

# Climate Policy Update

June 21, 2023

Good evening!

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

- **EPA Biofuels Rule to Nudge Biodiesel Mandate Higher and Gut Electric Vehicle Plan** (*Politico*)  
The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is poised to release an update to the Renewable Fuel Standard with a rule that will “slightly increase biodiesel blending volumes and shrink the conventional biofuel levels from an earlier proposal,” as well as roll back a plan that enables electric vehicles powered by renewable energy to qualify for credits.
- **White House Sets Fast Pace for Energy, Climate Rules** (*E&E News*)  
Throughout its semiannual Unified Agenda and ahead of the upcoming 2024 election, the Biden administration outlined its intent to pursue “regulations on gas stoves and methane emissions,” as well as address “transmission, heat pumps, and protections for public lands in Alaska.”
- **Ways and Means Approves Tax Bill Hitting Climate Law** (*E&E News*)  
Early last week the House Ways and Means Committee approved the *Build It in America Act* (H.R. 3938), which would “weaken key clean energy incentives and scrap a program to fund cleanup efforts at the nation’s most contaminated sites.”
- **House Defense Bill Chock-Full of Energy Provisions** (*E&E News*)  
The House Armed Services Committee released parts of its Fiscal Year 2024 National Defense Authorization Act last week, which included provisions to “further embrace clean energy, address energy security issues, and clean up contaminated military installations.”
- **House Passes Another Gas Stove Bill—This Time to Thwart Energy Department Efficiency Rule** (*Politico*)  
With a 249-181 vote, the House passed the *Save Our Gas Stoves Act* (H.R. 1640) to hinder the Department of Energy from finalizing proposed rules regarding gas stove efficiency. However, Democrats have defended the proposed rule and noted that it would “only apply to new gas stoves sold three years after the rule is finalized” to lower energy bills and reduce pollution.

## State & Local

- **Noting a Mountain of Delays, California Lawmakers Advance Bills Designed to Speed Grid Connections** (*Inside Climate News*)  
California legislators are pursuing legislation to expedite grid connections, including SB 410 to “require state utility regulators to lay out average and maximum times for utilities to complete new projects and for the utilities to report timelines and the staffing needed for each one.” Moreover, SB 319 would mandate annual reporting for interconnection timelines.

- **Pennsylvania’s Largest Coal Plant to Shut Down** (*WHYY News*)  
Homer City Generation Station in Indiana County is expected to close in July 2023 as it “could not compete with cheaper Marcellus Shale gas and more efficient combined-cycle power plants.” At its full capacity, the plant was capable of producing 1,888 megawatts of electricity although its recently only produced at 20% of its capacity.
- **Hobbs Vetoes Bill to Regulate Renewable Energy** (*Arizona Capitol Times*)  
Gov. Katie Hobbs (D-AZ) vetoed H.B. 2618 which “contained a list of what cities, towns, and counties could adopt in zoning standards, site-specific conditions, and permitting requirements on” solar and wind generating plants.

## International

- **China-U.S. Climate Partnership Vital Despite Differences, Kerry Says** (*Reuters*)  
United States Climate Envoy John Kerry called for the U.S. and China to “create a partnership to tackle climate change without allowing their differences on either issues get in the way.”
- **Canada to Miss Net-Zero 2050 Emissions Goal Without Further Action** (*Reuters*)  
As per the Canada Energy Regulator, the country is slated to miss its goal of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 unless it “takes actions beyond the efforts already underway.”
- **Swedish Parliament Passes New Energy Target, Easing Way for New Nuclear Power** (*Reuters*)  
Sweden’s parliament approved “a new energy target, giving the right-wing government the green light to push forward with plans to build new nuclear plants in a country that voted 40 years ago to phase out atomic power.”
- **EU Countries Fail to Agree Energy Reforms After Coal Subsidy Clash** (*Reuters*)  
The European Union (EU) fell short of agreeing on “new rules for the bloc’s power market, having clashed over a proposal to extend subsidies for coal plants under the reform and a push to expand state aid for other power plants.”

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

*“We are talking about the things we very much hope China will be able to do and together with us. We have to create a partnership here. China and the United States are the two largest emitters in the world.”*

– **U.S. Climate Envoy John Kerry** on the U.S.-China relationship as it relates to climate change (*Reuters* – June 19)

## Congressional Hearings (June 20 - June 23, 2023)

### Senate

*No relevant Senate hearings.*

### House of Representatives

[Clearing the Air: Examining the Environmental Protection Agency’s Proposed Emissions Standards](#)

**House Oversight and Accountability  
Subcommittee on Economic Growth, Energy  
Policy and Regulatory Affairs**

Wednesday, June 21, 10:00 AM EDT

[Microvast and More: Oversight of President Biden's Energy Spending Spree](#)

**House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations**

Wednesday, June 21, 2:00 PM EDT

[Driving Affordability: Preserving People's Freedom to Buy Affordable Vehicles and Fuel](#)

**House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Environment, Manufacturing and Critical Minerals**

Thursday, June 22, 10:00 AM EDT

## Federal Agency Climate News

### Department of Energy

[Biden-Harris Administration Invests \\$77 Million in States and Tribal Nations to Modernize America's Electric Grid \(June 16\)](#)

[Biden-Harris Administration Announces \\$135 Million to Reduce Emissions Across America's Industrial Sector \(June 15\)](#)

### White House

[Biden-Harris Administration Makes Historic Investments to Build Community Climate Resilience \(June 19\)](#)

### Department of the Interior

[Biden-Harris Administration Celebrates Groundbreaking of New Transmission Line, Delivering Clean, Reliable, Affordable Energy to Millions of Americans \(June 20\)](#)

## Funding and Comment Opportunities

[Carbon Capture Large-Scale Pilots](#)

### Department of Energy

Concept Papers: April 5, 2023

Close Date: June 21, 2023

[Powering Affordable Clean Energy](#)

### Department of Agriculture

Close Date: September 29, 2023

[Empowering Rural America](#)

### Department of Agriculture

Close Date: August 31, 2023

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

### Department of Energy

Pre-Award Information: April 28, 2023

Close Date: July 31, 2023

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

### Department of Energy

Concept Papers: April 14, 2023

Close Date: June 28, 2023

Clean Energy Demonstration Program on Current and Former Mine Land

**Department of Energy**

Concept Paper: May 11, 2023

Close Date: August 31, 2023

## D.C. Climate Events

Green Hydrogen for Africa: Opportunities and Obstacles in African Markets

**Atlantic Council**

Wednesday, June 21, 9:30 AM EDT

The Future of Mexico's Climate Commitments and Energy Policies

**Washington Post**

Thursday, June 22, 1:00 PM EDT

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

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