To: epa@BulletinIntelligence.com[epa@BulletinIntelligence.com]
From: Bulletin Intelligence
Sent: Wed 1/18/2017 11:57:09 AM
Subject: EPA Daily News Briefing for Wednesday, January 18, 2017
epaNewsBriefing170118.doc

Mobile version and searchable archives available at epa.bulletinintelligence.com.

TO: ADMINISTRATOR AND SENIOR EXECUTIVES
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Administrator

Pruitt Repeatedly Sued EPA, Sought Industry Funds To Do It.

McClatchy (1/17, Leavenworth) reports that EPA Administrator-designate Scott Pruitt has sued the agency he has been nominated to lead "numerous times" as Oklahoma's Attorney General and "turned to the industries he would not regulate to raise the millions of dollars needed to finance those lawsuits." As Attorney General, Pruitt "directed two political action committees that took contributions from energy companies and other industries and then used them to further his political agenda." One PAC, the Rule of Law Defense Fund, "allowed industry supporters to make anonymous donations in unlimited amounts" and then "used some of that money to build support for Pruitt's litigation agenda and elect other Republican attorney generals nationwide." According to McClatchy, Pruitt is likely to be questioned about his "legal stance against the EPA and his fundraising interests" during his Senate confirmation hearing on Wednesday.

The Washington Post (1/17, Dennis) says Pruitt announced his candidacy for Oklahoma Attorney General in 2010 with a promise to "fight the federal government at every turn," and, "He has, with gusto." Pruitt has sued the agency he has been nominated to lead "again and again during the Obama administration, challenging the agency's legal authority to regulate toxic mercury pollution, smog, carbon emissions from power plants and the quality of wetlands and other waters." His efforts have "won him praise from fellow Republicans and the oil and gas firms that have helped fund his efforts, as well as from Trump," but they have "horrified environmental advocates, who accuse Pruitt of being a climate-change denier and little more than an arm of the fossil fuel industry." In an editorial, the Wall Street Journal (1/17) argues that Pruitt favors a cooperative approach to enforcing regulations that will do more for the environment by making states partners instead of prosecuting them. KOTV-TV Tulsa, OK (1/17) also provides coverage of the Environmental Defense Fund's report on Pruitt's ties to industry "allegedly linked to more than a dozen lawsuits against the EPA."

Pruitt Allies, Detractors Both Cite His Role In Oil Fraud Case. E&E Publishing (1/17) reports that supporters and allies of Scott Pruitt are "touting his involvement" in cases such a $3.8 million settlement with ConocoPhillips Co. for "double dipping" from a state cleanup fund as "evidence that he will stand up to oil companies." One pro-Pruitt advocacy group "noted a similar case in which Pruitt sued BP PLC, seeking to counter Pruitt's reputation as an ally of oil and gas

companies." However, attorneys for the former state employees originally involved in the case against ConocoPhillips have opposed this narrative, and claim that "Pruitt fought them harder than he did the oil company." The Oklahoman (1/17, Monies) reports that Pruitt's office has provided more details about the work performed by an Alabama law firm for his office in the lawsuit against Phillips 66, revealing that the firm received $942,000 for its work, and that "two members of the firm were also minor donors to Pruitt's statewide races in 2006 and 2010."

Critics Point to Pruitt's Conflicting Approaches To Oklahoma Utility Cases. ClimateWire (1/17, Storrow) reports that critics point to Scott Pruitt's stance on two power company rate requests as evidence of his "cozy relationship with industry interests." Three years ago, when Oklahoma Gas & Electric requested a $1 billion rate the utility "found a ready ally in Republican Scott Pruitt," whereas the attorney general "fiercely opposed" a $130 million rate increase request from Public Service Company of Oklahoma. Detractors claim "the big difference in his stance: where PSO agreed to work with EPA on a transition away from coal, OG&E fought the agency and favored expensive pollution controls designed to keep its coal furnaces humming."

Op-Ed: Pruitt's Ties to Industry Disqualify Him From EPA Post. In an op-ed in Newsweek, (1/17, McDermott) Jeff McDermott, the managing partner at Greentech Capital Advisors and a "registered Republican and frequent contributor to Republican candidates," writes that "Republicans must refuse to confirm Scott Pruitt as director of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) because he is an instrument of the fossil fuel industry." McDermott claims that as Oklahoma Attorney General, "Pruitt copied letters drafted by fossil fuel lobbyists and sent them to government officials on Oklahoma State Government letterhead," and has "repeatedly put his ties with this industry above human health and safety."

As Oklahoma AG, Trump's EPA Nominee Opposed Chesapeake Bay Cleanup.

The Washington Post (1/16) reports that even though "Oklahoma is 1,400 miles from the entrance of the Chesapeake Bay," that didn't stop Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt from participating in an effort to block the EPA's plan to clean the polluted bay. A spokesman for President-elect Trump's transition team "said...Pruitt recently assured Sen. Ben Cardin (D-Md.) that he supports the multistate approach to the bay restoration." However, the spokesman later clarified that "Pruitt opposes any approach that would make the Chesapeake Bay a blueprint to clean watersheds elsewhere in the country." Greenwire (1/17) provides additional coverage.

Environmental Defense Fund Director Blasts Pruitt As Wrong Choice To Lead EPA.

Writing in a guest post for Forbes, (1/17) Diane Regas, Executive Director for the Environmental Defense Fund, blasts Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt as the wrong choice to lead the EPA. She focuses mainly on the New York Times report claiming that "his campaign to roll back bedrock environmental safeguards has been orchestrated and bankrolled" by major polluters within the fossil fuel industry. She also says that Pruitt "hasn't gotten the message" that "protecting the environment and public health is not at odds with a growing, prosperous economy," and accuses him of not "car[ing] much for science."

Four Reasons Pruitt Is "Dangerous" Choice To Lead EPA. Huffington Post (1/17, Mosbergen) contributor Dominique Mosbergen lists "four reasons why Pruitt has been called a 'dangerous' choice to lead the EPA." Mosbergen claims Pruitt "has threatened to undermine protections for air and water" by suing the EPA on multiple occasions regarding air pollution rules. He cites Pruitt's own comments that the EPA "was never intended to be our nation's foremost environmental regulator" and his position as a climate change denier as disqualifying. Finally, accusations that Pruitt is a "close ally of the fossil fuel industry" round out the list.

Barrasso Plans "Wholesale Change" At EPA.

The Hill (1/17, Cama) reports Sen. John Barrasso, the new chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee, is planning a "wholesale change" of the EPA. Barrasso said he looks forward to doing so "alongside a committed and capable administrator" in Scott Pruitt whom the panel will consider confirming. Barrasso applauded Pruitt's work against Obama's EPA, saying he "stood up for Oklahomans against the EPA's extreme regulations on greenhouse gasses, methane emissions, and cross state air pollution," and challenging "unworkable" water rules.

Rep. Smith Says Pruitt Will Usher In "New Era Of Leadership" At EPA. In an op-ed in The Hill (1/17, Smith) Rep. Lamar Smith (R-Texas), the chairman of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology Committee, voices his support for the nomination of Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt to lead the EPA, stating that Pruitt "sees the truth that the current administration has devotedly ignored: the EPA was never intended to be an advocate of extreme environmental regulations." Rep. Smith says that with Pruitt, "a new era of leadership will put the EPA back on track."

Sen. Grassley Says Pruitt Okay After Affirming Support For Ethanol. Brownfield Ag News (1/17) reports that Iowa Sen. Chuck Grassley said that he is "less concerned about Pruitt" since they met earlier this month to discuss his policy stances. "One thing that would have kept me from voting for Pruitt would be on ethanol," said Sen. Grassley, noting that the nominee "assured him that he would enforce the Renewable Fuels Standard as Congress intended."

Additional Reading.

- **What Should Senators Ask Scott Pruitt, Trump's E.P.A. Nominee?** New York Times. (1/17, Schlossberg)
- **Greens Expand Ad Campaign Against Trump EPA Pick.** The Hill. (1/17, Henry)

Air

Judge Praised For Delivering EPA Rebuke.

An editorial in the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review (1/17) praises the ruling by U.S. District Judge John Preston Bailey of West Virginia requiring the EPA to monitor the economic effects stipulated by the Clean Air Act, "specifically regarding job losses at coal mines and power plants." After EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy said that such an analysis could take up to two years to complete, the Review states that Judge Bailey "delivered a long-overdue smack," asserting that "It is time for the EPA to recognize that Congress makes the law, and the EPA must not only enforce the law; it must obey it."

Additional Reading.

- **EPA Tentatively Agrees To NO2, SO2 Review Deadlines.** Greenwire. (1/18)

Brownfields/Superfund/Other Cleanups

Shieldalloy Agrees To Remove Radioactive Slag From EPA Superfund Site.

The Philadelphia Inquirer (1/16, O'Reilly) reported that by the time Shieldalloy Metallurgical Corp. "closed its doors 10 years ago, the 67-acre property along Southwest Boulevard" in Newfield Borough "was a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Superfund site, where pumps still work 24

hours a day pulling chromium and other compounds to the surface." But under a new agreement, "things might be turning around for the notorious site, which Newfield officials hope might once again be put to good use." In November, the EPA "announced a $5.6 million agreement with Shieldalloy to treat contaminated soil, sediment, surface water and groundwater at the site." And last week, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection "announced that Shieldalloy would cart away all 44,000 tons of its radioactive slag and dust."

The Gloucester County (NJ) Times (1/13, Gray) reported that the "slag and 'bag dust' will be transported by rail to a low-level radioactive waste disposal site out of state" and Shieldalloy will cover the costs of the project. The "slag and baghouse dust at Shieldalloy are byproducts of the processes used to produce specialty metals." The material is "classified as Class A low-level radioactive waste, explained DEP spokesman Larry Hajna. Class A is the least radioactive of four low-level radioactive waste categories."

NCR Enters Consent Decree To Complete PCB Cleanup Of Fox River.

The AP (1/17) reports that NCR Corporation has entered a "consent decree" to complete the final phase of polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) removal from bottom sediment of the Fox River, according to the Department of Justice and the Environmental Protection Agency. In a news release the agencies said NCR has performed much of the dredging under protest and that the work to be completed by 2018 could cost up to $200 million. According to the Atlanta (GA) Journal-Constitution (1/17), Assistant Attorney General John C. Cruden of the Justice Department's Environment and Natural Resources Division said in the release, "After years of hard fought litigation, this settlement requires NCR to take full responsibility for completing this important cleanup effort. Lawsuits and settlements like this vindicate the principle that polluters should pay the cost of Superfund cleanups, rather than the taxpayers." NCR General Counsel Edward Gallagher reportedly responded, "NCR is pleased with the successful resolution of this matter."

EPA Says Nuclear Waste Could Slow Down Cleanup Of Westwood Property.

The Amherst (NY) Times (1/16) reports that the EPA wants to conduct ground testing at more than 2000 different areas near the Westwood Country Club to detect the "areas where the atomic waste is supposedly leaking." The EPA said the cleanup effort could take up to two years, and even longer "if the area is sour land because of the radioactive waste."

Additional Reading.

- **EPA Denies $1 Billion-plus In Claims From Toxic Colorado Mine Spill.** Reuters. (1/17, Coffman)
- **Dems Fuming Over EPA's Decision Not To Compensate Mine Spill Victims.** Daily Caller (1/17, Bastasch).

Climate Change

NYTimes Analysis: State Leaders' Climate Policies Insufficient To Achieve US Decarbonization Goals.

The New York Times (1/17, Porter) reports state climate policies are crucial to the US' decarbonization efforts; however, even California, which "has been at the forefront of climate policy for decades," has failed to implement the fuel economy and emissions standards necessary to further these efforts. Drought has unavoidably and drastically reduced hydroelectric power supply, but the state's decision to close the San Onofre nuclear plant in 2012 opened a void met by natural

gas. Meanwhile, state lawmakers across America have not aggressively pushed nuclear energy and have closed a number of nuclear plants, widening the energy demand void that only fossil fuels can feasibly fill. Without nuclear energy advocacy on behalf of state leaders, the Times writes, the fight against climate change "will be hard to stop."

Scientists, Environmental Organizations Criticize Museum Trustee's Contributions To Climate Change Deniers. The New York Times (1/17, Pogrebin) profiles Rebekah Mercer, a trustee and "important donor" to the American Museum of Natural History and "influential member" of President-elect Trump's transition team. The Mercer Family Foundation has contributed nearly $8 million to organizations that question climate change. Because museums typically do not vet their donors and trustees on personal, political, or ideological issues and because Mercer has only recently emerged as a high-profile Republican Party player, the Times says, "it's likely that the museum's trustees were unaware of her philanthropic history" when Mercer joined in 2013. The president of the museum, Ellev V. Futter, did not comment on whether the board had called for Mercer to step down or why she joined in the first place, although a number of scientists and environmental groups have denounced her involvement with the museum on grounds that her efforts conflict with the institution's mission.

Poll Finds Americans Want EPA To Remain Strong Regulator Under Trump.

Reuters (1/17, Kahn) reports that more than 60 percent of Americans would like for the "powers" of the EPA to be "preserved or strengthened under incoming President Donald Trump, and the drilling of oil on public lands to hold steady or drop, according to a Reuters/Ipsos opinion poll released on Tuesday." The findings of the poll "could foretell stronger-than-expected public opposition to Trump's plans to boost energy development by slashing environmental regulations."

State Department Gives $500M To UN Green Climate Fund.

Reuters (1/17) reports the State Department said on Tuesday the US made a "long-planned" $500 million grant to the Green Climate Fund. Bloomberg News (1/17, Ryan) reports the US contribution to the fund is now $1 billion of a pledged $3 billion over four year, but notes that President-elect "Trump has vowed to cancel future payments to the fund and redirect them toward projects in the US." The Washington Post (1/17, Mooney) reports State Department spokesman John Kirby said, "The Green Climate Fund is a critical tool that helps catalyze billions of dollars in public and private investment in countries dealing not only with the challenges of climate change, but the immense economic opportunities that are embedded in the transition to a lower carbon economy." The move, so close to the inauguration "is likely to spark controversy," as the GOP has "been heavily critical of this spending," and Trump has vowed to cease payments to UN global warming programs. Kirby said the investment "had been long-planned. I don't – I don't believe there was any nefarious desire or intent to do it just two days before [the inauguration]."

The AP (1/17, Lee) reports Kirby said the Administration's commitment to the fund "is entirely in keeping with the work that we've been doing across the interagency to try to look for ways to stem the effects of climate change, and this fund helps other economies, other countries develop their own initiatives and help them deal with this." Politico (1/17, Wolff) reports the money came from the fiscal year 2016 Economic Support Fund appropriation.

The Wall Street Journal (1/17, Harder), the Los Angeles Times (1/17, Megerian), and The Hill (1/17, Henry) also report.

Energy

Flaring Rules Take Effect Before Lawsuit Moves Ahead.

The AP (1/17) reports US District Judge Scott Skavdahl ruled that federal rules curtailing the practice of flaring off excess natural gas from wells on federal land will take effect before a lawsuit challenging them moves ahead. He said that he could not immediately conclude that the Interior Department overstepped its authority with the rules, and that certain provisions do not come into full effect for a year anyway. That means the lawsuit contesting the rules filed by a coalition of states and energy interests will have plenty of time to be resolved. Environmentalists praised the decision saying the government can begin collecting royalties on gas currently being flared. The Denver Post (1/17) reports Western Energy Alliance President Kathleen Sgamma said, "It's difficult to get a preliminary injunction, and while we're disappointed the judge was not willing to stop the rule now, we feel that our chances are very good once the full merits of the case are heard. ... There were several statements in his ruling that show he's extremely skeptical of BLM's authority to regulate air quality. We'll be driving those points forward in more detail in our brief due in March." Skavdahl wrote in his opinion that "at this point, the Court cannot conclude that the provisions of the Rule which overlap with EPA/state air quality regulations promulgated under CAA (Clean Air Act) authority lack a legitimate, independent waste prevention purpose or are otherwise so inconsistent with the CAA as to exceed BLM's authority and usurp that of the EPA, states, and tribes."

EPA Challenges FERC On Environmental Review Of Contentious Pipeline.

E&E Publishing (1/17) reports on an "interagency rift" between the EPA and Federal Energy Regulatory Commission "over the depth of climate reviews for proposed gas pipelines." On Thursday FERC commissioner will vote on whether to approve TransCanada's proposed $1.4 billion Leach XPress natural gas pipeline, which would travel between southeast Ohio and West Virginia's northern panhandle. EPA has previously said FERC's analysis of the pipeline was "insufficient" in how it addressed climate change, and instead "suggested further analysis of alternative routes, environmental protections and environmental justice, as well as a deeper analysis of potential greenhouse gas emissions."

North Dakota Challenging Settlement Between Environmentalists, EPA.

E&E Publishing (1/17) reports North Dakota filed a notice of appeal challenging a December legal settlement that requires the EPA to consider revising standards for industry waste under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. EPA had made the consideration as part of a legal settlement between the agency and a coalition of environmentalists who have been pushing for updated regulations for years. The coalition, including the Natural Resources Defense Council and the Environmental Integrity Project have urged the UPA to lift drillers' expemption from RCRA's hazardous waste rules. North Dakota Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem is asking the US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit to review the court's approval of the settlement.

International

Additional Reading.

- **Emissions Cheating Goes Global: France And Britain Also Investigating Automakers.** Christian Science Monitor. (1/17)

Other News

Zinke Stresses Need For Conservation, Says Climate Change Is Real.

Reuters (1/17, Volcovici) reports that Interior Secretary-designate Ryan Zinke told the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Tuesday that he "would consider an expansion of energy drilling and mining on federal lands but would ensure sensitive areas remain protected." Zinke said, "I can guarantee you it is better to produce energy domestically under reasonable regulation than overseas with no regulation." However, he said that he "was committed to protecting sensitive wildlife habitats and to keeping federal lands under federal control to ensure they are preserved for future generations, so 'my granddaughter's children can look back and say that we did it right.'"

Politico (1/17, Wolff, Whieldon) reports Zinke cited Teddy Roosevelt and "Sierra Club founder John Muir and early-1900s Forest Service chief Gifford Pinchot as role models for his approach to conservation," while also calling for an "all of the above" energy policy. Zinke committed to Sen. Lisa Murkowski that he would review every regulation that "takes lands and waters off Alaska" out of oil and gas development. The New York Times (1/17, Huetteman) says Zinke "pitched himself...as a serious steward of federal resources" during his confirmation hearing, "frequently bucking conservative orthodoxy on ownership of public lands, federal funding for preservation and even, briefly, climate change." But he also "emphasized his support for drilling, mining and logging on federal lands, activities strongly opposed by many environmental groups." Zinke "broke with" President-elect Trump "and even his own past statements on climate change," saying that it "was 'indisputable' that the climate is changing and that humans are having an effect on it." The Hill (1/17, Henry) reports Zinke said climate change isn't a "hoax." Zinke added, "I think where there's debate is what that influence is, what we can do about it. ... I'm not a climate science expert, but I will become much more familiar with it and it will be based on objective science." The Washington Post (1/17, Mooney, Erickson) says that Zinke's answer to the question "seems consistent with how other Trump nominees have addressed this tough question."

The Washington Examiner (1/17, Cohen) reports Zinke indicated that climate change "is visible at Glacier National Park, recalling that he could see a glacier receding over lunch with his family while they were at the park one day."

The Washington Post (1/17, O'Keefe, Fears) reports that Zinke also said "that completing billions of dollars in backlogged projects at national parks should be a major part of the new president's plans to revamp aging roads, bridges and transportation hubs." The Washington Times (1/17, Wolfgang) also reports on the hearing, focusing mainly on the climate change issue. The AP (1/17, Daly) reports Zinke is "likely to win Senate confirmation."

Former New Jersey Governors Urge Next To Prioritize Environment.

The Philadelphia Inquirer (1/17, Hanna) reports that former New Jersey Govs. Jim Florio and Christie Whitman joined environmental advocates Tuesday in launching a campaign to press New Jersey's next governor to make the environment a priority. Whitman said she was "very troubled" by Trump's attitude toward the EPA and hoped to spur action, saying, "Our governor is the most powerful of the 50 states" and "has the ability to make deep and long-lasting differences." Without mentioning Gov. Chris Christie, Florio "faulted the administration's replacement of pipeline foes on the Pinelands Commission and the lack of progress on offshore wind."

Perry Confirmation Hearing To Take Place This Thursday.

This week several of President-elect Trump's cabinet choices are set to testify before Senate confirmation hearings, including Trump's choice to run the Department of Energy, former Texas governor Rick Perry. The New York Times (1/17, Huetteman) reports Perry "will be asked to defend a department he once vowed to eliminate as a presidential candidate." He is slated to testify on Thursday. The choice of Perry, "to lead the agency charged with managing the nation's

nuclear arsenal and thwarting proliferation elsewhere, has raised questions among Democrats about his fitness for the job." The outgoing energy secretary, Ernest Moniz, "is a nuclear scientist who was part of the negotiating team on the Iran nuclear deal." USA Today (1/17, Kelly) also notes that Perry has in the past "advocated" for the abolition of the Energy Department.

The Hill (1/17, Henry) reports Democrats are expected to "prod" Perry "on the agency's climate change and clean energy agenda, both of which expanded under Obama, as well as a Trump team questionnaire, revealed in December, seeking names of employees involved in climate work." On its website NBC News (1/17) reports Perry's "financial ties to the oil and gas industry and efforts to expand oil and gas production during his time as governor of Texas are certain to draw pointed questions from Democrats," but he has received praise "from some environmentalists for also promoting renewable energy production as governor of Texas."

The "Floor Action" blog of The Hill (1/17, Carney) reports Perry's hearing will take place the same day as Steve Mnuchin, Trump's choice for Treasury secretary. A piece by TIME (1/17, Alter, Beckwith) highlights Perry's, and other Cabinet nominees, corporate connections as well as the donations made to his political campaigns.

Senators May Press Perry On "Oops" Moment. E&E Publishing (1/17) reports senators may throw a few "jabs" at Perry over "his now infamous DOE 'oops' moment during a presidential debate in Detroit in the summer of 2011, in which he said he wanted to eliminate three agencies, including DOE — except that he couldn't remember the department's name at the time." But "insiders" around Perry "say it's time to move past that public gaffe."

ClimateWire (1/17, Irfan) reports that several Texas watchdogs have expressed concerns about jobs programs launched by Perry as governor and questions about poor management and accounting. Tom Smith, Texas director of Public Citizen, said, "The critiques have often been that the programs operated without clear goals that enable their outcomes to be measured. ... [Perry's] policies in Texas were frequently criticized for being donor-driven or benefiting his cronies." Smith has "been discussing this with some of the Democrats on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee ahead of Perry's confirmation hearing."

Additional Reading.

- **EPA: Top Spokesman Says Goodbye.** E&E Publishing. (1/18)

Pesticides

EPA To Decide On Chlorphyrifos Ban By March 31.

Greenwire (1/18, Heller) reports that the public comment period regarding the EPA's proposed ban on the pesticide chlorpyrifos ends today, "and a federal court has told EPA to reach a final decision by March 31." The Natural Resources Defense Council claims that relatively small amounts of the pesticide early in life can lead to learning disabilities. Despite NRDC's claims that "scientists at the EPA see this is a huge public health threat," some groups are concerned that the EPA won't enact the ban once President-elect Trump takes office.

Additional Reading.

- **Schools In Lindsay, San Joaquin Added To California's Pesticide Monitoring List.** Fresno (CA) Bee. (1/17)
- **The EPA Backing Off These Pesticide Restrictions For Bees Sake.** USA Today. (1/17)

Rules/Regulations/Policy

Foreign Emissions Rules Could Help Maintain New EPA Regulations.

The Car Connection (1/17, Read) reports the Environmental Protection Agency "stunned many observers" on Friday by finalizing emissions standards for new cars through 2025, with environmental groups praising the ruling and automakers criticizing the move. However, "the real question on everyone's mind...is whether the incoming Trump administration can undo the EPA's ruling." While the feasibility of such a move is uncertain, the article points out that "other countries could force automakers to make vehicles cleaner, even if the EPA decision falls apart." When foreign markets "demand that cars sold there meet strict emissions rules, the technology underpinning those vehicles often gets spread around," and "automakers will have to meet those benchmarks."

Green Car Reports (1/17, Voelcker) reports that under the Trump administration, it's possible that "the EPA's vehicle emission limits, the NHTSA's fuel-economy rules, and various other regulations...could well be suspended, rolled back, or eliminated," but argues "there is risk for US automakers in particular if that happens" because "the rest of the world...has no intention of rolling back its own emission limits." A slackening of US standards would "run the risk of moving a US market that's already less important than it was 20 years ago even further from the global mainstream."

Toxics/TSCA

EPA Proposes Rules To Regulate Chemicals In Commerce.

Bloomberg BNA (1/18) reports that the EPA has proposed three rules as mandated by the Toxic Substances Control Act that would establish the "first-ever, comprehensive regulatory strategy to evaluate—and regulate, if needed—chemicals in commerce." Jim Jones, the EPA assistant administrator for chemical safety and pollution prevention touted the rules, stating, "After 40 years, we can finally address chemicals currently in the marketplace."

Water

Officials Say Drinking Water Safe Despite Complaints About Taste, Odor.

The AP (1/17) reports that the Great Lakes Water Authority has confirmed that the water is safe to drink in suburban Detroit communities after recent complaints about the water's taste and odor.

House Democrats Renew Subpoena Request For Gov. Snyder's Flint Records.

The Detroit News (1/17, Lynch) reports Democrats on the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform are "asking again for the Republican-led panel to continue its work" investigating the Flint water crisis, "with a renewed focus on Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder and three emergency financial managers he appointed." In a letter sent to Chairman Jason Chaffetz (R-UT) on Tuesday, committee Democrats "asked again that the committee chairman seek 'key documents (Snyder) has been withholding from the Committee for the past year, including evidence relating to his destruction of emails.'"

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