

Climate Policy Update

October 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

- [Enviros Join UAW Picket Lines in Pursuit of Climate Goals](#) (*E&E News*)

Environmental groups joined the United Auto Workers (UAW) strike as the effort may play “a central role in the push for workers’ rights and curbing pollution in industries that supply the automakers.”

- [Biden Administration to Announce \\$7 Billion in Hydrogen Hub Grants Friday](#) (*Reuters*)

The Biden administration is slated to release awardees of the Hydrogen Hub Grants. This comes after “months of intense political jockeying among states from California to Pennsylvania to their share of the \$7 billion in federal dollars to set the U.S. on a path to produce 50 million metric tons of clean hydrogen fuel by 2050.”

- [Treasury Lays Out Rules for Instant EV Rebate](#) (*E&E News*)

The Treasury Department outlined how “car dealers can give customers immediate access to federal tax credits for electric vehicles, a move the Biden administration hopes will persuade more people to buy the battery-based cars.”

- [New Speaker Could Take House GOP Backward on Climate](#) (*E&E News*)

Following the ousting of Rep. Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) as Speaker of the House, green conservatives “see the current slate of candidates as either untested on or outright hostile to policies designed to address a warming planet.”

State & Local

- **Virginia Begins Crafting New Plans to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions** (*Virginia Mercury*)

Virginia is drafting plans for “how to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the primary driver of climate change, on a state and regional basis” due to a \$6 million award from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

- **Texas Proposes First Rules on Oil Waste in 40 Years** (*E&E News*)

Oil and gas regulators in Texas are tackling rules on how the industry should build and maintain waste pits. Green advocates have characterized the current rules as too lax and that they have “allowed operators in the state to build and maintain the ponds in a way that jeopardizes surrounding groundwater, puts neighbors’ health at risk, and can result in the industrial waste washing off with rainstorms.”

- **Vermont Utility Plans to End Outages by Giving Customers Batteries** (*New York Times*)

To bolster the reliability of renewable energy, Green Mountain Power “proposed buying batteries, burying power lines, and strengthening overhead cables in a filing with state regulators on Monday.” This effort is anticipated to be more cost-effective than constructing new lines and power plants.

International

- **Oil Prices Surge on Fears of Mideast Conflict Adding to Supply Tightness** (*Reuters*)

Following violence between Israel and Hamas, oil prices spiked by four percent as the clash “ignited fears that a wider conflict could hit oil supply from the Middle East.”

- **France Wants Methane Curbs on Europe’s Fossil Fuel Imports** (*Reuters*)

France called on the European Union (EU) to “gradually impose methane emissions limits on gas imported into the 27-country, a move that would attempt to leverage Europe’s position as a major fossil fuel buyer to tackle the potent greenhouse gas.”

- **Saudi Arabia to Launch Greenhouse Gases Credits Scheme Next Year** (*Reuters*)

Saudi Arabia is slated to roll out a “greenhouse gas credits scheme early next year that will allow companies to offset their emissions by buying credits from projects that voluntarily cut or remove greenhouse gas emissions.”

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

“President Biden’s Investing in America agenda is focused on lowering transportation costs for consumers and giving American car companies the tools to lead the market.”

– Laurel Blatchford, Treasury’s Chief Implementation Officer for the Inflation Reduction Act (*E&E News* – October 6)

Congressional Hearings (October 9 - October 13, 2023)

Senate

No relevant Senate hearings.

House of Representatives

No relevant House hearings.

Federal Agency Climate News

Department of Energy

[Biden-Harris Administration Announces \\$5 Million to Support Cleaner Domestic Manufacturing](#)
(October 6)

Environmental Protection Agency

[EPA Announces Selection of Charter Members to the Science Advisory Board and the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee](#) (October 10)

[EPA Announces \\$4 Million Now Available for Technical Assistance Providing Evaluation Support for EPA Grant Funding Recipients](#)
(October 5)

Funding and Comment Opportunities

[Climate Pollution Reduction Grants](#)

Environmental Protection Agency

Close Date: April 1, 2024

[Critical Mineral Innovation, Efficiency, and Alternatives](#)

Department of Energy

Close Date: November 10, 2023

[Domestic Manufacturing Conversation Grants](#)

Department of Energy

Close Date: December 7, 2023

[Advanced Processing of Critical Minerals for Industrial and Manufacturing Applications](#)

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

Department of Energy

Concept Paper: September 27, 2023

Close Date: November 14, 2023

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

Department of Energy

Close Date: TBD

[Transmission Siting and Economic Development Program](#)

Department of Energy

Close Date: April 5, 2024

[Career Skills Training Program](#)

Department of Energy

Department of Energy

Close Date: November 27, 2023

Close Date: October 20, 2023

D.C. Climate Events

One Year Later: The Inflation Reduction Act and Climate Progress

Brookings Institute

Wednesday, October 11, 9:00 AM ET

Powering Up Our Nation's Infrastructure

American Council on Renewable Energy

Wednesday, October 11, 9:00 AM ET

Mini Grid Operations in Rural Communities: Challenges and Opportunities

United States Energy Association

Wednesday, October 11, 9:00 AM ET

Innovations in Weather Intelligence to Tackle Extreme Weather

Environmental and Energy Study Institute

Thursday, October 12, 2:00 PM ET

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

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