

Climate Policy Update

January 9, 2024

Good morning!

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

- **Yellen to Visit Boston to Tout Clean Energy Tax Credit Benefits** (*Reuters*)

Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen is slated to give remarks at Roxbury Community College's Center for Smart Building Technology to "promote the benefits of the Biden administration's clean energy tax credits for the economy ahead of the start of the 2024 presidential nominating contests."

- **Yellow School Buses are Going Green with a \$1 Billion Investment** (*Washington Post*)

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) "announced nearly \$1 billion for school districts to replace diesel buses with cleaner versions, including electric buses." Provided in the Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act (IIJA; [P.L. 117-58](#)), the federal funds intend to protect children from air pollution and slash greenhouse gas emissions.

- **Supreme Court Won't Hear Alaska's Unusual Pebble Mine Lawsuit** (*Politico*)

The Supreme Court declined to hear Alaska's "request for the high court to step in directly and undo EPA's veto of Pebble Mine, the latest loss for the long effort to build the controversial copper and gold project."

State and Local

- **Colorado River States are Racing to Agree on Cuts Before Inauguration Day** (*New York Times*)

California and Arizona—among other states reliant on the Colorado River—are seeking agreement on a "long-term deal to share the dwindling resource by the end of the year." This prospective agreement would anticipate significant cuts in the amount of river water available. Despite reduced amounts of flowing water due to climate change, the Colorado River provides "drinking water to 40 million people in seven states, 30 tribes and Mexico, as well as irrigation for some of America's most productive farmland."

- [Massachusetts Switches on its First Large Offshore Wind Farm](#) (*New York Times*)

The Vineyard Wind project began producing electricity last week. While the project can “send only five megawatts of power to the grid from a single towering wind turbine,” there are plans to “install a total of 62 turbines with 800 megawatts of capacity, or roughly enough electricity to power 400,000 homes, by the end of the year.”

- [Wyoming Greenlights State’s First CO2 Wells](#) (*Politico*)

Three carbon dioxide injection wells in Wyoming are anticipated to begin construction “in a major step toward expanding the nation’s ability to store planet-warming pollution in geologic formations.” The Department of Energy (DOE) previously awarded \$12.5 million to the project which “aims to eventually remove at least 1 million tons of carbon from the atmosphere annually.”

International

- [Azerbaijan Taps Former Oil Industry Leader to Head this Year’s Climate Talks](#) (*Politico*)

The Azerbaijan Minister of Ecology, Mukhtar Babayev, has been picked to “helm the United Nations climate talks later this year, in a move that stands to fuel debate about the oil and gas industry’s role in international negotiations aimed at reducing fossil fuel use.”

- [Global Temperatures Soared to a New Record in 2023. It Won’t Last](#) (*Politico*)

Despite 2023 being the warmest year on record, the “new peak is in danger of being surpassed in 2024.” These increased temperatures “are quickly putting the Paris Climate Agreement’s stretch target of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius increase over pre-industrial temperatures in jeopardy.”

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

“It’s a scary time in that there are candidates on ballots across the world who haven’t really understood the full scope of climate risks and opportunities for climate actions,”

– *Kim Cobb, Climate Scientist at Brown University* ([*Politico*](#) – *January 9*)

Congressional Hearings (January 8 - 12, 2023)

Senate

[Hearings to Examine Investing in the Future, Focusing on Safeguarding Municipal Bonds from Climate Risk](#)

Senate Budget

Wednesday, January 10, 10:00 AM ET

House of Representatives

[Protecting Clean American Energy Production and Jobs by Stopping EPA’s Overreach](#)

House Energy and Commerce

Wednesday, January 10, 10:00 AM ET

[Hearings to Examine Federal Electric Vehicle Incentives Including the Federal Government's Role in Fostering Reliable and Resilient Electric Vehicle Supply Chains](#)

Senate Energy and Natural Resources

Thursday, January 11, 10:00 AM ET

[Examining the Biden Administration's Limits on Access to the OCS: Impacts on Consumers, States, and Operators](#)

House Natural Resources

Thursday, January 11, 10:00 AM ET

Federal Agency Climate News

Department of Energy

[Statement by U.S. Energy Secretary Jennifer M. Granholm on 2023 EV Sales](#) (January 5)

[DOE Announces Up to \\$70 Million to Strengthen Energy Sector Against Physical and Cyber Hazards](#) (January 4)

Environmental Protection Agency

[Biden-Harris Administration Announces Nearly \\$1B in Awards for Clean School Buses Across the Nation as Part of Investing in America Agenda](#) (January 8)

Funding and Comment Opportunities

[Climate Pollution Reduction Grants](#)

Environmental Protection Agency

Close Date: April 1, 2024

[Battery Materials and Battery Manufacturing Grants](#)

Department of Energy

Close Date: March 19, 2024

[Transmission Siting and Economic Development Program](#)

Department of Energy

Close Date: April 5, 2024

D.C. Climate Events

[Sec. Janet Yellen Remarks on the Inflation Reduction Act and the Biden Administration's Investing in America Agenda](#)

Department of Treasury

Wednesday, January 10, 11:30 AM ET

[Comprehensive Assessment of Global Renewable Deployment Trends Since the Conclusion of COP28](#)

International Energy Agency

Thursday, January 11, 6:00 AM ET

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

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