

# May 2018 Washington Update

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## VIEWPOINT TOPICS

- Sustainable Energy & Infrastructure

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### Congress

#### House Hearing on DOE Budget

On April 12, the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy held a hearing on “The Fiscal Year 2019 Department of Energy Budget” with testimony from Secretary of Energy Rick Perry. The wide-ranging discussion covered the Administration’s request for the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE), which would see a 70% reduction from Fiscal Year 2018; the Yucca Mountain project and legacy cleanup responsibilities; pipeline safety; encouraging innovation in the private sector; the Strategic Petroleum Reserve; resiliency in the electric grid; fusion energy research; cybersecurity infrastructure; fuel security; and Small Refinery Waivers.

#### House Energy Bills Advance

The House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy held a markup on April 18 of five energy bills including H.R. 5174, the Energy Emergency Leadership Act; H.R. 5175, the Pipeline and LNG Facility Cybersecurity Preparedness Act; H.R. 5239, the Cyber Sense Act; H.R. 5240, the Enhancing Grid Security through Public-Private Partnerships Act; and H.R. 4606, the Ensuring Small Scale LNG Certainty and Access Act.

#### House Hearing on High Octane Fuels

On April 13, the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Environment held a hearing on the potential for high octane fuels and the vehicles designed for them. Members considered the impact of a potential transition to high octane fuels and vehicles on refiners, biofuel producers, automakers, fuel retailers, and consumers. Witnesses included Timothy Columbus, General Counsel, Society of Gasoline Makers of America and National Association of Convenience Stores; Dan Nicholson, Vice President, Global Propulsion Systems, General Motors, on behalf of the United States Council for Automotive Research; and Chet Thompson, President and CEO, American Fuel and Petrochemicals Manufacturers.

#### Senate Hearing on Rural Energy

The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee held a hearing on April 19 to examine energy-related challenges and opportunities in remote and rural areas of the United States. Witnesses included Carole Plowfield, Director, Office of Indian Energy and Policy Programs, DOE; Matt Greek, Senior Vice President of Research, Development and Technology, Basin Electric Power Cooperative; Doug Hardy, General Manager, Central Montana Electric Power Cooperative; Andrew Lyons, Weatherization and Energy Assistance Program Manager, HopeSource; and Robert Venables, Executive Director, Southeast Conference.

#### Ceiling Fan Energy Conservation Harmonization Act

On April 3, President Trump signed into law the Ceiling Fan Energy Conservation Harmonization Act (S. 2030). Introduced by Sen. Thom Tillis (R-NC), the bill makes January 21, 2020 the compliance date for the amended energy conservation standards for ceiling fan light kits, which is also the compliance date for ceiling fan standards. Previous to enactment of the Act, the compliance date for ceiling fan light kits was January 7, 2019.

### Administration

#### Offshore Wind Opportunities

On April 6, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) announced a proposed lease sale for two additional areas offshore Massachusetts for commercial wind energy leasing, totaling nearly 390,000

acres. A **Proposed Sale Notice** (PSN) for Commercial Leasing for Wind Power on the Outer Continental Shelf Offshore Massachusetts, published in the Federal Register on April 11, included a 60-day public comment period.

Also on April 6, BOEM announced it would publish a Call for Information and Nominations (Call) to obtain nominations from companies interested in commercial wind energy leases within the proposed area in the New York Bight. This region represents an area of shallow waters between Long Island (to the north and east) and the New Jersey Coast (to the south and west). BOEM **published** the Call, which includes a 45-day public comment period, in the Federal Register on April 11. BOEM will accept nominations and comments until May 29.

#### DOE Funding Announcements

On April 12, DOE **announced** it would award 82 grants totaling \$99 million to 69 small businesses in 26 states. Funded through DOE's Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs, the grant awards are for Phase II research and development.

On April 17, DOE **announced** up to \$39 million in available funding to support early-stage research and development (R&D) of innovative hydrogen and fuel cell technologies. Concept papers are due May 7, 2018, and full applications will be due June 12, 2018.

Also on April 17, DOE **announced** up to \$105.5 million to support energy innovation through solar technology. Under the department's Solar Energy Technologies Office, DOE will fund about 70 projects to advance both solar photovoltaic and concentrating solar thermal power technologies, as well as to facilitate the secure integration of those technologies into the nation's electricity grid.

## Authors