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From: POLITICO Pro Energy Whiteboard
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Subject: Pruitt to announce policy to limit science advisers

By Emily Holden

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EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt is expected to announce a new policy on Tuesday to limit the advisory roles of scientists who have received agency research grants, according to an invitation to the event obtained by POLITICO.

The change, which Pruitt suggested two weeks ago, could exclude scores of scientists who have received EPA funding in the past from serving on independent boards that provide advice to the administrator.

Pruitt has said he questions "the independence and the veracity and the transparency" of recommendations from scientists who have had EPA grants.

Critics say the change would allow industry-financed scientists to control advice given to the agency on a range of environmental protection issues.

"Such a move bans some independent scientists from providing scientific advice while giving those with conflicts a free pass," wrote Michael Halpern, deputy director of the Union of Concerned Scientists' Center for Science and Democracy. He said about half of board members have had EPA grants.

The agency has invited conservative political allies, including those affiliated with the CO2 coalition, a group formed in 2015 that dispute mainstream climate science and touts the "important contribution made by carbon dioxide to our lives and the economy."

Pruitt will make the formal announcement at EPA headquarters at 2 p.m., as was first reported by E&E News.

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