

To: Jackson, Ryan[jackson.ryan@epa.gov]
From: POLITICO Pro Energy Whiteboard
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Subject: DOJ environment nominee tussles with Feinstein on climate change

By Alex Guillén

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Jeffrey Bossert Clark, President Donald Trump's pick to run the Justice Department's environmental division, declined multiple times today to say whether he thinks greenhouse gases pose a threat to human health or welfare.

At a confirmation hearing today, Clark told Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) that he stands by his past criticism of EPA's 2009 endangerment finding on economic grounds, and he noted that the Supreme Court put the Clean Power Plan on hold last year in part "because it would have worked a fundamental transformation of how the power sector is regulated."

However, Clark declined to answer Feinstein's questions about whether he agrees with the scientific consensus that human activity is the main driver of climate change. Clark said his "personal views aren't relevant" and such issues are a matter for EPA and other agencies.

"I want to know what your beliefs are and I think we're entitled to it before I cast my vote," replied Feinstein, the top Democrat on the Judiciary Committee.

"What my beliefs are is fidelity to the law and then respect for the facts as they're found by the agency," Clark said. "If an agency makes a decision that's within the bounds of the Constitution and within the bounds of statutory law ... then that's owed a defense."

Feinstein then asked whether Clark believes climate change poses economic risks.

"I have seen economic studies that indicate that climate change could cause negative effects, yes," he replied.

WHAT'S NEXT: The Judiciary Committee will vote on Clark's nomination sometime after it returns from next week's Independence Day recess.

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