

Climate Policy Update

July 12, 2023

Good afternoon!

This is Akin's newsletter on climate change policy and regulatory developments, providing information on major climate policy headlines from the past week and forthcoming climate-related events and hearings:

National

- **Permitting Talks to Resume as Congress Returns** (*E&E News*)
With Congress back in D.C., lawmakers have resumed conversations on permitting reform. Specifically, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) noted that permitting reform is a priority ahead of the August recess. Rep. Garret Graves (R-LA) has additionally engaged with Sens. Joe Manchin (D-WV) and Kyrsten Sinema (I-AZ) to “pre-negotiate a solution.”
- **U.S. Carbon Emissions Fall for the First Time in Biden Era** (*E&E News*)
Carbon Monitor found that “U.S. emissions from power plants were down 27 million tons, or 4.5 percent, compared to 2022 levels, as the country continued its shift away from coal in favor of natural gas and renewables.”
- **Biden Approves Largest Wind Project Yet Off U.S. Shores** (*Washington Post*)
Last week, the Biden administration approved the Ocean Wind 1 project, making it the “largest-ever offshore wind project the U.S. has yet approved, paving the way for dozens of turbines that could eventually power thousands of New Jersey homes.”
- **US State Attorneys General Clash over EPA Emissions Plan** (*Reuters*)
25 Republican attorneys general called on the Biden administration to “abandon plans to sharply cut vehicle tailpipe emissions, while a group of Democratic counterparts from 20 states urged more stringent requirements.”

State & Local

- **U.S. Truckmakers Reach Deal to Phase Out Polluting Diesel Big Rigs** (*Washington Post*)
Various heavy truck and engine manufacturers have “agreed to accept a California plan to ban sales of new diesel big rigs by 2036 under a deal aimed in part at thwarting potential litigation and maintaining a single national standard for truck pollution rules.”

- **Oil Lobbyists Spend Millions to Stall California’s Game-Changing Climate Bill** (*The Guardian*)
Traditional energy stakeholders are investing millions to strike down two bills moving through the California Legislature that would “require corporations to disclose more information about their emissions and their efforts to fight the climate crisis.”
- **Minnesota Will Use \$3M IRA Grant to Expand Outreach on Climate Action Plan** (*Minnesota Reformer*)
The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency is slated to leverage Inflation Reduction Act (P.L. 117-169; IRA) funding to “help make sure the state’s climate strategies will benefit lower-income communities.”

International

- **Australia Joins G7-Backed ‘Climate Club’ and Promises to Drive Down Greenhouse Gas Emissions** (*Associated Press*)
Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese announced that Australia will join the “‘climate-club’ backed by the Group of Seven major economies to take more ambitious action in tackling global warming.”
- **Yellen Urges China to Step Up Climate Finance Investments** (*New York Times*)
During a visit to China, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen called for the country to “do more to help developing countries combat climate change, urging the world’s largest emitter of greenhouse gases to back international climate finance funds that it has so far declined to support.”
- **John Kerry to Visit China to Restart Climate Negotiations** (*New York Times*)
Special Envoy for Climate Change John Kerry is slated to visit China to “restart global warming negotiations between the world’s two largest polluters.”
- **Heat Records Are Broken Around the Globe as Earth Warms, Fast** (*New York Times*)
Early July included three days that “were quite likely the hottest in Earth’s modern history [...] as an astonishing surge of heat across the globe continued to shatter temperature records from North America to Antarctica.” Moreover, the temperature spikes are driven by greenhouse gas emissions and the cyclical return of El Niño.
- **LeapFrog Plans \$500 Million Investment in Asia, African Climate Transition Firms** (*Reuters*)
LeapFrog Investments is slated to “invest \$500 million in companies addressing climate change in Asia and Africa, with projects it hopes will reach up to 50 million low-income people.”

Check out below for key quotes, federal agency news and a look at the week ahead in congressional hearings and think tank events:

Quotes of the Week

“I believe that if China were to support existing multilateral climate institutions like the Green Climate Fund and the Climate Investment Funds alongside us and other donor governments, we could have a greater impact than we do today.”

– *Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen* (*New York Times* – July 7)

Congressional Hearings (July 10 - July 14, 2023)

Senate

No relevant Senate hearings.

House of Representatives

[Protecting Investor Interests: Examining Environmental and Social Policy in Financial Regulation](#)

House Financial Services

Wednesday, July 12, 10:00 AM EDT

[The State Department's Climate Agenda: A Budget Overview by the Special Presidential Envoy for Climate](#)

House Foreign Affairs

Thursday, July 13, 10:00 AM EDT

[How Mandates Like ESG Distort Markets and Drive Up Costs for Insurance and Housing](#)

House Financial Services

Friday, July 14, 9:00 AM EDT

Federal Agency Climate News

Department of Energy

[DOE Invests Over \\$23 Million to Reduce Carbon Emissions Across the United States](#) (July 10)

[Biden-Harris Administration Invests Over \\$200 Million in States and Tribal Nations to Modernize America's Electrical Grid](#) (July 6)

[Biden-Harris Administration Announces \\$45 Million to Boost Domestic Solar Manufacturing](#) (July 6)

Department of the Interior

[Interior Department Launches Map to Track Historic Resources Funded by the President's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Nationwide](#) (July 6)

Environmental Protection Agency

[EPA Proposes Updates to Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reporting Requirements for the Oil and Gas Sector](#) (July 6)

Funding and Comment Opportunities

[Powering Affordable Clean Energy](#)

Department of Agriculture

Close Date: September 29, 2023

[Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program](#)

Department of Energy

Pre-Award Information: April 28, 2023

Close Date: July 31, 2023

[Empowering Rural America](#)

Department of Agriculture

Close Date: August 31, 2023

[Clean Energy Demonstration Program on Current and Former Mine Land](#)

Department of Energy

Concept Papers: May 11, 2023

Close Date: August 31, 2023

[Additional Clean Hydrogen Programs - Regional Clean Hydrogen Hubs](#)

Department of Energy

Close Date: TBD

[Energy Improvements in Rural or Remote Areas](#)

Department of Energy

Concept Papers: April 14, 2023

Close Date: June 28, 2023

[Silicon Solar Manufacturing and Dual-Use Photovoltaics Incubator](#)

Department of Energy

Concept Paper: September 27, 2023

Close Date: November 14, 2023

[Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund](#)

Environmental Protection Agency

Close Date: August 28, 2023

D.C. Climate Events

[The Future of Natural Gas in the Energy Transition](#)

United States Energy Association

Tuesday, July 11, 11:00 AM EDT

[How to Balance Economic and Energy Security While Preserving Public Lands](#)

Hudson Institute

Thursday, July 13, 1:00 PM EDT

[Cutting Methane Emissions from Oil and Gas: U.S. and EU Cooperation](#)

Center for Strategic and International Studies

Wednesday, July 12, 10:00 AM EDT

[Talent and Skills Shortages in the Renewable Energy Industry](#)

American Council on Renewable Energy

Thursday, July 13, 1:00 PM EDT

For more information, please contact your regular Akin lawyer or advisor, or:

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