

Gina McCarthy Confirmed as EPA Administrator as Obama Completes Energy "Trifecta" - ML Strategies Weekly Energy and Environmental Update

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The date was March 4, President Obama had yet to give his climate strategy speech, Shaheen-Portman had yet to be introduced, and Gina McCarthy was nominated to serve as Environmental Protection Agency Administrator. 104 days later, on July 18, she was confirmed by the Senate 59-40. It was the longest confirmation process for a nominee to serve as Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. She was sworn in the following day. Administrator McCarthy now faces a full agenda at the agency including coal ash regulation decisions, a re-proposal of new power plant performance standards for carbon dioxide, a review of ozone national ambient air quality standards, and finalization of Tier 3 standards and of the definition of solid waste.

The confirmation signals the completion of the administration's energy and environment trifecta: Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Gina McCarthy as the chief environmental official, Secretary of Energy Ernest Moniz as the lead energy official, and Secretary of State John Kerry as the international point man. In addition to their focus on energy and environment, the three have a commonality: Massachusetts. In addition to all three hailing from the Bay State, Administrator McCarthy served as Undersecretary for Policy at the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Secretary Moniz was a long-time professor at MIT, and Secretary Kerry represented the state in the Senate.

While Administrator McCarthy has been confirmed, other nomination considerations continue. The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee will hold a hearing in mid-September to consider the nomination of Ron Binz to serve as Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Chairman. On Thursday, the President nominated NASA CFO Beth Robinson to serve as the Undersecretary of Energy for Management and Performance, a new position. The announcement signaled the beginning of reorganization at the Department; the shift includes the expansion of the Office of the Undersecretary for Science and Energy to oversee several energy programs including the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy. Several Senate hearings have been scheduled this week to consider assistant secretary and undersecretary nominations related to energy, including Dennis McGinn to serve as Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations, and Environment.

While the Senate will focus this week on the FY14 Transportation and Housing and Urban Development Appropriations bill and student loan compromise, the House will split its time between the FY14 Defense Appropriations bill and two energy bills: H.R. 2218, the Coal Residuals Reuse and Management Act of 2013, and H.R. 1582, the Energy Consumers Relief Act of 2013.

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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