

Climate Policy Update

August 2, 2023

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

- **[Biden-Harris Administration Launches Rebate Programs for Transformers and Critical Industrial Equipment](#)** (*Department of Energy*)

The Department of Energy (DOE) rolled out two rebate programs—totaling \$20 million in funding—to support domestic manufacturers, utilities, tribes, hospitals, and schools to install “energy efficient distribution transformers and extended product systems that use equipment with electric motors, such as pumps, air compressors, and fans.”

- **[FERC Approves ‘Historic’ Rule to Address Renewables Backlog](#)** (*E&E News*)

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) green-lit a new rule to “accelerate the connection of energy projects to the power grid, a move that could ease widespread delays stifling renewable energy.”

- **[NEPA ‘Phase 2’ Revamp Aims to Reverse Trump, Boost Renewables](#)** (*E&E News*)

The White House Council on Environmental Quality issued a draft rule that would “hasten the permitting process under the [National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)...] for efforts such as wildfire management, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, and offshore wind.”

- **[The Coming Manchin-Biden Feud Over ‘Clean Hydrogen’](#)** (*E&E News*)

Sen. Joe Manchin (D-WV) is slated to fight with President Biden about the implementation of a clean hydrogen tax subsidy. The senator “has the backing of leading Senate Democrats who want to see a nascent energy industry succeed and not be hamstrung by regulation.”

- **[Conservatives Have Already Written a Climate Plan for Trump’s Second Term](#)** (*E&E News*)

Former Trump administration staff penned a climate policy plan in the instance of Trump’s second term. The strategy would “block the expansion of the electrical grid for wind and solar energy; slash funding for the Environmental Protection Agency’s environmental justice office; shutter the Energy Department’s renewable energy offices; prevent states from adopting California’s car pollution standards; and delegate more regulation of polluting industries to Republican state officials.”

State & Local

- **[A Left-Right Alliance Puts Iowa's CO₂ Pipelines on the Presidential Agenda](#)** (*E&E News*)

A coalition of liberals and conservatives—led by former Rep. Steve King (R-IA)—is aiming to stop pipeline construction that would “snake through 3,300 miles of farmland in Iowa and other Midwestern states then pump [CO₂] into the bedrock beneath Illinois and North Dakota.”

- **[Colorado River Losing Vast Amounts of Water Due to Warming Climate, Study Finds](#)** (*Los Angeles Times*)

New research outlines that climate change is “shrinking the [Colorado River’s] flow and robbing the region of a vast amount of water.”

- **[Report Outlines the Costs of Climate Change on PA Communities, Taxpayers](#)** (*Pennsylvania Capital-Star*)

A study focused on Pennsylvania conducted by the Center for Climate Integrity, Resilient Analytics and Scioto Analysis determined that “climate change adaptations will cost municipalities and taxpayers more than \$15 billion by 2040.”

International

- **[The U.N. Warns ‘An Era of Global Boiling’ Has Started. What Does That Mean?](#)** (*Washington Post*)

The United Nations (U.N.) Chief Antonio Guterres declared that “the era of global boiling has arrived.” This comes as scientists “confirmed that July is set to become Earth’s hottest month on record.”

- **[A Commitment to Green Policy is Tested by an Election Win](#)** (*New York Times*)

The Conservative Party maintained a “vulnerable seat in Parliament in a by-election after a voter backlash against the expansion of a low-emission zone, which will penalize people who drive older, more polluting cars.”

- **[Switzerland Gets Six More Wind Turbines to Boost its Green Power](#)** (*Reuters*)

To boost the country’s renewable energy supply, Switzerland assembled six wind turbines that can “meet the energy needs of 6,100 households – or the entire energy consumption of Sainte-Crois, including its industries.”

- **[EU Confirms Watering Down of Corporate Sustainability Disclosures](#)** (*Reuters*)

The European Union (EU) finalized a rule for “corporate environmental, social, and governance (ESG) disclosures, confirming earlier moves to water down the requirements.”

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

“Climate change is here. It is terrifying. And it is just the beginning.”

– **U.N. Chief Antonio Guterres** (*Washington Post* – July 29)

Congressional Hearings (July 31– August 4, 2023)

Senate

The Senate is out of session.

House of Representatives

The House is out of session.

Federal Agency Climate News

Department of Energy

[DOE Announces \\$33 Million to Advance Energy Research Across America](#) (July 26)

[Biden-Harris Administration Announces \\$100 Million to Transform Climate Pollution into Sustainable Products](#) (July 24)

Department of Interior

[Biden-Harris Administration Investing \\$152 Million Through Investing in America Agenda to Expand Water Storage in the West](#) (July 27)

Environmental Protection Agency

[U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Department of Energy Announce Intent to Fund Efforts to Reduce Methane Emissions from Oil and Gas Sector](#) (July 24)

Funding and Comment Opportunities

[Powering Affordable Clean Energy](#)

Department of Agriculture

Close Date: September 29, 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

[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

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

Department of Energy

Close Date: TBD

D.C. Climate Events

[The Summer 2023 Electric Utility Story](#)

United States Energy Association

Tuesday, August 1, 11:00 AM ET

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

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