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ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT UPDATE

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ENERGY AND CLIMATE DEBATE

Congress came to a halt early last week as members mourned the loss of their colleague Senator Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ) who passed away last Monday. Following the Senator's funeral on Wednesday, the Senate considered the Farm Bill on Thursday, voting 75-22 to invoke cloture. The chamber will vote on final passage today. Unlike last year, it appears House leadership will find the time for the Farm Bill in the next few weeks. Representatives Marcy Kaptur (D-OH) and Bruce Braley (D-IA), along with 11 Democratic cosponsors, introduced H.R. 2290, the Rural Energy Investment Act. The bill would provide \$1.3 billion in mandatory funding to Farm Bill energy programs over the next five years. While the House is not expected to vote on the measure, it does provide an important marker for Agriculture Department energy programs as the chamber works toward floor debate on the bill. A copy of the Rural Energy Investment Act is attached.

The Senate will next take up immigration and student loan issues; the House will consider its counterparts after the Senate wraps up their bills. Both chambers will continue to work on appropriations with the House acting more quickly. The House Armed Services Committee considered and approved the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014 on Wednesday; several amendments related to energy, including biofuels, were added.

Congress is expected to consider energy legislation and nominations between the July 4 and August recesses. Issues including Shaheen-Portman, a handful of hydropower bills, and the nominations of Gina McCarthy to be Environmental Protection Agency Administrator and Allison Macfarlane to continue to serve as Nuclear Regulatory Commission Chairman are on the docket. The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee plans to host a hearing next month to examine the prices of gasoline and other fuels.

Off the Hill, the Department of Agriculture is expected to announce a new enrollment window for the 9005 Advanced Biofuels Program, a program created under the 2008 Farm bill that provides payments to advanced biofuels producers. Applications are accepted for the coming fiscal year in October, so the new enrollment window will allow advanced biofuels producers to participate for

the remaining two quarters of FY13. In the most recent quarterly payment in mid-May, the USDA distributed approximately \$14 million to biofuels producers.

Secretary of Interior Sally Jewell announced June 6 the department will extend the public comment period for the recent proposed rule on fracking on public lands by 60 days; comments will be accepted through late August.

On Friday, Southern California Edison announced it will officially close its nuclear power plant in San Onofre. The plant, which has been offline since January 2012, had been a top issue for Senate Environment and Public Works Chairman Barbara Boxer (D-CA). Two weeks ago, she asked the Justice Department to investigate operations to see if the company had misled shareholders, and last week, she requested 70,000 documents related to the plant during the consideration of Dr. Macfarlane's nomination.

The U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change began another round of climate talks in Bonn, Germany on June 3; the discussions will conclude on Friday.

CONGRESS

CRS 113th Congress Energy Report Released

The Congressional Research Service released its report [Energy Policy: 113th Congress Issues](#) May 30. The report identified policy goals, discussed the role of energy policy in the 2012 presidential election, and highlighted energy-related legislation. Energy policy goals included stabilizing the oil and gas markets, creating natural gas pipeline infrastructure, disposing nuclear radioactive waste, and replacing conventional energy resources.

McKinley Coal Ash Bill Introduced

Representative David McKinley (R-WV) introduced H.R. 2218, the Coal Residuals Reuse and Management Act of 2013, on June 3. The bill, similar to legislation introduced by the congressman in past sessions, would establish a state-level coal ash management program. Three days later, the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Environment and the Economy approved the bill by a voice vote with no amendments offered. Ranking Member Paul Tonko (D-NY) criticized the legislation, saying it does not properly address environmental and public health concerns.

Moniz, Poneman Meet with KY Members

Department of Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz and Deputy Secretary Daniel Poneman met with Senators Mitch McConnell (R-KY) and Rand Paul (R-KY) and Representative Ed Whitfield (R-KY) June 4 to discuss the department's facility in Paducah, KY. The members advocated for a long-term plan for the facility to create economic stability in the area.

Boxer on McCarthy, Macfarlane

Senate Environment and Public Works Chairman Barbara Boxer (D-CA) discussed June 4 the statuses of the nominations of Gina McCarthy to be Environmental Protection Agency Administrator and Allison Macfarlane to continue serving as Nuclear Regulatory Commission Chairman. Senate Democrats are pushing for McCarthy's nomination to move as hastily as possible, while, Chairman Macfarlane's nomination has been slowed until she shares documents on the San Onofre nuclear facility with Chairman Boxer.

NDA Markup Considers Energy

The House Armed Services Committee marked up [H.R. 1960](#), the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014, on June 5 and considered several energy amendments introduced by Representative Mike Conaway (R-TX). The first amendment would restrict biofuels procurement until these fuels are cost-competitive with traditional fuels or until sequestration is lifted; it was approved. A second amendment, also agreed to by a voice vote, would require congressional authorization for military construction of biofuels refineries. The third amendment would exempt the Department of Defense from Section 526 fuel purchasing requirements. Representative Doug Lamborn (R-CO) introduced an amendment to stop the Defense Department from procuring electric vehicles, but it failed.

Democratic Letter on OMB Delays Sent

Senators Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), Tom Harkin (D-IA), Ben Cardin (D-MD), and Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), along with Representatives Henry Waxman (D-CA) and Ed Markey (D-MA) sent a [letter](#) to Office of Management and Budget Director Sylvia Burwell June 5, advocating for the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs to finish the reviews of several energy and environment regulations. The letter cited 14 Environmental Protection Agency rules that have been under review for more than 90 days and nine Department of Energy rules that have been considered for more than 120 days.

Congressmen Ask President to Talk Climate with Xi Jinping

The Co-Chairs of the Bicameral Task Force on Climate Change sent a [letter](#) to President Obama June 5 asking him to discuss joint action on climate issues with Chinese President Xi Jinping at the leaders' meeting June 7 and 8. The group, which includes Representatives Henry Waxman (D-CA) and Ed Markey (D-MA) and Senators Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) and Ben Cardin (D-MD), urged the President to propose that China support an international proposal to reduce use of hydrofluorocarbons currently backed by the U.S., Canada, and Mexico.

RFS Blend Wall Hearing Held

The House Oversight and Government Reform Subcommittee on Energy Policy, Health Care, and Entitlements held a hearing June 5 to examine the anticipated "blend wall" as part of the RFS. Environmental Protection Agency Office of Transportation and Air Quality Director Christopher Grundler said the agency is considering public comments on standards to manage the blend wall, and these standards will be released sometime this summer. Representative Jim Jordan (R-OH) advocated that the agency create a strong definition of harm when reaching a decision.

McCarthy Pushes Senate Approval of Keystone XL

House Majority Whip Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) published an op-ed [Keystone Deserves a Vote](#) in the National Review Online June 5, advocating for the Senate to hold a vote on the approval of the Keystone XL pipeline. Representative McCarthy believes a bill that green lights the project would pass the Senate.

Draft Nuclear Waste Bill Public Comments Released

The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee released 2,000 public comments to a draft nuclear waste management bill on June 5. The bill was written by Senators Ron Wyden (D-OR), Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), and Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and would create a nuclear waste administration as well as a consent-based siting approach. Public comments were mixed with some questioning the attempt following the Yucca Mountain proposal breakdown while others urged the legislation to comply with the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982.

Senate Banking Approves Hochberg

The Senate Banking Committee voted June 6 on the nomination of Fred Hochberg to be President of the Export-Import Bank of the United States. Hochberg was approved overwhelmingly on a vote of 20-2. His nomination will now be sent to the full Senate for approval.

Fourth RFS White Paper Released

The House Energy and Commerce Committee released June 7 the fourth in a series of white papers on the Renewable Fuel Standard. The [paper](#) addresses energy policy considerations related to the RFS, including its role in enhancing energy security. Comments will be accepted through June 21.

Bills Introduced

- On June 3, Senators Mark Udall (D-CO) and Susan Collins (R-ME) introduced [S. 1084](#), the Streamlining Energy Efficiency for Schools Act. The bill would promote energy efficiency in schools and would streamline federal energy efficiency initiatives by placing the Department of Energy as the lead on school efficiency measures.
- Representative David McKinley (R-WV) introduced [H.R. 2218](#), the Coal Residuals Reuse and Management Act of 2013. The bipartisan bill, introduced with 35 cosponsors, would create a coal ash management program at the state level.
- On June 4, Representative Doc Hastings (R-WA) introduced [H.R. 2231](#), the Offshore Energy and Jobs Act. The bill would expand exploration and energy production on the Outer Continental Shelf.
- Representative Eliot Engel (D-NY) introduced [H.R. 2242](#), a bill to promote natural gas, flexible fuel, and high-efficiency motor vehicles at the state and local level.
- Representative Tim Walz (D-MN) and four Democratic cosponsors introduced [H.R. 2256](#), a bill to improve the coordination of refinery outages by requiring refineries to report maintenance schedules to the Department of Energy. The bill mirrors S. 1073, introduced by Senators Al Franken (D-MN), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), and John Hoeven (R-ND).
- On June 5, Representatives Gene Green (D-TX), John Culberson (R-TX), and Mike Doyle (D-PA) introduced [H.R. 2267](#), a bill to make the United States exclusively liable for certain damage claims resulting from the inclusion of ethanol in transportation fuel.
- On June 6, Senator John Barrasso (R-WY) introduced [S. 1100](#), the North American Alternative Fuels Act. The bill would repeal Section 526 of the 2007 Energy Independence and Security Act, which prevents the government from purchasing alternative fuels with greater greenhouse gas lifecycle emissions than traditional fuel.
- Senators Michael Bennet (D-CO) and Richard Burr (R-NC) introduced [S. 1103](#), a bill that equalizes the excise tax on liquefied natural gas with the energy equivalent of diesel.
- Representative Cory Gardner (R-CO) introduced [H.R. 2279](#), a bill that would eliminate deadlines under the Solid Waste Disposal Act and the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act for disposing solid waste. The legislation would allow the Environmental Protection Agency to review the Solid Waste Disposal Act and update it every three years.
- Representatives Marcy Kaptur (D-OH) and Bruce Braley (D-IA) introduced [H.R. 2290](#), the Rural Energy Investment Act. The bill would provide approximately \$1.3 billion in mandatory funding to Farm Bill energy programs over the next five years.
- Representative Gary Peters (MI) introduced [H.R. 2298](#), a bill that would require the Secretary of Health and Human Services in conjunction with the Environmental Protection Agency Administrator to study the impact of petroleum coke, a byproduct of oil sands, on public health.

Upcoming Hearings

- On June 10, the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee will meet to vote on the nominations of Penny Pritzker to serve as Commerce Secretary and Anthony Foxx to serve as Transportation Secretary.
- On June 12, the House Science, Space, and Technology Subcommittee on the Environment will hold a hearing to examine new ozone standards.
- On June 13, the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Power will hold a hearing to examine the Department of Energy FY14 budget. Secretary of Energy Ernest Moniz will testify.
- The House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Environment and the Economy will host a hearing to examine the impact of Title I of the Toxic Substances Control Act.
- Senate Energy and Natural Resources Chairman Ron Wyden (D-OR) will address the 24th Annual Energy Efficiency Forum at the National Press Club.

ADMINISTRATION

Federal Group Calculates New Cost of Carbon

A federal interagency working group released its report [*Technical Update on the Social Cost of Carbon for Regulatory Impact Analysis Under Executive Order 12866*](#) May 31 finding that the social and economic costs of CO2 emissions are higher than previously thought. Updated modeling techniques in predicting agricultural productivity, human health effects, and property damages from floods have increased the calculated cost of one ton of CO2 emissions in 2020 from \$26 to \$43, assuming a 3 percent discount rate. Federal agencies will use these updated costs as part of their cost-benefit analyses of new rules and regulations.

US, EU, China Solar Trade Talks

Deputy National Security Adviser for International Affairs Michael Froman announced June 6 that China, the European Union, and the U.S. are engaged in early discussions regarding ongoing solar trade disputes. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Chairman Ron Wyden (D-OR), who has discussed the talks with Froman, stated that they have the goal of leveling the playing field for American solar producers and ending retaliatory Chinese cases. The talks come after the EU announced June 4 that it will impose tariffs on Chinese solar panels.

WH Grid Memo Released

President Obama released a [memo](#) June 7 that directs the Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Energy, and Interior Secretaries to improve the siting and permitting processes for transmission lines in an effort to modernize the electric grid. Secretary of Energy Ernest Moniz is required to create a report on current research on transmission issues and utilizing renewable energy; one part of the report, focusing on western states, will be due in December 2013 while the second part, focusing on the rest of the U.S., will be due in April 2014.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Regional Climate Hubs Announced

Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack announced June 5 that the department will create seven regional climate hubs that, in partnership with agriculture stakeholders, will conduct vulnerability assessments as well as provide regionally appropriate advice on risk management and on climate change adaptation. The hubs were announced alongside several other initiatives, such as a tool for carbon evaluation and management, as part of a federal effort to assist the agriculture industry in adapting to and mitigating the effects of climate change.

RUS Renewable Energy Financing Programs ANPR

Acting Agriculture Under Secretary for Rural Development Doug O'Brien announced June 5 publication of an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to request public comment on expanding renewable energy and project financing programs through the Rural Utilities Service. The service is considering regulatory reforms related to project financing requirements to improve its ability to finance renewable electric infrastructure projects. The agency will host two town hall meetings to discuss the future proposed rulemaking on July 9; comments are due before July 31.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Higgins Named Climate Program Office Director

NOAA's National Centers of Environmental Prediction Acting Director Wayne Higgins was named June 5 to serve as the next director of the agency's Climate Program Office starting July 28. The post has been vacant since previous director Chester Koblinsky stepped down in August 2012. Higgins has published more than 80 peer-review articles and five book chapters, with his research focusing on climate change, extreme weather events, modeling, and weather-climate links.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

DLA Energy Presolicitation Released

The Defense Logistics Agency Energy issued May 31 a [presolicitation](#) for a hydrocarbon biofuel and petroleum diesel fuel blend. The agency requests that the fuels total 1,000,000 gallons between April 2014 and March 2017; the fuels will be delivered to an above ground storage tank in Mechanicsburg, PA. The solicitation period shall begin July 1 and will close after 30 days.

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Microwave Efficiency Standards Finalized

The Department of Energy announced May 31 that it finalized new energy efficiency standards for microwave ovens. The standards, to be implemented in 2016, will reduce the energy consumed in standby mode by both non-convection and convection-based microwave ovens by 75 percent and 51 percent, respectively. These changes will save consumers \$3 billion in energy costs by 2030 and prevent 38 million tons of CO2 emissions over the next 30 years.

Moniz Visits Oak Ridge, Y-12

Secretary of Energy Ernest Moniz visited the Oak Ridge National Laboratory and Y-12 National Security Complex in Tennessee June 3, addressing security concerns at the latter facility. Secretary Moniz said efforts are underway to ensure a situation similar to the July 2012 break-in attempt does not happen again, specifically work surrounding management issues. He then praised work being done by the two facilities.

DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR

Jewell's First Renewable Projects on Public Lands Approved

The Department of Interior approved June 3 three renewable energy projects on public lands. The Midland Solar Project in Nevada is a photovoltaic facility with transmission infrastructure on 76 acres of public land, the Quartzite Solar Project in Arizona is a concentrated solar project on 1,600

acres, and the New York Canyon Geothermal Project will be on 15,000 acres. The projects will total 520 megawatts.

Offshore Wind Auction in July

The Department of Interior announced June 4 that it will hold a competitive lease sale July 31 for areas off the Rhode Island and Massachusetts coastline for offshore wind projects. The area covers close to 165,000 acres, and nine companies will be able to participate in the auction. The federal waters are estimated to have 3.4 GW of generating potential.

Fracking Comment Period Extended

Secretary of Interior Sally Jewell announced June 6 that the comment period for the department's new rule on fracking on public lands would be extended by 60 days. Industry stakeholders and environmentalists had previously asked for additional time to review the rule.

DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY

Energy PLRs Released

The Internal Revenue Service released May 31 several private letter rulings that considered energy taxation issues. These rulings included several on refined coal products, income from hydraulic fracturing, and nuclear power plant decommissioning funds.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

API E15 Brief Filed

The American Petroleum Institute submitted a reply brief to the Supreme Court June 3, saying the court is correct to review the Environmental Protection Agency E15 waiver program. The group said E15 gasoline could be harmful to vehicles whether or not agency directives are followed.

UARG Tells EPA to Propose Power Plant Rule Again

The Utility Air Regulatory Group instructed the Environmental Protection Agency June 3 to re-propose its rule governing carbon dioxide emissions of new power plants after it missed the statutory deadline for finalizing the rule. The UARG, which represents utility companies, argued that because the agency missed the one-year mark on the proposed mid-April rule, the existing rule must be deemed terminated and a new rule must be proposed and receive public comment.

Garbow to be General Counsel

Environmental Protection Agency Deputy General Counsel Avi Garbow was nominated by President Obama June 5 to serve as the agency's General Counsel. Garbow has served as deputy since 2009; he previously worked at several law firms and as a trial attorney in the Divisions of Environmental Crimes and Wildlife and Marine Resources at the Justice Department. The position has been open since former General Counsel Scott Fulton stepped down in January 2013.

Cross-State Air Pollution Briefs Submitted to Supreme Court

The Department of Justice submitted a brief to the Supreme Court on behalf of the Environmental Protection Agency June 5, saying a recent decision by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit went beyond its jurisdiction when striking down the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule. The court created a new, non-statutory requirement, and as a result, down-wind states do not have health protections. The next day, environmental groups submitted a brief saying the court did not consider practical consequences when striking down the rule.

EPA Withdraws Fine Particulate Guidance

The Environmental Protection Agency withdrew guidance June 7 that was issued in March 2012 for the 2006 fine particulate matter standards. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit ruled in January that the guidance must be reissued under a more rigorous process. The agency plans to issue final implementation rules for the 2013 standards in December 2014.

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

Briefs Filed Challenging Order 1000

A collection of electric utilities, state commissions, and trade groups filed briefs with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit May 28 challenging Order 1000, a transmission planning rule the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission is currently implementing. The groups argue that the rule, meant to remove barriers toward building more renewable-friendly long-distance power transmission infrastructure, will lead to high costs for consumers and erode authority of state and regional regulators. FERC's response is due September 25.

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Svinicki Pushes License Extension Framework

Speaking at a Nuclear Infrastructure Council summit June 5, Nuclear Regulatory Commission Commissioner Kristine Svinicki advocated for the agency to continue developing license extension regulations for nuclear power plants. The agency has previously worked with the Department of Energy and industry stakeholders to address the issue through the 2040s; Svinicki pushed for the commission to consider plants beyond this time frame, and for new analyses on radiation to assist in the generation of rules.

U.S. EXPORT-IMPORT BANK

Environmental Procedures Revisions Announced

The U.S. Export-Import Bank announced June 4 [proposed revisions](#) to the agency's Environmental Procedures and Guidelines. The revisions include requiring an environmental review of projects that emit more than 25,000 tons of GHGs per year and adopting the Equator Principles.

INTERNATIONAL

World Bank Carbon Report Released

A World Bank May 29 report stated that sub-national, national, and regional carbon pricing initiatives are being implemented in the absence of international carbon markets in order to stabilize carbon prices and to limit global temperature increases. Many national and regional markets are linking together in an attempt to meet these goals. More than 20 sub-national and 40 national jurisdictions have implemented or are considering implementing pricing initiatives.

U.N. Bonn Talks Underway

The U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change is holding a round of discussions in Bonn, Germany June 3-14. To date, the conference has considered accountability, capacity building, HFC limits, implementation, and non-state actor participation.

World's Airlines Want Global Carbon Market Regs

The International Air Transport Association agreed to a resolution June 3 calling for a single market-based system to regulate the aviation industry's carbon emissions. The group, which represents 85 percent of the world market, will submit its proposal before the United Nation's International Civil Aviation Organization in September.

Canada Invites Comments on LNG Project

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency issued June 3 a call for public comments on whether a proposed natural gas transmission project in British Columbia requires a federal environmental assessment. The proposed pipeline would cover 750km between Hudson's Hope, British Columbia and a proposed Pacific Northwest LNG export facility on Canada's western coast.

Mexico Announces Climate Change Strategy

Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto announced June 3 that Mexico would soon launch its National Climate Change Strategy. The strategy will have eight key goals, including accelerating the transition to cleaner energy sources, cutting carbon emissions, moving towards sustainable cities and agricultural practices, and improving towns' and ecosystems' resilience to climate change. The plan should help the nation meet its key climate targets of cutting CO2 emissions 30 percent below 2010 levels by 2020 and generating 35 percent of its electricity from renewable sources by 2024.

Rio+20+1 Held in Brazil

The Brazilian Environment Ministry hosted a seminar June 3-6 on sustainable development, "Rio+20+1." Participants focused on the adoption of sustainable production and consumption practices to comply with the goals set up by the recent Rio+20 Summit. No final recommendations were created, but the group agreed to a document calling for sustainable development goals.

Chinese Solar Panel Tariffs Imposed

The European Commission announced June 6 that it has begun to impose antidumping tariffs on Chinese solar panels. The tariffs will be implemented in two stages: levies initially begin at 11.8 percent and will increase to an average of 47.6 percent in August. European officials hope that this staggered implementation will force China to look for a compromise before the higher rates begin.

IEA World Energy Report Released

The International Energy Agency released June 10 its annual World Energy Outlook study, finding that CO2 emissions in 2012 totaled 31.6 billion tons, up 1.4 percent from the previous year. However, the U.S. had its lowest level of emissions since the mid-1990s; the agency linked the switch from coal- to gas-fired generation as the reason for the drop.

STATES

CARB Regulation Ruling Released

The California Fifth District Court of Appeal ruled June 3 that the California Air Resources Board violated the California Environmental Quality Act when it created the low-carbon fuel standard. The court said the agency failed to properly design mitigation measures for biofuel nitrogen oxide emissions. However, the rule will continue to be enforced. Parties have until June 11 to submit proposed remedies.

IL Pollution Control Ruling

The Illinois Pollution Control Board unanimously rejected June 6 a proposal to waive pollution control improvement requirements for several Dyenergy, Inc. coal-fired plants. However, the board said future petitions could be filed.

DC Coal Bill Announced

District of Columbia Mayor Vincent Gray (D) announced June 6 that he would soon introduce the Ban on Combustion of Coal Act of 2013 as part of his Sustainable D.C. initiative. The announcement came on the same day that the District Department of the Environment issued four permits for the construction of two highly efficient cogeneration systems in the U.S. Capitol Power Plant, which will reduce the plant's reliance on older coal-burning equipment. The bill would permit coal combustion for tests and during emergencies, and would exempt cooking charcoal from the ban.

NC Fracking Legislation Passed

The North Carolina House of Representatives approved June 7 S.B. 76, a bill to grant the issuing of permits for fracking in the state. The Senate will caucus to agree to the House language, which includes a requirement for the state legislature to sign off on permits before they go into effect.

NYSERDA Funding Opportunity Announced

The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority announced June 10 a \$10 million funding opportunity for electric power delivery research and demonstration projects. Applications will be accepted through August 1 for round 1 and through February 12, 2014 for round 2.

SUSTAINABILITY

Ceres Buildings Report Released

A May 21 report by Ceres stated that energy efficiency presents an opportunity to mitigate the effects of climate change while simultaneously presenting a strong investment opportunity. In order to promote large-scale investment in energy efficiency projects, three main policy areas must be addressed: utility disincentives to pursuing energy efficiency must be removed; demand for energy efficient projects must be driven through building codes, appliance and equipment efficiency standards, and building energy disclosure standards; and financing mechanisms must be enabled to allow energy efficiency retrofit loans to be pooled into products investors can use.

GISR Principles Open for Public Comment

The Global Initiative for Sustainability Ratings released corporate sustainability reporting [principles](#) June 1 for public comment. The principles, which include impartiality and comprehensiveness, are a mix of characteristics from existing frameworks like the Global Reporting Initiative. Public comment is open until July 31.

MISCELLANEOUS

Natural Gas Report Released

The Center for Climate and Energy Solutions and the University of Texas released their report [Leveraging Natural Gas to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions](#) June 4, finding that natural gas use in generation, manufacturing, and transportation has helped to displace coal usage. The report urged more work on methane leaks and GHG measurements. The study advocated that the fuel source be used as part of an energy mix with renewable energy sources to fully address climate change.

Clean Tech Leadership Report Released

Clean Edge released its report [U.S. Clean Tech Leadership Index](#) June 4, listing the top 10 states and metro areas that lead in clean technology development. The top three states are California, Massachusetts, and Oregon, and the top three metro areas are San Francisco, San Jose, and Portland, OR. The report measures criteria such as investment, policy, and technology.

Gore Advocates Data Center Efficiency

Addressing Google June 6, former Vice President Al Gore encouraged the company to make its data centers more energy efficient. Data centers, which continuously operate at full power, account for 2 percent of global CO2 emissions.

Google Supports Jasper Power Project

Google announced June 6 that it has invested \$12 million in the 96 MW photovoltaic Jasper Power Project in South Africa. The plant has the capacity of supporting 30,000 homes. Other groups investing in the project include the Development Bank of South Africa, Intikon Energy, the Kensani Group, the PEACE Humansrus Trust, the Public Investment Corporation, and SolarReserve.