

**To:** Dravis, Samantha[dravis.samantha@epa.gov]  
**From:** POLITICO Pro Energy Whiteboard  
**Sent:** Mon 5/1/2017 6:09:07 PM  
**Subject:** Spending bill classifies biomass power as carbon neutral

By Esther Whieldon

05/01/2017 01:55 PM EDT

A fiscal 2017 spending **deal** released by congressional leaders today contains language that would classify electricity generated using biomass as carbon neutral.

The appropriations bill appears to borrow language from a broader energy bill that lawmakers failed to pass last year that would encourage the departments of Agriculture and Energy and the EPA to create policies that identify forest biomass energy as renewable and carbon neutral provided that it "does not cause conversion of forests to non-forest use." Lawmakers have attempted to include language on biomass in prior appropriations bills.

The biomass industry contends it can help the electricity sector reduce overall carbon levels, but some green groups argue that biomass in some cases emits more carbon at the smokestack than coal-fired generation and that planting new trees cannot offset those emissions entirely.

The EPA has not yet defined how it will assess emissions from biomass projects under a proceeding it started in 2011.

**WHAT'S NEXT:** The House and Senate are likely to act quickly this week on the measure.

*To view online:*

<https://www.politicopro.com/energy/whiteboard/2017/05/spending-bill-classifies-biomass-power-as-carbon-neutral-087050>

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**To:** Dravis, Samantha[dravis.samantha@epa.gov]  
**From:** POLITICO Pro  
**Sent:** Fri 4/28/2017 9:30:08 PM  
**Subject:** Sources: EPA expected to leave ethanol volumes in place

By Eric Wolff

04/28/2017 05:16 PM EDT

Industry sources say EPA could send its 2018 proposed biofuel mandates under the Renewable Fuel Standard to the White House for review as soon as Monday, putting the rule on track to meet the November deadline.

Biofuel and refining industry sources in contact with EPA and the White House told POLITICO the proposal will keep the conventional biofuel volume requirement — typically ethanol — at 15 billion gallons, the same level set by the Obama administration for 2017. EPA considers overall fuel consumption forecasts from the Energy Information Administration in its decision, and demand for gasoline is expected to surpass the record level seen last year.

The volume mandates set a decade ago for the RFS set the maximum level at 15 billion gallons.

One source said the volume mandates for advanced biodiesel and advanced cellulosic biofuel would increase slightly from 2017 levels, though other sources said the final numbers were still fluid.

EPA did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The sources cautioned that the timeline for submission to OMB could slip, and that OMB could, as happened under Obama, alter the numbers before the final rule is issued.

Sources also say the EPA's proposed volumes rule will not address the question of which companies should bear the burden of complying with the program.

**WHAT'S NEXT:** OMB will review the rule, possibly making adjustments. In order to remain on schedule to meet the November deadline, EPA must publish the proposal by early June.

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