

To: Jackson, Ryan[jackson.ryan@epa.gov]
From: POLITICO Pro Energy Whiteboard
Sent: Wed 11/29/2017 6:11:57 PM
Subject: Former N.C. regulator quits state agency after being named to EPA panel

By Alex Guillén

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Donald van der Vaart, the former North Carolina environmental regulator once under consideration for a top post in President Donald Trump's EPA, has resigned from the state Department of Environmental Quality, the News & Observer [reports](#).

Van der Vaart was recently named to a spot on EPA's Science Advisory Board, irking state Democratic leaders who complained he had not informed them before the appointment, and they said he did not speak for the state. He was recently placed on paid leave over conduct concerns.

Van der Vaart, who has a doctorate in chemical engineering from the University of Cambridge, demoted himself to a position from which he could not be removed for political reasons following Democrat Roy Cooper's win in last year.

In a [resignation letter](#) published by the newspaper, van der Vaart, a career DEQ official, said it was always his plan to return to a division leader role after running the agency.

He also complained that Cooper's administration "is moving to stifle my contributions to scientific and legal discourse in professional journals. This is deeply troubling." Van der Vaart published a [piece](#) in September calling for repeal of a key EPA pollution permitting program known as "Prevention of Significant Deterioration."

And he wrote that he "did not think that any reasonable person" would have anticipated DEQ's negative reaction to his SAB appointment.

WHAT'S NEXT: EPA did not immediately return questions about whether van der Vaart remains on the SAB or whether the agency will review his membership. He is [currently listed](#) as representing the "NC State Government."

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