

Federal Issues Update

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Dear Shelly,

It's almost hard to believe that Congress is back to work shortly after July 4th to work on the "debt ceiling limit." It is the first time since 1974 for the Senate to convene immediately after Independence Day.

While August 2nd remains the deadline for approval of additional federal borrowing, it is likely that no complete resolution will happen this week based on on-going ad hoc meetings with the White House.

The U.S. House has held only a few energy and environmental meetings these past two weeks. The House held hearings last week regarding the damage assessment of the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill and a review of EPA rulemaking on power plant toxic emissions.

Our Colorado delegation has been busy - and also successful. Sen. Bennet introduced specific oil independence/alternative energy legislation (see below) and Cong. Gardner successfully passed a bill to streamline permitting for energy exploration (see below).

Sen. Bennet Introduces Oil Independence For A Stronger America Act



Colorado U.S. Senator Michael Bennet, along with Senators Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Tom Carper (D-DE) and Tom Udall (D-NM), introduced a bill last week "to achieve American oil independence, strengthen national security and create jobs." The "Oil Independence for a Stronger America Act" includes a broad biofuels tax provisions. It also includes "steps to ramp up production and use of electric vehicles, increase travel options and improve infrastructure, make gasoline engines more efficient, develop alternative transportation fuels and reduce the use of oil to heat buildings."

The four Senators introduced a similar bill in 2010.

House Passes Gardner Bill To Streamline Permitting



The U.S. House of Representatives voted 253-166 last Wednesday to pass a bill by Colorado U.S. Rep. Cory Gardner that would speed up clean-air permits for oil drilling off Alaska and other coastal areas.

The bill would reduce "red tape" and streamline the permitting process to help increase domestic energy production by one million barrels of oil a day. An economic study estimates that 50,000 American jobs and \$100 billion in payroll over the next 50 years.

Rep. Gardner explained that "...in one particular lease in Alaska it's taken the EPA six years. They're supposed to issue these permits in a year under current law. It's taken EPA over six years now to deal with this permit because it's ping-ponged between the EPA and the Environmental Appeals Board..."

DOD Looks To Advanced Biofuels

In case you missed it, "[The Wall Street Journal](#)" [reports that the Department Of Defense is investigating the use of the 1950 Defense Production Act](#) to fund between \$300 and \$500 million in funding via a joint venture to directly invest in advanced biofuel production in the U.S.



EPA Picks Southern Colorado To Study "Fracking"



The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has chosen Las Animas County in southern Colorado as one of seven locations to conduct studies of "fracking."

"Fracking" is the reference name given hydraulic fracturing used to crack underground rock formations to produce oil and/or natural gas in a well.

The oil and gas industry insists that fracking is safe when done properly with the correct percentages of water, sand and a certain percentage of chemicals. Environmental groups, on the

other hand, worry about environmental impacts.

The EPA study was ordered by Congress and is expected to have results in 2012. The other study locations include Texas, Pennsylvania and Louisiana.

The EPA study will look at "potential drinking water well contamination (of methane and other contaminants) in an area with intense concentration of gas wells in shallow surficial aquifer (coalbed methane)." It said possible outcomes of the Las Animas study include identifying the source of methane in the water and identifying the "presence/source of contamination in drinking water wells."

The Colorado Oil & Gas Conservation Commission believes that it has found no evidence to date that fracking contaminated water supplies.

Working Together To Move Clean Tech Issues Forward



On July 13 - 14, CCIA will be part of a "DC Fly-In," along with the Clean Economy Network (CEN), the US Advanced Energy Economy and other state and regional organizations. The fly-in will also cover the Brookings Institution's release of their new report, "Sizing the Clean Economy: A National and Regional Green Jobs Assessment;" discussions on member companies' policy priorities; meetings with Senate and House Members, White House officials and representatives from various federal agencies including DOE, ARPA-E, Commerce and others.

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