

ML Strategies' Energy & Environment Update: Week of 7/21/2014

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The House Appropriations Committee approved July 15 a fiscal year 2015 spending bill for the Interior Department, the Environmental Protection Agency, and related agencies after Republicans opposed Democratic attempts to remove 24 legislative riders. The measure would increase Interior Department funding for oil and gas permitting and inspections on Bureau of Land Management land, as well as funding for fighting and preventing wildfires. The package would reduce the Environmental Protection Agency's budget by \$717 million, about nine percent. The overall bill would amount to \$30.2 billion, a \$162 million increase from the fiscal year 2014 enacted level. The riders are designed to halt some agency initiatives, including greenhouse gas regulations, a new definition of Clean Water Act jurisdiction, revised water pollution rules for surface coal mining, and the possibility of an Endangered Species Act listing next year of the greater sage grouse.

Congressman Jim Moran (D-VA) filed an amendment early last week to strip out the 24 riders, but it failed on a 29-19 vote. He then offered an amendment to remove the bill's provision to prevent the Environmental Protection Agency from implementing greenhouse gas regulations for power plants, but that failed also.

With just two weeks to go before the August recess, the Senate will try to make progress on a short-term highway funding bill that would replenish funds for highway and mass-transit projects through next May. The House plans floor action on a series of education measures. Issues that may also garner congressional attention between now and the end of the month include a conference negotiation on a provision (H.R. 3230) to reduce waiting times for veterans in need of medical care; the influx of Central American children crossing the United States-Mexico border; various tax issues; and additional appropriations negotiations. Committee work on energy issues this week is outlined below.

The weekly *Energy & Environment Update* from ML Strategies provides an overview of what's happening on and off Capitol Hill and around the world that may impact energy and environmental policies and industry players. [Read the Update here.](#)

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