ML STRATEGIES

Energy & Sustainability Washington Update - June 2022

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Policy Recap & Outlook

A soft target for negotiating a smaller version of the Build Back Better Act (BBB) climate and social legislation by Memorial Day has passed with no resolution, although neither the White House nor Senate Democratic leadership have signaled they are ready to throw in the towel. The latest word is that negotiations have been progressing and that we could see a new framework sometime in June, allowing time to bring a new bill – under a new name – to a Senate vote before the start of the August recess. With Democrats increasingly worried about the November election, it would seem that compromise between the moderate and progressive factions of the Democratic caucus is likely, although time is running short to pass legislation before voters head to the polls.

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Opportunities

The Biden administration continues to roll out the various opportunities from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, most recently announcing:

Electric Drive Vehicle Battery Recycling and Second-Life Applications Program – $200 million is available to institutions of higher education, national laboratories, nonprofit and for-profit private entities, state and local governments, or a consortia of these entities for the expansion of an existing Department of Energy program for research, development, and demonstration of electric vehicle battery recycling and second-life applications for vehicle batteries. Concept papers are due by May 31, and full applications are due by July 19.

Battery Materials Processing Grants and Battery Manufacturing and Recycling Grants – Just over $3 billion is available to institutions of higher education, national laboratories, nonprofit and for-profit private entities, state and local governments, or a consortia of these entities for grants for battery materials processing to ensure that the United States has a viable battery materials processing industry. Funds can also be used to expand our domestic capabilities in battery manufacturing and enhance processing capacity. Letters of intent are due by May 27, with full applications due by July 1.

Transmission Facilitation Program – DOE has issued a Request for Information on this $2.5 billion revolving fund that will help build out new interregional transmission lines across the country. Funds will be available to transmission developers via loans, direct financing, or capacity purchase. Responses to the RFI are due by June 13.

Energy Storage Demonstration and Pilot Grants and Long-Duration Energy Storage Demonstration Initiative and Joint Program – DOE has issued a Request for Information on these two programs which will provide $355 million and $105 million respectively to advance energy storage systems toward widespread commercial deployment by lowering the costs and increasing the duration of energy storage resources. Input is sought from industry, academia, research laboratories, government agencies, and other stakeholders with a deadline of June 16.

Advanced Energy Manufacturing and Recycling Grant Program – Aimed at regions where coal mines or power plants have closed and funded at $750 million, this program is intended to help small- to medium-sized manufacturers employ carbon-reduction retrofits, convert their facilities, or build new facilities to produce or recycle advanced energy technologies. This technical assistance opportunity is open ended.

New Energy & Sustainability Legislation

EV Grid Act (S. 4148).– Introduced by Sen. Jack Reed (D-RI), this bill requires the Secretary of Energy to complete and publish a study and develop a plan relating to the ability of the electric system to meet the electricity demand of America's new electric vehicle charging infrastructure. The measure is a companion to the House version of the EV Grid Act (H.R. 7453) introduced by Reps. Sean Casten (D-IL) and Paul Tonko (D-NY) earlier this year.

Alan Reinstein Ban Asbestos Now Act (H.R. 7810 and S. 4244) – Introduced by Rep. Susan Bonamici (D-OR) and Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-OR), this bill would prohibit the manufacture, processing, use, and distribution in commerce of commercial asbestos.

Water Efficiency, Conservation, and Sustainability Act (H.R. 7847 and S. 4279) – Introduced by Rep. Jerry McNerney (D-CA) and Sen. Alex Padilla (D-CA), this bill would incentivize water efficiency upgrades and establish programs to identify and repair leaks, especially in areas experiencing severe drought and in low-income communities.

Department of Energy Developments

The Department of Energy recently announced that it has allotted $38 million to begin decarbonizing four of DOE's 17 National Laboratories. The move supports President Biden's goal to reach net-zero greenhouse gas emissions no later than 2050. According to the DOE announcement, the Net Zero Labs (NZL) Pilot Initiative "will lay the foundation for one of the first-ever models for addressing hard-to-decarbonize industries and is expected to be a foundation of net-zero solutions that can be replicated at facilities across DOE, the federal government, and state and local governments." **Read more about the Net Zero Labs initiative**.

In support of the Biden administration's Justice40 initiative, the Department of Energy has awarded $3.6 million to 18 groups and organizations through the Inclusive Energy Innovation Prize. As noted in the DOE announcement, the competition is the first of its kind, and is "designed to support entrepreneurship and innovation in communities historically underserved in federal climate and energy technology funding." **Read more about these exciting projects**.

Authors



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Neal Martin brings more than two decades of experience in government and federal relations to his work, helping clients navigate a wide range of issues. He provides strategic guidance to organizations seeking to advance their legislative priorities and enhance their visibility before Congress and federal agencies.