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From: Bloomberg BNA Environment & Energy
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Subject: First Move: Environment Council in Spotlight • Wehrum Vote This Week? • Senate Winds Blow on Taxes

What you need to know to start your day.

Environment Council in Spotlight • Wehrum Vote This Week? • Senate Winds Blow on Taxes

By [Chuck McCutcheon](#)

Kathleen Hartnett White's Senate confirmation hearing today will focus on her outspoken advocacy of fossil fuels and questioning of human contributions to climate change. The hearing also will spotlight the White House agency she's been asked to lead.

The Council on Environmental Quality coordinates high-level environmental policies and regulations. It's helped presidents since Richard Nixon mesh those policies and regulations across multiple agencies, including the EPA and Interior Department.

President Trump wants the council to do even more. Shortly after taking office, he elevated the authority of CEQ and its chairman to speed up environmental reviews and permitting across agencies. His executive order authorizes the council chairman to decide which projects get the highest priority for expedited review.

The Senate's environment panel also will question Andrew Wheeler, Trump's choice to become EPA's deputy administrator. [Abby Smith](#) is covering.

Senate Democrats may let the EPA's nominee for air chief get an up-or-down vote this week.

Democrats have been upset with the nomination of William Wehrum, Trump's choice to lead the EPA's Office of Air and Radiation, claiming he's too close to industry. But Delaware Sen. Tom Carper, the top Democrat on the Senate environment panel, told [Abby Smith](#) that Democrats may not use the full 30 hours of debate permitted by Senate rules.

A Democratic Senate aide expects a vote late Thursday, before lawmakers leave for the Veterans Day holiday.

House Republicans want to use their sprawling tax plan to scale back the wind production tax credit.

But three Senate Republicans now say they oppose a move to do so—and that appears to boost the tax credit’s chances of remaining intact. Because of widespread Democratic opposition to the tax plan, Republicans can’t afford to lose the backing of many members of their party on the bill.

Other Stories We’re Covering

War-torn Syria has added a new wrinkle to the United Nations climate talks in Bonn by announcing it is joining the Paris climate pact, Dean Scott finds.

The District of Columbia and its water and sewer authority are expected to file a response in court defending a city law governing what kinds of disposable wipes can be flushed down the toilet. Amena H. Sayid is watching.

The European Union’s executive arm is expected to publish proposals today to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation through 2030. The European Commission’s proposals likely will include tighter carbon dioxide emissions limits for private cars sold in the bloc, as well as measures to boost the use of electric vehicles. Stephen Gardner is watching.

Chia seeds, hot peppers, and Mexican squash are among the more than two dozen imported fruits, vegetables, and grains on a watch list for items that exceeded the limits for pesticide residues set by the EPA, according to an FDA report that covers 2015.

A House committee is continuing to work on legislation that would shift some onshore and offshore oil and gas permitting to states. Alan Kovski is covering.

A federal court hearing involving a ban on fracking in the four-state Delaware River Basin halted yesterday for an unexpected reason: One of the lawyers fainted. Delaware River Basin Commission attorney Kenneth H. Warren recovered consciousness quickly and told judges that he had a medical condition that wasn’t serious, but the court postponed oral arguments. Leslie A. Pappas is following.

Around the Web

Commuters drive amid heavy smog in New Delhi.
Prakash Singh/AFP/Getty Images

- New Delhi’s severe air pollution has returned, prompting panic in some areas of India’s capital.
- Enerkem Inc. has received the EPA’s backing to be the first municipal waste-to-cellulosic ethanol plant with approval to sell in the U.S.
- Financial services company HSBC says it will provide \$100 billion in sustainable financing and investment by 2025 to fight climate change and

support sustainable growth.

Today's Events

- **9:45 a.m. • Nominations** • Senate commerce panel considers nominees for NASA administrator and Commerce Department environmental post.
- **10 a.m. • Geoengineering** • House science panels on environment and energy hold hearing on geoengineering research to use technology to address climate change.
- **5 p.m. • Solar** • Energy Department official discusses solar energy's potential in Cambridge, Mass. Video to be posted by Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Quote of the Day

"One is the loneliest number."

—Delaware's Tom Carper, the Senate environment panel's top Democrat, tweeting in reaction to the news that Syria will sign the Paris Agreement, leaving the U.S. as the only outlier if it leaves the climate pact.

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