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Energy & Sustainability Washington Update — October 2024

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VIEWPOINT TOPICS

- Energy & Sustainability
- Energy & Sustainability Washington Update

SERVICE AREAS

- Energy & Sustainability

Environmental Justice Climate Corps Launched at Climate Week NYC

On September 25, coinciding with Climate Week NYC, the US Environmental Protection Agency and AmeriCorps unveiled the **Environmental Justice Climate Corps (EJCC) Program**. This new partnership, part of President Biden's American Climate Corps, aims to create opportunities for individuals to pursue careers that support disadvantaged and low-income communities. This partnership will provide support for over 250 AmeriCorps VISTA members across the country over three years, with each new participating member serving a one-year term with the EJCC. The Environmental Justice Climate Corps is part of the Biden-Harris administration's American Climate Corps — a workforce training and service initiative that will ensure more young people have access to the skills-based training necessary for good-paying careers in the clean energy and climate resilience economy. The American Climate Corps will mobilize a new, diverse generation of more than 20,000 Americans in the initiative's first year, putting them to work conserving and restoring our lands and waters, bolstering community resilience, deploying clean energy, implementing energy-efficient technologies, and advancing environmental justice — all while creating pathways to high-quality, good-paying clean energy and climate resilience jobs in the public and private sectors after they complete their paid training program.

Energy Savings Highlighted in Better Buildings Initiative Progress Report

The Better Buildings Initiative brings together the US Department of Energy (DOE) and various public and private sector partners to tackle ambitious goals for reducing energy, waste, water, and emissions across entire portfolios. By sharing their successful strategies publicly, program partners inspire other organizations to replicate their achievements. Enhancements in building design, materials, equipment, and operations can drive significant decarbonization across many sectors of the economy.

DOE has released the **2024 Better Buildings Initiative progress report**, showcasing the accomplishments of its public and private sector partners in decarbonizing and enhancing the energy efficiency of the nation's buildings, manufacturing facilities, and homes. The report reveals that program partners, which include 28 Fortune 100 companies and over 90 state and local governments, have collectively saved nearly $22 billion through efficiency improvements and reduced harmful greenhouse gas emissions by more than 220 million metric tons since 2011 — equivalent to the annual emissions of approximately 29 million homes.

House Passes Energy Bills Before Leaving to Campaign

the final days before starting a six-week recess leading up to the November elections, the House of Representatives passed several bills aimed at advancing energy research and environmental protections and streamlining the permitting process. H.R. 7073, the **Next Generation Pipelines Research and Development Act**, passed with strong bipartisan support and focuses on modernizing pipeline research amid concerns over aging infrastructure. H.R. 7370, the **Geothermal Energy Opportunity Act**, which also advanced, aims to streamline geothermal project application processes. H.R. 7422, the **Geothermal Cost-Recovery Authority Act of 2024**, was cleared to allow the Interior Department to recover permitting costs, showcasing bipartisan cooperation on energy initiatives. H.R. 5509, the **Electronic Permitting Modernization Act**, mandates the Interior Department to update its electronic permitting system and

enhance online permit options.

Senate Committee Tackles DOE's Role in Advanced Computing Research & Technology

The Senate Committee on Energy & Natural Resources recently held a **hearing** to review DOE's role in advanced computing research, applications, and security. Testimony was provided on three bipartisan bills: S. 914, the **Energy Threat Analysis Center Establishment Act of 2023**; S. 4664, the **Department of Energy AI Act**; and S. 4932, the **DOE Quantum Leadership Act of 2024**. During the hearing, Chair Joe Manchin (I-WV) emphasized the importance of enhancing the United States' investment in research and development of emerging technologies, particularly in response to China's growing emphasis on innovation. The Committee received testimony from Helena Fu, Director of the DOE Office of Critical and Emerging Technologies; Dr. Shaun Gleason, Director of Science-Security Initiative Integration at Oak Ridge National Laboratory; and Dr. Divyansh Kaushik, an American Policy Ventures Senior Fellow.

DOE Funding Opportunity for Wave Energy

The Water Power Technologies Office (WPTO) at the US Department of Energy recently announced a new **$112.5 million funding opportunity** to support marine energy. The stage-gated, five-year "Oceans of Opportunity: US Wave Energy Open Water Testing" funding opportunity announcement (FOA) is intended to significantly accelerate the design, fabrication, and testing of multiple wave energy converters (WECs). This stage-gated approach is designed to reduce risks for deployments, increase the potential for commercial adoption, and offer additional benefits to quickly advance WECs. This opportunity will support long-duration (e.g., up to two years) in-water testing of WECs, which is critical for industry and investors to demonstrate technology readiness. This FOA will support projects across three (3) topic areas focused on advancing wave energy research, development, and demonstration (RD&D) to move the wave energy industry toward commercialization for distributed, community, and utility applications. Concept papers are due by 5 pm ET on October 25, 2024.

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law & Inflation Reduction Act Opportunities

Visit the **ML Strategies Energy Funding Matrix** for details of federal clean energy funding and financing opportunities. We update the matrix on a biweekly basis and welcome any inquiries about how the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act, along with other relevant federal opportunities, may impact your business or organization.

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.