

To: Jackson, Ryan[jackson.ryan@epa.gov]
From: Morning Energy
Sent: Tue 6/6/2017 2:04:50 PM
Subject: POLITICO's Morning Energy: Four energy nominees get committee votes today — Chinese diplomat resigns over Paris pullout — Pruitt feared Paris might force domestic climate rules

By Anthony Adragna | 06/06/2017 10:00 AM EDT

With help from Esther Whieldon and Darius Dixon

NEW JOLT OF ENERGY (NOMINEES)! The Energy and Natural Resources Committee is set to advance four crucial energy nominees to the full Senate by midday today as Republican votes alone are sufficient to move them forward. Arguably the greatest fight may be over President Donald Trump's pick for the No. 2 slot at Interior, David Bernhardt. Expect Democrats to raise concerns about Bernhardt's industry ties, ethics waivers and his assertion at his confirmation hearing that the Interior will take its cues on climate change from Trump, who has called it a hoax perpetrated by the Chinese. A coalition of environmental groups sent [a letter](#) to committee leaders on Monday citing what they said were "serious legal and ethical questions" about his actions in 2008 with California water districts while serving as Interior's Solicitor and calling for an investigation before his confirmation (The League of Conservation Voters sent its [own letter](#) opposing Bernhardt's nomination).

Don't expect any Republicans to break from their party's support for Neil Chatterjee or Rob Powelson, Trump's picks for FERC commissioners, or Deputy Energy Secretary nominee Dan Brouillette. Sen. [Ron Wyden](#) has already announced his opposition to Chatterjee and Powelson, but they're likely to get at least some Democratic votes. Keep in mind however that anti-pipeline protesters showed up at their nomination hearing - when the nominees' families were present - so there's no reason to think there won't be a bit of a ruckus today. The panel's top Democrat, Sen. [Maria Cantwell](#), wouldn't tip her hand when ME caught up with her Monday night, but did say she had unspecified "concerns" with some of the nominees.

If you go: The [business meeting](#) kicks off at 9:30 a.m. in Dirksen 366.

U.S. DIPLOMAT QUILTS OVER PARIS: David Rank, the Beijing embassy's chargé d'affaires, resigned Monday in a move driven by Trump's call last week to withdraw from the Paris climate agreement, POLITICO's Nahal Toosi [reports](#). Rank, who spent 27 years at the State Department, made the unusual move to inform colleagues of his decision in a public town hall. "Such a move shows the level of utter disdain for Trump and his policies by senior American diplomats," Brett Bruen, a retired State Department veteran who served as Director of Global Engagement in the Obama White House, told POLITICO. "They face the brunt of the blowback from our allies and have to contend with the advantages it offers our adversaries."

Another Cabinet member weighs in: Energy Secretary Rick Perry, speaking in Japan, said those seeking out Trump's view on climate change are "chasing a rabbit down a hole," but he vowed the U.S. would remain involved in international discussions, according to [multiple reports](#). "Is the climate changing? Yes," Perry said. "Is man having an impact? Yes. How are we going to address it going forward? And the answer is, that's not going to change. The United

States is still going to be very engaged in that."

Meanwhile, new polling out Monday finds 59 percent of Americans oppose Trump's move to pull out of the landmark climate pact while just 28 percent back it, POLITICO's Madeline Conway [reports](#). A majority, 55 percent, said they believe the decision hurts U.S. leadership in the world, while just 18 percent said it would help American leadership's standing.

WELCOME TO TUESDAY! I'm your host Anthony Adragna, and LCV's Tieman Sittenfeld was first to identify Indiana as the state with hyper-restrictive Sunday laws on beer, wine and liquor. For today: There are three states that are entirely dry by default. (Counties must specifically authorize the sale of alcohol.) Which states are they? Send your tips, energy gossip and comments to aadragna@politico.com, or follow us on Twitter [@AnthonyAdragna](#), [@Morning_Energy](#), and [@POLITICOPro](#).

PRUITT WORRIED PARIS MIGHT COMPEL DOMESTIC REGULATIONS: EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt took to [Breitbart Radio](#) Monday to reiterate a key reason he pushed for Trump to withdraw from the Paris Agreement was fear that staying might trigger litigation seeking to compel new regulations under Section 115 of the Clean Air Act. "[Paris] could trigger lawsuits by environmental groups here, the environmental left suing the EPA and the United States government and saying, 'Hey, we agreed to 26 percent and 28 percent targets in this international agreement. Why aren't you taking steps to meet those targets?' and then to compel action," he said. A group of environmental attorneys outlined ways EPA could pursue such regulations in a January 2016 [report](#).

Bashes health concerns: Pruitt criticized comments from many that withdrawing from the Paris accord would have disastrous health consequences, arguing there's a key difference between carbon dioxide and other criteria pollutants. He said it was time for a new discussion about the health impacts of carbon dioxide. "What the American people deserve is a true, legitimate, peer-reviewed, objective, transparent discussion about CO2," Pruitt said. "The American people need to have that type of honest, open discussion, and it's something that we hope to help provide as part of our leadership."

Returning to the Hill: For the first time since his confirmation, Pruitt returns to the Hill June 15 to testify about the Trump administration's proposed 31 percent cuts to EPA, Pro's Alex Guillén [reports](#). The [hearing](#) before the House Appropriations Interior-EPA subcommittee will take place at 1 p.m. ME expects House Democrats to aggressively question Pruitt on a host of actions to unwind the Obama administration's rules.

CALIFORNIA BACKS CLIMATE COOPERATION WITH CHINA: Led by Gov. Jerry Brown, the government of California agreed today to work with China's Ministry of Science and Technology on deploying clean energy technologies and collaborating on emissions trading, Reuters [reports](#). That comes after Brown signed [an agreement](#) with Jiangsu Province expanding their cooperation on climate change and [another](#) with Sichuan Province enhancing their work on clean energy efforts.

EPA TOUTS PROGRESS ON CHEMICALS BACKLOG: Citing effective prioritization and

process efficiencies, EPA now says it will eliminate a backlog of new chemicals awaiting review under the Toxic Substances Control Act by the end of July. "Reviewing new chemicals quickly will enable those deemed safe to enter the marketplace to support jobs and our economy," Pruitt said in a statement. The agency says it plans to provide [weekly progress updates](#). Back in April, Pruitt [said](#) the backlog stood at about 1,000 chemicals when he took office but he pledged to hit regulatory deadlines outlined in the revamped TSCA law this year.

WHAT'S AFTER STUCK IN THE MUD? The White House is making a push this week toward privatizing air traffic control and promoting Trump's \$1 trillion infrastructure plan, but tossing infrastructure onto the existing heap of huge legislative lifts runs the risk of stalling the president's entire agenda, POLITICO's Andrew Restuccia and Lauren Gardner [report](#). "I believe a new president has about a year to get three to four big things done," said former Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood, a Republican who served under President Barack Obama. "And if they don't do it in that year, it's probably pretty much a lost opportunity."

SCHUMER BLAMES TRUMP FOR FEDERAL VACANCIES: Trump has [slammed](#) Democrats for "taking forever" to confirm his nominees to a litany of vacant federal positions, but Senate Minority Leader [Chuck Schumer](#) correctly noted that he hasn't nominated anyone to fill many of them. "President Trump ought to roll up his sleeves and get to work rather than pointing false fingers of blame," Schumer said in a statement. The White House has not formally nominated people to fill 441 of 559 key positions requiring Senate confirmation, according to the [Partnership for Public Service](#).

NEVADA PASS BILL TO HIKE RENEWABLES: In its last day in session, the Nevada legislature on Monday sent Gov. Brian Sandoval a bill, [A.B. 206](#), that would raise the state renewable portfolio standard to 40 percent by 2030 instead of 25 percent by 2025. The bill also eliminates the requirements setting out how much must come from solar projects and includes language allowing utilities to provide direct sales contracts to customers from renewable power projects.

MILITARY LEADERS SOUND ALARM ON ENERGY DISRUPTION: Successfully transitioning to an advanced energy economy will be decisive for U.S. competitiveness, diplomacy and national security for years to come, according to [a report](#) out this morning from the highest-ranking retired group of U.S. military officers. The CNA Military Advisory Board advises that a wide portfolio of advanced energy technologies will enhance geopolitical security and failure to lead in this space will compromise U.S. global influence and national security. The group will provide a closed-door briefing to administration defense and security officials on the report this week.

MORE NOMINEES WITH ENERGY TIES: Trump announced two picks for roles in the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, a foreign development fund, and both have significant energy ties. Ray Washburne, nominated to be president of the entity, was on the Trump's [short list](#) for energy secretary during the transition. David Bohigian, up to be executive vice president of OPIC, founded E2 Capital Partners, which pushed new financing models for energy efficiency projects, and [championed](#) international clean energy deployment efforts while serving as an assistant secretary of Commerce during the George W. Bush administration.

FOR PLANNING PURPOSES: Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke is scheduled to give a luncheon address today to a meeting of the Recreation Vehicle Industry Association in Washington.

STORAGE SECTOR CONTINUES UTILITY-SCALE BOOM: The U.S. added 234 megawatt-hours of energy storage in the first quarter of this year, the industry's biggest quarter yet, GTM Research and the Energy Storage Association said in a [report](#) out this morning. Most of that growth was boosted by a few large utility-scale projects in Arizona, Hawaii and California, including one to offset power supplies lost during the Aliso Canyon natural gas leak.

REPORT: EMPLOYEE SENT HARASSING MESSAGES: A Bureau of Indian Affairs employee sent inappropriate - and frequently sexual - text and Facebook messages to Colorado River Indian Tribes employees and tribal members, an Interior inspector general [report](#) found. The employee admitted sending the messages and that his conduct was "unprofessional and inappropriate," but the report doesn't say whether he faced additional disciplinary action.

MOVERS, SHAKERS: Ryan Serote has joined Salt River Project as senior manager of federal affairs in the utility's Washington office; he comes from the lobbying shop of National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

Judith Browne Dianis, executive director of Advancement Project, a multi-racial civil rights organization, has joined the board of directors of Friends of the Earth. "The organization's staunch advocacy to protect our planet is vital in this moment when policymakers want to scrap environmental protections," she said in a statement.

John Deutch will join the Energy Policy Institute at the University of Chicago as a distinguished fellow for the fall quarter; previous jobs include a professorship with MIT and several positions at DOE, including undersecretary, during Jimmy Carter's presidency.

Pat Hart has joined the Edison Electric Institute as director of preparedness and outreach with its security and business continuity group; he was most recently senior adviser to DOE Deputy Secretary Liz Sherwood-Randall.

Tristan Daedalus (who has what had to be one of the most distinctive names of any congressional staffer) has joined the American Forest Foundation as director of policy. He was previously communications director for Rep. Matt Salmon (R-Ariz.) (h/t POLITICO Influence).

QUICK HITS

- In This Texas Coal Town, Worry About Climate, But Not The Paris Accord. [KUT](#).
- EPA: Pruitt meant 'mining' jobs, not 'coal' jobs up 50,000 under Trump. [SNL](#).
- Review of Auto Standards Raises Concerns From Former EPA Officials. [Morning Consult](#).
- Qatar's dispute with Arab states puts LNG market on edge. [Reuters](#).

- Hispanic Group With Ties To Soros' Open Society Targets Western Senators. [Western Wire](#).

- The U.S. is relocating an entire town because of climate change. And this is just the beginning. [Quartz](#).

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