

The Farm and FY14 Energy and Water Development Bills – ML Strategies Weekly Energy and Environmental Update

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Immigration, student loans, the budget, and the Farm bill, are the top four issues that Congress will consider before the August recess. That being said, President Obama's recent climate change strategy release ensures that energy and environmental issues will remain on the agenda for the next month. For all of its supporters and detractors, global skepticism persists over America's ability to lead climate change efforts. While not part of the June proposal, the president's proposed \$2 billion Energy Security Trust has been the subject of debate as congressional Republicans are claiming the White House has yet to reach out to them about it.

The House will have two major energy issues to consider over the next month: the Farm Bill and the FY14 Energy and Water Development Bill. Republican leadership is considering splitting the Farm Bill into two separate pieces of legislation to ensure final passage. One bill would focus on agriculture while another would address nutrition. Commodity, forest, renewable energy, and wildlife groups have advocated for the bill to remain intact. A vote on the energy and water appropriations bill is expected this week. Since the House version is \$3.285 billion less than the Senate version, a conference to reconcile the bills will be needed. It is unlikely that this or other appropriations bills will be passed by September 30. Once these two issues are addressed, the House is expected to consider H.R. 761, the National Strategic and Critical Minerals Production Act. At the committee level, the House Energy and Commerce Committee will consider H.R. 1582 Energy Consumers Relief Act; H.R. 1900 Natural Gas Pipeline Permitting Reform Act; and H.R. 2218, the Coal Residuals Reuse and Management Act.

The Senate will spend this week focusing on judicial nominations. The chamber could also consider the energy and water appropriations bill later this week. The nomination of Gina McCarthy to serve as Environmental Protection Agency Administrator is still on the docket, with a vote expected sometime later this month. Questions remain as to which Democrats are against the nomination and which Republicans support McCarthy. Environmental groups, including the Sierra Club and the Environmental Defense Fund, have begun launching ads in states with Republicans rumored to be considering supporting McCarthy, such as Senators Kelly Ayotte (R-NH), Susan Collins (R-ME), and Rob Portman (R-OH). Both sides are working to avoid a nuclear option.

For more on the latest energy and clean technology regulatory and legislative developments please see [ML Strategies'](#) most recent [Energy and Environmental Update](#).

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