Message

From: POLITICO Pro Energy [politicoemail@politicopro.com]
Sent: 5/10/2018 10:08:46 AM
To: Dravis, Samantha [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=ece53f0610054e669d9dffe0b3a842df-Dravis, Sam]
Subject: Morning Energy, presented by Anheuser-Busch: Zinke's turn on the Hill — EPA watchdog: Aides slow to turn over docs — House to take up Yucca bill today

By Kelsey Tamborrino | 05/10/2018 06:01 AM EDT

With help from Eric Wolff, Alex Guillén, Anthony Adragna and Jennifer Haberkorn

ZINKE HEADS TO THE HILL: Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke faces his Senate appropriators today to discuss his department's budget request for fiscal 2019. Expect Democrats to bring up familiar topics, such as his plans to reorganize the department and last year's decision to shrink national monuments in Utah. Subcommittee ranking member Tom Udall plans to tell Zinke that until courts weigh in on whether his move was legal, "I believe that moving forward with land management plans that will open these iconic areas to development is reckless."

Subcommittee Chair Lisa Murkowski may be interested in hearing more about Zinke's plans for oil and gas development in Alaska, after Interior kicked off its environmental review of potential drilling in part of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge thanks to language she got included in last year's tax bill. And Sen. Lamar Alexander, another member of the subcommittee, can follow up on the maintenance backlog for the national parks, an issue the two discussed when Zinke visited Tennessee last week.

Ahead of the hearing, the Coalition to Protect America's National Parks is sending a letter to Zinke, with signatures from current and former employees of the National Park Service, calling on him to support permanent reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, an issue with support in both parties.

If you go: The Senate Appropriations Interior-Environment Subcommittee hearing begins at 9:30 a.m. in 138 Dirksen.

— **But first:** Zinke will join Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue at USDA headquarters for an 8 a.m. briefing on the forecast for this year's wildfire season.

WATCHDOG: EPA AIDES SLOW TO SEND DOCS: EPA's internal watchdog complained last year that Administrator Scott Pruitt's aides were taking their sweet time handing over documents related to a probe into their boss' travels, new emails show. Although the standoff between the inspector general's office and Pruitt's staff was resolved a month later, the incident illustrates tensions between political appointees and career oversight officials that developed early on. The IG's office is in the process of conducting multiple reviews into Pruitt's actions.

The new emails, released under a FOIA request from California's Justice Department, show the IG's office was seeking information for its probe of Pruitt's frequent travel to Oklahoma on EPA business, Pro's Alex Guillén reports. That same probe was later expanded to include a wider swath of Pruitt's travel practices, including his first-class flights that cost more than $100,000. (The investigation is slated to be completed this summer.)

At the time, the agency's assistant inspector general for audits, Kevin Christensen, wrote to a top career official in EPA's finance office to warn of a "potential situation" with the travel audit just two weeks after it began, the emails show. Christensen flagged messages showing Pruitt's chief of staff Ryan Jackson was

"screening" documents before releasing them to the Office of Inspector General. "This does not fit the definition of unfettered access or comply with the Administrator memo on access and providing information to the OIG," Christensen wrote to Jeanne Conklin, EPA's controller who oversees financial management and reporting. "When we are denied access to information until approved for release, it raises the question as to what is being withheld and approved for release."

The emails spotlight concerns about the lack of transparency atop the agency since Pruitt joined. And other emails released to California's Department of Justice also show career ethics officials warning Pruitt's aides about accepting industry awards and attending political events, further exemplifying internal tensions as Pruitt's external problems grow. Read more from Alex here.

— **Related reporting:** Amid ongoing scrutiny, Pruitt met with industry representatives Wednesday, where a reporter asked if he still had the confidence of the White House. Pruitt said: "I think they've spoken very clearly," Bloomberg reports.

WELCOME TO THURSDAY! I'm your host Kelsey Tamborrino. Bracewell's Frank Maisano was the first to correctly identify Detroit as home to the first paved roadway. Woodward Avenue carries the designation M-1 for its status as the first place to pour a 1-mile patch of concrete roadway. For today: Name the state first lady who simultaneously served as a member of the House. Send your tips, energy gossip and comments to ktamborrino@politico.com, or follow us on Twitter @kelseytam, @Morning_Energy and @POLITICOPro.

TRUMP EXTENDS OLIVE BRANCH: President Donald Trump called coal baron Don Blankenship Wednesday to exchange pleasantries and offer up congratulations for waging his campaign, POLITICO's Alex Isenstadt reports. The conversation was described as straightforward, polite and cordial, and comes days after Trump tweeted that voters shouldn't vote for Blankenship in the West Virginia Republican primary. Blankenship also published an open letter to Trump on Wednesday that in part blamed the president for his loss. "Your interference in the West Virginia election displayed a lack of understanding of the likely outcome of the upcoming general election," Blankenship wrote. But he ended with a note of optimism: "I look forward to meeting with you in the near future." Alex reported the president had also reached out to Rep. Evan Jenkins, who also lost in Tuesday's primary, but had yet to connect with the Republican party's winner, Patrick Morrisey, as of Wednesday evening. Read more.

** **A message from Anheuser-Busch:** Anheuser-Busch announced that America's leading brewer has placed an order for up to 800 hydrogen-electric powered semi-trucks. The zero-emission trucks will be able to travel between 500 and 1,200 miles. Anheuser-Busch aims to convert its entire long-haul dedicated fleet to renewable powered trucks by 2025. Learn more. **

HOUSE GOES NUCLEAR: The House will take up the long-awaited H.R. 3053 (115), the "Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 2018," for consideration today, with votes expected between 10:45 a.m. and 11:45 a.m. The bipartisan legislation would update how the U.S. handles nuclear waste and promote development of the Yucca Mountain repository in Nevada, among other provisions. The legislation is expected to pass, although it will face a much shakier Senate reception with Sen. Dean Heller facing a tough re-election race this year. Rep. John Shimkus, who introduced the comprehensive nuclear waste package, previously said he hadn't had any recent talks with Senate counterparts about potentially moving the bill across the Capitol. Still, its appearance today is a victory for Shimkus: Greg Walden told reporters this week that Shimkus had sent hand-written letters to the homes of every member of leadership during recess encouraging the bill to come up, praising his tenacity.

COURT SAYS CRA IS A-OK: A federal judge in Alaska yesterday dismissed an environmental group's lawsuit that called the Congressional Review Act unconstitutional. The Center for Biological Diversity specifically challenged the CRA resolution successfully passed by Congress last spring that nullified an Interior Department rule regarding hunting in Alaska wildlife refuges.

Judge Sharon Gleason of the U.S. District Court for Alaska, an Obama appointee, noted that both the CRA itself and this specific resolution were passed by both chambers and signed by the president, fulfilling the constitutional requirements for creating laws. Other parts of CBD's argument similarly failed to hold water. "The Court finds that even construing all the facts in favor of CBD, CBD's constitutional claims fail to adequately allege a plausible basis for relief," Gleason wrote.

SUNNY CALIFORNIA: The California Energy Commission voted unanimously Wednesday to require solar panels be installed for all newly built single-family homes and multifamily buildings less than three stories starting in 2020. A CEC study found that installing solar would increase home prices, but that would be more than offset by lower utility bills, according to the Los Angeles Times. The move has been anticipated for years and was supported by much of the home building industry. More from the LAT here.

STEELWORKERS SAY YES TO RFS: The United Steelworkers are supporting Trump's recent decisions on the Renewable Fuel Standard, which include expanding sales of 15 percent ethanol fuels and having EPA and USDA workout some kind of program for biofuel credits on exported ethanol. "While it will continue to review the details, [USW] supports a deal brokered by the President that appears to address the long-running conflict between ethanol producers and oil refiners over federal biofuels mandates," the union said in a press release.

HOUSE GOP DROPS RESCISSIONS PACKAGE: House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy unveiled the chamber's batch of spending cuts Wednesday. Similar to the White House's request, the package makes cuts to Energy Department loan guarantee programs for clean energy and vehicle technologies. The bill is expected to go directly to the House floor for a vote, Pro's Sarah Ferris reports. Senate GOP leaders have said they will consider the bill if and when it passes the House.

MEANWHILE IN BONN: Things aren't going as planned for the second week of climate talks in Bonn, Germany, punting further discussions to another meeting in September. The U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change said Wednesday that there would be an additional meeting from Sept. 3-8 in Bangkok amid a stalemate centered in part around clarity on climate finance between developed and developing countries. The new date underscores the pressure negotiators are under to advance talks enough for ministers to strike a deal later this year at the COP24 in Katowice, Poland. "We need to resolve differences on finance, accounting and transparency," Alden Meyer of the Union of Concerned Scientists told POLITICO Europe's Kalina Oroschakoff.

CALVERT: EPA-INTERIOR COMING SHORTLY: Rep. Ken Calvert, who oversees EPA and Interior on the Appropriations Committee, told ME to expect their fiscal 2019 bill "pretty soon" as work's going well. "We're working on final details now," he said. As for the perennial question, yes, Calvert expects policy riders to be in play: "There's always riders," he quipped.

AUTOMAKERS WANT MORE FUEL EFFICIENCY: The Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers and the Global Automakers, trade associations which together represent most of the automakers who sell cars in the U.S., will tell Trump that they most definitely want increases in fuel efficiency standards, contra that zero increase preference of the Department of Transportation. They also want the federal government to work out a single national standard with California, rather than face either a bifurcated market or a long legal battle. "Automakers are deeply committed to increased fuel economy and safety measures that meet the needs of our customers, and we expect to share the importance of government policies that provide certainty to the auto sector, continue to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reflect what consumers will buy and result in a national policy that includes California," the two groups said in a statement.

FOLLOW THE MONEY: The Environmental Integrity Project released a database Wednesday of political contributions from companies and conservative organizations that met with Pruitt between Feb. 21, 2017, and April 13 of this year. The database was compiled via EPA calendars, FEC reports and data from the Center for Responsive Politics. See it here.

SAVE THE DATE: BLM scheduled meetings to discuss its plans for an environmental review of planned oil and gas leases in ANWR. Several will be held in Alaska, including one each in Fairbanks and Anchorage on May 29 and May 30, respectively. Another meeting is scheduled for Washington D.C. on June 15. For those who can't make the hearings, BLM plans to live stream the Fairbanks and Anchorage dates.

MAIL CALL! ISN'T IT IRONIC? Six Democratic senators wrote to Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs Administrator Neomi Rao on the office's review and evaluation process for EPA's proposed "secret science" proposal to ban the use of studies that don't publicly disclose all their data. "The review process and rollout of this rule appears to have been rushed and secretive — which is particularly ironic for a proposal that purportedly aims to improve agency transparency and decision-making processes," they write.

Separately, bipartisan Reps. Ryan Costello and Paul Tonko sent a letter to the National Academy of Sciences asking for its input on the proposed rule, which was discussed when Pruitt testified before the House E&C Committee. Read the letter here.

Of course, Pruitt seems pleased with the proposal: Bloomberg's Ari Natter snapped a photo of new signs at EPA that tout the agency's "Strengthening Transparency in Regulatory Science."

ROCK STARS: Access Fund and American Alpine Club are sponsoring their annual "Climb the Hill" event today with professional rock climbers and outdoor recreation advocacy groups, who will hit the Hill today to talk outdoor recreation and public lands. Sen. Maria Cantwell will attend a reception with the group at 3 p.m. in 385 Russell. High-profile members of the rock-climbing community and executives from REI, Patagonia and The North Face will attend.

QUICK HITS

— Pair of investor-pushed resolutions pass at Kinder Morgan, Axios.

— Saudis pledge to "mitigate" loss of Iranian oil exports from U.S. sanctions. But crude prices rise anyway, The Washington Post.

— Emails: Perdue's donors, agency coordinated on biomass, E&E News.

— Hugh Hewitt used his MSNBC gig to praise efforts to weaken a law that his firm's client is accused of violating, Media Matters.

— Emails show Heritage Foundation offered Pruitt flights, hotel, and talking points for its conference, ThinkProgress.

HAPPENING TODAY

8:00 a.m. — The Women's Council on Energy and the Environment discussion on "Congressional Energy and Environmental Priorities: 2018 and Beyond," 400 North Capitol Street NW

8:30 a.m. — The International Trade Administration meeting of the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Advisory Committee, 1401 Constitution Avenue NW

8:45 a.m. — Peter G. Peterson Foundation holds "the 2018 Fiscal Summit: Debt Matters," 1301 Constitution Ave NW

9:00 a.m. — House Appropriations Interior-Environment Subcommittee two-part hearing on "American Indian/Alaska Native Public Witnesses," 2007 Rayburn

9:00 a.m. — The Environmental Law Institute conference on "Infrastructure Review and Permitting: Is Change in the Wind?" 601 Massachusetts Avenue NW

9:00 a.m. — The Washington Post discussion on "The Energy 202 Live," 1301 K Street NW

9:30 a.m. — Senate Appropriations Interior-Environment Subcommittee hearing on Interior's FY 2019 budget request, 138 Dirksen

10:00 a.m. — House Energy and Commerce Energy Subcommittee hearing examining the state of electric transmission infrastructure investment, planning, construction and alternatives, 2123 Rayburn

1:00 p.m. — The United States Energy Association forum on "Chemical Looping Prospective: An Advanced Approach to Coal Utilization," 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue NW

2:00 p.m. — Center for Climate and Energy Solutions webinar on "City-Utility Partnerships for a Cleaner Energy Future."

THAT'S ALL FOR ME!

** **A message from Anheuser-Busch:** Anheuser-Busch announced that America's leading brewer has placed an order for up to 800 hydrogen-electric powered semi-trucks from the pioneer in hydrogen-electric renewable technology, Nikola Motor Company. The zero-emission trucks — which will be able to travel between 500 and 1,200 miles and be refilled within 20 minutes, reducing idle time — are expected to be integrated into Anheuser-Busch's dedicated fleet beginning in 2020.

Through this agreement Anheuser-Busch aims to convert its entire long-haul dedicated fleet to renewable powered trucks by 2025.

"At Anheuser-Busch we're continuously searching for ways to improve sustainability across our entire value chain and drive our industry forward," said Michel Doukeris, CEO of Anheuser-Busch. "The transport industry is one that is ripe for innovative solutions and Nikola is leading the way with hydrogen-electric, zero-emission capabilities. We are very excited by the possibilities our partnership with them can offer."

Learn more. **

To view online:
https://subscriber.politicopro.com/newsletters/morning-energy/2018/05/zinkes-turn-on-the-hill-209472

Stories from POLITICO Pro

EPA watchdog knocked Pruitt aides for slowing probe Back

By Alex Guillén | 05/09/2018 06:43 PM EDT

EPA's internal watchdog complained last year that Scott Pruitt's top aides were delaying handing over documents to auditors probing the administrator's travel practices, according to newly released emails.

That standoff between the EPA inspector general's office and Pruitt's team was resolved a month after the IG's staff flagged the issue and warned that the reticence to release the documents came close to impeding their probe, the emails show. But the incident highlights early tension between EPA's political appointees and the internal watchdog, which is now conducting multiple reviews of Pruitt's actions.

And it shows that concerns about the lack of transparency atop the agency since Pruitt joined have rankled people inside the agency as well as outside. POLITICO reported last week that Pruitt's political appointees were screening documents produced for public records requests related to the embattled administrator, slowing the release of information.

The new emails, released under a Freedom of Information Act request from California's Justice Department, show the IG's office was seeking information for its probe of Pruitt's frequent travel to Oklahoma on EPA business, enabling him to spend numerous weekends at his home in Tulsa.

That probe was later expanded to look at Pruitt's other travel practices, including his first-class flights that cost more than $100,000, and it is expected to be completed by this summer. The watchdog has since opened additional probes into Pruitt's security spending, condo rental, soundproof phone booth, large raises for aides and allegations of retaliation against staff who questioned him.

Kevin Christensen, EPA's assistant inspector general for audits, wrote in September to a top career official in EPA's finance office to warn of a "potential situation" with the travel audit just two weeks after it began, the emails show. He flagged messages showing Pruitt's chief of staff Ryan Jackson was "screening" documents before releasing them to the Office of Inspector General.

"This does not fit the definition of unfettered access or comply with the Administrator memo on access and providing information to the OIG," Christensen wrote to Jeanne Conklin, EPA's controller who oversees financial management and reporting. "When we are denied access to information until approved for release, it raises the question as to what is being withheld and approved for release."

The auditors were able to obtain the documents on Pruitt's flights from the EPA's finance office in Cincinnati, even as Pruitt's staff continued to withhold them, Conklin wrote to Kevin Minoli, a career official who at that time served as EPA's acting general counsel.

"Do they not understand in the [Office of the Administrator]," Conklin asked Minoli. "Perhaps someone can speak to them and make them understand that the OIG has the documents already and they appear close to impeding the audit."

Both Minoli and Conklin stated in their email exchange that neither of them advised Pruitt's staff that they had the power to delay or withhold handing over documents to the OIG.

Minoli said in an email a week later that Jackson had delayed providing the records over concerns the audit might make public some previously redacted information, such as Pruitt's calendar and flight records. Minoli said he discussed the matter with the deputy inspector general, Chuck Sheehan, and noted the IG's office "has a long-standing practice of not using privileged information in their published work unless absolutely necessary."

An EPA spokesman on Wednesday declined to comment on the incident.

Other emails released to California's Department of Justice under the FOIA request also show career ethics officials warning Pruitt's aides about accepting industry awards and attending political events.

In March 2017, the Oklahoma-based National Stripper Well Association told Pruitt it would award him its "Industry Leader Award" at an annual gala, which was sponsored by Koch Industries. The group represents the

owners of the hundreds of thousands of small wells that produce less than 15 barrels of oil or 90,000 cubic feet of natural gas per day.

But EPA ethics official Justina Fugh noted in an email to Pruitt's schedulers, Sydney Hupp and Millan Hupp, that NSWA was registered to lobby the federal government and Pruitt would violate his ethics agreement if he accepted the honor.

The group had praised Pruitt's decision that month to halt the Obama EPA's request for oil and gas companies to provide the agency with information about methane emissions, a possible first step toward regulating pollution in those existing wells. "NSWA Got a Win at EPA Already!" touted an early March blog post by the group. It is unclear whether Pruitt's award was directly connected to that decision.

Fugh warned the Hupps that Pruitt would have to walk a fine line in accepting anything from a lobbying entity. Items with "no other intrinsic value" like a plaque may be OK, she said, but "an ashtray or coffee table book" would not be.

Pruitt ultimately appears to have accepted a plaque from the NSWA, according to a photo posted on the group's site and his own internal calendars. Another photo posted on the NSWA's Facebook page shows Pruitt posing with Koch executives.

Pruitt's Outlook calendar, released in response to public records requests, lists the topic of the speaking engagement as "acceptance of award, thank you."

EPA did not say whether Pruitt officially accepted the award from the group along with the plaque, despite Fugh's advice.

"We gave the plaque to [the Office of the Executive Secretariat] who confirmed that we could keep it," EPA spokesman Jahan Wilcox said. NSWA did not say Wednesday why it honored Pruitt.

Pruitt aides hinted to ethics officials last fall that he expected to be invited to increasing numbers of political events, which ethics officials warned raises a host of Hatch Act concerns about mixing political activities with his official duties.

Earlier in his tenure, Pruitt had decided not to attend an Oklahoma GOP fundraiser after reports revealed the event would feature a speech on EPA issues.

Last fall, Ronna McDaniel, the head of the Republican National Committee, invited Pruitt to attend an Oct. 25 fundraiser in Dallas for Trump Victory, a joint fundraising committee that funnels money to the RNC and Trump's reelection campaign.

"We will get more and more of these" invites as "political season" approaches, Jackson wrote to an ethics official.

Hatch Act restrictions would allow Pruitt to attend, but he would be barred from mentioning his EPA affiliation or asking for donations, Fugh replied. EPA could not cover his travel costs, although the agency could pay for his security detail's travel, Fugh added. Event organizers could not specifically invite guests with issues before the agency and would need to rescind invitations to anyone with business before EPA.

Pruitt ultimately appears to have skipped that fundraiser.

Emily Holden contributed to this report.

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Back

Trump calls Blankenship after pushing for his loss in West Virginia Back

By Alex Isenstadt | 05/09/2018 10:55 PM EDT

President Donald Trump connected by phone on Wednesday with Don Blankenship, the former coal baron and ex-con whose Senate candidacy he helped sink.

Trump and Blankenship spoke briefly, according to three people familiar with the discussion. The conversation was described as straightforward, polite and cordial, with the president calling to exchange pleasantries and offer his congratulations on waging the campaign.

The call came two days after Trump took to Twitter to urge West Virginia Republicans to reject Blankenship's candidacy. In the tweet, Trump argued that Blankenship, who spent a year in jail following a 2010 explosion at his Upper Big Branch Mine that killed 29 workers, would be unable to defeat Democratic Sen. Joe Manchin in November.

Trump's intervention undermined Blankenship, who had aligned himself closely with the president — so much so that he described himself as "Trumpier than Trump."

Blankenship would go on to lose the primary decisively, finishing a distant third behind state Attorney General Patrick Morrisey and Rep. Evan Jenkins.

In his remarks to supporters on Tuesday evening, Blankenship attributed his loss to the president's last-minute intervention in the contest, saying that it had halted his momentum.

"I think if there was any single factor based on the polling at different times, the debates, and all the things I saw, it was probably President Trump's lack of endorsement — I don't know what to call it, but 'Don't vote for Don' tweet," he said. "I don't know what else it would have been."

In the final hours of the race, he said he was convinced that Trump had been pushed into the intervention by Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, who had aggressively opposed Blankenship.

Blankenship on Wednesday released an "open letter" to Trump in which he accused the president of spreading "fake news against me."

"Your interference in the West Virginia election displayed a lack of understanding of the likely outcome of the upcoming general election," Blankenship added. "Patrick Morrisey will likely lose the general election. It's too late to change that, but it's not helpful to do to me what others are doing to you."

The president also connected briefly with Jenkins, but as of Wednesday evening had yet to connect with Morrisey, the winner of the primary. On Tuesday, though, Morrisey spoke with Donald Trump Jr. During the call, the president's eldest son promised to be helpful.

Trump's calls on Wednesday, several Republicans said, were partly aimed at healing the wounds following a deeply divisive primary. Blankenship has yet to endorse Morrisey, who aggressively attacked him during the final days of the race.

Some in the party are concerned that the deep-pocketed Blankenship, who spent more than $2.5 million of his own funds in the primary, could wage an effort to damage Morrisey in the general election.

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DOE loan guarantee programs hit hard in White House rescissions package Back

By Anthony Adragna | 05/08/2018 11:08 AM EDT

More than $5 billion in Energy Department loan guarantee programs for clean energy and vehicle technologies would be cut under a $15 billion rescissions request unveiled today by the White House.

The proposal would cut $684 million from clean energy loan guarantee programs, on top of the $4.33 billion in proposed cuts to Advanced Technology Vehicles Manufacturing loan program already announced by the Trump administration.

"This proposed rescission would eliminate subsidy amounts that are inconsistent with the President's policies," the proposal says of cutting from the loan guarantee programs.

In addition, the package would cut $10 million in water quality research grants, which the proposal says "are duplicative with other Federal programs."

WHAT'S NEXT: The package is expected to easily pass the House but faces a less certain fate in the Senate.

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Trump spending cut package to head directly to House floor Back

By Sarah Ferris | 05/09/2018 01:03 PM EDT

House Republican leaders are moving quickly to tee up the White House's $15 billion package of proposed spending cutbacks.

GOP leaders plan to release legislative text of the White House's proposal as early as today, a House GOP aide confirmed.

The package is expected to closely mirror the Trump administration's request, which targeted unspent dollars from years-old accounts.

It will not go through the House Appropriations Committee, another GOP aide confirmed. That sets up the bill directly for a floor vote.

Most Republicans have embraced the proposed cuts, even as some budget hawks complained that most of the savings are only on paper.

But some, like GOP Rep. Vern Buchanan of Florida, have rejected the idea of cutting $7 billion of budget authority from the Children's Health Insurance Program.

White House officials have argued that most of the funding has technically expired and can't be used, so it would have zero impact on the program.

The CBO confirmed that point today, saying that there would be no actual cuts or coverage reductions for CHIP.

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Back

House GOP leaders unveil rescissions bill Back

By Sarah Ferris | 05/09/2018 08:28 PM EDT

House Republican leaders today unveiled a package of spending cuts, following a request from President Donald Trump this week.

The House GOP bill contains $10.45 billion in specific cuts, including roughly $7 billion to the Children's Health Insurance Program.

Other cutbacks in the GOP bill — including one targeting an energy program in the 2009 Obama-era stimulus bill — do not provide specific dollar amounts.

House GOP leaders will now begin whipping support for the bill, which is expected to go directly to the House floor for a vote. Senate GOP leaders have said they will consider the bill if and when it passes the House.

Under a decades-old law, presidential rescissions requests can pass the Senate with a simple majority, instead of the usual 60-vote threshold for procedural votes.

Democrats argue that Trump's bill would require the full 60 votes, however, because it targets mandatory funding, and not solely discretionary.

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