

# Climate Policy Update



January 24, 2025

Good morning!

This is Akin's newsletter on climate change policy and regulatory developments, providing information on major climate policy headlines from the past week and forthcoming climate-related events and hearings.

In case you missed it, Akin recently launched our [Trump Executive Order Tracker](#), serving as repository detailing all of President Donald Trump's executive order's following his inauguration. This searchable tool breaks down the orders and their impact. Akin will update the Tracker as orders are published and provide in-depth analysis of specific orders.

## National

### [Trump proclaims a 'national emergency' to prop up fossil fuels, block EVs and state emissions rules](#) *(PoliticoPro)*

President Trump issued a series of executive orders reversing Biden-era energy policies, emphasizing oil and gas production, expediting permits and withdrawing from the Paris climate agreement. The orders also target electric vehicles (EVs) by calling for the elimination of the "EV mandate," revoking California's emissions waivers and reassessing subsidies favoring EVs, while promoting traditional energy sources and domestic mineral dominance.

### [Energy Department resumes processing of LNG export applications](#) *(PoliticoPro)*

The Department of Energy announced it will resume processing natural gas export applications while extending the public comment period for its report, which warned of potential domestic energy price increases from rising exports. The move follows President Trump's executive order lifting the Biden administration's year-long pause on these applications and aims to streamline the review process alongside multi-agency evaluations.

### [Trump targets climate endangerment finding, social cost of carbon](#) *(PoliticoPro)*

President Trump ordered his administration to reevaluate the 2009 endangerment finding for greenhouse gases, a key legal basis for Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) climate regulations and directed the agency to report on its applicability within 30 days. The order also called for eliminating the "social cost of carbon" metric, criticizing it as flawed and harmful to U.S. economic competitiveness, while directing agencies to prioritize domestic over international benefits in climate rule assessments.

### [Trump executive order targets halt to offshore wind projects](#) (*PoliticoPro*)

President Trump issued an executive order halting leasing, permitting and approvals for wind projects, temporarily withdrawing offshore wind energy areas and initiating a review of existing leases for potential termination or amendment. The order also imposed a moratorium on new wind project approvals, citing environmental, economic and ecological concerns, while targeting specific projects like Idaho's Lava Ridge Wind Project and calling for assessments of defunct turbines and litigation delays.

### [Trump boosts court ruling that bulldozed White House NEPA regs](#) (*EnergyWire*)

President Trump's executive order removes the White House Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) authority to write binding regulations under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), following a court ruling limiting CEQ's rulemaking power. Instead, CEQ will provide guidance to streamline permitting processes and prioritize efficiency in environmental reviews, marking a shift toward policies emphasizing energy development and critical minerals.

### [Energy committee sends Trump's Interior, Energy cabinet picks to full Senate](#) (*PoliticoPro*)

The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee advanced President Trump's nominees Doug Burgum for Interior Secretary (18-2 vote) and Chris Wright for Energy Secretary (15-5 vote), both receiving bipartisan support despite Democratic concerns. While some Democrats praised their qualifications, others questioned their commitment to addressing climate change and safeguarding clean energy investments under the Inflation Reduction Act.

### [Zeldin clears EPW committee on path to EPA confirmation](#) (*PoliticoPro*)

The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee advanced former Rep. Lee Zeldin's nomination for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) administrator with an 11-8 vote. While Republicans praised Zeldin's credentials, Democrats expressed concerns over his ties to fossil fuel interests and questioned his independence in leading the agency that has jurisdiction over the Clean Air Act and vehicle emission requirements.

### [Trump admin rethinks Biden's fight against DC Circuit NEPA ruling](#) (*EnergyWire*)

The Trump administration has asked a federal appeals court to delay deciding on whether to reverse last year's ruling that struck down the White House Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) regulatory authority, following President Trump's rescission of a 1977 executive order granting CEQ its power. Justice Department attorneys indicated they are reassessing the Biden administration's request for a full court review, as the new executive order directs CEQ to provide guidance for federal agencies on implementing NEPA instead of issuing regulations.

## State and Local

[Joint Statement from U.S. Climate Alliance Co-Chairs, Governor Kathy Hochul and Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham](#) (*Office of New York Governor Kathy Hochul*)

Governor Kathy Hochul and New Mexico Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham, co-chairs of the U.S. Climate Alliance, sent a [letter](#) to United Nations Climate Change Executive Secretary Simon Stiell, reaffirming to the global community that the United States remains committed to climate action.

[California bill would replace Trump-targeted renewable energy tax incentives with state ones](#) (*ClimateWire*)

California state Sen. Jerry McNerney introduced S.B. 86 to counter President Trump's proposed cuts to federal renewable energy funding by increasing state tax incentives. The bill, co-sponsored by California Treasurer Fiona Ma, aims to extend the California Alternative Energy and Advanced Transportation Financing Authority Act indefinitely and boost its funding from \$100 million to \$300 million per year.

## International

[Trump is targeting global climate aid. Here's what that means.](#) (*ClimateWire*)

President Trump's executive order seeks to withdraw the U.S. from the Paris climate agreement and revoke climate aid commitments, aiming to eliminate U.S. contributions to global climate funds. While Congress holds a key role in determining the impact, Trump's actions could leave vulnerable countries without vital financial support, affecting international climate efforts and global stability.

[Von der Leyen: Paris climate deal still 'best hope for all humanity'](#) (*ClimateWire*)

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen reaffirmed Europe's commitment to the Paris Agreement, emphasizing its importance for humanity's fight against climate change, despite President Trump's decision to withdraw the U.S. for a second time. While Trump's withdrawal has drawn less global opposition than in 2017, European Union (EU) officials remain dedicated to collaborating with international partners to tackle climate change.

[EU 'ready to negotiate' with Trump on boosting gas imports](#) (*PoliticoPro*)

The EU plans to engage in talks with U.S. officials to discuss President Trump's demand for more fuel purchases from the U.S., despite Europe's already significant liquefied natural gas (LNG) imports from America. However, EU officials caution that the push to buy more U.S. LNG may be challenging, with some member states like Germany expressing concerns over higher costs and market competition.

[EU's Clean Industrial Deal to cover 6 themes from energy prices to trade](#) (*EnergyWire*)

The European Commission's upcoming Clean Industrial Deal, set to be unveiled on February 26, will focus on six key areas, including energy security, financing, recycling, labor skills, lead markets and global action. The plan aims to boost the EU's energy-intensive industries, reduce energy costs, address resource shortages and enhance trade relations, while integrating social policies to ensure job opportunities and workforce development.

Check out below for key quotes, federal agency news and a look at the week ahead in congressional hearings and think tank events:

## Quote of the Week

“The inflation crisis was caused by massive overspending and escalating energy prices, and that is why today I will also declare a national energy emergency. We will drill, baby, drill. America will be a manufacturing nation once again, and we have something that no other manufacturing nation will ever have — the largest amount of oil and gas of any country on earth — and we are going to use it. We’ll use it. We will bring prices down, fill our strategic reserves up again right to the top, and export American energy all over the world. We will be a rich nation again, and it is that liquid gold under our feet that will help to do it.”

-President Donald Trump during the Inaugural Address ([White House Newsroom](#) – January 20, 2025)

## Congressional Hearings (January 20 - 24, 2025)

### Senate

[Business meeting to consider the nomination of Lee Zeldin, of New York, to be Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency](#)

#### **Environment and Public Works**

Thursday, January 23, 9:15 AM ET

[Business Meeting to Consider the Nominations of the Honorable Doug Burgum and Mr. Chris Wright](#)

#### **Energy and Natural Resources**

Thursday, January 23, 9:30 AM ET

### House of Representatives

*No relevant hearings.*

## Federal Agency Climate News

### White House

[Declaring A National Energy Emergency](#) (January 20)

[Unleashing American Energy](#) (January 20)

[Temporary Withdrawal of All Areas on the Outer Continental Shelf from Offshore Wind Leasing and Review of the Federal Government’s Leasing and Permitting Practices for Wind Projects](#) (January 20)

[Unleashing Alaska’s Extraordinary Resource Potential](#) (January 20)

### Department of Energy

[U.S. Department of Energy Reverses Biden LNG Pause, Restores Trump Energy Dominance Agenda](#) (January 21)

[Putting America First in International Environmental Agreements](#) (January 20)

[Initial Rescissions of Harmful Executive Orders and Actions](#) (January 20)

## Funding and Comment Opportunities

[Oceans of Opportunity: U.S. Wave Energy Open Water Testing](#)

**Department of Energy**

Close Date: January 30, 2025

[Request for Information: Defining Sustainable Maritime Fuels in the United States](#)

**Department of Energy**

Close Date: February 28, 2025

[Advanced Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Technologies to Drive National Goals](#)

**Department of Energy**

Close Date: January 31, 2025

[Point Source Carbon Capture Large-Scale Pilots, Commercial Demonstrations, & Networked Demonstration](#)

**Department of Energy**

Close Date: July 1, 2025

[Wind Turbine Technology Recycling](#)

**Department of Energy**

Close Date: February 11, 2025

[Regional Direct Air Capture Hubs – Recurring Program](#)

**Department of Energy**

Close Date: July 31, 2025

[Energy Storage Pilot Demonstrations](#)

**Department of Energy**

Close Date: February 13, 2025

## D.C. Climate Events

[IEEJ Energy Outlook 2025: Energy, Environment, and Economy through 2050](#)

**Center for Strategic and International Studies**

Wednesday, January 22, 3:00 PM ET

[Annual State of the Energy Industry Forum & Networking Reception](#)

**United States Energy Association**

Thursday, January 23, 10:30 AM ET

[What's Next for US-China Climate Relations](#)

**The Wilson Center**

Thursday, January 23, 10:00 AM ET

[The Future of Uranium to Jumpstart Nuclear Power in the 21st Century: A Fireside Conversation with Miriam D'Onofrio](#)

**Center for Strategic and International Studies**

Wednesday, January 29, 9:30 AM ET

**For more information, please contact your regular Akin lawyer or advisor, or:**

[Kenneth J. Markowitz](#)

[Christopher A. Treanor](#)

[Stacey H. Mitchell](#)

[Emily P. Mallen](#)

[akingump.com](http://akingump.com)