

Mintz Levin Energy Technology

Energy Technology Connections Newsletter

Your Law Firm Link to Industry News

APRIL 2017

A Note from the Editors

Our April edition of Energy Technology Connections brings you recent industry highlights and features a list of upcoming energy industry events throughout the nation. To learn about MIT's latest startup accelerator, [The Engine](#), read our Leaders in the News profile to see how they lend vital support to entrepreneurs. In [Event Highlights](#), we feature the 2017 Cleantech Open Northeast Boston Mentor Mixer, which we are excited to host on May 25, 2017. Finally, our [Washington Update](#) provides insight into a number of energy-related developments at the federal level, including the Senate Democrats' new Energy Jobs bill, the fate of the Paris Climate Agreement, and the EPA's new \$11 million Diesel Emission Reduction Program.

For links to industry grant opportunities and stories from the business, policy, and research sectors of the energy and clean technology industry, please [see our Energy Navigator](#).

You can [subscribe to our Energy Technology Matters blog here](#).

We would also like to remind our readers that you can always ask us anything at <http://mintzedge.com/ask-anything/>. We built the MintzEdge website as a resource for entrepreneurs and investors, and hope that all of you take advantage of the site and see how it can help you.



Thomas R. Burton, III



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Leaders in the News: The Engine

This month we feature [The Engine](#), a startup accelerator out of MIT that lends vital support to entrepreneurs pursuing societal impact through scientific and technological innovation. Based in Central Square in Cambridge, MA, the new venture aims to meet a critical need among start-ups, namely those in “[hard tech](#),” which lack stable access to the resources and capital necessary to lift their breakthroughs out of the lab and into the market.

In February, just months after its initial launch, [The Engine](#) sparked media attention with the closing of its first investment fund at over \$150 million – a promising sign for new companies hoping to benefit from the accelerator’s growing ecosystem of investors and facilities. This initial

funding was secured under the leadership of President, CEO, and Investment fund Manager Katie Rae. This [veteran tech entrepreneur and investor](#) has an impressive resume of leading and advising innovative business programs throughout Boston (including two she co-founded, **Project 11 Ventures** and **Startup Institute**). Rae's reputation earned **The Engine** broad support among individual investors, supplementing MIT's \$25 million investment to create a robust debut fund comparable to "the third or fourth 'vintage' for a typical software focused fund," according to [TechCrunch](#).

The Engine dubs itself "[a new machine to drive innovation](#)," reflecting the venture's commitment to solutions-oriented, advanced technology companies. Whereas software startups or consumer applications are generally simpler to prototype and test, and find more straightforward paths to the commercial marketplace, companies based on nascent "[hard tech](#)" require greater capital, time, and physical resources to develop their product. Rae recognizes the gap, and promises tech founders in the proof-of-concept stage that **The Engine** will "bet early, stay their ally through the long period of '[figuring it out](#),' and be willing to look at things that other people would find too hard or unusual."

Teams partnering with **The Engine** gain access to targeted business services and a network of labs, specialized equipment, and other resources at MIT and throughout the greater Boston area. The venture's investment portfolio will span diverse industries, from medicine and robotics to advanced materials, nuclear energy, fusion artificial intelligence, and more. Ultimately, **The Engine** incentivizes companies to optimize their business strategy to promote scientific breakthroughs above all else.

It's a bold strategy – and one that will keep Boston a major hub for bold ideas in science and technology. Congratulations to **The Engine** on an impressive first few months. We can't wait to see what's next!

Event Highlight

Cleantech Open Northeast Boston Mentor Mixer

We are excited to host the [2017 Cleantech Open Northeast Boston Mentor Mixer](#) on Thursday, May 25 in our Boston office. Since the matching request deadline for Cleantech Open teams and mentors is May 31, this event will be a good opportunity to network in advance! Our own [Kristin Gerber](#), [Hannah Coman](#), and [Mark Higgins](#) will be among the mentor pool, which consists of innovative leaders such as corporate executives, entrepreneurs, venture capitalists, accountants and more. For more information, [click here](#).

Washington Update

Congress returned this week from a two-week recess, and is now ramping up their agenda, with the most pressing issue being passage of a spending bill for the remainder of the current fiscal year, which ends on September 30. Currently, federal activities are funded via a Continuing Resolution, which expires on April 28, requiring action on appropriations in order to avoid a government shutdown.

Senate Democrats Introduce Energy Jobs Bill

Sens. Martin Heinrich (D-NM) and Cory Booker (D-NJ) have introduced [S. 895](#), a bill to require the Secretary of Energy to establish a comprehensive program to improve education and training for energy- and manufacturing-related jobs and to increase the number of skilled workers trained to work in these fields.

Paris Climate Agreement Fate Still Undetermined

A meeting of President Trump's senior advisors was scheduled for April 18 to discuss whether the US would remain in the Paris climate change agreement. That meeting was postponed, but was held on Thursday, April 27. The president's senior advisors are not in agreement on whether to remain in the climate change agreement, with the president's Chief Strategist and Senior Counselor Steve Bannon arguing for leaving the agreement, and Senior Advisor Jared Kushner and Ivanka Trump arguing in favor of the agreement. At the cabinet level, there is also disagreement, with Energy Secretary Perry in favor of the US remaining in the agreement but renegotiating its terms, Secretary of State Tillerson in support of remaining, and EPA Administrator Pruitt saying the US should exit the agreement.

On April 18, 12 Republican members of the House of Representatives sent a letter to President Trump calling on the US to withdraw from the Paris agreement, arguing that President Obama did not fulfill his obligation under the Constitution to seek consent of Congress when he signed the agreement in December 2015. The letter was signed by Reps. McKinley (R-WV), Gosar (R-AZ), Barr (R-KY), Griffith (R-VA), Jenkins (R-WV), Mooney (R-WV), Sensenbrenner (R-WI), Cheney (R-WY), Comer (R-KY), Gohmert (R-TX), Biggs (R-AZ), and McClinton (R-CA). In addition to calling for a complete withdrawal from the agreement, the letter opposes any additional US contributions to the Green Climate Fund.

On April 27, eight Republican members of the House of Representatives sent a letter to President Trump outlining conditions they believe should be met if the US is to remain a party to the agreement. The letter calls for a rejection of the commitment to achieve a 25 – 28% reduction in US greenhouse gas emission by 2025, arguing that it would cause irreparable harm to the economy. The letter further argues that the US should not make additional transfers to the Green Climate Fund, and that the US should defend and promote American commercial interests, including the manufacturing and fossil fuel sectors. The letter was signed Reps. Foxx (R-NC), Kelly (R-PA), Bucshon (R-IN), Mullin (R-OK), Long (R-MO), Collins (R-NY), Harper (R-MS), and Carter (R-GA).

EPA Announces DERA Funding Opportunity

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has [announced](#) the availability of \$11 million in Diesel Emission Reduction Program (DERA) funds to support projects aimed at reducing emissions from the nation's existing fleet of older diesel engines. Under this competition, between 20 and 80 awards are anticipated to be made to eligible applicants. Eligible applicants include regional, state, local, or tribal agencies, or port authorities with jurisdiction over transportation or air quality. Nonprofit organizations may apply if they provide pollution reduction or educational services to diesel fleet owners or have, as their principal purpose, the promotion of transportation or air quality.

Eligible diesel reduction solutions include verified emission control technologies, such as exhaust controls, cleaner fuels, engine upgrades, verified idle reduction technologies, verified aerodynamic technologies and low rolling resistance tires, certified engine replacements, and/or certified vehicle or equipment replacement.

Eligible applicants include regional, state, local, or tribal agencies, or port authorities with jurisdiction over transportation or air quality. Nonprofit organizations may apply if they provide pollution reduction or educational services to diesel fleet owners or have, as their principal purpose, the promotion of transportation or air quality. School districts, municipalities, metropolitan planning organizations, cities, and counties are all eligible entities to the extent that they fall within the definition above.

EPA Begins Workforce Reduction

On April 12, the Office of Management and Budget issued a memorandum that provides guidance

on implementing a comprehensive plan for reforming the federal government and reducing the federal workforce. The guidance requires four deliverables by June 30, 2017: 1) Draft Agency Reform Plan; 2) Draft Agency FY 2018-2022 Strategic Plan; 3) Draft Workforce Reduction Plan; and 4) Plan to Maximize Employee Performance. According to an internal agency memo dated April 17 on the agency's efforts to meet these requirements, the EPA has begun the process of offering buyouts and early retirements, and will continue a hiring freeze with limited exceptions. The federal hiring freeze was lifted on April 11.

NREL Report on State of Wind Development

The National Renewable Energy Laboratory has published its [2016 State of Wind Development in the United States by Region](#) report, which finds that significant expansion of wind energy development will be required to achieve the scenarios outlined in the Department of Energy's Wind Vision: 20% wind energy by 2030 and 35% wind energy by 2050. The report also finds that expanding the nation's wind energy portfolio requires high-impact, regionally specific strategies to inform the policy and permitting processes and improve public discourse.

DOE Announces National Laboratories Collaboration with Small Businesses

On April 21, Earth Day, DOE announced that 38 small businesses will collaborate with National Lab research through the [Small Business Vouchers \(SBV\)](#) pilot. The SBV pilot facilitates access to the Department of Energy National Laboratories for small businesses, enabling them to tap into the intellectual and technical resources they need to gain a competitive advantage and overcome critical technology challenges for their advanced energy products. Eight national laboratories will receive funding to partner with 38 competitively selected small businesses across the country. The collaborations with small businesses focus on the following energy technology areas: Advanced manufacturing, bioenergy, buildings, fuel cells, geothermal, solar, vehicles, water, and wind.

Energy Navigator

Please visit and bookmark our [Energy Navigator](#) to easily view all of the latest headlines from the most trusted publications reporting on developments in the energy and clean technology industries. It is housed on our blog, [Energy Technology Matters](#).

Upcoming Events

California Solar Power Expo

May 1–2, 2017
San Diego, CA

[More Info »](#)

Schneider Electric & Aster Capital Digital Energy Event

May 2, 2017
Cambridge, MA

[More Info »](#)

EnergyBar – Greentown Labs

May 4, 2017
Somerville, MA

[More Info »](#)

Solar Summit 2017 – Greentech Media

May 16–18, 2017
Scottsdale, AZ

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Infocast's California Energy Summit

May 16–18, 2017
Santa Monica, CA

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2017 ACEEE Energy Efficiency Finance Forum

May 21–23, 2017

Novogradac's Financing Renewable Energy Tax Credits Conference

May 4–5, 2017
San Francisco, CA

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NEWIN Smart Water & IOT Innovation Showcase

May 5, 2017
Beverly, MA

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EE Global 2017 Energy Efficiency Global Forum

May 8–9, 2017
Washington, DC

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Solar Power Southeast

May 11–12, 2017
Atlanta, GA

[More Info »](#)

Chicago, IL

[More Info »](#)

AWEA WINDPOWER

May 22–25, 2017
Anaheim, CA

[More Info »](#)

Cleantech Open Northeast Boston Mentor Mixer

May 25, 2017
Boston (Mintz Levin)

[More Info »](#)

World Waste to Energy City Summit

May 23–24, 2017
London

[More Info »](#)

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