To: Ferguson, Lincoln[ferguson.lincoln@epa.gov]
From: Bowman, Liz
Sent: Thur 8/10/2017 2:55:29 PM
Subject: FW: Tulsa World: Some believe Scott Pruitt is eyeing U.S. Senate campaign from his seat as EPA head, 8/10/17

FYI

Tulsa World

http://www.tulsaworld.com/homepagelatest/randy-krehbiel-some-believe-scott-pruitt-is-eyeing-u-s/article_8df80b4a-fde8-59d5-b67b-153214782f0f.html

Some believe Scott Pruitt is eyeing U.S. Senate campaign from his seat as EPA head

By: Randy Krehbiel, 8/9/17

Former Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt's foray into the federal bureaucracy as Environmental Protection Agency administrator doesn't seem to have diminished speculation that his ultimate goal is the U.S. Senate.

Although he remains mum about his long-range plans, Pruitt has long been seen as a potential successor to U.S. Sen. Jim Inhofe, who would be up for re-election in 2020, when he turns 86.

Inhofe has not said whether he'll seek another term, but he has always been very complementary of Pruitt and, publicly at least, seems to regard Pruitt as a worthy protege.

In a piece published Wednesday morning, Politico suggests some of Pruitt's EPA initiatives are regarded as political theater. His proposed televised debates on climate change are viewed with particular skepticism, according to the piece.

"The man's running for Senate (in 2020)," says David Bookbinder of the Niskanen Center, a libertarian-leaning policy institute that favors federal regulation of greenhouse gases. "Everything he says is calculated toward securing the Republican nomination in Oklahoma and

then winning the general election there."

Pruitt has been and continues to be the subject of intense scrutiny in Washington. Most recently, reporters have been reexamining Pruitt's handling five years ago of a state auditor and inspector's report on a trust created to administer relocation of residents in the area of Tar Creek in Ottawa County.

Pruitt, who was attorney general at the time, took the report to the state's multi-county grand jury, but no action was taken. Pruitt subsequently refused to release the report, saying he believed it might cast private citizens in an unfavorable light.

At the time, Auditor and Inspector Gary Jones, now a candidate for governor, disagreed with Pruitt.

More recently, as a result of Open Records Act requests for the audit, Jones' office asked current Attorney General Mike Hunter for guidance on the matter.

In a letter dated Aug. 3, Senior Deputy Attorney General Tom Gruber told Jones' office "this audit shall remain a confidential criminal investigatory file in the Office of the Attorney General and will not be released."

A long record in public office can be fertile ground for political foes. The Politico piece says that while Pruitt's energy allies want a more favorable regulatory environment, they don't necessarily want a showdown on environmental science, because that's a fight they could lose.

And if they lose, so does Scott Pruitt.

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