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ML Strategies Energy and Environment Update: Week of 8/18/2014

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ENERGY AND CLIMATE DEBATE

Congress is in recess for the remainder of August, but when it returns for just over two weeks in September, much of the focus will turn to crafting a continuing resolution to keep the government open while senators and representatives continue to negotiate a budget.

In addition to negotiating a continuing resolution, reauthorizing the Export-Import Bank and Department of Defense programs, and addressing internet taxation, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) has identified several bills for debate prior to the November elections. Majority Leader Reid plans to hold votes on measures to raise the minimum wage, address pay equity issues and student loan rates, and guarantee access to contraception, as well as a constitutional amendment to limit campaign contributions and spending.

On the House side, House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) told the House Republican conference August 8 that he plans to bring up two packages of jobs and energy legislation and an Obamacare bill in September. Though not finalized, the energy package would approve the Keystone XL pipeline (H.R. 3), limit environmental regulations (H.R. 1582), and open federal lands to energy extraction (H.R. 4899).

CONGRESS

PTC Expiration Support
Fifty-four representatives sent a letter July 29 to Speaker of the House John Boehner (R-OH) and House Majority Leader-Elect Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) expressing their support of the production tax credit's expiration.

Export Restrictions May Violate Trade Rules
The Congressional Research Service issued a report August 4 finding that fossil fuel export restrictions may potentially be inconsistent with the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade 1994.

CPP Reconsideration Sought
House Science Committee Chair Lamar Smith (R-TX) sent letters to the **Environmental Protection Agency** and the **Energy Information Administration** August 13 saying that a recent Government Accountability Office report that raises concerns over the Environmental Protection Agency's economic review of regulations means that the agency should reanalyze the Clean Power Plan, and that the Energy Information Administration should analyze the agency's rule as well.

DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR

NC Offshore Wind
The Department of Interior **announced** August 11 that it plans to make more than 300,000 acres of ocean of the North Carolina coast available for commercial leasing for offshore wind energy projects. The Wind Energy Areas include the 122,405-acre Kitty Hawk Wind Energy Area, the 51,595-acre Wilmington West Wind Energy Area, and the 133,590-acre Wilmington East Wind Energy Area.

MISCELLANEOUS

Keystone Emissions Underestimated
A study in the August 10 edition of Nature Climate Change found that greenhouse gas emissions from the proposed Keystone XL pipeline could be up to four times higher than the State Department estimates. The estimate difference stems from the pipelines impact on global oil prices and consumption.

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**.

Authors

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