Message

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To: Woods, Clint [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=bc65010f5c2e48f4bc2aa050db50d198-Woods, Clin]
Subject: Morning Consult Energy, Presented by Wells Fargo: Pruitt Expected to Face GOP Questions Over Ethics, Spending at Hearings

By Jacqueline Toth

Top Stories

- When Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt testifies before two House committees today, he is likely to face at least some critical questions from Republicans about allegations of ethical lapses and excessive spending. House Energy and Commerce Environment Subcommittee Chairman John Shimkus (R-Ill.) said Pruitt can expect a "cool" reception from his party, though committee member Joe Barton (R-Texas) said

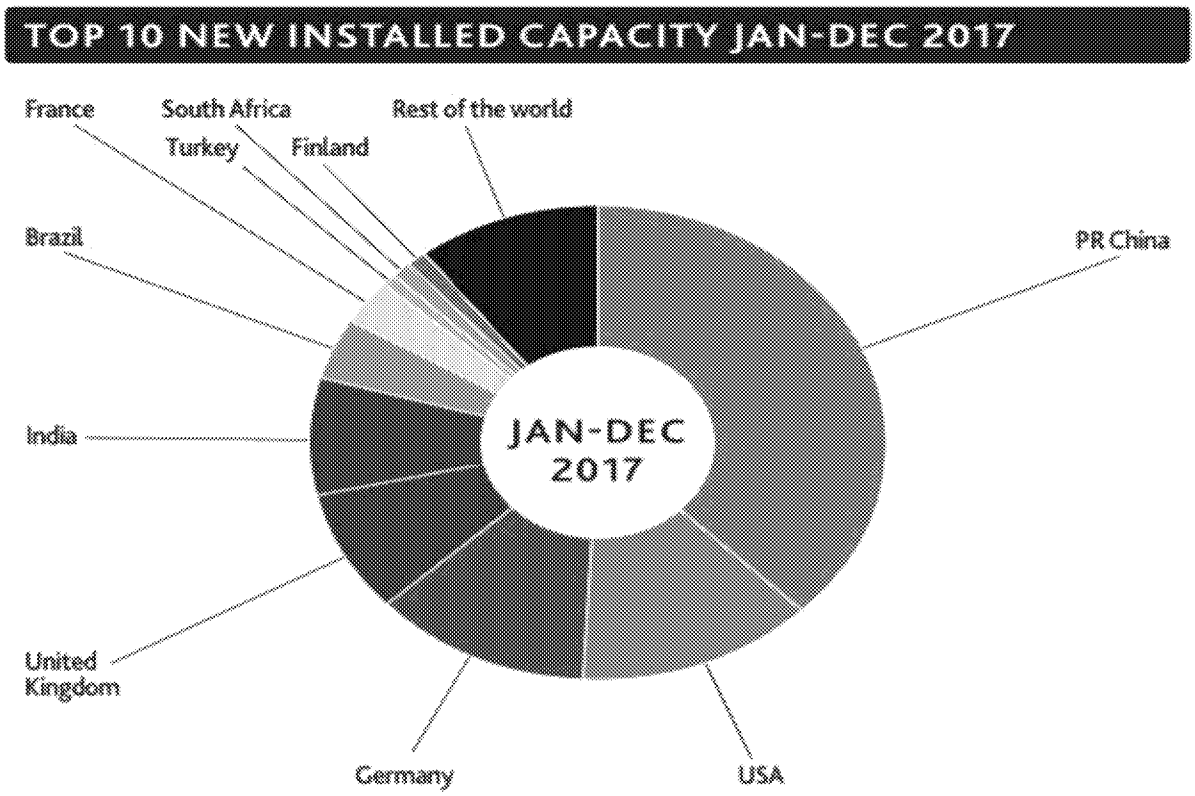
scrutinizing Pruitt's ethics is "not the purpose of the hearing" and suggested that many Republicans would defend Pruitt. (Politico)

- ConocoPhillips Co. won a long-running legal battle against Venezuela's state oil company Petróleos de Venezuela S.A., entitling ConocoPhillips to over $2 billion from Pdvsa after Venezuela expropriated multiple oil projects over 10 years ago. But collecting the money may be difficult after Pdvsa and Venezuela defaulted on over $50 billion in bonds last fall. (The New York Times)

- Royal Dutch Shell Plc reported its first-quarter profit rose 42 percent to $5.3 billion, thanks to stronger oil prices and production. But Shell's shares fell as its cash flow was below analysts' forecasts. (Reuters)

Chart Review

Global Wind Report - Annual Market Update 2017
The Global Wind Energy Council



Events Calendar (All Times Local)

THURSDAY

Center for Energy Science and Policy energy symposium on the energy-water nexus	8:30 a.m.
House Energy and Mineral Resources Subcommittee hearing on the importance of offshore energy revenue sharing in the Gulf	10 a.m.
House Environment Subcommittee hearing on the Environmental Protection Agency FY2019 budget	10 a.m.
United States Energy Association event on the Plains CO2 Reduction Partnership	10 a.m.
Atlantic Council conversation with Orsted North America President Thomas Brostrom	11:30 a.m.
Daniel Morgan Graduate School of National Security event on the geopolitics of energy and Saudi Aramco's IPO	12 p.m.
Information Technology & Innovation Foundation event on grid-scale energy storage	1:30 p.m.
House Appropriations Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Subcommittee hearing on FY2019 EPA budget	2 p.m.
Center for a New American Security event on geopolitical risks and opportunities in the low oil price era	2:30 p.m.
Atlantic Council event on energy in Iraq	5 p.m.

FRIDAY

Women's Council on Energy and the Environment overview of wholesale electricity pricing	12 p.m.

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General

'It could be pretty painful' when Pruitt faces Congress
Anthony Adragna et al., Politico

When Scott Pruitt returns to Capitol Hill on Thursday, he will find few friends ready to greet him - and an audience of one waiting to determine his fate.

What to Watch as Scott Pruitt, the E.P.A. Chief, Goes Before Congress
Coral Davenport, The New York Times

Scott Pruitt, the embattled head of the Environmental Protection Agency, will face two congressional panels on Thursday, in what is expected to be a daylong grilling over recent allegations of ethical infractions and lavish spending.

Support for Pruitt wanes as he takes the hot seat on Capitol Hill
Leigh Ann Caldwell et al., NBC

Supporters of embattled Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt are starting to raise questions about his alleged ethical lapses, a shift in tone that could spell trouble as he appears before Congress Thursday.

Pruitt's Friends Became Lobbyists. And Then Handed Their Clients an EPA Biomass Win.
Marianne Lavelle, InsideClimate News

When Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt declared this week that tree burning was inherently a carbon-neutral way to produce electricity, it was a victory for some Oklahoma friends of Scott Pruitt.

'You can't abuse taxpayer money': GOP's Kennedy on Pruitt
John Verhovek, ABC News

Republican Sen. John Kennedy of Louisiana criticized Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt for his spending habits and other behavior during his time leading the agency but said the decision whether to fire him should be left up to President Donald Trump.

Scientists denounce Pruitt's effort to block 'secret science' at EPA
Joel Achenbach, The Washington Post

In the annals of science there aren't many reports that had as much impact as Harvard's Six Cities Study of 1993. It showed a dramatic association between long-term exposure to air pollution and higher risk of an early death.

Behind the scenes of Pruitt's Nevada trip
Kevin Bogardus, E&E News

Pam Robinson, policy director for Nevada Gov. Brian Sandoval (R), had been working feverishly to help set up EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt's Feb. 5 trip to the Silver State.

Oil gains as concern heats up over Iran sanctions, Venezuelan output
Amanda Cooper, Reuters

Oil rose on Thursday, supported by expectations of renewed U.S. sanctions on Iran, declining output in Venezuela and ongoing strong demand.

Oil and Natural Gas

ConocoPhillips Wins $2 Billion Ruling Over Venezuelan Seizure
Clifford Krauss, The New York Times

ConocoPhillips won a ruling on Wednesday that says it is entitled to more than $2 billion from Venezuela's state oil company over the country's expropriation of several oil projects more than a decade ago.

Shell profit soars on higher oil prices, cash flow disappoints
Ron Bousso, Reuters

Royal Dutch Shell reported on Thursday a 42 percent rise in first-quarter profit to its highest in more than three years on stronger oil prices and production, but its shares fell as the oil major's cash flow missed forecasts.

High Oil Prices Boost Industry Earnings, but Investors Remain Wary
Sarah Kent, The Wall Street Journal

Rising crude prices are supercharging earnings at the world's major oil firms, but investors may need more convincing that Big Oil is back.

Skinny and sweet: U.S. refiner earnings depend on the oil diet
Devika Krishna Kumar, Reuters

Smaller independent refiners with less complex facilities are surging in the stock market of late, as investors expect strong earnings growth thanks to the recent fall in price of their primary cost - light, sweet crude oil coming out of West Texas.

Shell pushes ahead with US Gulf of Mexico Vito development
Starr Spencer, Platts

Shell Tuesday said it would push ahead with the Vito deepwater development in the US Gulf of Mexico, signaling confidence in both crude prices above $60/b and that region's future after sluggish activity over the last few years.

BP Names Oil Industry Veteran Helge Lund as Chairman
Carlo Martuscelli, The Wall Street Journal

BP PLC has appointed energy industry veteran Helge Lund as its next chairman as the oil giant seeks to move past the Deepwater Horizon disaster and get to grips with a fast-changing industry.

Utilities and Infrastructure

Trump Tax Revamp Threatens to Make Gas Pipelines Pay $18.5 Billion
Naureen S. Malik, Bloomberg

Pipeline owners led by Enbridge Inc. and Williams Cos. could be forced to refund as much as $18.5 billion to drillers, utilities and even United Airlines Inc. for upfront payments they charged customers before new U.S. tax rules cut the corporate rate.

Can Puerto Rico Recover From Maria Before the Next Storm Hits?
Vann R. Newkirk II, The Atlantic

Puerto Rico still doesn't know how many people died from Hurricane Maria. The official death toll of people drowned in floods, killed by landslides, caught in collapsed houses, or who perished from environmental or health problems in the immediate aftermath of the storm seven months ago sits at 64.

Renewables

Tesla fan: Autopilot glitches brought peril to road trip
Will Evans, The Center for Investigative Reporting

As You You Xue completed a whirlwind cross-country trip in his brand-new Tesla Model 3 earlier this year, the 20-year-old Californian racked up some impressive statistics.

Coal

Kentucky jury awards $67.5 million to miners who used defective dust masks
Bill Estep, Lexington Herald Leader

A Knott County jury has awarded $67.5 million in damages to two former coal miners who claimed defective dust masks led to their debilitating black-lung disease.

Don't Gut Coal Ash Rules, Communities Beg EPA at Hearing
Georgina Gustin, InsideClimate News

It took decades for the Environmental Protection Agency to craft public safeguards for the disposal of coal ash, the toxic byproduct that coal-burning power plants generate more than 100 million tons of every year.

Nuclear

FirstEnergy Solutions definitely to close its nuclear power plants
John Funk, Cleveland.com

FirstEnergy's power plant subsidiary announced this morning that it has certified to federal regulators the definite shut down of its three nuclear power plants.

US officials slam Washington state nuke waste site problems
The Associated Press

Problems first identified six years ago at a Washington state plant where deadly nuclear waste is supposed to be treated in the future continue to plague the multi-billion dollar facility, U.S. investigators have said.

Climate

Macron: The US will come back to the Paris climate pact
Timothy Cama, The Hill

French President Emmanuel Macron on Wednesday predicted that the United States will come back to the Paris climate change agreement.

Profit slips at Volkswagen after accounting change
David McHugh, The Associated Press

Profits have slipped at automaker Volkswagen in the first quarter due to a change in accounting rules, but sales increased and the company recorded no significant additional losses from its diesel emissions scandal.

Ford to kill Fusion, Taurus and Fiesta cars to make way for more SUVs
J.C. Reindl, Detroit Free Press

Ford, backing up its promise to double-down on trucks and SUVs, is killing the Fiesta subcompact, Fusion midsize sedan, Taurus large sedan and C-Max van in the U.S., it announced Wednesday.

A Message from Wells Fargo:

Wells Fargo: Committed to the environment

How can a bank help the world transition to a lower-carbon economy? By setting goals and meeting them. Last year, Wells Fargo began meeting 100% of its global electricity needs with renewable energy. We remain committed to protecting the environment and leading by action through our businesses, our operations and our philanthropy. Learn more.

Opinions, Editorials and Perspectives

Who's afraid of global warming?
Robert J. Samuelson, The Washington Post

As we mark Earth Day this week, it's natural to ask: What do Americans think of global warming? Is it a big worry?

Scott Pruitt's New Rule Could Completely Transform the EPA
Robinson Meyer, The Atlantic

Do you think the Environmental Protection Agency should completely overhaul how it uses science in its work? Do you think it should adopt new guidelines that totally undermine at least the last three decades of clean air and water rules?

Climate Activists Are Lousy Salesmen
Stewart Easterby, The Wall Street Journal

Politicians, bureaucrats, activists, scientists and the media have warned Americans for decades that the Earth is headed toward climate catastrophe. Yet surveys consistently show that less than half of U.S. adults are "deeply concerned" or "very worried" about climate issues.

The Carbon Tax Could Come Soon To A State Near You
Ryan Maness, Law360

Lawmakers in Washington state thought that this was going to be the year that they would pass a carbon tax.

The EPA Is Acting Like Big Tobacco
Emily Atkin, The New Republic

"This is really evil," Professor Stan Glantz said after I sent him an article about the Environmental Protection Agency's new science policy.

Research Reports

Most atolls will be uninhabitable by the mid-21st century because of sea-level rise exacerbating wave-driven flooding
Curt D. Storlazzi et al., Science Advances

Sea levels are rising, with the highest rates in the tropics, where thousands of low-lying coral atoll islands are located. Most studies on the

resilience of these islands to sea-level rise have projected that they will experience minimal inundation impacts until at least the end of the 21st century.

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