

To: Jackson, Ryan[jackson.ryan@epa.gov]
From: Morning Energy
Sent: Mon 8/14/2017 2:07:09 PM
Subject: POLITICO's Morning Energy: Pruitt's commitment to transparency questioned — N.Y. mulls carbon price options — Manchin-to-DOE trial balloon rises again

By Anthony Adragna | 08/14/2017 10:00 AM EDT

With help from Darius Dixon

A NEW CA-vs.-EPA SHOWDOWN: California Attorney General Xavier Becerra is the latest Democratic official from the Golden State to take on EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt - this time with a public records [lawsuit](#) alleging he has failed to promptly hand over documents related to his ethics arrangements. Becerra filed the suit Friday, Pro's Alex Guillén [reports](#). Pruitt, a prolific litigant challenging the Obama-era EPA, has agreed to stay away from lawsuits over the various rules he challenged in court, such as the Clean Power Plan or Waters of the U.S., although he says he is not barred from working to roll back the rules themselves. Becerra asked for documents outlining Pruitt's "compliance with federal ethics regulations and obligations" as well as agency "policies and procedures for determining who (if anyone) can assume the powers of the Administrator if he is recused or disqualified from participating in a matter."

EPA spokeswoman Liz Bowman said agency staff had reached out twice to Becerra's office to say they were working on a response. "It's unfortunate that California is suing the Agency, draining resources that could be better spent protecting human health and the environment - rather than working with EPA's career staff, as they can gather all the information requested," she said in a statement.

A few hours after Becerra filed his suit, the New York Times dropped a big [report](#) documenting limits on access to EPA - for both the public, press and even agency staff. Citing interviews with 20 current and former staffers, the Times reported that EPA employees now must leave their cellphones before meeting with Pruitt and must have an escort to see the administrator, who is accompanied by his armed security staff even at agency headquarters. ("None of this is true," Bowman told the Times. "It's all rumors.")

Pruitt's tactics aren't just controversial at agency headquarters. He's frequently met with tightly-screened industry groups and opted for interviews with friendly media figures. It was three such closed events in North Dakota that earned Pruitt a rebuke from Republican Sen. [John Hoeven](#). "I think (meetings) should be open," he said, according to [The Bismarck Tribune](#). "I guess I saw no reason not to have it open," he said.

But Pruitt isn't shifting approaches either. He leaned into a brewing controversy over a major federal climate change report blaming human activity for climate change, promising he and his staff would gauge the "accuracy" of its findings. It's a bizarre promise, Pro's Emily Holden [reports](#), given Pruitt's concern over so-called politicization of science and the fact the report has already undergone "rigorous" peer-review by a 14-person committee at the National Academies with 132 pages of suggestions from the reviewers already incorporated into the final version. "It's a much more extensive process than a usual peer review, which does not typically come out

as a paperback book," said Bob Kopp, a lead report author and climate scientist at Rutgers University.

The administrator also dismissed the discussion over the role of human activity in climate change during a Texas radio show last week as "political" and a "wedge issue." "Why aren't we celebrating what we're achieving with respect to CO2 ... why do we continue to engage in this political football?" he said. Multiple science organizations have sought meetings with Pruitt to discuss why he doesn't acknowledge the scientific consensus that human activity is driving climate change.

WELCOME TO MONDAY AND HAPPY AUGUST EVERYONE! I'm your host Anthony Adragna, and hope everyone had a lovely start to August. Thank you to Pro's Alex Guillén, Darius Dixon, Annie Snider and Esther Whieldon for keeping this warm for me while I was away on my honeymoon! Geronimo Energy's Jenny Monson-Miller was first to correctly identify Marguerite Higgins on Friday as the Pulitzer Prize-winning female journalist buried at Arlington Cemetery. For today, in honor of the amazing performance of "42nd Street" I just saw in London: What play holds the record for the longest initial run in history (at over 26,000 and counting)? Send your tips, energy gossip and comments to aadragna@politico.com, or follow us on Twitter [@AnthonyAdragna](https://twitter.com/AnthonyAdragna), [@Morning_Energy](https://twitter.com/Morning_Energy) and [@POLITICOPro](https://twitter.com/POLITICOPro).

NEW YORK'S 'MAJOR STEP' TOWARD CARBON PRICE: New York's grid operator released a hotly-anticipated report Friday finding that the state could support its clean energy goals with minimum costs to consumers by incorporating the social cost of carbon emissions into the its electricity prices, POLITICO New York's Marie J. French reports. NYISO CEO Brad Jones and Public Service Commission Chairman John Rhodes said the document's release marked the first step in a collaborative process to further consider what a carbon price would look like and how it could be implemented. Setting a price on carbon would help incentivize greater investments in renewable energy and more efficient combined-cycle fossil fuel-powered generators while pushing out less-efficient technologies, the report argues.

SECOND TIME'S THE CHARM? White House officials are again titillated by the possibility of luring West Virginia Democratic Sen. Joe Manchin to serve as Energy secretary, a role still currently occupied by Rick Perry, Bloomberg reports. There's high interest because Manchin's seat would be filled by newly-minted GOP Gov. Jim Justice, potentially opening the possibility the Republican-led Senate might be able to pass some form of healthcare reform. ME readers likely remember Manchin interviewed for the slot that went to Perry during the transition though there's some thought Perry could jump the vacant Homeland Security job formerly held by White House Chief of Staff John Kelly. A spokesman for Manchin, for what it's worth, said "Senator Manchin has not had any recent conversations with the Administration about the Secretary of Energy position."

PERRY GOES WEST! Far from the Washington rumor mill, Perry is out in Eastern Oregon later today where he'll tour the Army Corps-operated McNary Lock and Dam in Umatilla. That'll be followed Tuesday by visits to the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory and DOE's Hanford Site. Joining Perry at various points of his trip are Senate Energy ranking member Maria Cantwell, Rep. Dan Newhouse and House Energy and Commerce Chairman Greg Walden.

QUE TAL CON LA VENEZUELA? Vice President Mike Pence is visiting Colombia, Argentina, Chile and Panama during a South American swing this week and senior administration officials expect Venezuela to dominate their talks. One official told reporters on Friday to expect discussion of "economic options, diplomatic options - every tool that's available" to amplify pressure on Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro. One option that's been avoided to date would be placing sanctions on Venezuelan oil imports, something four Republican senators warned last week doing would harm Gulf Coast oil refiners.

All of this comes as Trump himself refused to rule out the U.S. pursuing "a military option" against Venezuela, though Pence downplayed such talk during a press conference Sunday night with Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos. "President Santos and I discussed in some detail additional measure that could be taken to further pressure the regime in Venezuela, economically," Pence said. "We'll continue on this trip and beyond to bring diplomatic pressure to bear." Santos in his remarks stressed any talk of military intervention "shouldn't even be considered."

AND THE BEAT GOES ON: Jeff Holmstead, the former EPA air chief during the George W. Bush administrations whose name briefly popped up as a potential number two at the agency, attended an OMB meeting last week on EPA's proposed Clean Power Plan repeal on behalf of the Electric Reliability Coordinating Council, according records posted by the White House, Pro's Alex Guillén reports in Energy Regulation Watch. Holmstead wasn't available for comment, but his Bracewell colleague Scott Segal said they discussed possible replacements rules, including implementation and enforcement issues, with administration officials who "seemed interested and engaged."

THIS IS... UNUSUAL: The family of West Virginia Republican Gov. Jim Justice has filed a lawsuit against two top Kentucky environmental regulators themselves - not the state of Kentucky for which they work - because they blame the officials for their company's failure to meet reclamation deadlines, the Courier-Journal reports. The lawsuits, filed on behalf of the Kentucky Fuel Corporation, allege the actions of Kentucky Department for Natural Resources Commissioner Allen Luttrell and Deputy Commissioner John D. Small could have cost the company up to \$4.5 million in fines.

STEYER THROWS HIS WEIGHT AROUND: Billionaire environmentalist and Democratic mega-donor Tom Steyer said Saturday he and his organization NextGen America would only support pro-choice candidates for office, POLITICO's Gabriel Debenedetti reports. He also pointedly refused to rule out a run for office - whether that be the presidency or a statewide role in California. "Look, I promise: There is nothing that I would not do in order to have the most impact," he said in an interview on the sidelines of the progressive Netroots Nation conference in Atlanta.

MONIZ PLUCKS DOE STAFFER FOR NEW GROUP: Former Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz has hired Jeanette Pablo away from the Energy Department as the general counsel for his nascent Energy Futures Initiatives. Pablo, who will also be a senior associate with EFI, has spent more than 20 years working in the energy world, including a long stretch with the Tennessee

Valley Authority as well as positions with PNM Resources and American Water Co.. Up until last week she was the acting deputy director for energy systems with DOE's Office of Energy Policy and Systems Analysis.

NEW GIG FOR SCHRODER: Russia's largest oil company, Rosneft, has added former German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder as an "independent director" on its board, POLITICO Europe's Emmet Livingstone [reports](#), citing an official government statement. Chancellor Angela Merkel's predecessor already chairs the shareholders' committee of Nord Stream AG, a gas-pipeline consortium set up to transport Russian gas across the Baltic Sea and into Germany.

MAIL CALL! HOUSE ENTERS SUNIVA FRACAS TOO: Hot on the heels of their Senate colleagues, a bipartisan group of 53 congressmen, led by Reps. [Mark Sanford](#), [Mike Thompson](#), [Pat Meehan](#) and [Matt Cartwright](#), sent a [letter](#) Friday to the International Trade Commission urging it not to grant petitions from Suniva and SolarWorld Americas that would impose solar trade import tariffs. The lawmakers are throwing their weight around ahead of the first public hearing on the petitions Tuesday at which hundreds of solar workers are expected to testify about the impacts the tariffs would have on their jobs.

MOVER, SHAKER: Ciaran Clayton will soon be joining the Nature Conservancy as director of global media relations; she's been working with the Center for American Progress and was previously director for communications with NOAA.

QUICK HITS

- A Legacy of Environmental Racism. [The Intercept](#).
- In Egypt, A Rising Sea - And Growing Worries About Climate Change's Effects. [NPR](#).
- ConocoPhillips launches drilling at a North Slope oil field. [Alaska Dispatch News](#).
- Kuwait to Finish Cleaning Up Oil Spill This Week. [Reuters](#).
- Is Houston Missing the Next Energy Wave? [Houston Chronicle](#).

THAT'S ALL FOR ME!

To view online:

<http://www.politico.com/tipsheets/morning-energy/2017/08/14/pruitts-commitment-to-transparency-questioned-221852>

To change your alert settings, please go to <https://secure.politico.com/settings>

This email was sent to jackson.ryan@epa.gov by: POLITICO, LLC 1000 Wilson Blvd.
Arlington, VA, 22209, USA

Please click [here](#) and follow the steps to unsubscribe.
