

To: Jackson, Ryan[jackson.ryan@epa.gov]
From: POLITICO Pro Energy
Sent: Mon 10/23/2017 9:44:12 AM
Subject: Morning Energy, presented by Chevron: Senate takes up massive disaster aid package — Pruitt science adviser directive coming — Interior political appointee lands new responsibilities

By Anthony Adragna | 10/23/2017 05:42 AM EDT

With help from Esther Whieldon, Tim Starks and Darius Dixon

CONGRESS MOVING ON DISASTER AID: The Senate takes the first procedural step today toward getting additional resources to Puerto Rico — more than a month after Hurricane Maria hit — even as 80 percent of the island remains without power and 30 percent lacks clean drinking water. The House-passed \$36.5 billion disaster aid package [H.R. 2266 \(115\)](#) includes nearly \$19 billion for FEMA while also providing a much needed cash infusion to the National Flood Insurance Program's borrowing capacity. It's expected to pass by Wednesday after Senate Majority Whip [John Cornyn](#) received a [commitment](#) that additional hurricane aid for his state of Texas would come in a subsequent bill, removing one of the largest obstacles to passage.

Calls for an emergency response CEO: Calling the long delays in restoring electricity and clean water "unconscionable," Senate Minority Leader [Chuck Schumer](#), along with Reps. [Nydia Velazquez](#) and [Jose Serrano](#), are asking President Donald Trump to appoint a CEO of response and recovery to help coordinate the government's response. "This person will have the ability to bring all the federal agencies together, cut red tape on the public and private side, help turn the lights back on, get clean water flowing and help bring about recovery for millions of Americans who have gone too long in some of the worst conditions," Schumer said in a statement. He called for the person to have a "direct line" to Trump.

And time is of the essence: Thousands of low-income properties across the island may no longer be able to meet legal standards for housing assistance if power cannot be restored soon, Pro Financial Services' Lorraine Woellert [reports](#). "Due to the ongoing and unique circumstances in Puerto Rico, we're reviewing every available option to assist residents during this difficult time," HUD spokesman Brian Sullivan said.

Presidents tout fundraising: The five living former presidents announced Saturday they'd raised \$31 million in private funds from over 80,000 donors to help hurricane recovery in Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico and other areas. ME will admit to having Lin-Manuel Miranda's [benefit song](#) stuck in his head.

WELCOME TO MONDAY! I'm your host Anthony Adragna, and Andeavor's Stephen Brown was first to identify Rep. [Chris Stewart](#) as the author of Elizabeth Smart's book. For today: How many states have just one congressman? Send your tips, energy gossip and comments to aadragna@politico.com, or follow us on Twitter [@AnthonyAdragna](#), [@Morning_Energy](#) and [@POLITICOPro](#).

ON TAP THIS WEEK — PRUITT'S LATEST DIRECTIVE: The timing isn't exactly clear yet, but look for EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt to issue a directive limiting scientists who

receive agency research grants from being able to serve on its various advisory boards. "If we have individuals that are on those boards that are receiving money from the agency, sometimes going back years and years to the tune of literally tens of millions of dollars, over time, that to me causes questions on the independence and the veracity of the transparency of the recommendations that are coming our way," Pruitt said in [an interview](#) posted Friday by the Heritage Foundation's Daily Signal. It's unclear if the same restrictions would apply to scientists that receive funding from industry groups regulated by EPA.

Pruitt's view on environmentalism: "True environmentalism from my perspective is using natural resources that God has blessed us with to feed the world, to power the world with the sensitivity that future generations cultivate, to harvest, to be respectful good stewards, good managers of our natural resources, to bequeath those natural resources for the next generation."

WORTH A READ: The New York Times [looks at](#) how the arrival of Nancy Beck, a former American Chemistry Council executive, at EPA has led to weaker chemical regulation that may result in the "underestimation of the potential risks to human health and the environment." Beck returned from the private sector in May after receiving an ethics waiver and began pressing right away for changes to chemical regulations long-sought by industry. "It was a clear demonstration this administration has been captured by the industry," said Elizabeth Southerland, an Office of Water employee who retired in July.

EPA's eyebrow-raising response: "No matter how much information we give you, you would never write a fair piece. The only thing inappropriate and biased is your continued fixation on writing elitist clickbait trying to attack qualified professionals committed to serving their country," Liz Bowman, a spokeswoman for the agency who worked at the American Chemistry Council before joining the administration, [said in an email](#) to the newspaper.

CLIMATE DATA PUSH GROWS: Seventeen cities around the U.S., including New Orleans, Atlanta and Boston, are now hosting climate change data that EPA has removed from its website, Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel announced. "While the Trump administration buries their heads deeper in the sand when it comes to climate change, local leaders from across the country continue to confront the challenge head-on," he said. Chicago wants to expand [its site](#) to include an open-sourced repository of new scientific research.

ARE YOU A YES PERSON OR A NOPR-SON? If you have any thought on the Energy Department's grid resilience pricing proposal, you're just about out of time. FERC set a deadline on initial comments for today — less than a month after the rule was filed with regulators. The deadline for reply comments is Nov. 7, two weeks from Tuesday. If you've misplaced FERC's list of questions, [here it is](#).

Days for FERC to take a "final action": 49

MANY A TARGET: The Homeland Security Department and the FBI issued a joint [warning](#) about a sophisticated hacking campaign that has targeted the energy, nuclear, water, aviation and manufacturing sectors. The targets include both governments and other organizations. Although the alert, issued late last week, doesn't identify the nationality of the attackers, it does reflect a

Symantec report from last month where the company found similarities between those attackers and a campaign that U.S. officials tied to Russia.

"This campaign comprises two distinct categories of victims: staging and intended targets. The initial victims are peripheral organizations such as trusted third party suppliers with less secure networks," the joint DHS-FBI report states. "The threat actor uses the staging targets' networks as pivot points and malware repositories when targeting their final intended victims. The ultimate objective of the cyber threat actors is to compromise organizational networks."

**** A message from Chevron:** When an endangered butterfly was found near a Chevron refinery, we protected the habitat and still plant the only thing they eat—buckwheat. Watch the video: <http://politi.co/2gyQXsp> **

TWO HOUSE BILLS OF NOTE: Lawmakers are expected to vote on two bills of interest to ME readers this week. One, H.R. 732 (115), would bar federal agencies from requiring defendants to donate money to outside groups as part of federal government settlements. The other, H.R. 469 (115), would place various limitations on the use of federal consent decrees that frequently require new regulatory actions. The House Rules Committee meets today at 5 p.m. to consider how to structure debate on both bills.

SECOND TIME'S THE CHARM? After winning the support of Sen. Joni Ernst for Trump's pick to run the EPA air office, the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee will try again on Wednesday to move a host of nominees. On deck is the highly controversial selection of Bill Wehrum to run the air office and Michael Dourson's selection for EPA chemicals chief, as well as the less contentious picks of David Ross as head of the EPA water office, Matthew Leopold for EPA general counsel, Jeff Baran's re-nomination to the NRC and Paul Trombino's selection to be administrator of the FHWA.

CELEBRATION FROM BIOFUEL BACKERS: Pruitt's letter Thursday making major concessions on the Renewable Fuel Standard led to sighs of relief from biofuel backers but frustration from oil refiners, Pro's Eric Wolff reports. "[Pruitt] didn't kick tires on changing the RFS, he tried to take a baseball bat to the program, and the response was matching and in response to, from a magnitude perspective, to the initial foul," Brooke Coleman, head of the industry lobby group Advanced Biofuels Business Council, said.

That's not how refiners felt: "Some Midwesterners cannot accept any premise that the RFS could be improved. As a result, their overreaction included everything from holds on confirmations to even more personal threats launched at the White House and EPA," one refining source told Eric.

Help wanted: Meanwhile, Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf sent Trump a letter Friday asking him to take steps to help Northeast refiners deal with the high costs associated with compliance credits, known as RINs. "I specially request that you ask Administrator Pruitt to waive the renewable volume obligation for Northeast refiners until or unless the market prices deflate," Wolf wrote.

PRUITT VISITS NEBRASKA: Continuing his state visits, Pruitt stopped by Nebraska Friday where he met with Gov. Pete Ricketts and other officials to discuss the agency's efforts to revamp the Waters of the U.S. regulation. "In his work of rolling back the old rule and writing a new one, Pruitt is returning power to the states and protecting the rights of our farm families and small business owners," Ricketts said. Afterwards, Pruitt hit up Omaha where he met with officials from railroad giant Union Pacific about the agency's agenda.

BLM ANNOUNCES SAGE GROUSE PUBLIC MEETINGS: The Bureau of Land Management will hold a series of public meetings in Idaho, Colorado, California and Oregon in November on potential changes to plans for protecting greater sage grouse habitat. The meetings will be in [Idaho](#) on Nov. 2, 6 and 7, in [California](#) on Nov. 3, in [Oregon](#) on Nov. 7, and in [Colorado](#) on Nov. 9. The sage grouse plans involve 10 Western states, so BLM may announce more meetings in the weeks ahead and it will accept emailed comments through either Nov. 27 or 15 days after the last public meeting, whichever is later. The agency created the plans in 2015 under an agreement with states in lieu of listing the bird as either endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act but re-opened them at Zinke's bidding.

WESTERN VALUES PROJECT SUES FOR SAGE GROUSE RECORDS: The Montana-based Western Values Project, which focuses on public land issues, is [suing](#) Interior to release copies of emails between Zinke, members of his sage grouse review team and oil and gas groups to determine the extent to which they were able to influence the agency's decision to reshape the sage grouse plans and guidance on energy development.

ME FIRST -- INTERIOR BEEFS UP BLM, BOEM SENIOR STAFF OVER NOMINEE DELAY: The Interior Department last week quietly assigned a senior political staffer to lend an extra hand overseeing the agencies that are key to carrying out the administration's energy goals until the Senate confirms Joe Balash as secretary for land and minerals management.

In [Secretarial order No. 3357](#) dated Oct. 17, Deputy Secretary David Bernhardt said there is a "an immediate need for additional executive level supervision and direction" over the Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement and the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement and assigned Aurelia Skipworth, the deputy assistant secretary for fish, wildlife and parks; to help out.

Balash's nomination easily cleared the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee in September with a voice vote but Interior spokeswoman Heather Swift in an emailed statement accused Senate Democrats of dragging their feet on the nomination. "Rather than let that slow our progress, we are utilizing team members across the bureaus to move the ball forward for the American people," she said. In related news, Virginia Johnson, an Interior beachhead staffer and principle deputy secretary for fish wildlife and parks in July left for a job at the USO, according to her [LinkedIn](#) profile.

HANNITY V. INGRAHAM ON SOLAR TARIFFS: Whether to slap cheap imported solar equipment with tariffs has split Laura Ingraham and fellow Fox News host Sean Hannity, Pro's Eric Wolff [reports](#). Ingraham said on her radio show Friday that "Chinese manipulation of the solar market has hurt U.S. manufacturers" and urged Trump to hit back with steep tariffs. But

Hannity has made an ad warning that Suniva and SolarWorld are trying to manipulate U.S. trade laws and pointing out that both had foreign owners. "American taxpayers should not have to bail out one foreign company so another foreign company can get a payout," he said.

NO MINCING WORDS HERE: Russian President Vladimir Putin bashed efforts by some European nations, Poland and Denmark chief among them, to block two Russian gas pipelines, POLITICO Europe's David M. Herszenhorn reports. "Attempts are being made to create obstacles in the way of our efforts to forge new energy routes - South Stream and Nord Stream - even though diversifying logistics is economically efficient, beneficial for Europe and promotes its security," Putin said in a speech at the Valdai Discussion Club.

SIGNED, SEALED, DELIVERED: The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management approved a key step of Deepwater Wind's 144-megawatt Revolution Wind project that will enable the company to collect the biological and wind performance data it needs to file a construction plan, Pro's Esther Whieldon reports. Massachusetts is slated to pick the winning contracts in July, and Deepwater Wind has said it could bring the project online by the end of 2023.

FRIESS WON'T RULE OUT BARRASSO CHALLENGE: Wealthy GOP megadonor Foster Friess tells Fox Business he won't raise money to pick off Republican incumbents, but he's not ruling out launching a bid to unseat Wyoming Sen. John Barrasso. "Better messaging, return of civility and untangling the health care logjam are my motivation; not that I am hell bent on replacing John Barrasso," he said.

Not amused: During an appearance on "Fox News Sunday," Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell referred to Steve Bannon and others not backing GOP incumbents as "specialists at nominating people who lose, and that isn't going to help President Trump achieve his agenda," POLITICO's Rebecca Morin reports.

QUICK HITS

- E.P.A. Cancels Talk on Climate Change by Agency Scientists. New York Times.
- Governor Brown Signs Order Allowing EPA to Help With Cleanup of Hazardous Waste from North Bay Fires. NBC Bay Area.
- OKC firm secures \$200 million contract to restore power in Puerto Rico. News OK.
- U.S.-backed forces take Syria's largest oil field from Islamic State. Chicago Tribune.
- The World's Next Environmental Disaster. Wall Street Journal.

HAPPENING THIS WEEK

MONDAY

1:00 p.m. — Press call with PJM president and CEO, contact:

kassandra.meholick@edelman.com.

5:00 p.m. — House Rules Committee holds a hearing on various bills, H-313

6:00 p.m. — "Can Fossil Fuel Companies Be Held Liable for Climate Change?" Columbia Law School, Jerome Greene Hall, Room 104, 435 West 116th Street, New York, NY

TUESDAY

1:00 p.m. — Lawmakers host "Half-Earth Day" celebration and conversation with E.O. Wilson, U.S. Capitol Building Visitor Center: Congressional Auditorium and Atrium

2:30 p.m. — "Reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act: Fisheries Science," Senate Commerce Coast Guard Subcommittee, Russell 253

4:00 p.m. — "Crude Nation: How Oil Riches Ruined Venezuela," Cato Institute, 1000 Massachusetts Ave. NW

6:00 p.m. — 'Flint' viewing and panel discussion with Rep. Dan Kildee, U.S. Capitol Visitors Center Auditorium

WEDNESDAY

10:00 a.m. — "Empowering State Based Management Solutions for Greater Sage Grouse Recovery," House Natural Resources Committee, Longworth 1324

10:00 a.m. — Senate Environment and Public Works Committee holds a business meeting and hearing on "The Wildfire Prevention and Mitigation Act of 2017," Dirksen 406

2:00 p.m. — House Natural Resources subcommittee hearing on American Indian lands bill, House Natural Resources Indian, Insular, and Alaska Native Affairs Subcommittee, Longworth 1324

THURSDAY

10:00 a.m. — "Examine Cyber Technology and Energy Infrastructure," Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Dirksen 366

10:00 a.m. — "Improving Oversight of the Regulatory Process: Lessons from State Legislatures," Senate Homeland Security Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management, Dirksen 342

12:00 p.m. — Natural Gas Roundtable hosts USTDA's Energy Sector Worldwide Team Lead, Carl B. Kress, University Club, 1135 16th Street, NW

THAT'S ALL FOR ME!

**** A message from Chevron:** This is a story about DOERS, butterflies, and buckwheat. In '75, the endangered El Segundo Blue butterfly was found near a Chevron refinery. We protected the habitat and planted the only thing they eat—buckwheat. We're still planting and keeping an eye on our littlest neighbor. Watch the video: <http://politi.co/2gyQXsp> **

To view online:

<https://www.politicopro.com/tipsheets/morning-energy/2017/10/senate-takes-up-massive-disaster-aid-package-today-025166>

Stories from POLITICO Pro

Cornyn extracts Trump pledge of Texas hurricane aid [Back](#)

By Sarah Ferris | 10/19/2017 05:47 PM EDT

The Senate's No. 2 Republican today endorsed a \$36.5 billion disaster aid package, resolving one of the standoffs holding up the bill.

A spokesman for Sen. [John Cornyn](#) (R-Texas) said Cornyn will support the House-passed aid package, [H.R. 2266 \(115\)](#), after personal assurances from the White House that more money for Texas will be delivered next month.

"The president strongly indicated his preference that a second appropriations request, which will come in November, will include funds specifically to aid Texans recovering from Harvey," Cornyn told Texas reporters in a call.

The [House package](#) includes nearly \$19 billion to replenish FEMA, largely intended for emergency efforts in Puerto Rico. It would also restore the National Flood Insurance Program's borrowing capacity to ensure all hurricane victims, including in Texas and Florida, receive timely payments.

But just two days ago, Cornyn said the package was "inadequate" for his home state, which was recently slammed by Hurricane Harvey.

Texas lawmakers in Congress have been pressured by Gov. Greg Abbott to seek more funding — and fast. After the House denied the Texas delegation's \$18.7 billion request for Harvey-specific aid last week, Abbott blasted the representatives for lacking a "[stiff spine](#)."

Without a cash infusion, the National Flood Insurance Program's claims funding would run dry on Oct. 23, a FEMA spokesman told POLITICO this week.

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Puerto Rico housing subsidies at risk as blackout drags on [Back](#)

By Lorraine Woellert | 10/20/2017 06:42 PM EDT

Puerto Rico could lose funding for thousands of low-income housing units if power to the island isn't restored soon.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development, which subsidizes 203 housing projects on the island, is prohibited by law from providing Section 8 assistance to buildings that aren't "decent, safe, and sanitary."

As an electrical blackout drags on a month after Hurricane Maria, it's likely that fewer properties will be able to meet that standard, and the agency is being forced to review its options.

"Due to the ongoing and unique circumstances in Puerto Rico, we're reviewing every available option to assist residents during this difficult time," HUD spokesman Brian Sullivan said in a statement. About 20,000 housing units in 203 projects on the island receive project-based subsidies to provide affordable housing.

The agency has long interpreted "decent, safe and sanitary" housing to include continuous running water and electricity. In Puerto Rico, evaluating the livability of HUD's subsidized units has been slow going, and it's too soon to know how much damage has been done.

Meanwhile, property owners and managers say they're shipping generators to the island and sending couriers armed with cash to pay for gas to keep the machines running.

The Institute of Real Estate Management, an affiliate of the National Association of Realtors, whose members manage nearly 40 percent of federally assisted housing units, is urging HUD Secretary Ben Carson to keep the subsidies flowing.

"Penalizing these properties and, more importantly, these tenants, is simply adding more hardship to this community," the group wrote in a [letter](#) to HUD. "Without the federal portion of the rent, many of these properties will simply fail, and this stock of affordable housing will be lost."

After Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans, some subsidies to ruined housing projects were converted to rental vouchers, which were distributed to individuals in need. Many of those low-income households pulled up roots and moved away from the city. In Puerto Rico, there are far fewer, if any, places for families to go.

"It's not only an invitation for people to leave the island, it means you're going to displace that many more families," said Mike Ford, NAR's point person on Puerto Rico. "Maybe it's not what we would call safe and decent housing in Mississippi or Arkansas, but it's better to have a house with a roof over your head in a rainstorm than be outside."

Colin Wilhelm contributed to this report.

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Biofuel backers claim victory in EPA battle [Back](#)

By Eric Wolff | 10/20/2017 05:37 PM EDT

Biofuels backers were breathing a sigh of relief on Friday after EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt backed away from changes to the Renewable Fuels Standard, a reversal that left oil refiners frustrated.

Pruitt [acceded](#) to demands from Sen. [Joni Ernst](#) that he publicly promise not to pursue plans to change the biofuel program rules — changes that had been sought by oil refiners who have long complained about the costs of implementing the program that many see as a giveaway to the corn states.

Pruitt's letter to Ernst, Sen. [Chuck Grassley](#) and five other Midwestern Republican senators delivered what they'd asked for: A promise not to expand the group of companies required to comply with the program, to keep the biodiesel volume requirements at levels proposed in July, to not alter the policy that strips RFS credits from exported ethanol, and to explore allowing year-round sale of gasoline with 15 percent ethanol nationwide.

The quick reversal by Pruitt — at the [direction](#) of President Donald Trump — showed the influence of the biofuel lobby, corn growers and farm-state lawmakers to scuttle changes in the decade-old policy sought by the energy industry.

"This was a basket of bad ideas for biofuels," said Brooke Coleman, head of the industry lobby group Advanced Biofuels Business Council. "And there's no way that we could have any other response than to take this approach. [Pruitt] didn't kick tires on changing the RFS, he tried to take a baseball bat to the program, and the response was matching and in response to, from a magnitude perspective, to the initial foul."

The push by the senators, as well as Midwestern governors, "made a huge difference in this matter," said Michael McAdams, head of the Advanced Biofuels Association. "In addition, the collective unity of the entire biofuels industry, including those who distribute and market these fuels, made a significant impression on the importance and support for the RFS program."

But oil refiners who have said the high cost of biofuel credits, called Renewable Identification Numbers, was costing them hundreds of millions of dollars, lamented the power of the biofuels lobby and the corn-belt lawmakers.

"The [Pruitt] letter is a result of political pressure applied by Midwestern politicians," said one

refining source. "Some Midwesterners cannot accept any premise that the RFS could be improved. As a result, their overreaction included everything from holds on confirmations to even more personal threats launched at the White House and EPA."

The unified and vociferous campaign by the biofuels industry in attacking the proposal that would have lowered biodiesel volume mandates surprised some in the refining industry, as well as the political staff in the EPA, sources tell POLITICO.

The Trump administration's embrace of the oil industry had raised refiners' hopes that it could have the best opportunity in years for significant RFS changes, and refining giant Valero Energy, along with a group of Pennsylvania companies, believed they would get relief from what they considered an onerous program.

But Grassley took to the Senate floor to blast Pruitt's biofuel plans as a "betrayal" of Trump's promises to protect ethanol, and he arranged a call with Trump and Pruitt that led to the meeting in his office with Pruitt and Ernst as well as [Deb Fischer](#) (Neb.), [John Thune](#) (S.D.), [Ben Sasse](#) (Neb.), [Pat Roberts](#) (Kan.) and [Mike Rounds](#) (S.D.). Following that meeting, Ernst demanded the public statement from Pruitt, and said she would withhold her support for Bill Wehrum, who was nominated to run the agency's air office, forcing a delay in the Environment and Public Works Committee's vote until next week.

Ernst spokeswoman Brook Hougesson told POLITICO, "Now that Sen. Ernst has received the assurances that the EPA will support the spirit and the letter of the RFS, she will support Mr. Wehrum."

Valero was disappointed its efforts to change the program had been shot down by the fierce political opposition.

"These senators have intervened in a regulatory process, and the proposals and concepts in the letter address RFS implementation problems to which these senators have offered no constructive solutions," Valero said in a statement. "The only unifying principle of their bullying opposition seems to be a desire to maintain the status quo at all costs and to protect windfall profits associated with unregulated trading of renewable identification numbers, or RINs. Their position advances neither the goals nor the efficient implementation of the RFS, and places U.S. manufacturing jobs at risk."

But in a statement, the White House made clear that Trump remained fully behind the biofuels program.

"President Donald J. Trump promised rural America that he would protect the Renewable Fuel Standard, and has never wavered from that promise," spokeswoman Kelly Love said in a statement. "The president has had constructive conversations with several key officials about the RFS over the past week, and he understands their concerns. The Trump administration will protect the RFS and ensure that our Nation's hardworking farmers continue to fuel America."

One energy executive said the biofuel backers were victorious because they were unified in their

support for the RFS, while Republicans, the oil industry, and even the refiners were not on the same page.

"The ethanol boys won this round, no doubt, but at a pretty high cost," said Stephen Brown, vice president for federal government affairs for Andeavor. "The refining industry is anything but united on the RFS beyond a sunset as individual companies have each made investments and honed mitigation strategies to comply with the statute. As those investment decisions become increasingly operationally embedded, the industry will continue to splinter on the suite of RFS issues."

But some producers are still wary of Pruitt's pledge in his Thursday letter, and they note that he promised to release a final rule in which none of the mandatory volumes will be less than he proposed in July. For some producers, those volumes were already too low.

"There's some work to do here," Coleman said. "We won't know until the rule is done. And we recognize it's an ongoing rulemaking, it's not like they're going or republish the rule, they've said what they can say. The final rule really matters."

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Solar tariff fight pits Ingraham against Hannity [Back](#)

By Eric Wolff | 10/20/2017 03:53 PM EDT

Conservative talk radio host Laura Ingraham urged President Donald Trump to impose tariffs on solar equipment imports today — rebutting the argument by Fox News host Sean Hannity that such tariffs would be a bailout to two foreign-owned companies in the U.S.

"Chinese manipulation of the solar market has hurt U.S. manufacturers," Ingraham said on [her show](#) while interviewing Matt Card, an executive with Suniva, one of the companies that brought the trade case seeking tariffs on imported solar panels.

"This is where Trump fulfills his promises that he made on the campaign trail to stand up for American manufacturing by using current U.S. law that other presidents basically didn't pay that much attention to," Ingraham said.

But most of the industry opposes tariffs, and solar installers have enlisted Hannity to urge Trump not to implement trade barriers. He made [an ad](#) saying the two companies were trying to manipulate U.S. trade laws, and pointed out that both had foreign owners. "American taxpayers should not have to bail out one foreign company so another foreign company can get a payout," he says in the ad.

Suniva, which is backed by a Chinese solar company, and SolarWorld, a U.S. subsidiary of a

German company, last month won a 4-0 decision from the U.S. International Trade Commission saying that they had been harmed by cheap solar panel imports.

WHAT'S NEXT: The ITC will hold a hearing to discuss tariff options next week.

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BOEM approves key step for Deepwater Wind-Tesla offshore wind project [Back](#)

By Esther Whieldon | 10/20/2017 04:17 PM EDT

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management has approved a key step for Deepwater Wind's 144-megawatt Revolution Wind project proposed off the coast of Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

In a letter dated Oct. 12 and posted by the agency today, BOEM said it approved Deepwater's "site assessment plan" to install a meteorological buoy at the site of the project. The buoy will give the company the biological and wind performance data it needs to file a construction plan.

Deepwater has held a lease for the area since 2013 and in July announced plans with Tesla to combine the wind project with a 40 megawatt-hour onshore battery in their bid to win a long-term clean-energy contract in Massachusetts.

Deepwater late last year brought the nation's first offshore wind project online — the 30-megawatt Block Island project off the Rhode Island coast.

WHAT'S NEXT: Massachusetts is slated to pick the winning contracts in July, and Deepwater Wind has said it could bring the project online by the end of 2023.

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