassignments. Clement continues to work for the federal government in his new role as a senior advisor for the Office of Natural Resources Revenue – the agency responsible for collecting and dispersing royalty income from oil, gas and mining companies.

Joel is receiving the Callaway award for upholding the highest standards of his civil service oath as a senior federal official. In June, he blew the whistle on the Trump Administration's Interior Department for using personnel reassignment to shut down climate change programs, muzzle scientists and undermine subject matter experts. Multiple investigations of the Department of the Interior are now underway as a result of his efforts.

About the award:

The Joe A. Callaway Award for Civic Courage was established by Mr. Callaway in 1990. The Award recognizes individuals in any area of endeavor who, with integrity and at some personal risk, take a public stance to advance truth and justice, and who challenged prevailing conditions in pursuit of the common good. Toward this end, Mr. Callaway endowed The Shafeek Nader Trust for the Community Interest with a special fund to administer this annual award honoring citizens for their civic courage.

This year's award winners also include: Megan Rice, Michael R. Walli and Greg Boertje-Obed, who courageously waged peace against nuclear weapons by taking their non-violent message of conscience inside the highly-guarded Y-12 Weapons Complex in Oak Ridge, TN.

Past award winners include Robert MacLean from the Federal Air Marshal Service, who fought for federal government employee free speech rights to ensure airline passenger safety, winning a groundbreaking January 2015 Supreme Court decision, and Larry Criscione, reliability and risk Engineer at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission Office of Research, for blazing a courageous path for public health and safety.

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