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## Biden's 'energy whisperer' balances climate agenda, rising gas prices

Maxine Joselow - Friday

When President Biden vowed to “intensify” relations with the Caribbean at the Summit of the Americas, he told leaders of more than a dozen Caribbean countries that they could meet with one of his top energy advisers whenever they wanted.



© Michael Brochstein/Sipa USA via APBiden's 'energy whisperer' balances climate agenda, rising gas prices

“I’ve got this wonderful person, Amos Hochstein, who really knows energy issues well. And if you’d like to meet with him and talk to him, I’ll arrange it,” Biden said, according to former senator Christopher J. Dodd, who was in the room and [helped plan](#) this month’s gathering of Western Hemisphere nations.

“Joe out of the blue mentioned him as someone that he relies on,” Dodd, a longtime friend of Biden and Hochstein’s former boss, said in an interview. “The president doesn’t do that that often.”

[Biden turns to his old friend Chris Dodd for a sensitive job](#)

Hochstein, a presidential coordinator at the State Department, may not be a household name, but he has played

a key role in advising Biden on international energy policy, according to interviews with half a dozen people familiar with the matter, including senior administration officials, energy analysts, lobbyists and friends.

Hochstein, 49, advised Biden on energy security when he was vice president. During the Trump administration he served as an executive at the Houston-based natural gas company Tellurian and on the supervisory board of Naftogaz, the Ukrainian state-owned oil and gas company. He also has done a [small amount of lobbying](#) for Marathon, the country's largest oil refiner.

Now he is taking on one of the biggest challenges facing the Biden administration: how to rein in rising energy prices in a world that remains dependent on fossil fuels while advancing a climate-change agenda that is built on phasing out oil, gas and coal.

The tension between the two tasks has been exacerbated by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The conflict has upended international energy markets and sent Democrats scrambling to address surging gasoline prices, a political liability, before the midterm elections.

Another hurdle is Hochstein's résumé. As one of the only officials in the Biden administration with experience in the oil and gas industry, Hochstein has faced fierce criticism from environmentalists, who warn that the world [urgently needs to phase out fossil fuels](#) to avert a climate catastrophe.

"I'm not a big fan of Amos. I think of him as 100 percent an oil-and-gas guy, not a climate guy," said one official at a prominent environmental group, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to preserve relationships within the administration.

But supporters say Hochstein's knowledge of global oil and gas markets has helped Biden navigate an urgent political problem: rising prices at the pump that imperil Democrats' chances in the midterms and have dragged down the president's approval rating.

"I'm not aware of anybody — certainly at the senior political level — who comes close to Amos in terms of understanding the realities of the energy industry," said Bob McNally, president of Rapidan Energy Group, a consulting firm. "I call him President Joe Biden's energy whisperer."

Reached by phone, Hochstein declined to comment on the record for this report.

While Hochstein is not a Biden insider in the mold of White House Chief of Staff Ron Klain, he speaks directly to the president and has earned his respect, according to people familiar with the matter. He has helped shape many of the administration's attempts to tamp down gas prices, which had topped an average nationwide price of [\\$5 per gallon](#) as of June 11.

Most recently, Hochstein was involved in the decision to send letters on Wednesday to the CEOs of America's largest oil and gas companies, according to a senior administration official, who, like others interviewed, spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly. In the letters, Biden informed the firms that he is considering invoking "emergency authorities" to boost refinery output.

"Amos is a key member of the president's team managing energy disruptions from Putin's war and helping mitigate cost impacts for families here and all over the world," said National Economic Council Director Brian Deese.

Since joining the administration in August, Hochstein has been thrust into thorny debates over how to balance long-term efforts to combat climate change with short-term efforts to bolster the energy security of the United States and its allies in Europe.

Biden took office with ambitious plans for addressing climate change and accelerating the nation's transition to clean energy. He vowed to slash U.S. greenhouse gas emissions [at least in half by the end of the decade](#), with the ultimate goal of eliminating economywide emissions by mid-century.

But the war in Ukraine has complicated these plans. Soaring gas prices have prompted Biden to take several steps that are anathema to climate activists, such as [authorizing a historically large release from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve](#) and [resuming oil and gas leasing on federal land](#).

#### [Biden's urgent moves on gas prices collide with lofty climate goals](#)

In Europe, which imported about [40 percent of its natural gas](#) and more than a quarter of its oil from Russia before the conflict, the European Union has unveiled a [plan](#) to slash its dependence on Russian fossil fuels by strengthening energy-efficiency targets and deploying more clean energy technologies. But the 27-nation bloc also has sought to boost the flow of gas into the continent.

More than any other American official, Hochstein has played a critical role in steering these efforts on both sides of the Atlantic.

"There's no doubt that Amos is at the pointy end of the spear when it comes to determining these policies," said Daniel Vajdich, a lobbyist who has worked as an adviser to the Ukrainian state-owned energy sector.

In March, Biden tapped Hochstein to serve as the U.S. representative on the U.S.-E.U. Task Force for Energy Security, which will seek to boost U.S. exports of liquefied natural gas (LNG) to Europe, with a goal of sending an additional 15 billion cubic meters this year, according to a [White House fact sheet](#).

Friends of the Earth, an environmental group, has denounced Hochstein's role on the task force. The group has questioned whether Hochstein is helping LNG export terminals get long-term contracts with Europe at a time when [top scientists say](#) the world needs to quit fossil fuels.

"The president may not like the climate legacy Mr. Hochstein is helping him secure," said Lukas Ross, program manager at Friends of the Earth, which [sued](#) the Biden administration in May for refusing to expedite a public-records request seeking Hochstein's communications with the task force and State Department ethics officials. (The State Department has since agreed to expedite the request.)

A senior administration official strongly rejected the notion that the task force is not cognizant of climate concerns. The official said the task force will strive to support Europe's efforts to reduce demand for natural gas and will not encourage more gas infrastructure than what European countries are already planning.

A senior State Department official said Hochstein — who [drives an electric vehicle](#) and has solar panels on his roof — has sought to elevate climate concerns in internal administration discussions.

"He's been very forcefully advocating that we make sure that the climate goals are the North Star," the official said. "I think that was a bit unexpected for some who were thinking this isn't the background that you'd necessarily expect for somebody who'd be an advocate on climate. But he has been."

At the same time, Hochstein worries that transitioning to clean energy too rapidly could further increase fuel prices, adding to inflationary pressures that have raised the cost of consumer goods in the United States and Europe, according to a person familiar with his thinking. That could spark a popular backlash against climate policies, just as the “yellow vest” movement in France protested a proposed carbon tax.

In addition to huddling with European leaders, Hochstein has made half a dozen discreet visits to Saudi Arabia alongside Brett McGurk, the National Security Council Middle East coordinator, to urge the kingdom to increase oil production. The trips culminated in the news that Biden [will visit Saudi Arabia next month](#), a remarkable departure from his pledge as a presidential candidate to treat the country as a “pariah.”

U.S. intelligence has concluded that Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman ordered the killing of Jamal Khashoggi, a Washington Post columnist and outspoken critic of the regime. The trip highlights how the energy crisis has spurred Biden to stray from his past rhetoric on climate change, human rights and other issues.

“I think climate objectives are still at the core of this administration. But you know things have changed when the president of the United States goes to Saudi Arabia,” said Dan Yergin, vice chairman of S&P Global.

Meanwhile, former secretary of state John F. Kerry, Biden’s top climate diplomat, recently cautioned that the world must not lock in more fossil fuel infrastructure in response to the war in Ukraine.

“You have this new revisionism suggesting that we have to be pumping oil like crazy, and we have to be moving into long-term [fossil fuel] infrastructure building, which would be absolutely disastrous,” Kerry said at the Time 100 Summit in New York City this month. “We have to push back, and we have to push back hard.”

Kerry, who overlapped with Hochstein at the State Department during the Obama administration, said the two men have complementary — not contradictory — roles.

Hochstein “understands the global energy system as well as anyone, and is doing everything in his power to help achieve the President’s goal: getting to a net zero, pollution neutral world in time to avoid the worst consequences of climate crisis and safeguard energy security,” Kerry said in a statement.

While Kerry’s climate diplomacy has garnered a flurry of media coverage, Hochstein’s work has largely flown under the radar in Washington, with the exception of his high-profile appearance [before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee](#) this month. Hochstein prefers to stay out of the spotlight, according to a person familiar with the matter.

In September 2020, 145 climate advocacy groups sent a [letter](#) urging Biden, then the Democratic nominee, to ban all fossil fuel executives, lobbyists and representatives from any positions on his campaign, or his transition team or administration, should he win the presidency.

“Many thousands of talented experts, advocates and community leaders who do not represent coal, oil and gas companies would gladly serve in your administration and help move our country forward into the clean energy future,” the groups wrote. “We urge you to choose them over the fossil fuel CEOs, lobbyists and representatives who are profiting from climate destruction.”

The senior State Department official said that such “litmus tests” on climate can be unhelpful.

“The energy sector is going to need to be a partner in this effort,” the official said. “And if we don’t let anybody who has any experience working closely with that sector serve in leadership roles, then we’re missing a piece of the puzzle.”

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**Date:** Monday, June 6, 2022 10:41:23 AM

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See #1.

If y'all have any back-and-forth on this, please let me know. (b) (5)

[REDACTED]

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## **Washington Schedule**

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Upcoming energy-related events in the Washington, D.C. area

Date	Host	Title
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## DOE News

### 1. Politico: Morning Energy: SPR refill

[Politico](#) (Choi) reported that House Republicans “want to know how Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm plans to refill the Strategic Petroleum Reserve after the Biden administration finishes the largest ever release from the crude stockpile.” According to the article, the release of “a million barrels per day will run through the summer, in coordination with other major consumers, including China,” but now Beijing “is refilling its crude stockpile and Republicans want to make sure the U.S. isn’t being left behind.” The article indicated that House Energy and Commerce ranking member Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA) and Energy subcommittee ranking member Fred Upton (R-MI) in a letter to Sec. Granholm claimed the Biden administration “is depleting the nation’s petroleum reserves, while allowing OPEC, Russia, and China to gain geopolitical leverage over the United States.” The Republicans, the article continued, “want Granholm to detail the impact of the current release on domestic gasoline prices, the administration’s plans to refill the SPR and the conditions of SPR sites.” The article added that DOE “announced last month a buyback plan to refill a third of the 180 million barrels released to take place this fall,” and “more buyback plans will be announced to replace the rest of the oil put on the market.”

### 2. AIP: DOE applied energy budget: FY22 outcomes and FY23 request

[AIP](#) (Peterson) reported that the Department of Energy offices that support R&D on “renewable energy, nuclear energy, and carbon management technologies are all receiving budget increases of roughly 10% in fiscal year 2022.” The article indicated that although sizeable, the Biden administration “had sought significantly larger increases for DOE’s applied energy offices, in some cases exceeding 50%.” According to the article, DOE is also receiving “\$62 billion over multiple years outside of the regular appropriations process through last year’s Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, mostly for programs supporting the deployment of energy technologies.” Around “\$25 billion of the total, including about \$8 billion in fiscal year 2022,” the article continued, “will support technology demonstration projects, mostly overseen by the recently launched Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations (OCED).” The article noted that for fiscal year 2023, the administration “is again requesting exceptionally large increases for some programs, especially those in the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE).” The article added that “unlike last year, the administration also seeks a major expansion of the Advanced Research Projects Agency–Energy and proposes that it house efforts previously envisioned for a separate climate-oriented ARPA, which Congress ultimately declined to create.”



### **3. WKDZ: POTUS nominates Lyon County's White for TVA board**

[WKDZ](#) (Marlowe) reported that President Joe Biden “has announced two nominees for the Tennessee Valley Authority’s Board of Directors.” The article indicated that one of POTUS’ two selections “includes current Lyon County Judge-Executive Wade White, who announced last September he’s not running for re-election after 12 years in the position.” The article indicated that Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell “praised Biden’s decision, and noted White is the first Kentuckian nominated for the TVA Board under this administration.”

## **Global Energy**

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### **4. Reuters: Ukraine signs deal with Westinghouse to end Russian nuclear fuel needs**

[Reuters](#) reported that Ukraine “has signed a deal for the U.S. nuclear power company Westinghouse to supply fuel to all of its atomic power stations in an effort to end the country's reliance on Russian supplies.” According to the article, the agreement also “increases the number of new nuclear units Westinghouse will build to nine from an earlier five, and the company will establish an engineering centre in the country.” The article indicated that “building on earlier agreements, the deal with Westinghouse stipulates that the company will supply fuel to all of Ukraine's atomic plants.”

### **5. WSJ: The end of energy free trade**

[The Wall Street Journal](#) (Matthews, Said, Faucon) reported that over the past half-century, oil and natural gas “have moved with relative freedom to the markets where they commanded the highest prices around the world.” According to the article, that “ended abruptly when Russian tanks rumbled across the Ukraine border on Feb. 24, triggering a barrage of trade sanctions by the U.S. and Europe targeting Russia that have plunged global commerce into disarray.” This week, the article continued, the European Union “agreed to its toughest sanctions yet on Russia, banning imports of its oil and blocking insurers from covering its cargoes of crude.” The article pointed out that whatever “new order emerges won’t be fully clear for years to come,” but “traders, diplomats and other experts in energy geopolitics generally agree that it will be more Balkanized, and less free-flowing, than what the world has seen since the end of the Cold War.” The article noted that “three likely axes of energy influence are emerging: the U.S. and other Western nations, which have used their massive economic and purchasing power as a political weapon; China and large emerging nations such as India, Turkey and Vietnam, which have rebuffed Western pressure and continued doing business with Russia; and Saudi Arabia and other Middle Eastern oil-producing nations, which have sought to maintain neutrality, and may stand to gain market share in the years to come.”

### **6. The Hill: EU officially adopts Russian oil embargo**

[The Hill](#) (Budryk) reported that the European Union on Friday “formally adopted a sanctions package banning oil imports from Russia in response to its February invasion of Ukraine.” The article indicated that the sanctions package, the “sixth imposed by the EU thus far, will phase out imports of Russian crude oil by sea over the next six months and refined petroleum imports over eight months.” According to the article, the EU “imported about \$51.5 billion in crude from Russia and \$24.7 billion in refined products in 2021.” The article noted that in the announcement, the

EU said the package would include “a temporary exemption for European nations” with a “particular pipeline dependency” on Russia, “allowing them to continue receiving crude oil by pipeline in the meantime. Exempt states would still be restricted from reselling crude or refined oil to third parties or other European states.” Bulgaria, the article detailed, will “specifically be permitted to import crude oil and petroleum products by sea through the end of 2024” due to its “specific geographical exposure.” The article specified that Croatia “will be allowed to continue importing the Russian vacuum gas oil necessary for its refinery operations until the end of 2023.” The sanctions, the article added, “will also bar operators within the EU from financing or insuring transportation of Russian oil to third-party countries.”

## Electricity/Cyber Security

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### **7. Axios: State officials warn of increased summer blackouts**

[Axios](#) (Knutson) reported that officials and power operators in a swath of Western and Midwestern states “are bracing the public for blackouts this summer caused by higher-than-average temperatures and a human-caused extended drought.” According to the article, utility officials in California and Arizona “have warned of potential interruptions this summer as have officials in Midwestern states like Illinois, and North Dakota.” The article indicated that the California Energy Commission said the state could face a shortage “equal to the equivalent of one major power plant on the hottest days this summer.” New Mexico's primary utility company, the article added, “initially cautioned this year that interruptions should be expected but retracted that warning after operations were extended at a powerplant that was set to close.”

### **8. Axios: Tropical storm warnings in Florida as flooding threat grows**

[Axios](#) (Freedman) reported that a tropical weather system “forecast to become Tropical Storm Alex will bring heavy, flooding rainfall and strong winds to the Florida Keys and South Florida, including metro Miami, Fort Lauderdale and West Palm Beach, through Saturday.” According to the article, the “heavy rains, which will also extend up the west coast of the state into Fort Myers and possibly Tampa, are likely to lead to widespread, life-threatening flash flooding.” The article indicated that the storm's rains “began affecting the peninsula Friday, with the heaviest rains falling through Saturday.”

## Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

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### **9. Ars Technica: Solar and wind keep getting cheaper as the field becomes smarter (Berkeley Lab)**

[Ars Technica](#) (Johnson) reported that as solar and wind energy “ramps up in the United States, the industries have gotten better at installing and operating their facilities.” According to the article, this experience “can be seen in how the facilities are financed.” The article indicated that new research found people working in the fields- “and adjacent ones—have learned to be more efficient, reducing the overall cost of power.” Furthermore, the article continued, Mark Bolinger, “a research scientist at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and one of the paper's authors,” said this “so-called learning rate can be extrapolated into the future, and it spells good news for the two renewable sources of energy.”

## **10. NGT News: DOE, IREC, NBI, Southface offer resources to advance clean energy workforce**

[NGT News](#) (Fine) reported that three clean energy organizations “have formed a partnership to provide educational resources and training on clean energy technologies for building operators, managers and safety officials.” According to the article, the Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC), New Buildings Institute (NBI), and Southface Institute “are collaborating to provide these resources on safe and effective deployment of distributed energy resources (DER) in buildings across the country.” The article indicated that IREC, NBI and Southface Institute “have launched CleanEnergyClearinghouse.org, an interactive learning resource providing unbiased educational resources on solar photovoltaics, electric vehicle supply equipment, battery storage, grid-interactive technologies, and highly efficient building materials.” The organizations, the article noted, “are working in concert under the U.S. Department of Energy’s (DOE) Empowered program, which is funded by three technology offices within the Office of Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy: Building Technologies Office (BTO), Solar Energy Technologies Office (SETO) and Vehicle Technologies Office (VTO).” The article added that the partnership is an “arrangement among the offices that leverages the unique skills and strengths to deliver comprehensive resources that support safe and effective distributed energy resource deployment.”

## **11. Electrek: Southwest Airlines is investing in a sustainable aviation fuel pilot program (NREL)**

[Electrek](#) (Lewis) reported that Southwest Airlines announced this week that it’s “investing in SAFFiRE Renewables as part of a Department of Energy (DOE)-backed project to develop and produce scalable, sustainable aviation fuel.” According to the article, SAFFiRE “is a company formed by D3MAX,” and both are “based in Grand Forks, North Dakota.” The article indicated that in 2021, DOE “awarded D3MAX the only pilot-scale grant for sustainable aviation fuel production, with a goal of eventual commercialization.” NREL, the article continued, “believes that this could produce significant quantities of cost-competitive sustainable aviation fuel that could provide an 84% reduction in carbon intensity compared to conventional jet fuel on a life cycle basis.” The article added that SAFFiRE is an acronym for “Sustainable Aviation Fuel From Renewable Ethanol,” and the company, “which was formed this year, uses technology developed by the DOE’s National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) to convert waste biomass like corn stover – the leaves, stalks, and cobs of maize plants left over after harvest – into renewable ethanol that will then be upgraded into sustainable aviation fuel.”

## **Fossil Energy**

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## **12. Pittsburgh Post-Gazette: Pittsburgh companies to get \$1.6M in Department of Energy grants to improve nuclear, help solve climate challenges**

[Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#) (Murray) reported that Pittsburgh area companies “will receive \$1.6 million in U.S. Department of Energy grants to study and test technology that have the potential to help solve problems contributing to climate change and a warming planet.” According to the article, local operations in the areas of “advanced

manufacturing, nuclear energy, carbon capture, solar technology and building materials will have roughly nine months to assess whether a new idea could possibly go to the next step of commercialization.” The article indicated that ideas from the small businesses and startups – “many run by scientists with relationships to local universities – range from weatherizing homes, to monitoring equipment at nuclear power plants, to finding ways to capture harmful air emissions.” Liquid Ion Solutions, the article continued, will “receive \$254,749 to continue its research to reduce the steps in removing carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxides and sulfur oxides emitted from sources like fossil fuel power generation plants and other industrial sites, including steel, metal, glass, chemical and cement production facilities.”

## Industry News

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### **13. Reuters: Oil settles up despite OPEC+ output hike plan; supply still tight**

[Reuters](#) (Sanicola) reported that oil “settled higher on Friday, supported by expectations that OPEC’s decision to increase production targets by slightly more than planned will not add that much to global supply which should tighten as China eases COVID restrictions.” According to the article, Brent crude “rose \$2.11, or 1.8%, to settle at \$119.72 a barrel by 1338 GMT.” The article indicated that U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude “advanced \$2, or 1.7%, to \$118.87.”

### **14. Reuters: U.S. EPA sets 2020-2022 biofuel blending mandates, denies refiners waivers**

[Reuters](#) (Kelly, Renshaw) reported that the Environmental Protection Agency on Friday “issued biofuel blending mandates for 2022 and the prior two years - with this year’s number below one proposed in December - while denying oil refiners waivers to be exempt from the requirements.” According to the article, EPA set biofuel blending mandates for 2022 “at 20.63 billion gallons and retroactive volume mandates for 2021 at 18.84 billion gallons and for 2020 at 17.13 billion gallons.” The article indicated that although it “denied the oil refiners’ exemption petitions, the agency said it would allow extra time for small refiners to meet their 2020 blending obligations.”

## Nuclear Weapons/Security

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### **15. Morocco World News: U.S. government conducts training for 30 Moroccan customs officers**

[Morocco World News](#) (Benazizi) reported that “from May 30 to June 3, the US government held training sessions for 30 Moroccan customs officers at the Customs Training Institute in Benslimane.” According to the article, the initiative – “as announced by the US Embassy on Twitter -- focused on preventing the smuggling of dangerous chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear materials.” The article indicated that “funded by the U.S. State Department’s Export Control and Related Border Security Program, the training is being carried out by four US Department of Energy-affiliated professionals, including a nuclear chemist and a biologist.”

### **16. Toms Hardware: Trio of prototype AMD-based El Capitan supercomputers already rank in Top 200**

[Toms Hardware](#) (Klotz) reported that the AMD-based El Capitan supercomputer “isn't set to go online until 2023.” However, the article noted, “in preparation for the new exascale supercomputer, the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA, not to be confused with the NSA or NASA) has produced three smaller prototype supercomputers to test out El Captains' hardware systems.” The article indicated that “despite not being the real supercomputer deal, these three computing monsters have been found to pack a serious punch, with each landing on the top 200 list of the world's fastest supercomputers.” According to the article, El Capitan is “a brand-new exascale supercomputer behemoth being built for the NNSA that will be responsible for modeling nuclear weapon simulations.” Once completed, the article elaborated, El Capitan “is expected to be, at the very least, the fastest supercomputer owned by the United States government, with an estimated 2 exaflops of computing power.” The article highlighted that powering this monstrosity “will be a combination of AMD CPUs and accelerators, including AMD EPYC Genoa CPUs built on AMD's Zen 4 architecture, and next-generation Radeon Instinct GPUs, which will likely be based on an enterprise version of RDNA3.”

### **17. CalMatters: California’s plan for handling climate crisis is flawed, advisors say (LLNL)**

[CalMatters](#) (Lopez) reported that a panel of experts speaking at a meeting of the Joint Legislative Committee on Climate Change Policies on Tuesday “discussed the pros and cons of carbon capture and storage and how it could inform the types of policies lawmakers push for.” According to the article, George Peridas “is director of carbon management partnerships at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, a federally-funded research facility,” and he said California is “well-positioned to launch projects in parts of the state with deep sedimentary rock formations, including the Central Valley, which could serve as prime locations to store carbon dioxide,” adding “the Central Valley has a world class geology – that means just the right kinds of rocks for safe and permanent storage,” and “carbon capture and storage is well-understood, heavily regulated, available for deployment today and has an overwhelmingly positive track record.”

### **18. Aiken Standard: More improvements underway for Savannah River Site liquid waste operations**

[Aiken Standard](#) (Christian) reported that “more improvements are underway to improve the operations of the Salt Waste Processing Facility and the rest of the liquid waste operations at the Savannah River Site.” According to the article, the Department of Energy Office of Environmental Management announced Wednesday that Savannah River Mission Completion crews “recently finished installing a new 38-foot pipe bridge to more efficiently deliver utilities to one of two evaporators in H-Area.” The article indicated that Jim Folk, “assistant manager of waste disposition at the Department of Energy Savannah River Site, said in a news release the new pipe bridge would better support operations at the Salt Waste Processing Facility and Defense Waste Processing Facility.” The new pipe bridge, the article explained, “is part of the East Hill Utilities Project that's designed to replace aging infrastructure in the East Hill area of H-Tank Farm.” The article added that the new infrastructure “will allow for a more reliable delivery of water, steam and air to equipment and machinery in H-Area and for the machinery to last until the cleanup of the remaining 43 tanks of liquid waste is completed.”

### **19. The Drive: Rocket sled track sets Mach 5.8 recoverable test speed record**

[The Drive](#) (Parken) reported that the Air Force's 846th Test Squadron at Holloman Air Force Base, New Mexico, "successfully recovered a reusable rocket sled after traveling at a recorded speed of 6,400 feet per second, or just about Mach 5.8 — beyond the hypersonic threshold — the Air Force reports." According to the article, this is the "first time the squadron has successfully recovered a reusable rocket sled after traveling at that speed." The test, the article specified, was "performed on the base's 10-mile-long Holloman High-Speed Test Track (HHSTT) in late March, 2022." The article highlighted that while "significantly higher speeds have been recorded at the HHSTT during rocket sled testing — see our previous post with footage of a rocket sled traveling at around Mach 8.6 — the rocket sled test of March 2022 represents the highest speed a reusable rocket sled has reached before being successfully recovered."

### **20. Wired: The first privately funded killer asteroid spotter is here**

[Wired](#) (Skibba) reported that "gigantic asteroids have smashed into the Earth before—RIP dinosaurs—and if we're not watching out for all those errant space rocks, they could crash into our world again, with devastating consequences." According to the article, that's why Ed Lu and Danica Remy of the Asteroid Institute "started a new project to track as many of them as possible." The article indicated that Mr. Lu, "a former NASA astronaut and executive director of the institute, led a team that developed a novel algorithm called THOR, which harnesses massive computing power to compare points of light seen in different images of the night sky, then matches them to piece together an individual asteroid's path through the solar system." The article highlighted that they've already "discovered 104 asteroids with the system." While NASA, the European Space Agency, and other organizations "have their own ongoing asteroid searches," the article continued, "all of them face the challenge of parsing telescope images with thousands or even 100,000 asteroids in them." The article noted that "some of those telescopes don't or can't take multiple images of the same region on the same night, which makes it hard to tell if the same asteroid is appearing in multiple photos taken at different times," but THOR "can make the connection between them."

### **21. The Times: "Grave concerns" as North Korea heads disarmament conference**

UK's [The Times](#) (Parry) reported that "dozens of countries" have registered "grave concern" that North Korea "has assumed the leadership of the UN-sponsored Conference on Disarmament, as the country prepares for what many experts believe is an imminent nuclear test." According to the article, "forty-nine governments, including Britain, the United States, Japan and the members of the European Union, have signed a statement demanding that Kim Jong-un abandon his weapons of mass destruction as Pyongyang takes up the one-month presidency of the conference, which meets in Geneva."

## **Science**

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### **22. Daily Press: Virginia's budget includes \$3M to help Newport News-based Jefferson Lab bid for high-performance data facility**

[Daily Press](#) (Ress) reported that Virginia "will give the Jefferson Lab \$3 million to

help the Newport News national laboratory bid for a major new Department of Energy project.” According to the article, the project, “a high-performance data facility, could have an enormous economic impact on the Peninsula,” and the money “will help the Thomas Jefferson National Accelerator Facility prepare detailed plans and engineering work to bid for the facility.”

### **23. The Next Platform: The final frontier: Talking exascale with Oak Ridge’s Jeff Nichols**

[The Next Platform](#) (Morgan) reported that just ahead of the revelations about the feeds and speeds of the “Frontier” supercomputer at Oak Ridge National Laboratory ‘concurrent with the International Supercomputing conference in Hamburg, Germany and the concurrent publishing of the summer Top500 rankings of supercomputers, we had a chat with Jeff Nichols, who has steered the creation of successive generations of supercomputers at Oak Ridge.” According to the article, Dr. Nichols “is associate laboratory director for Computing and Computational Sciences at Oak Ridge and two decades ago was running the Computer Science and Mathematics Division for the lab, and before that did a stint as deputy director of the Environmental Molecular Sciences Laboratory at the Department of Energy’s Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, and is one of the key developers of the open source NWChem computational chemistry simulator that includes both quantum chemical and molecular dynamics scale interactions.”

### **24. Northwest News Network: Lower Yakima Valley dirt to hitch a ride to space next week (PNNL)**

[Northwest News Network](#) (Flatt) reported that if all goes according to plan, soil from Prosser, Washington, “could end up in space next week.” According to the article, the soil – “and eight types of bacteria in the soil – will hitch a ride to the International Space Station as part of NASA’s SpaceX CRS-25 resupply mission for now planned to blast off June 10 at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida.” The article indicated that Janet Jansson, “a laboratory fellow at Pacific Northwest National Laboratory in Richland, Washington, and experiment lead,” explained these beneficial bacteria, “or soil microorganisms, could be key to growing food in space or on Mars or the moon,” because “soil microbes are the hidden players of life support systems on Earth.”

### **25. Houston Chronicle: UH researchers seek to learn whether soot and smoke cause stronger storms (BNL, TRACER)**

[Houston Chronicle](#) (Leinfelder) reported that a yearlong study into Houston storms “kicked into high gear Wednesday,” and researchers were immediately treated to two “golden” days for collecting data. The article indicated that there were “afternoon storms and a sea breeze moving inland from the Gulf of Mexico, which helps drive the formation of clouds and storms.” According to the article, Michael Jensen, “principal investigator for the experiment and a meteorologist with the U.S. Department of Energy’s Brookhaven National Laboratory,” said, “the summertime in Houston we have the warm, moist conditions that are conducive to getting lots of clouds and storms,” so “we’re ramping up our operations,” and the “first two days were great days for what we’re after out here.” The article explained that the researchers “hope to settle the aerosol debate and, ultimately, improve computer models used for weather forecasts, air quality conditions and climate predictions.” The experiment, the article highlighted, might even “produce data that helps predict how much rain a storm could produce, which could be particularly useful in cities such as Houston that are

prone to flash flooding.” The article detailed that the study is known as TRACER, which stands for “TRacking Aerosol Convection interactions ExpeRiment.” UH, the article added, is “partnering with organizations that include the Department of Energy, National Science Foundation, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and NASA,” but there are also “roughly 30 universities contributing to this study.”

## Climate Change/Global Warming

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### **26. Axios: Earth’s carbon dioxide levels hit record high**

[Axios](#) (Freedman) reported that the level of carbon dioxide, “a long-lived gas that warms the planet, in Earth's atmosphere hit a new official record this spring and is now more than 50% higher compared to preindustrial times.” According to the article, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Scripps Institution of Oceanography said carbon dioxide levels “rose to a peak of 421 parts per million in May, for the highest level in human history.” The article indicated that the increase “compared to 2020 was 1.8 ppm, a slight drop from last year.”

## National News

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### **27. NYTimes: 21 Americans infected with monkeypox, C.D.C. reports**

[The New York Times](#) (Mandavilli) reported that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention “has identified 21 monkeypox cases in 11 states, and the numbers are expected to rise.” According to the article, genetic analysis has revealed that “while most of the cases appear to be closely related to the outbreak in Europe, two patients have versions of the virus that seems to have evolved from a monkeypox case identified in Texas last year.” The article indicated that of “17 patients for whom the agency has detailed information, all but one were among men who had sex with men; 14 had traveled to other countries in the three weeks before their symptoms began.”

### **28. WaPo: Baby formula shortage life-threatening for some older kids and adults**

[The Washington Post](#) (Sellers) reported that the nationwide formula shortage “has focused on the plight of infants,” but some older children and adults “depend on specially formulated powders, much of it made by Abbott, to compensate for a variety of ailments, from malformed bowels and allergies to problems processing nutrients like protein.” The article indicated that while “most healthy babies can switch easily from brand to brand, for these people, a poorly chosen substitute can either taste intolerable or prompt dehydration, seizures and even death.”

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**From:** [McGarry, Thomas](#)  
**To:** [Macintyre, Douglas](#); [Perry, Robert](#)  
**Subject:** OPEC Cuts  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 5, 2022 10:10:02 AM

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OPEC cuts are 2 million barrels a day.

The Joint Ministerial Monitoring Committee (JMMC) of the OPEC+ group recommended on Wednesday that the alliance cut 2 million barrels per day (bpd) of production for November, according to various sources after the committee's meeting ended.

The full OPEC+ ministerial meeting begins shortly.

Earlier reports suggested that OPEC+ would discuss a production cut of between 500,000 bpd and 1 million bpd at today's meeting. Most analysts were leaning toward predicting a 1 million bpd cut. Then on Tuesday, more reports emerged that OPEC+ could discuss a cut as deep as 2 million bpd.

Just before the JMMC and OPEC+ meeting started, the most circulated number was a cut of 1.8 million bpd.

The actual cut in OPEC+ production could be much smaller, considering that the alliance is estimated to be around 3.6 million bpd below its target production.

The White House, meanwhile, was reportedly up in arms to try and prevent the potentially major production cut in OPEC+ just a month before midterm elections when the current Administration least needs higher prices at the pump.

Tom McGarry  
Director, Operations and Readiness  
Office of Petroleum Reserves  
Department of Energy  
Thomas.mcgarry@hq.doe.gov  
(b) (6)

**From:** [Bartol, Bridget](#)  
**To:** (b)(6) Sec. Granholm [Turk, David](#); [Davis, Christopher](#); [Bhattacharyya, Arpita](#); [Doran, Emily](#); [Mayorga, David](#); [Troiano, Charisma L.](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: FORTUNE: Ignore the analysts' misinformation oil slick: Biden is making real progress on energy  
**Date:** Friday, October 21, 2022 8:12:04 PM  
**Attachments:** [image.png](#)  
[image.png](#)  
[image.png](#)  
[image.png](#)

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Potential (b) (5)

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**From:** Jeffrey Sonnenfeld CELI <Jeffrey.Sonnenfeld.CELI@yale.edu>  
**Sent:** Friday, October 21, 2022 7:52 PM  
**To:** Sonnenfeld, Jeffrey <jeffrey.sonnenfeld@yale.edu>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] FORTUNE: Ignore the analysts' misinformation oil slick: Biden is making real progress on energy

<https://fortune.com/2022/10/21/biden-energy-policy-oil-prices-misinformation/>

# FORTUNE

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Ignore the analysts'  
misinformation oil slick:  
Biden is making real  
progress on energy

BY [JEFFREY SONNENFELD](#) AND [STEVEN TIAN](#)

October 21, 2022 at 5:48 PM EDT

President Biden makes a speech on energy



President Biden delivers remarks on energy as Secretary of Energy Jennifer Granholm listens during an event at the White House October 19, 2022. Biden spoke on American energy independence and announced the release of 15 million barrels of oil from the U.S. strategic reserve.

ALEX WONG—GETTY IMAGES

Texas congressman and House Speaker Sam Rayburn famously quipped, “Any jackass can kick down a barn, but it takes a skilled carpenter to build one.” That analogy which is especially apt when evaluating recent energy policies from the Biden administration, including the generally skeptical reaction from to President Biden’s most [recent speech on oil markets this week](#).

That reaction shows that energy analysts have slipped on their own oil slick of misinformation. It is always easy for cynical but conflicted industry analysts and commentators to [lob politicized beanbags](#) at the administration’s decisions. Sure, the White House may have had ups and downs with some mistakes early on—as well as [poor messaging](#) on energy solutions. But listening to these biased industry complaints has increasingly become a tale of two realities.

The prevailing narrative presented by most energy analysts is that of a dire and dystopian global oil “supply shock” outlook. They portray the administration as largely rudderless on energy challenges, politicizing

releases of the [fast-dwindling](#) strategic petroleum reserves (SPR) to put a band-aid on lowering prices before the midterm elections, [unable to tackle](#) supply challenges. They further fault the administration for simultaneously offending the second- and third -argest oil producers, Saudi Arabia and Russia, amidst drastic OPEC+ production cuts and the European Union's sixth sanctions package to ban Russian oil in December. And they accuse the White House of murdering U.S. energy independence by launching an ESG crusade against oil, blocking pipelines, cutting federal leases and threatening energy companies' access to capital and the outlook for long-term demand.

But this dystopic vision is grounded in misleading information. Perhaps these energy analysts would be wise to redirect their fire from President Biden and target their skepticism towards the duplicitous Saudi-Russian OPEC+ cartel instead. These biased analysts, who projected that oil would be \$400/barrel by now instead of the current \$84/barrel, do not acknowledge certain key realities, including:

\* The U.S. is now the world's largest oil producer and needs almost no Saudi oil; as the U.S. has already cut its imports of Saudi oil by over [90% over the last decade to a mere 356,000 barrels](#) a day.

\* The U.S. owned Aramco but recklessly gave it to the Saudis when President Nixon and Henry Kissinger panicked in the 1970s.

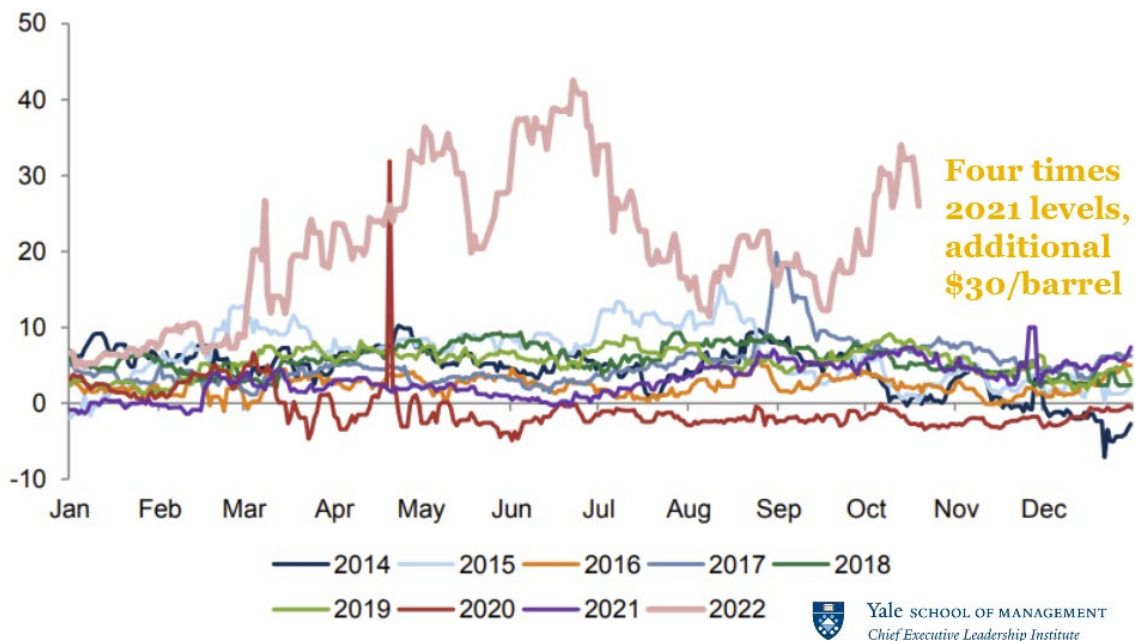
\* Gasoline prices should have fallen recently to match the decline in crude oil, but refineries are enjoying a soaring windfall, with [profits quadrupling from 2021 levels](#). Refiners have added [\\$30 a barrel in refining margins](#) on top of the price of crude—even though 1 million barrels per day in [refining capacity was added in 2022](#) with [more coming in 2023](#). That's not counting the return of [hundreds of thousands of barrels of capacity which was taken offline due to idiosyncratic outages and disruptions](#) the last couple months due to refinery mismanagement.

# Retail Gasoline Price Breakdown and Change Over Time – Price Per Gallon

	Current price	% of retail		% change since		Absolute change		
		Today	2011-15	2015-20	Jan-18	Jan-21	Jan-18	Jan-21
Crude	1.68	51%	70%	52%	6%	36%	0.09	0.45
Refining	0.39	12%	7%	8%	193%	383%	0.25	0.31
RINs	0.20	6%	1%	2%	166%	110%	0.12	0.10
Taxes	0.48	15%	12%	19%	4%	0%	0.02	0.00
Marketing	0.52	16%	10%	19%	39%	18%	0.15	0.08
<b>Retail gasoline</b>	<b>3.27</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>0.63</b>	<b>0.94</b>


 Yale SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT  
 Chief Executive Leadership Institute

## Refining Margins as \$ Per Barrel

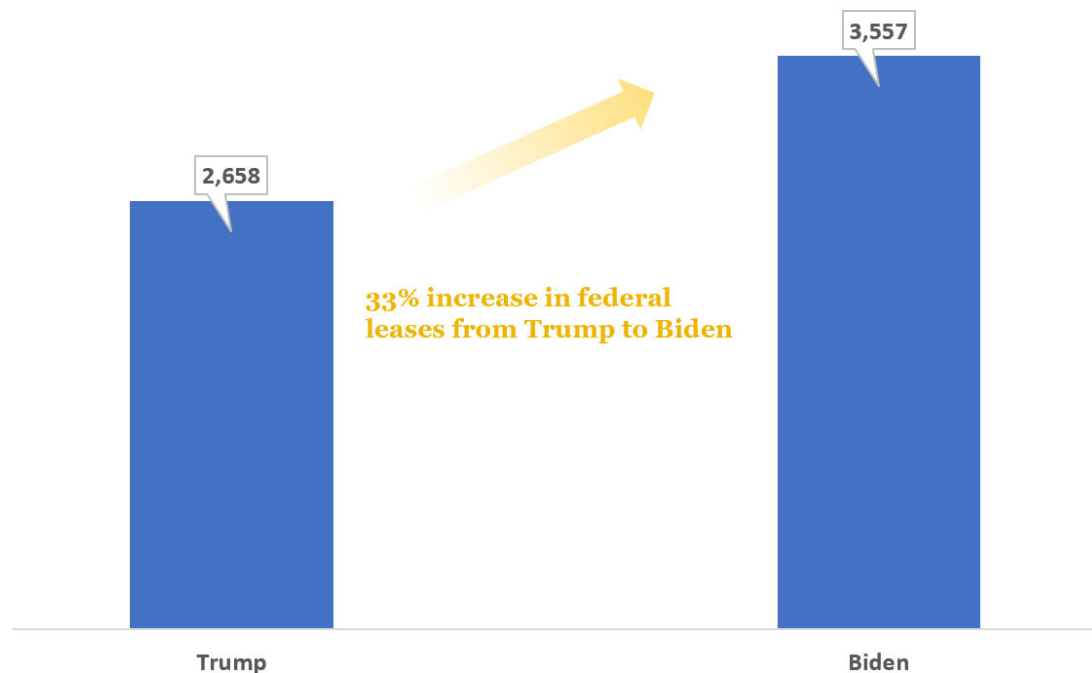


\* The billions of dollars oil producers lost in 2020 was not due to Biden, who had not been elected yet, but due to COVID-related economic shutdowns.

\* Federal leases under Biden far exceed those under Trump—[with 3,557 permits for oil and gas drilling on public lands in Biden’s first year, far outpacing the Trump Administration’s first year total of 2,658, with record](#)

[numbers of unused leases](#). That's the case even though all federal leases combined account for [less than 20%](#) of all U.S. oil and gas production.

## Approval of New Permits of Oil and Gas Drilling on Federal Lands Comparison



\* The U.S. already provides [more gas to the EU than Russia did at its peak](#), and now the EU buys 80% less from Russia than they did before Russia's attack on Ukraine.

\* The recent Saudi/OPEC price hike was not justified by oil markets as producers were already making 80% profit margins. Only the inefficient oil producer Russia, with break-[even production costs twice that of Saudi](#) Arabia, needed these price hikes, to fuel its war.

\* U.S. SPR releases are not political. [Every modern president](#) has authorized significant SPR releases, [including Donald Trump](#)—who likewise faced [attacks from self-serving industry](#) voices. Furthermore countries like [Saudi](#) and [China](#) maintain their own sizable strategic petroleum reserves from which they released ample supplies at [least until this year](#).

\* [Biden's new policy](#) of replenishing the SPR through futures contracts, taking advantage of [backward-dated futures markets](#) where oil is hovering cheaply around \$70 a barrel, locks in hefty profits for domestic oil producers for years to come—which [Riyadh refused to do](#).

Similarly, contrary to Vladimir Putin propaganda that Western sanctions will lead to energy supply shocks, it is in fact Putin who is willingly withholding both oil and gas supplies. The U.S. Treasury Department has proactively put [forward the price cap scheme](#) explicitly to stave off a supply shock come Dec. 5, when further EU sanctions kick in, ensuring Russian oil continues flowing to global markets while simultaneously limiting Putin's revenue.

Any decision by Putin to withhold oil supply after Dec. 5 the way he is withholding gas supply from Europe would be a catastrophic, unforced mistake. He will likely have to reverse himself, much the same way he is now [begging Europe to buy](#) more Russian gas after months of blackmail.

And to the great chagrin of many environmental advocates, Biden has been laying the groundwork for a gradual transition to clean energy, not the overnight transformation that boogeyman industry critics have been urging him to make. [His speech this week](#) explicitly called for an increase in domestic oil and gas production as well as much-needed permitting reform to expedite the construction of energy [infrastructure, particularly gas pipelines which can be converted to green hydrogen pipelines](#) over time.

Perhaps it is even more surprising that many analysts retain any market credibility at all, considering the number of missed calls by many analysts the last year alone. Among them.

\* Some denied that OPEC+ was going to have an unscheduled October surprise with a production cutback of 2 million barrels.

\* Many believed Saudi propaganda that the kingdom had no spare capacity, when in fact the Saudis are [33% off production](#) levels from two years prior, while refusing to release SPR inventory.

\* These experts believed Riyadh's pleas that a production cut was needed to maintain profitability, never appreciating that U.S. technology enables the

Saudis to extract oil as far less than half the cost of Russian oil, with [low break-evens of ~\\$22 a barrel](#).

\* They [forgot to figure in the massively higher shipping costs](#) for getting Russian oil to Asia, buying into Putin's "pivot to Asia" mythology. They likewise wrongly believed that gas was fungible and that Putin could pivot from selling piped gas to Europe to China—though he does not have the needed pipelines.

\* Many, including JP Morgan, said oil by now [would cost \\$380/barrel](#)

\* They [underestimated the speed of liquified natural gas \(LNG\)](#) to backfill for Russian gas to the EU (the U.S. now sells more gas to the EU than Russia did at its peak in February). Fully 86% of Russian gas went to the EU but the EU didn't need it as much as Putin needed to sell it to them.

\* They didn't [imagine that Germany could construct six massive LNG conversion plants in record time to supplement existing 150 bcm](#) of re-gasification capacity.

Evidently, when it comes to energy industry analysts, sometimes the emperor *is* naked—with these conflicted experts too close to their own biased industry sources, repeatedly mistakenly falling for Saudi and Russian misinformation. Riyadh no longer even bothers to disguise its blatant manipulation of industry analysts. Recently the Saudi oil minister [publicly, mercilessly berated a Reuters reporter](#) and banned Reuters from OPEC+ meetings while showering favored analysts [he deemed "kind friends" with extensive access](#) during the most recent OPEC+ press conference. No wonder that with so many [industry experts on the Saudi payroll](#) or reliant on access to Saudi sources, experts shudder in fear at the thought of crossing Riyadh.

Transcending the industry analysts parroting the heavy-handed misinformation of the Saudi-Russia OPEC+ alliance, U.S. energy policy is quite promising—neither giving industry a blank check nor folding to Saudi blackmail like lawn furniture. If only some industry analysts could get beyond the groupthink that greases their paths.

*Jeffrey Sonnenfeld is the Lester Crown Professor in Management Practice*



*and Senior Associate Dean at Yale School of Management. Steven Tian is the director of research at the Yale Chief Executive Leadership Institute.*

*The opinions expressed in Fortune.com commentary pieces are solely the views of their authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions and beliefs of Fortune.*

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**To:** (b)(6) Sec. Granholm [Turk, David](#)  
**Cc:** [Davis, Christopher](#); [Doran, Emily](#)  
**Subject:** FW: [EXTERNAL] Biden's closing attack  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 1, 2022 9:10:28 AM

(b) (5)


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Pronouns: She/her/hers

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# Axios Generate

By Ben Geman and Andrew Freedman · Nov 01, 2022

**Hi November!** Today's newsletter has a Smart Brevity count of 1,116 words, 4.5 minutes.

**Did a friend** send you this newsletter? Welcome, please [sign up](#).

**At this moment** in 1974, Dionne Warwick and The Spinners were #1 on Billboard's Hot 100 with [today's intro tune](#)...

## 1 big thing: Making sense of Biden's oil threat



Illustration: Brendan Lynch/Axios

**President Biden is escalating** criticism of the oil industry in the closing days of a midterm election season that could diminish his power, *Ben writes*.

**Catch up fast:** In remarks from the White House yesterday, he called for new taxes on oil producers if they don't lower fuel prices and boost output. Biden also warned of "other restrictions."

**Why it matters:** It underscores the importance of the economy and gas prices in the elections, and the political fallout from massive industry profits, capped by Exxon's record \$19.7 billion Q3 haul.

**What's new:** This morning BP beat estimates with an \$8.2 billion Q3 profit, its second-highest ever, and announced another \$2.5 billion in share buybacks.

**Threat level:** Biden's comments "must be contextualized within Biden's (and Dem's) larger focus on gasoline prices as a proxy for inflation and economic stress into the midterm election," Cowen Research analyst John Miller said in a note.

A CBS News poll shows that far more voters think gas prices will rise if Democrats control Congress. (Quick reminder: Federal officials have rather limited sway over oil and hence pump prices.)

**The big picture:** Here are a few things to know about yesterday's brief

speech and the response...

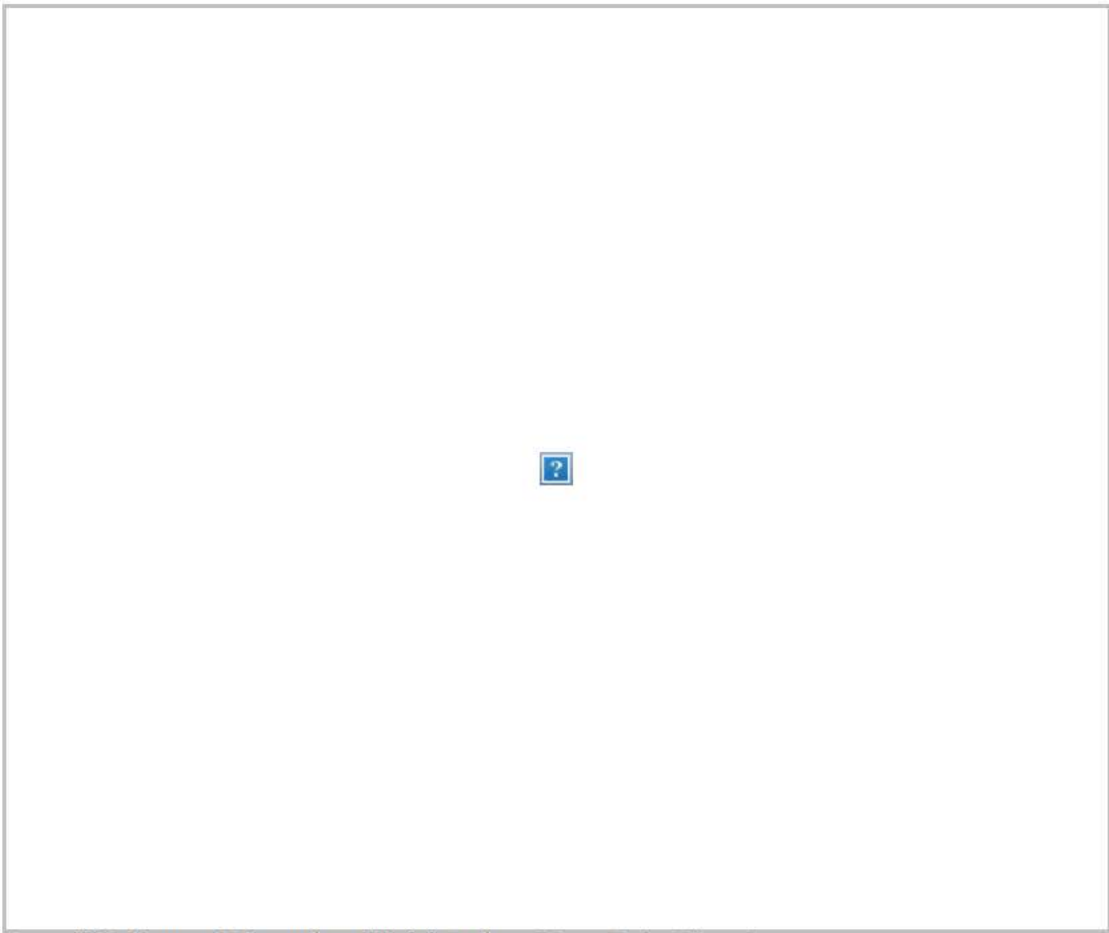
- **Biden went to 11.** It was the most aggressive of his many broadsides against Big Oil in recent months. Biden accused the industry of "war profiteering" and reaping a "windfall from the brutal conflict that's ravaging Ukraine and hurting tens of millions of people."
- **It's a political gamble.** The criticisms could deflect voter upset over energy costs and wider inflation that's creating political peril for Democrats — or increase focus on a vulnerability in the closing days of midterm races.
- **These taxes probably won't happen.** New taxes on oil companies lack enough votes in Congress, and the headwinds will grow if, as appears likely, Republicans regain one or both chambers.
- **That "other restrictions" line is intriguing.** ClearView Energy Partners called it a "further nod to possible limits on refined products exports" and more broadly a "signal of a tighter regulatory posture."

**What they're saying:** "Increasing taxes on American energy discourages investment in new production, which is the exact opposite of what is needed," American Petroleum Institute CEO Mike Sommers said in a statement that reflects sentiment from several industry groups.

But some environmental groups cheered. "Big Oil CEOs proved again this quarter that they are willing to do anything to enrich their wealthy shareholders over lowering costs for people," Climate Power executive director Lori Lodes said in a statement.



**Bonus: The gas price trajectory**



Data: [U.S. Energy Information Administration](#); Chart: Axios Visuals

**U.S. gasoline prices** have come way down from their June peak, but remain elevated.



## 2. First Look: Verifying carbon removal projects

Illustration of magnifying glass over a binary background that reveals a checkmark



Illustration: Eniola Odetunde/Axios

**Carbon180**, which works on carbon removal policies, released a new framework, first shared with Axios, it hopes will jump-start a conversation around ways to measure, report and verify project effectiveness, *Andrew writes*.

**Why it matters:** Carbon removal is essential to avoid some of the most severe climate change impacts but is not yet capable of operating at scale.

- The nascent carbon removal industry needs to demonstrate its success in taking in CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere, without causing negative impacts on ecosystems or leaking emissions over time.

**Zoom in:** According to an accompanying MRV "matrix" Carbon180 seeks to encourage procurers of carbon removal projects to increase their transparency.

- This, the nonprofit, nonpartisan group believes, would help build trust in the removal sector.
- The industry needs to grow to a gigaton scale by the middle of the century in order to limit the severity of global warming, said Peter Minor, director of science and innovation at Carbon180, in an interview.
- Serious money is now being spent on carbon removal projects, such as the nearly \$1 billion commitment by Frontier to spend through

2030.

**What they're saying:** According to Carbon180, robust MRV is needed for securing community buy-in for building projects, which could affect ecosystems.

- "I think if we don't get this right, if we take too many shortcuts, then this could actually be an existential risk for carbon removal," Minor said.



A MESSAGE FROM ENBRIDGE

## Our focus is on tomorrow



At Enbridge, we're advancing the energy transition by investing in low-carbon solutions and modernizing our systems.

**The goal:** By 2030, we plan to reduce the intensity of greenhouse gas emissions from our operations by 35%. By 2050, we plan to achieve net zero emissions.

[Find out more.](#)

### 3. Philanthropic giving to climate mitigation grows

Illustration of a stack of cash with three windmills on top of it.



Illustration: Victoria Ellis/Axios

**Foundation and individual support** for climate mitigation grew by 25% last year, reaching between \$7.5 billion and \$12.5 billion, according to new research, *Andrew writes*.

**The big picture:** [ClimateWorks' report released yesterday](#) finds that total giving to limit the severity of global warming still represents less than 2% of global philanthropic giving.

- The report shows clear trends over time, with foundation funding increasing by more than 40% between 2020 and 2021.
- This reflects some of the big pledges made around the COP26 climate summit in Glasgow as well as commitments from new players, such as the Bezos Earth Fund.

**Between the lines:** The report shows the sectors attracting the most money now reflect recent boosts for forest conservation and carbon dioxide removal technologies.



- Funders are increasingly incorporating equity and justice components into their grant programs.
- Little money is going toward cutting emissions from Latin America and Africa, however, despite Africa's growing carbon emissions.

**What they're saying:** “It’s striking how little foundation funding is going toward mitigating climate change in many major emerging countries and regions where emissions are increasing,” said Surabi Menon of ClimateWorks and an author of the report, in a statement.



## 4. Need-to-know numbers: deals, oil, earnings

**\$3.1 billion**, the amount the private equity firm Veritas Capital is paying Verisk to obtain Wood Mackenzie, an energy data and research firm whose work often appears in this newsletter, *Ben writes*.

- **Why it matters:** The figure shows Veritas' confidence in the expanding market for energy data services, especially related to low-carbon transition.
- **What they're saying:** Veritas CEO Ramzi Musallam said in a statement that the growing customer base, "from upstream producers who are looking to decarbonize to new energy asset managers who want to optimize their investments."

**110 million barrels per day**, which is the global oil demand in 2045 in OPEC's new long-term forecast, which sees continued growth through then.

- **Why it matters:** It splits with new projections from the IEA, which sees demand plateauing in the mid-2030s — and peaking and falling much faster if countries enact tougher climate policies.

**\$42.4 billion**, the Q3 profit announced this morning by Saudi Aramco, the world's largest oil producer. The Saudi giant's net earnings are 39% higher than in the same period last year. *CNBC has more*.

**100 gigawatts** by 2035, the clean energy deployment goal of the newly announced partnership between the U.S and the United Arab Emirates.



## 5. Quoted

***"African nations are going to call out the hypocrisy of Europe securing gas deals in the name of energy security while telling African nations not to develop their resources for baseload energy."***

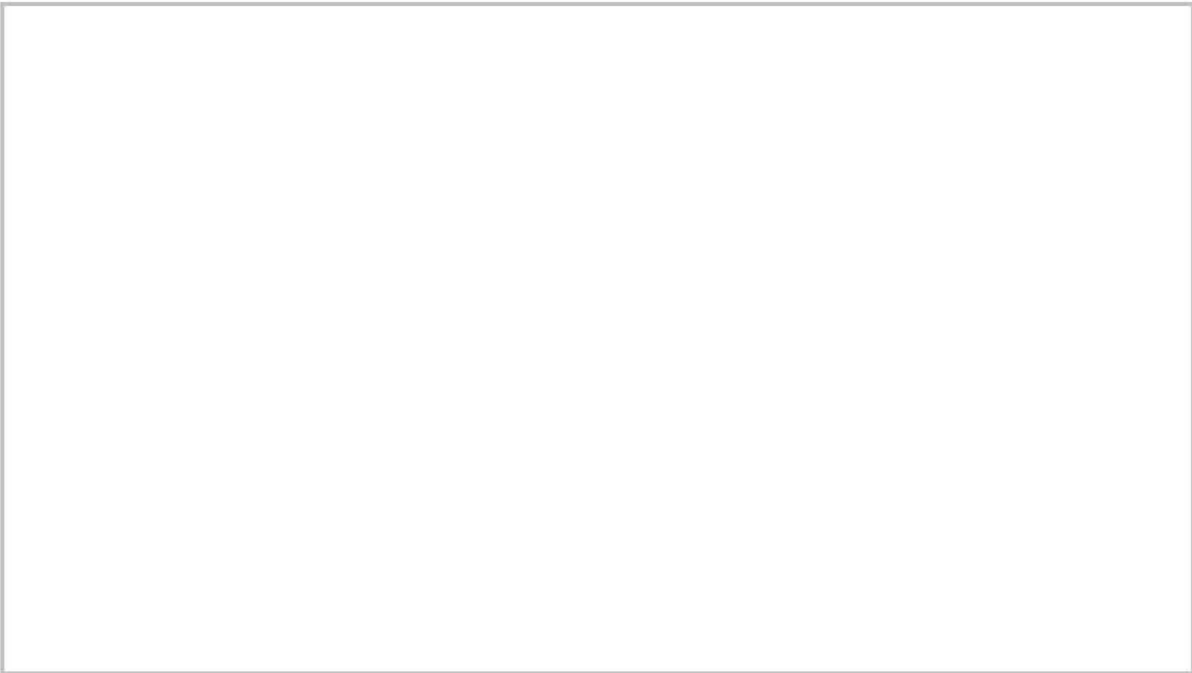
— Lily Odarno, head of the Clean Air Task Force's Africa climate program

**Via Reuters**, she's highlighting one of the fissures expected at the upcoming COP27 climate conference in Egypt.



A MESSAGE FROM ENBRIDGE

## Can coral reefs help fight climate change?



Enbridge's support is helping the University of Texas Rio Grande and Friends of RGV Reef determine if reefs can capture and store carbon.

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Thanks to Mickey Meece and David Nather for edits to today's newsletter. We'll see you back here tomorrow!



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**Subject:** Fwd: [EXTERNAL] Republicans say Biden slashed oil drilling. The facts say otherwise.  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 2, 2022 9:06:56 AM

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(b) (5) Thanks!

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**From:** Bartol, Bridget <bridget.bartol@hq.doe.gov>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 2, 2022 6:54 AM  
**To:** Troiano, Charisma L <charisma.troiano@hq.doe.gov>; DL-PAC <DL-PAC@hq.doe.gov>  
**Cc:** Doran, Emily <emily.doran@hq.doe.gov>; Bloom, David <david.bloom@hq.doe.gov>; Hutchinson, Emma <emma.hutchinson@hq.doe.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL] Republicans say Biden slashed oil drilling. The facts say otherwise.

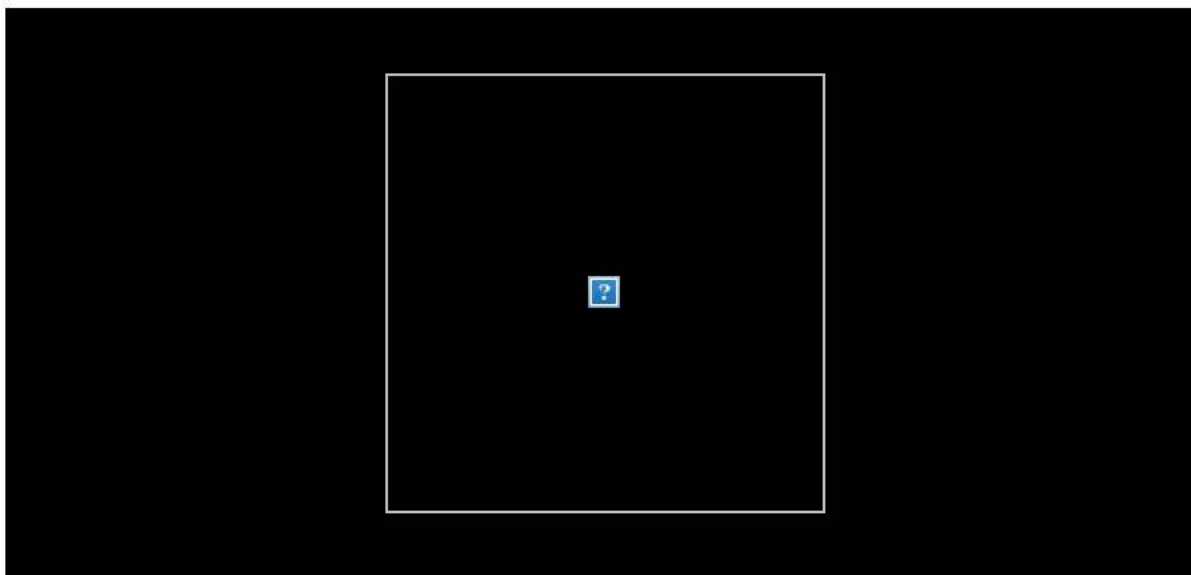
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**To:** DL-PAC <DL-PAC@hq.doe.gov>  
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**Subject:** Fwd: [EXTERNAL] Republicans say Biden slashed oil drilling. The facts say otherwise.

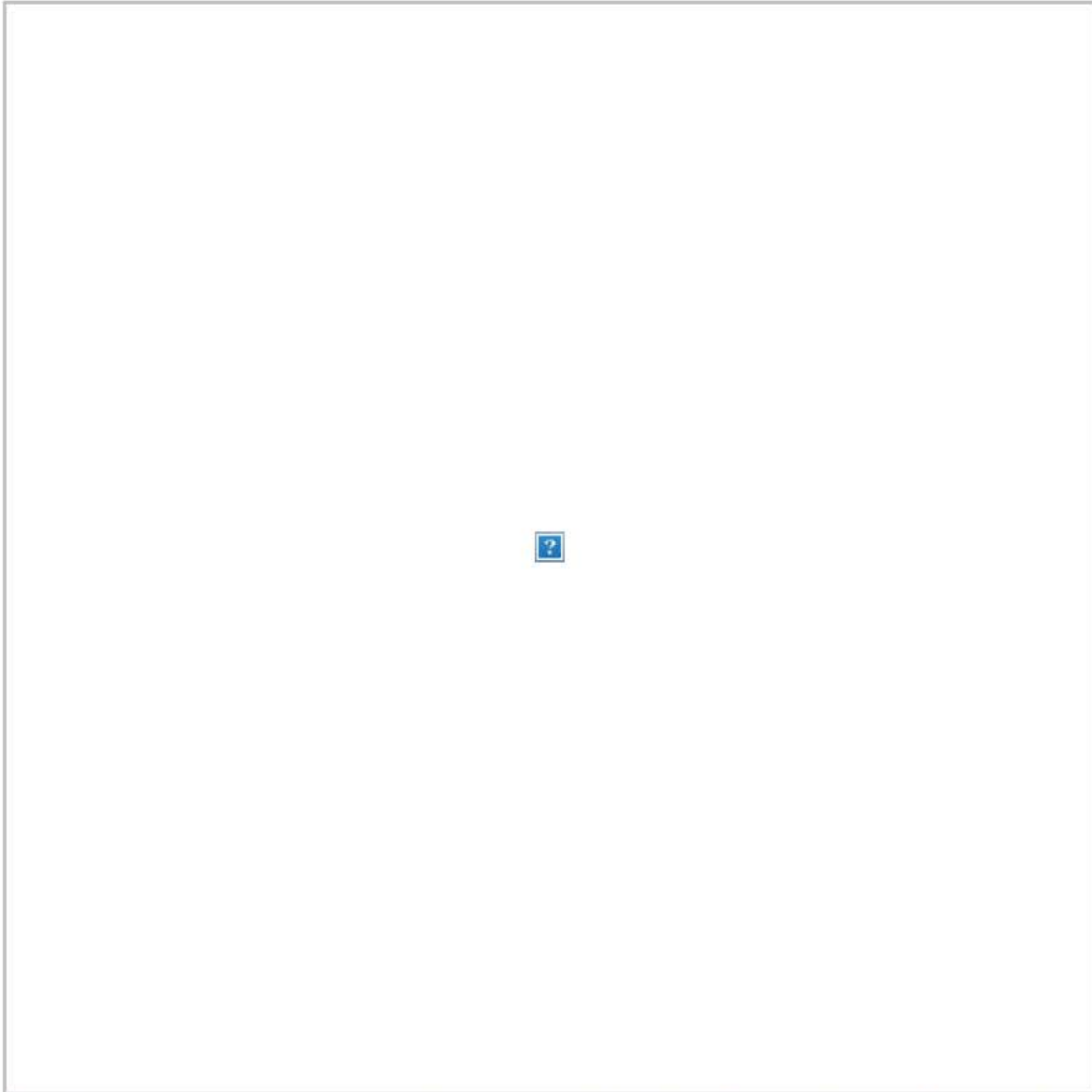
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**From:** POLITICO Pro <alert@email.politicopro.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 2, 2022 5:03 AM  
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# Republicans say Biden slashed oil drilling. The facts say otherwise.

BY BEN LEFEBVRE | 11/02/2022 05:01 AM EDT



The Biden-era petroleum surge came despite his promises to shift the nation away from fossil fuels to combat climate change. | Michael M. Santiago/Getty Images

President Joe Biden's regulators have approved new oil and gas wells at a far faster pace than the Trump administration did during its first 21 months in office — a fact that undermines Republican election-year arguments about the causes of this year's high gasoline prices.

The U.S. has also produced more crude oil since Biden's inauguration than it had done during the equivalent period of former President Donald Trump's presidency, a POLITICO review of federal energy data shows.

The Biden-era petroleum surge came despite his promises to shift the nation away from fossil fuels to combat climate change, as well as his unsuccessful efforts to end new oil and gas drilling on federal lands and waters. But it hasn't shielded Biden from taking a political strafing over gasoline prices, which reached a record high in June and remain a potent campaign issue for next week's midterm elections.

The dynamic offers yet another reminder of how little power any president has to shape the gyrations of the energy markets.

Democrats have blamed the gasoline price spike on Russia's invasion of Ukraine, production cuts by OPEC, lingering economic supply chain effects of the pandemic and price-gouging by oil companies — some of which reported record quarterly profits last week. On Monday, Biden [accused the oil industry of "war profiteering"](#) and threatened to push for stiffer taxes on the companies' earnings.

But Republicans have hammered one consistent message this year: Biden caused motorists' pain at the pump by shutting down U.S. oil and gas production.

"Joe Biden's anti-energy agenda has destroyed American energy independence," [House Republicans tweeted last week](#) as part of a [cascade of similar GOP messages](#) aired on social media and television appearances in the run-up to the election.

An analysis of federal energy data shows a different story, however.



From January 2021 to the end of September, Biden's Interior Department approved 74 percent more well permits for oil and natural gas production than the agency had done during the comparable period of Trump's term, according to figures from the U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

Meanwhile, [U.S. natural gas production has hit record highs](#), and oil output is expected to reach an [all-time high next year](#). Even with the oil industry's pandemic slump, the U.S. produced more than 15 percent more oil during Biden's first 20 months than during the same period under Trump, according to POLITICO's analysis of numbers from the Energy Information Administration.

All told, the U.S. is still the world's top oil and natural gas producer, as it had been under Trump, as well as the largest exporter of natural gas, gasoline and other



transportation fuels.

## **The pandemic hangover lingers**

Those numbers come with some caveats, however. The oil production surge, for instance, is entirely due to drilling on private and state land, which is largely outside the administration's control. Oil production from federal land and waters — nearly a quarter of the U.S. total — has been virtually unchanged since Biden took office, dipping less than 0.3 percent.

And U.S. oil production still lags below the all-time high it reached under Trump, which peaked at 13 million barrels a day before the start of the pandemic. That peak was the culmination of an oil boom that started during the George W. Bush administration and ran through the Obama years, except for a one-year industry bust starting in the summer of 2015.

The industry is now rebounding from [a massive downturn sparked by the collapse of fuel demand](#) during the Covid lockdowns — a business environment that some industry officials have said [was worsened by the Trump administration's failure to persuade more people to get vaccinated](#) and control the virus.

Any lingering hesitancy to produce more oil stems from the industry's own aversion to cross its Wall Street lenders by returning to pre-covid spending levels, market analysts said — not from government policy.

This chart shows the monthly average U.S. crude oil production (barrels per day).

Republicans are correct that Biden has made transitioning away from fossil fuels a top policy plank, and he promised during the 2020 campaign that he would halt new oil and gas drilling in federal territory. And his Interior Department did freeze new lease sales for about a year, until a federal court ordered it to resume them.

All told, the Biden administration has held only one oil and gas lease sale in the Gulf of Mexico and one round of onshore oil lease sales in seven states in June. By comparison, the Trump administration held four offshore lease sales along with quarterly onshore lease sales in multiple states during its first 21 months.

Biden's pause will mostly be a blip on the drilling schedules for companies operating on federal land. The Interior Department is now in the process of scheduling new oil lease sales to comply with provisions in Democrats' newly

passed climate bill.

## **The White House changes its tune**

At the same time, the White House has done a rhetorical about-face amid the past year's surge in oil prices, which began in the fall of 2021 and accelerated after Russia invaded Ukraine in February. In addition to calling for oil companies to put their rigs back to work, Biden has opened up the nation's crude oil stockpile, the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, pushing more than 200 million barrels into the market since December.

When announcing the latest petroleum release last month, Biden rejected accusations that his administration had slowed oil production.

“Quite the opposite,” he told reporters during a news conference. “We're producing 12 million barrels of oil per day and by the end of this year we will be producing one million barrels a day more than the day in which I took office. In fact, we're on track for record oil production in 2023.”

This chart shows the benchmark price of U.S. crude oil, in dollars per barrel.

The oil industry acknowledges that the Biden administration has issued more oil and gas permits than the early Trump administration had done. But the American Petroleum Institute, the industry's premier trade association, credits that increase to momentum built during the Trump era, specifically changes the Trump administration made to the Bureau of Land Management's review process.

The Biden administration also inherited [a massive number of permit applications filed in the final months before Trump left office](#). Oil companies made what they believed to be a last-ditch effort to get permits approved before the inauguration of Biden, [who had campaigned on a promise](#) of "banning new oil and gas permitting on public lands and waters."

The numbers show that Biden didn't keep that campaign pledge — though he's still

reaping the political blame for making it.

**"At present, no specific U.S. policy is meaningfully hindering U.S. production."**

Reed Olmstead, S&P Global Commodity Insights

The Biden administration has had a strained relationship with the oil industry, even if it hasn't gone nearly as far as many environmental groups would like. On his first day in office, Biden killed the proposed Keystone XL pipeline, which would have delivered Canadian oil to the Gulf Coast. On the other hand, the administration hasn't taken green activists' sides in [legal cases seeking to block other major oil pipelines](#) or ConocoPhillips' proposed [Willow oil drilling project in Alaska](#).

Oil market analysts largely agree that few policy decisions coming out of an administration — Biden's or otherwise — have more than a marginal impact on short-term U.S. oil and gas production. More important factors are the price of oil and the simple laws of supply and demand, they said.

"At present, no specific U.S. policy is meaningfully hindering U.S. production," Reed Olmstead, executive director for upstream research at the market analyst firm S&P Global Commodity Insights, said in an email.

Biden's releases from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve "did not affect domestic markets sufficiently to cause a drop in activity/growth," Olmstead wrote, adding that OPEC's most recent production cut "only served to undergird prices, which were already more than sufficient to sustain the industry running at capacity."

## **Is oil a 'declining business'?**

Instead of Biden, the real cause of Americans' woes at the fuel pump lay with the oil industry's relationship with Wall Street, analysts said.

The industry, which for years burned through capital, collected debt and had little direct competition against its main products, is now facing investors who are no longer willing to hand over money, said Philip Verleger, head of the economic consulting firm PKVerleger and senior fellow at the Niskanen Center think tank. He said those investors see oil as a "declining business," believing that electric

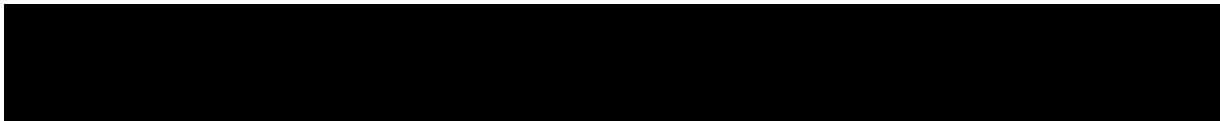
vehicles and renewable energy projects are a significant risk to the industry's growth.

“Wall Street isn't listening to the White House,” Verleger continued. “To say if the White House would just encourage oil and gas drilling, all this investor money would come forward. ... I'm trying to think of another adjective instead of 'bullshit.'”

Company earnings data shows that even with gasoline prices having hit a nominal high earlier this year — and exhortations from Biden and [Energy Department Secretary Jennifer Granholm to produce more](#) — the industry as a whole isn't planning to go into higher gear anytime soon.

“We expect adherence to capital discipline to remain strong, with most of the industry committing to low-or-no growth in 2023 and continued focus on shareholder returns,” analysts at investment bank Morgan Stanley said in a client note last month.

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**From:** [Troiano, Charisma L](#)  
**To:** (b)(6) Sec. Granholm  
**Subject:** RE: CNBC  
**Date:** Thursday, November 3, 2022 12:41:30 AM

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Secretary,

Sharing a quick round up of interviews and a few notable news articles since POTUS's Oct. 31<sup>st</sup> speech. I've also included a few articles of note.

- **Amos Hochstein at the Abu Dhabi International Petroleum Exhibition and Conference (11/1)**
  - CNBC: ['We're not against profits,' Biden's special presidential coordinator says after White House tax threats on energy companies](#)
  
- **Brian Deese on Squawk Box (11/1)**
  - CNBC: [Biden wants Big Oil to reduce the historic margins they're charging, says White House economist](#)
    - [Full clip](#)
  - CNN (11/1) – [full clip](#)
    - This touches on the larger economy (namely health costs) as well as oil/gas company profits

On the topic of profits, I wanted to reup this CNN piece from the spring which has recordings of industry investor calls –

CNN: [Big oil catered to shareholders while Americans were hit with surging gas prices](#)

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## WAPO: Inside the Biden team's fixation on gas prices

Many Biden aides say the president's popularity is closely

tied to a single economic number. They could be right.

President Biden's top aide wakes up almost every morning at around 3:30 a.m. in his suburban Maryland home, rolls over in bed and pulls out his iPhone to check a number critical to the fate of the presidency.

The information sought by Biden's chief of staff is not covert intelligence from a foreign government nor a top-secret national security assessment, but a publicly available tracker on AAA.com – the average national gas price, which updates in the early morning.

A few hours later, Ron Klain gathers anecdotal information about [gas prices](#) on his drive to the White House, checking the listed price at each of the nine gas stations he passes on his morning commute.

Before the end of his day, as he guides the president's agenda, Klain often continues to check in on gas prices with a dedication that has impressed some of his colleagues. If prices are trending downward, Klain amplifies them in news releases, notes to colleagues and, most frequently, tweets. He has tweeted close to 300 times about gas prices since July alone, including retweets, sometimes doing so in the morning, afternoon and again the same night.

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"I know how important it is to bring down gas prices," Klain said in an interview.

Klain's fixation on gas prices reflects a wider sense inside the Biden administration that the president's popularity is, [to a remarkable degree, tied up in that single indicator](#) – one that many economists regard as not nearly as important as the attention it gets. With some incredulity, White House economic officials have watched for months as the president's approval rating moves in almost exact relation to the average national gas price.

President Biden on Oct. 31 bemoaned the profits of oil and gas companies ahead of the 2022 midterm elections and suggested



exploring a new tax on those profits. (Video: The Washington Post)

This focus has in part driven the White House to sacrifice other major objectives in the search for lower fuel costs — leading Biden to [seek a rapprochement with Saudi Arabia](#) despite its human rights record, for instance, and to relax some environmental rules. The White House has also released more than 165 million barrels of oil [from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve](#), the largest in the history of the reserve, amid concerns from some analysts that its depletion could prove dangerous ahead of winter. And the president has repeatedly browbeaten oil companies for purportedly keeping prices artificially high, contrary to his usual instincts as a business-friendly Democrat.

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The White House in a statement to the Post denied that any other goals had been compromised.

“The claim that our work to lower gas prices has come at the expense of other priorities is flatly wrong,” the statement said. “In the time the President has been doing everything he can to lower prices at the pump, he has also done more than any prior president to tackle the climate crisis — securing the largest investment ever in clean energy and climate resilience, creating thousands of clean energy manufacturing jobs, leading global efforts to combat climate change, and so much more.”

With the midterms a week away, the months-long push is about to be put to the test. Polls suggest it has done little to chip away at the Republicans’ strong advantage on economic issues, and analysts from both parties say the GOP is likely to make big gains next week.

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But Democrats see some reason for hope.

Biden’s approval rating cratered in June as gas prices soared, recovered in July and August when gas prices plummeted, and then fell again

when gas prices ticked upward in late September. Now a fourth shift may be underway – again in Democrats’ favor, with prices again beginning to dip in the last two weeks of the campaign. Some in the administration are optimistic or at least hopeful that it will translate into one final polling bump at the right time.

Nobody in the White House has been more focused on lowering gas prices than Klain, according to interviews with half a dozen senior aides, Democratic lawmakers and others familiar with the chief of staff’s thinking. It’s a reflection of the president’s own attention to the issue.

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Biden has tasked Brian Deese, director of the National Economic Council, and top White House aide Amos Hochstein with leading the administration’s day-to-day work on energy policy. This White House economic team holds multiple staff-level meetings every week and regularly updates senior officials on data from AAA and GasBuddy, which also tracks gas prices, according to a person familiar with the matter who spoke on the condition of anonymity to reflect internal deliberations.

“Ron Klain is the most aggressive of anyone in the administration in making sure we’re lowering gas prices and taking action against the Saudis and doing everything on the table to bring relief,” said Rep. Ro Khanna (D-Calif.), who introduced a bill last week temporarily banning the export of gasoline produced by the United States. “He understands that’s the priority for many Americans, and of all the voices in the administration, he’s been the most aggressive and assertive.”

Economists say there is something puzzling, if not irrational, in the political power of gas prices. Gas typically amounts to just 4 percent of the average family’s budget, with food and housing typically representing larger shares of how Americans spend their money.

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Gas appears to have a disproportionate electoral impact in part because of its visual prominence and the frequency with which consumers must buy it. The cost of housing, medicine and even groceries can be relatively opaque, while the price of gasoline is emblazoned on large public signs in every part of the country.

Political scientists have found that gas prices have had a direct effect on presidential approval ratings for decades, independent of other inflationary trends, according to Matt Grossmann, a Michigan State political scientist. Presidential approval ratings are in turn connected to how voters decide which party to back in Congress.

“Every focus group you do, it’s the number one thing volunteered,” said Celinda Lake, a Democratic pollster who has worked for Biden. “People get reminded of the price of gas every two hours. They just really watch that price and feel that it’s an overall indicator of which way things are going.”

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Gas prices have at points appeared to represent a major threat to Biden’s presidency. From their pandemic-depressed level of around \$2.39 when Biden took office in January 2021, prices shot up as the economy recovered and demand surged from factories and commuters. In November 2021, before Russia invaded Ukraine, Biden announced the release of the first 50 million barrels of oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve to offset the increases.

Inside the White House, gas prices were not initially seen as the most pressing political concern. Deese took the lead on the administration’s response, with White House aides Vivek Viswanathan and David Kamen tasked with playing key coordinate roles.

Klain became increasingly involved as the political importance of gas prices became evident.

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“Ron was not as focused on it in the early going; in the beginning, it was really Brian’s,” one person familiar with the internal dynamics said, speaking on the condition of anonymity to reflect private dynamics. “But once it became obviously a meaningful political issue, then it became a much higher priority.” The person added: “When Ron is focused on something, that means it’s a focus for the president.”

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine last February introduced even more instability to the market, and the average gallon of gas even [eclipsed \\$5 at one point in June](#). Biden’s popularity took a beating in the polls, often on a slight delay from changes in gas prices.

Then things began breaking the White House’s way. Pointing to the extraordinary circumstances posed by Russia’s invasion, Biden announced the largest-ever drawdown of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve in the spring: an [additional 180 million barrels](#).

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More important, Russia did not reduce oil exports as many analysts feared at the war’s outset. That kept global supply stable while the United States was pumping more from its reserves into world markets.

At the White House, Klain hosted Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy, ahead of hurricane season to discuss how the company’s data could help the administration limit the impact of fuel disruptions on Americans, De Haan confirmed to The Washington Post.

When BP had to shut units at an Ohio refinery, White House and Energy Department officials held multiple calls per day with the company to offer assistance and account for any damage, according to one person familiar with the matter who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss internal dynamics.

Average prices fell below \$3.70 in September — or by roughly one-quarter from the summer — and Biden’s approval rating rose to 43 percent. Democrats also moved into the lead on the generic ballot for the midterm elections for the first time since October 2021, according

to FiveThirtyEight.

On Twitter, Klain celebrated as the United States posted a record streak in falling gas prices for 97 consecutive days, after highlighting many of the days along the way.

Still, some political analysts say the focus on gas prices may be overstated, given that overall inflation has also closely tracked with Biden's approval ratings.

Republicans say that despite the administration's talk of lowering gas prices, it has not done enough to expand drilling in the United States because of environmental concerns. Other analysts have criticized the release of the petroleum reserve as politically motivated, arguing its depletion now could leave the United States vulnerable after the midterms should prices spike again in the winter, when Europe imposes its embargo on Russian oil exports.

Many analysts supported the Biden administration's decision to release the reserves after the Ukraine invasion but said that action should have been suspended once it became clear Russian supply did not evaporate as feared.

"If it was me, I would have kept my powder dry because we're going to lose Russia this winter," said Bob McNally, who served as an energy official in the George W. Bush administration. "The responsible thing to do would have been to suspend sales and not drawn down emergency reserves."

Overall, analysts say a president has limited influence over gas prices, and it is clear that Biden's efforts have not kept costs consistently low. In September, gas prices rose as the OPEC Plus nations announced they would cut back oil production in a rebuke to the administration, and Biden's approval ratings dipped yet again in subsequent weeks.

On Monday, Biden floated the possibility of a tax on energy giants' profits if they refused to expand production, castigating firms for not doing enough to lower prices. It was only Biden's latest recognition of

gas prices' political significance.

On Tuesday morning, Klain again tweeted about gas prices falling nationally and dropping below \$3.55 in 20 states. He tweeted again about falling gas prices less than two hours later.

“White House officials will sometimes say, ‘Well, the only thing that matters in the entire American economy is gas prices,’ ” said one person in communication with senior White House officials, speaking on the condition of anonymity to reflect private conversations with Biden’s economic aides. “And they may not be wrong, which is wild.”

Yasmeen Abutaleb contributed to this report.

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## REUTERS Analysis: Biden's threatened windfall oil tax unlikely to pass U.S. Congress

WASHINGTON, Nov 2(Reuters) - President Joe Biden's threat to impose a windfall profits tax on oil companies is unlikely to pass in the U.S. Congress, even if Democrats defy forecasts and manage to maintain their razor-thin majority in midterm elections on Nov. 8.

Congress passed big, retroactive tax breaks for Big Oil when former President Donald Trump was in office, as fuel demand dropped during COVID lockdowns. After oil prices soared following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, European governments already [have imposed](#) windfall taxes on their oil industries.

But most U.S. lawmakers show little appetite to reverse that trend after oil companies like Exxon Mobil Corp and Chevron Corp <CVX.N. [raked in huge quarterly profits](#), analysts and officials said.

Biden on Monday accused [oil and gas companies](#) of "war-profiteering" because shareholders are reaping the record profits boosted by Russia's

invasion of Ukraine. He said companies should instead lower fuel costs for Americans or invest some of the profits in boosting domestic production.

"If they don't, they're going to pay a higher tax on their excess profits, and face other restrictions," Biden said, but tax and energy experts said he will have a hard time convincing Congress, which sets U.S. tax policy.

Senator Sheldon Whitehouse and Representative Ro Khanna, both Democrats, are among legislators who have already introduced bills to tax excess oil company profits. But not all sitting Democrats support the effort, and the Senate would likely have to pick up Democratic seats next week even to get the simple majority needed to push a windfall tax through budget reconciliation.

Democratic Senators Kyrsten Sinema from Arizona and Joe Manchin from West Virginia would likely oppose a windfall profits tax, dimming its prospects, congressional sources and research groups said. The senators' offices did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

State and local governments could take action regardless of what Congress does, says ClearView Energy Partners, a DC research firm.

"High prices tend to make governments grabby, and a recession could strain state and local government finances," ClearView said.

It said even U.S. oil producing states, known for low taxes and loose regulations, "might begin to eye industry profits - potentially leading to a rescission or modification of existing incentives, if not new levies."

Administration officials conceded privately that it may be difficult to enact a federal windfall profits tax, and said no deadline has been set for a next step. Other options include a possible export ban on oil products, they said.

'NOT NECESSARILY CRAZY'

Asking companies to pay more in taxes to fund government services from education to roads has been a key plank of Biden's economic platform. Yet his windfall tax comments were quickly dismissed by industry and business groups and even by former Democratic Treasury Secretary Larry Summers, who suggested such moves could ultimately raise prices by discouraging investment and oil production.

"Bottom line, this is all politics and really, really bad economics," said Scott Hodge, president emeritus of the pro-business Tax Foundation. He said a windfall tax enacted under former President Jimmy Carter in 1980 on the industry had the opposite effect, lowering domestic production.

Big U.S. companies pay less than their overseas competitors, [Reuters research shows](#), and [contribute much less](#) to the federal budget than they did in the United States in the 1940s and 1950s.

The 2021 federal tax rate for Exxon was 2.8% and Chevron 1.8%, the left-leaning Center for American Progress calculated, after profits cratered and the Trump-backed COVID relief bill the CARES Act reduced past taxes owed based on losses during and before the pandemic.

Exxon declined to comment and Chevron had no immediate comment.

British lawmakers in July [approved](#) a 25% windfall tax on oil and gas producers in the British North Sea expected to raise 5 billion pounds (\$5.95 billion) in a year to help consumers with soaring energy bills. Greece, Spain, and Italy have also implemented windfall taxes.

Joseph Thornton, a U.S. political historian and tax expert, said Biden's plans were "not necessarily crazy," but could be difficult to execute. Excess profits taxes on companies had found traction during World War Two only because Americans were dying in the war, he said.

"That's traditionally how this sense of moral outrage has been mustered by politicians," to tax companies during war, he said, though high gasoline prices and inflation were clearly hurting Americans.



The International Monetary Fund last month embraced well-structured [permanent taxes on excess profits](#) on fuel extraction, saying they could help raise revenue without reducing investment or increasing inflation.

Reporting by Andrea Shalal and Tim Gardner; Editing by Heather Timmons and David Gregorio

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**From:** Troiano, Charisma L <[charisma.troiano@hq.doe.gov](mailto:charisma.troiano@hq.doe.gov)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, November 2, 2022 8:04 PM

**To:** (b)(6) Sec. Granholm

**Subject:** Re: CNBC

Absolutely. I'll compile a list this evening.

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**From:** (b)(6) Sec. Granholm

**Sent:** Wednesday, November 2, 2022 7:55:39 PM

**To:** Troiano, Charisma L <[charisma.troiano@hq.doe.gov](mailto:charisma.troiano@hq.doe.gov)>

**Subject:** CNBC

Charisma,

(b) (5)

JMG

**From:** [Bartol, Bridget](#)  
**To:** [Troiano, Charisma L](#); [Bhattacharyya, Arpita](#); [Turk, David](#)  
**Cc:** [Mayorga, David](#)  
**Subject:** RE: WaPo story on SPR  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 9, 2022 9:35:46 AM

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Amazing that they're essentially saying the DOE is doing its job while they swipe at the admin on failing to do its job...

**Bridget Bartol**

Deputy Chief of Staff

U.S. Department of Energy

[Bridget.Bartol@hq.doe.gov](mailto:Bridget.Bartol@hq.doe.gov) | (b) (6)

Pronouns: She/her/hers

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**From:** Troiano, Charisma L <charisma.troiano@hq.doe.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 8, 2022 11:46 PM  
**To:** Bhattacharyya, Arpita <arpita.bhattacharyya@hq.doe.gov>; Turk, David <david.turk@hq.doe.gov>; Bartol, Bridget <bridget.bartol@hq.doe.gov>  
**Cc:** Mayorga, David <david.mayorga@hq.doe.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: WaPo story on SPR

## **Biden courted oil companies before threatening them with windfall tax**

Top advisers made the latest of several attempts to prompt firms to boost production but were rebuffed

President Biden speaks at the White House last month. (Oliver Contreras for The Washington Post)

Before President Biden lambasted oil companies for excess profits last week and [threatened to slap a "windfall tax" on them](#), several of his top energy advisers privately attempted to woo that same industry only to get rebuffed, according to seven people familiar with the matter who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

Officials from the White House and the State and Energy departments reached out to oil industry trade groups and companies in mid-October to get support for a plan to buy crude to refill the country's emergency reserves, said source, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not permitted to share the discussions. They told industry representatives their plan would help U.S. oil and gas companies by guaranteeing that the government would purchase oil in months to come if crude prices fell to about \$70 a barrel or below.

It was the latest of several attempts by the Biden administration to prompt oil companies to boost output, this time by telling them they could invest with the

confidence that the government would help ensure steady revenue. Officials including the National Economic Council director, Brian Deese, and Amos Hochstein, a special presidential coordinator at the State Department, called some of the world's largest oil companies, including ExxonMobil, Chevron and Shell.

Story continues below advertisement

But none has endorsed the plan or committed to boosting output, a setback for an administration trying to lower energy prices going into an election and weaken the power of Russia as a major energy exporter. Instead of repairing relations with the U.S. oil industry, the outreach deepened a divide between the White House and executives who control U.S. oil output and have little trust that the president will back them.

Several industry officials said executives told administration officials that the logic of the plan wasn't clear and that the effort was probably too small to work as the White House claimed. Some called the outreach a political ploy amid a series of comments from the president [blaming the oil companies for record-high prices](#) and castigating them for their historically high profits.

“We’ve been disappointed that the conversations of the last several weeks have been geared so much toward midterm politics,” said Chet Thompson, leader of the American Fuel and Petrochemical Manufacturers, the refiners’ trade group. “We’ll be happy after that to get back to serious energy policymaking.”

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Biden announced the plan — along with [more withdrawals from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve](#) — from the White House on Oct. 19 and criticized oil companies in the same speech. He said they shouldn't be delivering so much profit to shareholders “while a war is raging,” referring to Russia's assault on Ukraine. Days later, shortly after other cordial, private talks between Energy Department officials and industry leaders, Biden accused oil companies of “war profiteering” as he raised the possibility of imposing a windfall tax.

The mistrust goes both ways, according to administration officials. John D. Podesta, a top climate adviser at the White House, said oil company executives are failing to show patriotism. They should be spending to boost production that might lower consumer prices, he said, at a time when Russia has used its power as one of the world's top energy exporters to put pressure on NATO countries and to fund its war in Ukraine.

[\*U.S. warns that climate change threatens what 'Americans value most,' in key federal report\*](#)

Instead, they are heeding major shareholders who have demanded restraint and paying some of their huge profits back to those investors rather than spending on growth. It has irritated White House officials who want lower prices for consumers, and many of them passed around recent comments from ExxonMobil CEO Darren Woods that the company was helping “the American people” through “the form of our quarterly dividend.”

Story continues below advertisement

“Comments like that are just highly frustrating,” Podesta said. “The total lack of recognition of what is happening to families around the country.”

Woods’s comments on Oct. 28 were part of an ExxonMobil earnings call about its latest record profit, \$19.7 billion. Chevron had just posted an \$11.2 billion profit, its second highest on record. The size of the profits and the commitment to shareholders over consumers pushed Biden to his first public suggestion that he might support a windfall tax, the culmination of months of internal debates, administration officials said.

“It’s frustrating that a year ago we were being told to stop drilling, and in the past several months, we’ve been beat up for not drilling enough,” ExxonMobil spokesman Casey Norton said in a statement. “In actuality, we delivered record production from our US refineries so that we could do our part to help meet demand.”

Story continues below advertisement

Consumer prices for gasoline and diesel both hit nominal records in June, and then declined for three straight months, coinciding with improving poll numbers for the president. But declines have stopped since then, leaving gasoline up 11 percent and diesel 43 percent from a year ago going into election day, according to U.S. Energy Department figures.

[Biden’s inner circle has been fixated on gasoline prices](#) since last year, believing they’re pivotal to the president’s popularity and potentially Democrats’ success in Tuesday’s election. In a Friday speech outside San Diego, Biden suggested he would soon try to meet with oil company executives.

“Well, I’m working like hell to deal with the energy prices,” he said, according to a White House transcript. “I’m going to have a little, as they say, come-to-the-Lord talk with the oil companies pretty soon.”

Story continues below advertisement

At the center of last month’s offer was a plan to refill the U.S. Strategic Petroleum

Reserve. The administration decided, over industry objections, to sell 180 million barrels of the government-owned oil starting in the spring to prevent soaring prices in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The reserve is now down to a little more than half of its 714-million-barrel capacity and will need to be at least partially refilled.

The White House announced in October it settled on a plan to buy crude when prices are at or below \$67 to \$72 per barrel. The rule is the first of its kind, enabling the Energy Department to enter fixed-price contracts with suppliers, paying in advance for future delivery, in 2024 or 2025 under the plan, the White House has said.

### [\*U.N. climate talks off to tense start as nations feud over damage\*](#)

Podesta said the system could help prevent the type of plummeting prices that led to mass [bankruptcies](#) and pullbacks in the industry in recent years. That should remove the "excuse" that the industry can't invest because of fears over potential supply gluts or weak long-term demand growth, he said.

Story continues below advertisement

Industry leaders said it's unclear it would work that way. The program isn't big enough or effective soon enough to change the broader dynamic in the industry, which is influenced by global factors and investors that have become aggressive about getting better returns, they said.

Administration officials also noted that it is common for any White House to reach out to stakeholders to ensure support for and the quality of any new program or rule. And some initially expected little commitment from oil companies because the firms have been slow or reluctant to make major changes in response to past administration requests.

Strained relations between the two sides go back to the administration's earliest days. Industry executives have been frustrated that the White House has prioritized climate change, blocking the Keystone XL pipeline, limiting their access to federal land, and aggressively pushing for oil companies to shift their businesses to produce cleaner energy instead.

Story continues below advertisement

As energy prices began rising last year, the administration also first spent more time pursuing new supply from international exporters instead of changing domestic policy to help U.S. oil companies. Those moves drew attacks from political opponents, and Biden often responded by blaming high prices on the companies, further irritating industry executives.

In recent months, industry relationships have improved with Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm, who at times has struck a more conciliatory tone and whom some industry leaders have grown to consider an earnest dealmaker. But some still see White House officials, especially the economic adviser Deese, as quick to use their comments to attack them and to [consider policies such as export bans](#) that companies say would be harmful.

“When Deese joins the calls, it tends to be more of a lecture,” one lobbyist said.

[\*Fossil fuel projects were stalled a year ago. Now they're making a comeback.\*](#)

Administration officials said Deese has good relationships with many executives and asks probing, challenging questions to produce better policies for taxpayers.

Story continues below advertisement

“Month after month, these companies have posted record profits that they’ve then used to pad shareholder pockets rather than boost production and lower gas prices. Month after month, we’ve offered them every opportunity and incentive to change their behavior,” White House spokesman Abdullah Hasan said in a statement. “If they don’t like the carrots approach, the President has made clear we can use sticks too.”

Talks have continued in the past two weeks even amid the president’s rhetoric. Some of Granholm’s top aides have been asking for guidance on what could boost inventories — especially of refined products such as diesel and gasoline. They fear a severe storm or other supply disruptions could cause major price increases because those inventories are so low, according to people familiar with the talks who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss private conversations.

Administration officials have stopped mentioning export bans or new mandates to refill low commercial inventories, the people said. While fall’s mild weather is likely to limit energy demand, they are urging companies to start getting inventories to healthy levels voluntarily.

Industry leaders have stressed that markets, left alone, will eventually produce solutions and refill inventories. Some have also pitched waivers of the Jones Act — which permits only U.S.-flagged vessels to complete maritime cargo transport between American ports — to lower costs for supplying to key storage sites, as well as waivers on sulfur limits in diesel fuel, policies that might hurt unions or worsen air quality, according to people familiar with the talks. Some in the administration are still planning to revisit new mandates to boost commercial inventory levels later if the industry doesn’t come through on its own, according to one of the people.

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**From:** Bhattacharyya, Arpita <[arpita.bhattacharyya@hq.doe.gov](mailto:arpita.bhattacharyya@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 8, 2022 9:25:19 AM  
**To:** Troiano, Charisma L <[charisma.troiano@hq.doe.gov](mailto:charisma.troiano@hq.doe.gov)>; Turk, David <[david.turk@hq.doe.gov](mailto:david.turk@hq.doe.gov)>;  
Bartol, Bridget <[bridget.bartol@hq.doe.gov](mailto:bridget.bartol@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Cc:** Mayorga, David <[david.mayorga@hq.doe.gov](mailto:david.mayorga@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: WaPo story on SPR

Thanks Charisma! Let us know if you need anything else from us and keep us posted.

---

**From:** Troiano, Charisma L <[charisma.troiano@hq.doe.gov](mailto:charisma.troiano@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 7, 2022 6:54 PM  
**To:** Turk, David <[david.turk@hq.doe.gov](mailto:david.turk@hq.doe.gov)>; Bartol, Bridget <[bridget.bartol@hq.doe.gov](mailto:bridget.bartol@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Cc:** Mayorga, David <[david.mayorga@hq.doe.gov](mailto:david.mayorga@hq.doe.gov)>; Bhattacharyya, Arpita <[arpita.bhattacharyya@hq.doe.gov](mailto:arpita.bhattacharyya@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: WaPo story on SPR

Thank you so much, Deputy. (b) (5) [Redacted]  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted]

---

**From:** Turk, David <[david.turk@hq.doe.gov](mailto:david.turk@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 7, 2022 6:12 PM  
**To:** Bartol, Bridget <[bridget.bartol@hq.doe.gov](mailto:bridget.bartol@hq.doe.gov)>; Troiano, Charisma L <[charisma.troiano@hq.doe.gov](mailto:charisma.troiano@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Cc:** Mayorga, David <[david.mayorga@hq.doe.gov](mailto:david.mayorga@hq.doe.gov)>; Bhattacharyya, Arpita <[arpita.bhattacharyya@hq.doe.gov](mailto:arpita.bhattacharyya@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: WaPo story on SPR

Thanks, Charisma.

(b) (5) [Redacted]  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted] Happy to help on that front.

(b) (5) [Redacted]  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted]

Does that all work for you?

Dave

---

**From:** Bartol, Bridget <[bridget.bartol@hq.doe.gov](mailto:bridget.bartol@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 7, 2022 5:59 PM  
**To:** Troiano, Charisma L <[charisma.troiano@hq.doe.gov](mailto:charisma.troiano@hq.doe.gov)>; Turk, David <[david.turk@hq.doe.gov](mailto:david.turk@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Cc:** Mayorga, David <[david.mayorga@hq.doe.gov](mailto:david.mayorga@hq.doe.gov)>; Bhattacharyya, Arpita <[arpita.bhattacharyya@hq.doe.gov](mailto:arpita.bhattacharyya@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: WaPo story on SPR

(b) (5)

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**From:** Troiano, Charisma L <[charisma.troiano@hq.doe.gov](mailto:charisma.troiano@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 7, 2022 5:48:46 PM  
**To:** Turk, David <[david.turk@hq.doe.gov](mailto:david.turk@hq.doe.gov)>; Bartol, Bridget <[bridget.bartol@hq.doe.gov](mailto:bridget.bartol@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Cc:** Mayorga, David <[david.mayorga@hq.doe.gov](mailto:david.mayorga@hq.doe.gov)>; Bhattacharyya, Arpita <[arpita.bhattacharyya@hq.doe.gov](mailto:arpita.bhattacharyya@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Subject:** WaPo story on SPR

Good afternoon Deputy Secretary,

The Washington Post is running a story that criticizes the SPR buyback plan. The storyline is that the Biden admin thought that this would be an olive branch and industry thinks it'll be ineffectual (not guaranteed to do the things the admin expects it to do re: encouraging near term production). We expect the story to reference calls/your engagements with industry

The reporter's sources say a sense that the admin is signaling (officials broadly) that they understand that some of the issues like an export ban or redirecting supplies into inventories would probably have the opposite outcome than what the Admin is hoping for and would like increased gas prices.

***I'm checking with you to see if there's a validator or two we can provide the reporter on the SPR buyback plan, (b) (5)***

\*\*\*\*

For reference, (b) (5)

1) (b) (5)

2) (b) (5)



(b) (5) [Redacted]  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted]

3) (b) (5) [Redacted]  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted]

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**Charisma L. Troiano**  
Press Secretary  
U.S. Department of Energy  
[Charisma.Troiano@hq.doe.gov](mailto:Charisma.Troiano@hq.doe.gov) | (b) (6) [Redacted]

**From:** [Macintyre, Douglas](#)  
**To:** [Oosterling, Paul S](#); [Shepherd, Patrick J](#); [Elias, Wayne](#); [Wormhoudt, Sheldra A](#); [Thomas, Edna](#)  
**Cc:** [Perry, Robert](#); [Treadway, Demetrius L](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: APPROPRIATIONS ALERT: Continuing Resolution through December 16, 2022  
**Date:** Sunday, October 2, 2022 1:10:39 PM

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FYSA

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**From:** Donley, Katherine <katherine.donley@hq.doe.gov>  
**Sent:** Sunday, October 2, 2022 11:37:43 AM  
**To:** Macintyre, Douglas <douglas.macintyre@hq.doe.gov>  
**Cc:** Harris-Cameron, Maya <Maya.Harris-Cameron@hq.doe.gov>; Everett, Jazmin <jazmin.everett@hq.doe.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: APPROPRIATIONS ALERT: Continuing Resolution through December 16, 2022

Doug,

Unfortunately no. We knew this was going to be the case and I apologize the message didn't get to you.

Staffers are working this with the intention of addressing it in December. Right now, SEWD majority is the lead to try to make progress and they are actively working with their appropriations attorneys on the language we put forward, etc. (b) (5)

We will definitely work to keep you posted as things progress. I'm happy to talk at any point.

Best,  
Katie

---

**From:** Macintyre, Douglas <douglas.macintyre@hq.doe.gov>  
**Sent:** Saturday, October 1, 2022 12:48 PM  
**To:** Donley, Katherine <katherine.donley@hq.doe.gov>  
**Subject:** Fwd: APPROPRIATIONS ALERT: Continuing Resolution through December 16, 2022

Is there nothing ion it for the SPR and LE2?

---

**From:** Thomas, Edna <[edna.thomas@hq.doe.gov](mailto:edna.thomas@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Sent:** Saturday, October 1, 2022 12:42:12 PM  
**To:** Macintyre, Douglas <[douglas.macintyre@hq.doe.gov](mailto:douglas.macintyre@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Cc:** Perry, Robert <[robert.perry2@hq.doe.gov](mailto:robert.perry2@hq.doe.gov)>; Elias, Wayne <[wayne.elias@hq.doe.gov](mailto:wayne.elias@hq.doe.gov)>; Turner, Shenee <[shenee.turner@hq.doe.gov](mailto:shenee.turner@hq.doe.gov)>; McGarry, Thomas <[thomas.mcgarry@hq.doe.gov](mailto:thomas.mcgarry@hq.doe.gov)>; Elliott, Michael <[michael.elliott@hq.doe.gov](mailto:michael.elliott@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: APPROPRIATIONS ALERT: Continuing Resolution through December 16, 2022

---

**From:** Donley, Katherine <[katherine.donley@hq.doe.gov](mailto:katherine.donley@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Sent:** Friday, September 30, 2022 5:35:00 PM  
**To:** Everett, Jazmin <[jazmin.everett@hq.doe.gov](mailto:jazmin.everett@hq.doe.gov)>; DL-CF 30 Budget Leads <[DL-CF30BudgetLeads@Hq.Doe.Gov](mailto:DL-CF30BudgetLeads@Hq.Doe.Gov)>; EERE Legislative Affairs <[eerelegaffairs@ee.doe.gov](mailto:eerelegaffairs@ee.doe.gov)>; DL-NA-Congressional Affairs <[DL-NA-CongressionalAffairs@nnsa.doe.gov](mailto:DL-NA-CongressionalAffairs@nnsa.doe.gov)>  
**Cc:** DL-CF-30 Office of Budget <[DL-CF-30OfficeofBudget@hq.doe.gov](mailto:DL-CF-30OfficeofBudget@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: APPROPRIATIONS ALERT: Continuing Resolution through December 16, 2022

Good evening,

The President has signed the bill. The CR Bulletin is posted and can be found [here](#).

Happy Fiscal New Year's Eve,  
Katie

---

**From:** Everett, Jazmin <[jazmin.everett@hq.doe.gov](mailto:jazmin.everett@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Sent:** Friday, September 30, 2022 3:55 PM  
**To:** DL-CF 30 Budget Leads <[DL-CF30BudgetLeads@Hq.Doe.Gov](mailto:DL-CF30BudgetLeads@Hq.Doe.Gov)>; EERE Legislative Affairs <[eerelegaffairs@ee.doe.gov](mailto:eerelegaffairs@ee.doe.gov)>; DL-NA-Congressional Affairs <[DL-NA-CongressionalAffairs@nnsa.doe.gov](mailto:DL-NA-CongressionalAffairs@nnsa.doe.gov)>  
**Cc:** DL-CF-30 Office of Budget <[DL-CF-30OfficeofBudget@hq.doe.gov](mailto:DL-CF-30OfficeofBudget@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Subject:** APPROPRIATIONS ALERT: Continuing Resolution through December 16, 2022



## **Continuing Appropriations and Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2023**

### Summary

Today the House passed the *Continuing Appropriations and Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2023*, the Senate amendment to H.R. 6833, by a vote of 230-201. The [Continuing Resolution](#) (CR) funds the government through December 16, 2022. The bill is expected to be signed by President Biden quickly given that today is the last day of the fiscal year.

### Background

On September 29, the Senate passed the *Continuing Appropriations and Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2023* by a vote of 72-25.

### DOE Items of Note

#### **NNSA - Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation**

As part of Ukraine supplemental appropriations, the bill includes \$35,000,000 for “Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation” to remain available until expended, to respond to the situation in

Ukraine.

### **Office of Intelligence**

An anomaly in the provides an extension to the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022, granting a continuation of necessary authorities for intelligence functions.

### Next Steps

Appropriators are hoping to conference a final FY 2023 Omnibus bill before the CR expires in December; the proposals DOE offered for the CR that were not included – uranium, SPR, and grid resilience – may be considered during consideration of the Omnibus. The midterm elections will likely shape next steps.

Jazmin Everett  
U.S. Department of Energy  
Office of the Chief Financial Officer  
Office of Budget, External Coordination  
Phone: 202-586-2499  
Cell: (b) (6)

**From:** [Biscardi, Lindsay](#)  
**To:** [Kumar, Puesh](#); [Neukomm, Monica](#); [Wills, Andrew C](#); [Manning, Marsha](#); [Winn, Mara E](#); [Muneer, Fowad](#); [Macintyre, Douglas](#); [Buell, Kenneth](#)  
**Cc:** [Hindmarch, Michelle](#)  
**Subject:** CESER Congressional Weekly - 2022 Midterm Election Recap  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 9, 2022 11:28:28 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)

Good morning,

Please see the first (election) edition of the CESER Congressional Update Newsletter. I'll be sharing these going forward at the beginning of each session week to help us track major actions on Capitol Hill. As these roll out, please let me know if you have any questions or would like to see additional information included. I want this to be a useful tool for everyone and am open to suggestions!

v/r,

Lindsay E. Biscardi  
 Legislative Affairs Lead  
 Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency  
 Response (CESER)  
 U.S. Department of Energy  
 Office: 202-586-3518 | Cell: (b) (6)  
 Email: [lindsay.biscardi@hq.doe.gov](mailto:lindsay.biscardi@hq.doe.gov)

### **CESER Congressional Weekly - 2022 Midterm Election Recap**

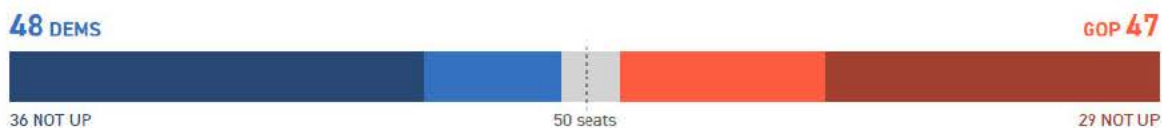
Yesterday, millions of voters went to the polls and cast ballots for their next members of Congress and state executives. This year, all 435 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and 35 of the 100 seats in the U.S. Senate were contested. As of this morning, the future of the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress is still undecided, with many races too close to call.

Localities nationwide cited higher voter turnout than expected, with record numbers of voters casting ballots early and by mail. Nationwide, over 40.1 million ballots were cast ahead of Tuesday's election. As a result, races in states with high mail-in ballot rates (NV) may take days to finalize.

### **U.S. Senate**

#### **Election results: U.S. Senate**

Last updated Nov. 9, 2022, 9:04 a.m. EST



- The current U.S. Senate has a Democrat majority, with 48 Democrats, 2 Independents (who caucus with the Democrats), and 50 Republicans.
- Pre-election projections showed Republicans potentially adding up to 3 seats, which is well

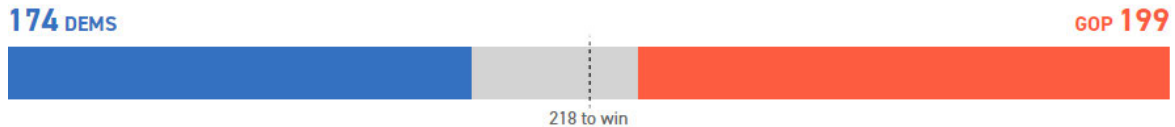
short of the 60-vote threshold needed to pass most measures in the chamber.

- All around the country, incumbent senators fared better than expected. Democrats who appeared vulnerable, won solid victories early into the night (Sen. Hassan of NH, Sen. Bennet of CO, and Sen. Rubio of Florida).
- In the Senate, Democrats flipped Pennsylvania's seat with John Fetterman, capturing the first vacant PA Senate seat in over a dozen years.
- As of this morning, Democrats held 48 seats, Republicans held 47 seats, and there are 4 states with results still pending (WI, GA, NV, AZ).

### U.S. House of Representatives

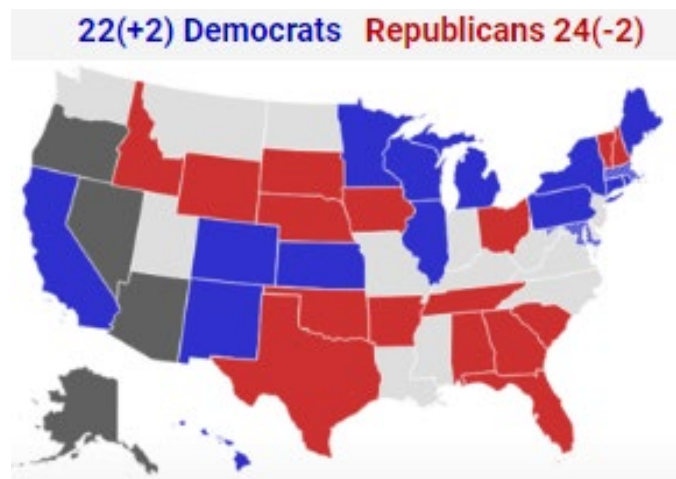
#### Election results: U.S. House

Last updated Nov. 9, 2022, 10:45 a.m. EST



- The current U.S. House is comprised of 221 Democrats, 212 Republicans, and 2 vacancies. 218 is the magic number of seats needed to hold majority and pass most measures in the chamber.
- Pre-election projections showed Republicans retaking the majority, but this has failed to materialize as of this morning.
- Democrats hold 174 seats and Republicans hold 199 seats, neither squeaking out the 218 to claim majority.
- Democrats flipped House seats in MI, IL, OH, and NC. Republicans flipped seats in GA, FL, CA, TX, NY, and VA.
- Idaho's Rep. Mike Simpson (R-ID-02), whose district is home to INL, expectedly won re-election by a large margin.
- Rep. Joe Neguse (D-CO-02), whose district borders NREL was also re-elected by a large margin while other nearby districts like CO-7 is still too close to call.
- Reps. DeSaulnier (D-CA-10) and Panetta (D-CA-19) held their seats near LLNL, with the race for CA's 15<sup>th</sup> House District still undecided.

### Governors



- Currently, there are 28 states with Republican governors and 22 states with Democratic governors.
- Results show a net change of 2 seats, with Democrats winning key races in Massachusetts and Maryland.
- As of this morning there are 4 races still pending - AK, AZ, NV, and OR - with final results expected later this week.
- Incumbent Governors Polis (D-CO), Little (R-ID), Newsom (D-CA), Lujan Grisham (D-NM), Abbot (R-TX), DeSantis (R-FL) all held their seats by comfortable margins.

### **End of Year Impacts**

- When Congress returns November 14th, there are two “must pass” bills Congress must address - the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 appropriations measure (omnibus or continuing resolution) and the FY23 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).
- These two legislative vehicles serve as the final, executable opportunities to pass and enact policy in the 117th Congress.
- The current continuing resolution (CR) expires on 16 December 2022.
- The FY23 appropriations bill will be in the form of an all-encompassing, 12-bill omnibus package or, alternatively, another continuing resolution (CR) with flat funding into the 118th Congress (with potentially a few supplemental riders).
- Alternatively, the NDAA is widely expected to pass in the post-election, lame duck session with bipartisan support.

### **The 118<sup>th</sup> Congress**

- A Republican majority in the House and perhaps the Senate could open a new phase in relations between Congress and DOE, as GOP chairs take over key committees and plan to pursue aggressive oversight agendas.
- In addition, a Republican majority of any margin in the Senate could impact DOE nominations that fail to make it through before the end of the year.
- Should majority change in either chamber, CESER should expect leadership (and key staff) changes on our committees of jurisdiction (House Energy and Commerce, Senate Energy and Natural Resources, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, and the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development).
- House Homeland Security Republicans and House Energy and Commerce Committee Republicans are likely to continue struggles over cybersecurity policy jurisdiction. For example, House Energy and Commerce Republican leaders are championing new messaging legislation to give the Department of Energy greater oversight over grid infrastructure cybersecurity. A responsibility that the House Homeland Security Committee and the Department of Homeland Security has refused to cede.
- A House Homeland Security Committee under GOP Chairmanship will battle internally over the prioritization of secure physical borders vs. cyber borders. These competing priorities are likely to make it difficult for the incoming Chairman to move quickly on new policies.
- Should Republicans take majority in the House, CESER should also expect a significant increase in SPR-related inquiries, briefing requests, and possible oversight hearings. DOE will also likely face questions about domestic oil and natural gas production as a GOP Congress is expected to spend a significant amount of time on a domestic energy agenda.
- A Republican-led House with a narrow majority will likely also struggle to keep the government funded and prevent the country from defaulting on its debt, which increases the likelihood of a long-term FY23 CR if lawmakers are unable to reach a spending agreement before January.

**From:** [Hindmarch, Michelle](#)  
**To:** [Macintyre, Douglas](#); [Biscardi, Lindsay](#); [Kumar, Puesh](#)  
**Cc:** [Neukomm, Monica](#); [Wills, Andrew C](#); [Perry, Robert](#); [Williams, Rhonda](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Prep Memo for Tomorrow's SPR Briefing for HEC (Majority and Minority Staff)  
**Date:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 1:27:59 PM

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Thanks much, Lindsay.

---

**From:** Macintyre, Douglas <douglas.macintyre@hq.doe.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 1:22 PM  
**To:** Biscardi, Lindsay <lindsay.biscardi@hq.doe.gov>; Kumar, Puesh <puesh.kumar@hq.doe.gov>  
**Cc:** Neukomm, Monica <monica.neukomm@hq.doe.gov>; Wills, Andrew C <andrew.wills@hq.doe.gov>; Hindmarch, Michelle <michelle.hindmarch@hq.doe.gov>; Perry, Robert <robert.perry2@hq.doe.gov>; Williams, Rhonda <rhonda.williams@hq.doe.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: Prep Memo for Tomorrow's SPR Briefing for HEC (Majority and Minority Staff)

Thank you, Lindsay!

---

**From:** Biscardi, Lindsay <[lindsay.biscardi@hq.doe.gov](mailto:lindsay.biscardi@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2022 1:15 PM  
**To:** Kumar, Puesh <[puesh.kumar@hq.doe.gov](mailto:puesh.kumar@hq.doe.gov)>; Macintyre, Douglas <[douglas.macintyre@hq.doe.gov](mailto:douglas.macintyre@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Cc:** Neukomm, Monica <[monica.neukomm@hq.doe.gov](mailto:monica.neukomm@hq.doe.gov)>; Wills, Andrew C <[andrew.wills@hq.doe.gov](mailto:andrew.wills@hq.doe.gov)>; Hindmarch, Michelle <[michelle.hindmarch@hq.doe.gov](mailto:michelle.hindmarch@hq.doe.gov)>; Perry, Robert <[robert.perry2@hq.doe.gov](mailto:robert.perry2@hq.doe.gov)>; Williams, Rhonda <[rhonda.williams@hq.doe.gov](mailto:rhonda.williams@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Subject:** Prep Memo for Tomorrow's SPR Briefing for HEC (Majority and Minority Staff)

Puesh and Doug,

Tomorrow, we are scheduled to brief the House Energy and Commerce Committee Staff (Majority and Minority) on the SPR supplemental request and the potential SPR replenishment/buyback plan. The briefing is virtual (Teams) and will begin at 2:15PM. Minority staff have a hard-stop at 3:00PM, so we will want to budget time for staff questions. GC's Avi Zevin will also join the briefing to provide support regarding any technical/legislative drafting questions that staff may raise regarding buyback proposals.

For run of show, CI's Michael Harris will begin the briefing and conduct introductions. He'll ask the staff to explain a bit of what they're hoping to get out of our meeting and then turn things over to Puesh and Doug for a short overview of the SPR supplemental request and the proposed plan for SPR replenishment. As we know very well... this is a group that likes to ask questions, so we should be prepared for them to interrupt and steer the conversation.

To help with your prep for tomorrow, I've included the below memo. It includes suggested discussion points and a few anticipated staff questions. Please let me know if you have any questions or would like more information.



v/r,

Lindsay E. Biscardi  
Legislative Affairs Lead  
Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency  
Response (CESER)  
U.S. Department of Energy  
Office: 202-586-3518 | Cell: (b) (6)  
Email: [lindsay.biscardi@hq.doe.gov](mailto:lindsay.biscardi@hq.doe.gov)

***SPR Replenishment Briefing for HEC Staff – Prep Memo***

**Congressional Staff Attending:**

- Rick Kessler, Senior Advisor and Staff Director for Energy and Environment, Majority
- Tuley Wright, Senior Energy and Environment Policy Advisor, Majority
- Tyler O’Conner, Energy Counsel, Majority
- Medha Surampudy, Professional Staff Member, Majority
- Peter Spencer, Senior Professional Staff Member, Minority
- Mary Martin, Chief Counsel, Minority
- Brandon Mooney, Deputy Chief Counsel, Minority

**DOE Attendees:**

- Puesh Kumar, Director, CESER
- Doug MacIntyre, Deputy Director, OPR
- Avi Zevin, Deputy General Counsel, GC
- Michael Harris, Advisor for House Affairs, CI
- Lindsay Biscardi, Legislative Affairs Lead, CESER

**Topline:**

- During our FY22 Budget Execution Briefing for the House Energy and Water Development (HEWD) subcommittee staff, CESER was asked to provide the same SPR buyback/replenishment overview to the House Energy and Commerce Committee (HEC) Staff as negotiations begin on the FY23 spending bills. HEC also asked to hear more about the \$500M supplemental request for SPR’s life extension project.

**Focus and Discussion Points:**

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- (b) (5)

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(b) (5)

Anticipated Questions:

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(b) (5)

**From:** [Biscardi, Lindsay](#)  
**To:** [Macintyre, Douglas](#)  
**Cc:** [Perry, Robert](#); [Wills, Andrew C](#); [Hindmarch, Michelle](#); [Williams, Rhonda](#)  
**Subject:** SENR & SEWD SPR Briefing Prep Memo  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 15, 2022 1:10:16 PM  
**Attachments:** [11162022\\_SPRReplenishmentBriefing\\_SENRStaff.docx](#)

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Doug,

To help guide preparation for tomorrow's briefing, I've put together the below memo for your use. Please let me know if you have any questions or would like further information. Also, please let me know if you plan to use slides or any additional briefing materials. I'll have to share them with CI/CF this afternoon for clearance. I'd suggest (b) (5)

If you prefer to use slides to guide the conversation, I'd suggest (b) (5)

Let me know what you think. I'm happy to chat when you have some time.

Lindsay

### ***SPR Replenishment Briefing for SENR/SEWD Staff – Prep Memo***

#### **Congressional Staff Attending:**

- Nora Khalil, Minority Clerk, SEWD
  - **Short Biography:**
    - Khalil's career in government affairs spans more than 20 years in both the private and public sectors. Prior to her work with SEWD, Khalil was the Director of External Affairs for NNSA, the Director of External Affairs for the DNFSB, and the Deputy Director for Government Affairs for the Naval Reactors. She's also held several prior positions on Capitol Hill, including Legislative Director to Congressman Ron Packard (R-CA) and Congresswoman Kay Granger (R-TX). Nora is a graduate of Loyola Marymount University in California where she earned a bachelor's degree in political science.
- Valerie Manak, Professional Staff Member, Minority Staff, SENR
  - **Short Biography:**
    - Valerie joined SENR in 2022 after working in the personal office of Senator James Lankford (R-OK). Valerie has worked on Capitol Hill for over ten years, including two years in the U.S. House of Representatives. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Government from the University of Wisconsin and her Master of Public Policy from Georgetown University.
- CJ Osman, Professional Staff Member, Majority Staff, SENR
  - **Short Biography:**
    - CJ joined SENR earlier this year after lobbying for the Interstate Natural Gas Association, where he was vice president for government affairs. Prior to his work in Washington, he was facilities engineer for Chevron North America Exploration and Production in Houston, TX. CJ is a graduate of Vanderbilt University, where he earned his Bachelor of Engineering in Chemical and Molecular Engineering, and his Bachelor of Arts in Economics.

-

**DOE Attendees:**

- Doug MacIntyre, Deputy Director, OPR
- Avi Zevin, Deputy General Counsel, GC
- Katie Donley, Deputy Director for External Coordination, CFO
- Rebecca Ward, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Senate Affairs, CI
- Michelle Hindmarch, Director for External Affairs, CESER

**Topline:**

- During our FY22 Budget Execution Briefing for the Senate Energy and Water Development subcommittee staff, CESER-OPR was asked to provide the same SPR buyback/replenishment overview to Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee (SENRC) staff.

**Focus and Discussion Points:**

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**Anticipated Questions:**

- (b) (5)
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**Anticipated Questions:**

• (b) (5)

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**From:** Macintyre, Douglas <douglas.macintyre@hq.doe.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 15, 2022 9:23 AM  
**To:** Biscardi, Lindsay <lindsay.biscardi@hq.doe.gov>  
**Cc:** Perry, Robert <robert.perry2@hq.doe.gov>; Wills, Andrew C <andrew.wills@hq.doe.gov>; Hindmarch, Michelle <michelle.hindmarch@hq.doe.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: Possible Meeting with SENR & SEWD on SPR

I forwarded the meeting invite to you. It is on hold until we get confirmation from some of the staffers.

Doug

---

**From:** Biscardi, Lindsay <[lindsay.biscardi@hq.doe.gov](mailto:lindsay.biscardi@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 15, 2022 9:18 AM  
**To:** Macintyre, Douglas <[douglas.macintyre@hq.doe.gov](mailto:douglas.macintyre@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Cc:** Perry, Robert <[robert.perry2@hq.doe.gov](mailto:robert.perry2@hq.doe.gov)>; Wills, Andrew C <[andrew.wills@hq.doe.gov](mailto:andrew.wills@hq.doe.gov)>; Hindmarch, Michelle <[michelle.hindmarch@hq.doe.gov](mailto:michelle.hindmarch@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Possible Meeting with SENR & SEWD on SPR

Thank you, Doug, I appreciate the heads up as I wasn't looped in. I'll reach to Becca for the meeting information and will try to attend. I'll be on the Hill for a 0930 meeting with Mara.

-Lindsay

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**From:** Macintyre, Douglas <[douglas.macintyre@hq.doe.gov](mailto:douglas.macintyre@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 15, 2022 9:17 AM  
**To:** Biscardi, Lindsay <[lindsay.biscardi@hq.doe.gov](mailto:lindsay.biscardi@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Cc:** Perry, Robert <[robert.perry2@hq.doe.gov](mailto:robert.perry2@hq.doe.gov)>; Wills, Andrew C <[andrew.wills@hq.doe.gov](mailto:andrew.wills@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Subject:** Possible Meeting with SENR & SEWD on SPR

Rebecca Ward has scheduled a meeting with SEWD and SENR staffers for 11:00 tomorrow (Wednesday) to discuss the SPR and I just wanted to make sure you were aware of it.

Doug

## *SPR Replenishment Briefing for SENR/SEWD Staff – Prep Memo*

### **Congressional Staff Attending:**

- Nora Khalil, Minority Clerk, SEWD
  - **Short Biography:**
    - Khalil’s career in government affairs spans more than 20 years in both the private and public sectors. Prior to her work with SEWD, Khalil was the Director of External Affairs for NNSA, the Director of External Affairs for the DNFSB, and the Deputy Director for Government Affairs for the Naval Reactors. She’s also held several prior positions on Capitol Hill, including Legislative Director to Congressman Ron Packard (R-CA) and Congresswoman Kay Granger (R-TX). Nora is a graduate of Loyola Marymount University in California where she earned a bachelor's degree in political science.
- Valerie Manak, Professional Staff Member, Minority Staff, SENR
  - **Short Biography:**
    - Valerie joined SENR in 2022 after working in the personal office of Senator James Lankford (R-OK). Valerie has worked on Capitol Hill for over ten years, including two years in the U.S. House of Representatives. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Government from the University of Wisconsin and her Master of Public Policy from Georgetown University.
- CJ Osman, Professional Staff Member, Majority Staff, SENR
  - **Short Biography:**
    - CJ joined SENR earlier this year after lobbying for the Interstate Natural Gas Association, where he was vice president for government affairs. Prior to his work in Washington, he was facilities engineer for Chevron North America Exploration and Production in Houston, TX. CJ is a graduate of Vanderbilt University, where he earned his Bachelor of Engineering in Chemical and Molecular Engineering, and his Bachelor of Arts in Economics.

### **DOE Attendees:**

- Doug MacIntyre, Deputy Director, OPR
- Avi Zevin, Deputy General Counsel, GC
- Katie Donley, Deputy Director for External Coordination, CFO
- Rebecca Ward, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Senate Affairs, CI
- Michelle Hindmarch, Director for External Affairs, CESER

### **Topline:**

- During our FY22 Budget Execution Briefing for the Senate Energy and Water Development subcommittee staff, CESER-OPR was asked to provide the same SPR buyback/replenishment overview to Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee (SENR) staff.

### **Focus and Discussion Points:**

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(b) (5)

Anticipated Questions:

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(b) (5)

Anticipated Questions:

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(b) (5)

**From:** [Toyzaki, Edward Y.](#)  
**To:** [Macintyre, Douglas](#); [Perry, Robert](#)  
**Cc:** [Suntoke, Jamshed](#)  
**Subject:** Response Letter to Congress  
**Date:** Friday, October 28, 2022 12:42:29 PM  
**Attachments:** [101922.incoming.pdf](#)  
[SPR\\_102422.incoming.pdf](#)

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Hi Doug and Robert,

Happy Friday! We received notice this week from the GC front office that the attached incoming documents are being moved from oversight (GC) to regular correspondence and will be assigned to CESER/OPR to prepare a response shortly.

- The first is a joint letter to DOE & DOI. CI reached out to DOI and this is the read out -- (b) (5)

GC and CI will review responses as part of the regular correspondence process via ExecSec after CESER/OPR have drafted the response.

» Ali Nouri/CI noted – (b) (5)

- GC-76 wanted to flag these for you on the front end to make sure the reply letters to Congress are drafted in alignment with the above.

- The GC front office also instructed us to remind CESER/OPR that (b) (5)

Please let me know if you have any questions or if you'd like assistance with the drafting. If you have difficult questions, those can go to Jamshed ☺. Thanks and have a great Halloween Weekend!

Best,  
Teddy

Attorney-Adviser (GC-76)  
Office of the General Counsel  
U.S. Department of Energy  
Office: 202-586-0126  
Mobile: (b) (6)  
[edward.toyozaki@hq.doe.gov](mailto:edward.toyozaki@hq.doe.gov)



**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

19 October 2022

The Honorable Jennifer Granholm  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Ave., S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20585

The Honorable Debra Haaland  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Secretaries Granholm and Haaland,

This administration has done everything possible to discourage oil production and raise energy costs on the American people, and the egregious results speak for themselves: the average national price of a gallon of gas peaked at over five dollars in June before decreasing due to a drop off in demand and the onset of recession.

While some Americans have come to view a brief decline in gas prices as a welcome respite during record high inflation, increasing interest rates, and a sputtering economy, gas prices are still much too high and they are starting to increase again. On Wednesday, October 5, news outlets reported that OPEC and non-OPEC producers will pursue output cuts of two million barrels of oil a day; due to the OPEC cartel's reconstituted and outsized influence in the crude oil market, the price of oil could well increase to over \$100 per barrel in short order. This is a foreseeable issue that deserves your full attention and commitment - there is zero excuse for failing to prepare for every contingency.

Last year, in what can only charitably be described as a misplaced reaction to the imposition of high energy costs on the American people, Secretary Granholm laughed when asked what her plan was to increase oil production in America. In March, she also suggested that Americans should purchase electric vehicles to avoid rising gas prices. This extraordinary adoption of a "let them eat cake" mentality, coupled with this government's inability and unwillingness to approve onshore and offshore oil drilling, indicates that neither one of you, nor anyone else in this administration, has a plan to insulate Americans from the effects of a volatile oil market.

The only concept approaching an energy plan this administration has announced involves a rapid switch towards exclusive use of renewable energy. From the use of cobalt in the construction of electric vehicles, to the procuring of polysilicon in the production of solar panels, this administration seems to have no issue with utilizing slave labor. By plowing forward in his design to halve all greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2030, Joe Biden has all but ignored the stark human rights atrocities this policy is enabling. Make no mistake: the only way this GHG

target is met is if the Biden administration continues to implicitly endorse the use of forced and even child labor within Chinese Communist Party (CCP) supply chains.<sup>1</sup>

Given the prospect of a worsening energy crisis, we demand answers to the following questions by **COB Wednesday October 26, 2022**:

- 1). Secretary Granholm, does the Biden administration anticipate higher gas prices considering the OPEC cartel's intention to reduce output by a reported two million barrels<sup>2</sup> a day? What is currently being done to mitigate OPEC's influence and ensure that Americans will not be subject to future financial strain at the pump? A year after laughing off the question, do you finally have a plan to increase oil production in the United States?<sup>3</sup>
- 2). Secretary Haaland, CNN reports that the White House is "having a spasm and panicking"<sup>4</sup> due to OPEC's efforts to cut output. Is the outsized influence of far Left "environmentalist" groups, many of whom have served as de facto apologists for genocide, preventing this administration from increasing domestic energy production?
- 3). Secretary Haaland, due to OPEC's announcement on October 5, are you prepared to recommend regulatory relief to facilitate expedited onshore and offshore oil and gas drilling, including but not limited to exemptions from the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)?
- 4). Secretary Granholm, OilX, a consultant company, estimated that by the end of this month, the SPR will hold only 179 million barrels of medium-sour crude oil, the type of crude oil preferred by US refineries. Last year, the SPR contained 621 million barrels, and one projection indicates that the reserve will shrink to 358 million barrels by the end of this month.<sup>5</sup> As of September 14, this administration has withdrawn almost 24% of the SPR's supply since March.<sup>6</sup>

Does this administration plan to withdraw even more barrels from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR)? Is there any plan to limit this rapid depletion of the SPR?

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<sup>1</sup> Crawford, A. (2017, February 28). *Meet Dorsen, 8, who mines cobalt to make your smartphone work*. Sky News. Retrieved October 3, 2022, from <https://news.sky.com/story/meet-dorsen-8-who-mines-cobalt-to-make-your-smartphone-work-10784120>

<sup>2</sup> Person. (2022, October 5). *OPEC+ JMMC agrees oil output cuts of 2 mln bpd - sources*. Reuters. Retrieved October 5, 2022, from <https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/opec-jmmc-agrees-oil-output-cuts-2-mln-bpd-sources-2022-10-05/>

<sup>3</sup> "Biden's Energy Secretary on Plans to Increase Oil Production." *Bloomberg Politics*. 5 November 2021. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=un5N690N3MY>

<sup>4</sup> Marquardt, A., Bertrand, N., & Mattingly, P. (2022, October 4). *White House launches last ditch effort to dissuade OPEC from cutting oil production to avoid a 'total disaster'* | *CNN politics*. CNN. Retrieved October 5, 2022, from <https://www.cnn.com/2022/10/04/politics/white-house-lobby-opec-oil-production-cuts-gasoline-prices-midterms/index.html>

<sup>5</sup> Blas, J. (2022, June 17). *The US Is Depleting Its Strategic Petroleum Reserve Faster Than It Looks*. Bloomberg. Retrieved October 3, 2022, from <https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2022-06-17/the-us-is-depleting-its-strategic-petroleum-reserve-faster-than-it-looks?leadSource=verify%20wall>

<sup>6</sup> Denning, L. (2022, September 14). *Biden's Strategic Petroleum Reserve move adds to energy contradictions*. Bloomberg.com. Retrieved October 5, 2022, from <https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2022-09-14/biden-s-strategic-petroleum-reserve-move-adds-to-energy-contradictions?leadSource=verify+wall>

Did political considerations play any role in extending the SPR's withdrawal program – initially intended to end on October 31 – beyond Election Day 2022?

5). Secretary Granholm, given that the only way to realize a 50% cut in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 necessitates continued reliance on a CCP-dominated supply chain, does the Biden administration believe that child and slave labor is merely an unfortunate byproduct in the fight against global warming? Is it acceptable to tell Americans to purchase electric vehicles when the inputs for EVs are typically sourced with forced labor?

6). Secretaries Granholm and Haaland, natural gas prices are at a 14-year high, and as the winter approaches, natural gas prices will likely continue to skyrocket. Have your respective departments developed contingency plans to confront potential rolling blackouts and brownouts, and what will likely be a very expensive winter for millions of Americans? Please provide any accompanying details regarding any such plans.

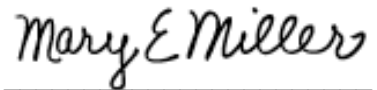
Thank you in advance for your consideration of these critical questions and we look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,



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Lauren Boebert  
Member of Congress



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Mary E. Miller  
Member of Congress



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Troy E. Nehls  
Member of Congress



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Andy Biggs  
Member of Congress



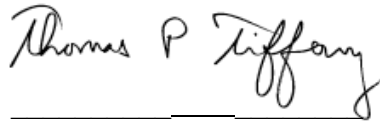
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W. Gregory Steube  
Member of Congress



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Louie Gohmert  
Member of Congress



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Tom Tiffany  
Member of Congress



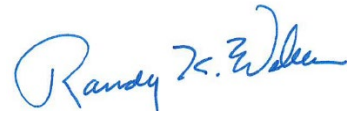
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Dan Bishop  
Member of Congress



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Glenn Grothman  
Member of Congress



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Randy K. Weber  
Member of Congress



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Doug LaMalfa  
Member of Congress

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

October 24, 2022

The Honorable Jennifer Granholm  
Secretary of Energy  
U.S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Secretary Granholm:

As gas prices rise again in our shared home state of Michigan, we continue to be concerned about the lack of action to increase domestic energy production from the U.S. Department of Energy and the Biden administration.

Recently, the consequences of this inaction have once again become apparent. On October 5, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) announced that it will cut its oil production by two million barrels per day beginning in November.<sup>1</sup> Gas prices in Michigan have begun to rise in response to the anticipated cuts, up nearly forty cents a gallon since last month.<sup>2</sup> Already, more than 20 million families are behind on their utility bills.<sup>3</sup> This is another price hike Americans cannot afford.

As the Biden administration's policies have crippled American energy independence, the United States has become increasingly reliant on foreign oil and petroleum products. Despite repeated warnings from experts and Republican Members of Congress, this increased reliance on foreign oil threatens both our energy and economic security.

Instead of unleashing American energy, the administration unsuccessfully campaigned for OPEC to increase production. After being rebuffed, there are now reports that the White House is preparing to scale down sanctions on Venezuela's authoritarian regime to allow oil exports. These actions are completely at odds with the reality of United States energy potential.

The United States is sitting on 264 billion barrels of untapped oil<sup>4</sup>, yet this administration has leased fewer acres for oil-and-gas drilling offshore and on federal land than any other

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<sup>1</sup> Stein, J., Lerman, R., & Hudson, J. (2022, October 5). OPEC, allies move to slash oil production, eliciting blistering White House response. *The Washington Post*. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2022/10/05/opec-plus-oil-cut-russia-saudi-arabia/>

<sup>2</sup> AAA Gas Prices. (2022, October 17). *Michigan Average Gas Prices*. <https://gasprices.aaa.com/?state=MI>

<sup>3</sup> Dumas, B. (2022, August 27). More than 20 million US households are behind on utility bills. *Fox Business*. <https://www.foxbusiness.com/economy/more-than-20-million-households-behind-utility-bills>

<sup>4</sup> Egan, M. (2016, July 5). U.S. has more untapped oil than Saudi Arabia or Russia. *CNN Business*. <https://money.cnn.com/2016/07/05/investing/us-untapped-oil/index.html>

administration dating back to the end of World War II.<sup>5</sup> This summer, when gas prices were the highest in history, President Biden announced plans to block new offshore oil drilling in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.<sup>6</sup>

Amid an already tight energy market and record high inflation, the OPEC cuts will have significant impacts beyond prices at the pump. Despite these concerning trends, both your department and the White House have not adequately outlined how you plan to address these significant shortfalls in global production and the impact it will have on American consumers.

Please respond to the following by November 21, 2022:

1. Describe what specific actions you are taking or are prepared to take to increase domestic oil and gas production.
2. Describe your interactions with other federal agencies, the states, and the White House related to oil and petroleum product exploration and production.
3. Describe your interactions with other federal agencies, the states, and the White House related to the status of current and future oil and gas infrastructure.
4. To temporarily lower gas prices and calm global markets, the administration depleted the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) to the lowest level since 1984. On October 20, President Biden announced the sale of an additional 15 million barrels. Describe what specific actions you are taking or are prepared to take to replenish the SPR and increase emergency reserves.
5. Describe your interactions with the Environmental Protection Agency concerning any policies, actions, and regulations that reduce energy production, such as recent enforcement actions involving using ozone standards to curb energy production in the Permian Basin.
6. Describe your interactions with other federal agencies and the White House related to implementing an export ban on U.S. crude oil, gasoline, and/or diesel and how this action would impact gas prices.
7. List all regulatory actions you are considering or have taken since the start of the administration to alleviate high gas prices.

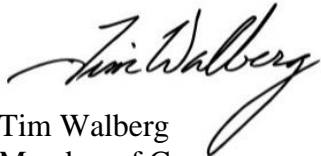
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<sup>5</sup> Puko, T. & DeBarros, A. (2022, September 4). Federal Oil Leases Slow to a Trickle Under Biden. *Wall Street Journal*. [https://www.wsj.com/articles/federal-oil-leases-slow-to-a-trickle-under-biden-11662230816?st=00nat01jktbnxbx&reflink=desktopwebshare\\_permalink](https://www.wsj.com/articles/federal-oil-leases-slow-to-a-trickle-under-biden-11662230816?st=00nat01jktbnxbx&reflink=desktopwebshare_permalink)

<sup>6</sup> Puko, T. (2022, July 1). Biden Seeks to Block New Offshore Drilling in Atlantic, Pacific. *Wall Street Journal*. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/biden-plans-to-block-new-offshore-oil-drilling-in-atlantic-pacific-11656709209>

We look forward to your response to this request.

Sincerely,



Tim Walberg  
Member of Congress



Fred Upton  
Member of Congress



Bill Huizenga  
Member of Congress



John Moolenaar  
Member of Congress



Jack Bergman  
Member of Congress



Lisa McClain  
Member of Congress



Peter Meijer  
Member of Congress

**From:** [Wills, Andrew C](#)  
**To:** [Biscardi, Lindsay](#); [Macintyre, Douglas](#); [Perry, Robert](#); [Williams, Rhonda](#); [Thomas, Edna](#); [Harris, Aleisha \(CONTR\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Hindmarch, Michelle](#)  
**Subject:** RE: SPR Briefing Request - Rep. Michael Burgess (R-TX-26)  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 19, 2022 4:54:20 PM

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Deferring to [@Harris, Aleisha \(CONTR\)](#) on PK's availability.

Thanks!

ACW

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**From:** Biscardi, Lindsay <lindsay.biscardi@hq.doe.gov>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 19, 2022 4:15 PM  
**To:** Macintyre, Douglas <douglas.macintyre@hq.doe.gov>; Perry, Robert <robert.perry2@hq.doe.gov>; Williams, Rhonda <rhonda.williams@hq.doe.gov>; Thomas, Edna <edna.thomas@hq.doe.gov>  
**Cc:** Hindmarch, Michelle <michelle.hindmarch@hq.doe.gov>; Wills, Andrew C <andrew.wills@hq.doe.gov>; Harris, Aleisha (CONTR) <aleisha.harris@hq.doe.gov>  
**Subject:** SPR Briefing Request - Rep. Michael Burgess (R-TX-26)

Good afternoon,

CI just fielded a request from Rep. Burgess's office for a Member-level SPR briefing. The Congressman is looking for an overview of the recent SPR drawdowns and emergency sales. His staffer says he is "finding it hard to keep track of". Rep. Burgess is also hoping to learn about future scheduled sales and the process for refilling the SPR. For this briefing, I think it's best to have Doug lead and, since it's Member-level, maybe have Puesh join if he's available?

Please check your schedules and provide a few windows of availability for this call. Ideally, we'd like to try and get this done before the week of the November election as the Congressman's schedule is likely to be busy.

v/r,

Lindsay

Lindsay E. Biscardi  
Legislative Affairs Lead  
Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency  
Response (CESER)  
U.S. Department of Energy  
Office: 202-586-3518 | Cell: (b) (6)  
Email: [lindsay.biscardi@hq.doe.gov](mailto:lindsay.biscardi@hq.doe.gov)



**From:** [Perry, Robert](#)  
**To:** [Macintyre, Douglas](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Weber SPR Visit Request  
**Date:** Thursday, October 13, 2022 11:12:21 AM

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Thank you,

Robert Perry Jr.  
Chief of Staff and Senior Advisor  
Office of Petroleum Reserve  
Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency Response (CESER)  
U.S. Department of Energy  
W(b) (6)

In order to beat them, you have to think like them.

R. Perry

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**From:** Macintyre, Douglas <douglas.macintyre@hq.doe.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 13, 2022 11:09 AM  
**To:** Perry, Robert <robert.perry2@hq.doe.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: Weber SPR Visit Request

No, nothing yet.

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**From:** Perry, Robert <[robert.perry2@hq.doe.gov](mailto:robert.perry2@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 13, 2022 10:43 AM  
**To:** Macintyre, Douglas <[douglas.macintyre@hq.doe.gov](mailto:douglas.macintyre@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: Weber SPR Visit Request

Any update on this? I don't want Demetrius to be blind sided by the visit. We didn't get any further communication on this.

Thank you,

Robert Perry Jr.  
Chief of Staff and Senior Advisor  
Office of Petroleum Reserve  
Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency Response (CESER)  
U.S. Department of Energy  
W(b) (6)

In order to beat them, you have to think like them.

R. Perry

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**From:** Macintyre, Douglas <[douglas.macintyre@hq.doe.gov](mailto:douglas.macintyre@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 29, 2022 8:04 PM  
**To:** Wills, Andrew C <[andrew.wills@hq.doe.gov](mailto:andrew.wills@hq.doe.gov)>; Harris, Michael <[michael.harris2@hq.doe.gov](mailto:michael.harris2@hq.doe.gov)>; Nouri, Ali <[ali.nouri@hq.doe.gov](mailto:ali.nouri@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Cc:** Tuttle, Robert <[robert.tuttle@hq.doe.gov](mailto:robert.tuttle@hq.doe.gov)>; Perry, Robert <[robert.perry2@hq.doe.gov](mailto:robert.perry2@hq.doe.gov)>; Biscardi, Lindsay <[lindsay.biscardi@hq.doe.gov](mailto:lindsay.biscardi@hq.doe.gov)>; Hindmarch, Michelle <[michelle.hindmarch@hq.doe.gov](mailto:michelle.hindmarch@hq.doe.gov)>; Neukomm, Monica <[monica.neukomm@hq.doe.gov](mailto:monica.neukomm@hq.doe.gov)>; Oosterling, Paul S <[Paul.Oosterling@SPR.DOE.GOV](mailto:Paul.Oosterling@SPR.DOE.GOV)>; Treadway, Demetrius <[Demetrius.Treadway@SPR.DOE.GOV](mailto:Demetrius.Treadway@SPR.DOE.GOV)>  
**Subject:** [External] Re: Weber SPR Visit Request

Whatever you guys decide, we can do! My only comment is that I cannot make it on Oct. 18. We would just want to keep the count to 20-30 people, including about 5 combined from OPR. Also consider how many from DOE outside OPR that will want to come.

Doug

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**From:** Wills, Andrew C <[andrew.wills@hq.doe.gov](mailto:andrew.wills@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 29, 2022 2:07 PM  
**To:** Harris, Michael <[michael.harris2@hq.doe.gov](mailto:michael.harris2@hq.doe.gov)>; Nouri, Ali <[ali.nouri@hq.doe.gov](mailto:ali.nouri@hq.doe.gov)>; Macintyre, Douglas <[douglas.macintyre@hq.doe.gov](mailto:douglas.macintyre@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Cc:** Tuttle, Robert <[robert.tuttle@hq.doe.gov](mailto:robert.tuttle@hq.doe.gov)>; Perry, Robert <[robert.perry2@hq.doe.gov](mailto:robert.perry2@hq.doe.gov)>; Biscardi, Lindsay <[lindsay.biscardi@hq.doe.gov](mailto:lindsay.biscardi@hq.doe.gov)>; Hindmarch, Michelle <[michelle.hindmarch@hq.doe.gov](mailto:michelle.hindmarch@hq.doe.gov)>; Neukomm, Monica <[monica.neukomm@hq.doe.gov](mailto:monica.neukomm@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Weber SPR Visit Request

Thanks, Ali.

I've added Doug's Chief of Staff, Robert, here to consider this request. I know they're on travel this week with the Indian delegation and other USG officials, so their replies may be delayed.

(b) (5)

but I'd like to defer to Robert and Doug on how they typically handle these types of requests.

Thanks,

**Andrew C. Wills**

Chief of Staff and Senior Advisor

Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency Response (CESER)

U.S. Department of Energy

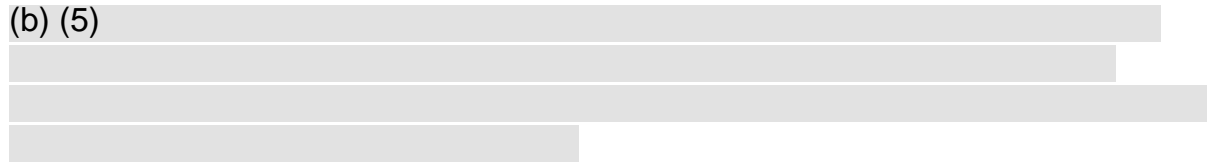
Office: 202.586.4081 | Cell: (b) (6) | [andrew.wills@hq.doe.gov](mailto:andrew.wills@hq.doe.gov)

*He/Him/His Pronouns*

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**From:** Harris, Michael <[michael.harris2@hq.doe.gov](mailto:michael.harris2@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 29, 2022 2:59 PM  
**To:** Nouri, Ali <[ali.nouri@hq.doe.gov](mailto:ali.nouri@hq.doe.gov)>; Wills, Andrew C <[andrew.wills@hq.doe.gov](mailto:andrew.wills@hq.doe.gov)>; Macintyre, Douglas <[douglas.macintyre@hq.doe.gov](mailto:douglas.macintyre@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Cc:** Tuttle, Robert <[robert.tuttle@hq.doe.gov](mailto:robert.tuttle@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Weber SPR Visit Request

(b) (5)



I'll also note for awareness that Weber has harshly criticized the administration on SPR. He authored this op-ed in Breitbart last month: [Exclusive: Weber -- The Reckless Depletion of Our Strategic Petroleum Reserve \(breitbart.com\)](#). (b) (5)

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**From:** Nouri, Ali <[ali.nouri@hq.doe.gov](mailto:ali.nouri@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 29, 2022 2:21 PM  
**To:** Wills, Andrew C <[andrew.wills@hq.doe.gov](mailto:andrew.wills@hq.doe.gov)>; Macintyre, Douglas <[douglas.macintyre@hq.doe.gov](mailto:douglas.macintyre@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Cc:** Harris, Michael <[michael.harris2@hq.doe.gov](mailto:michael.harris2@hq.doe.gov)>; Tuttle, Robert <[robert.tuttle@hq.doe.gov](mailto:robert.tuttle@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: Weber SPR Visit Request

Andrew, Doug – thoughts on this one?

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**From:** Whitener, Jeanette <[Jeanette.Whitener@mail.house.gov](mailto:Jeanette.Whitener@mail.house.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 29, 2022 2:18 PM  
**To:** Nouri, Ali <[ali.nouri@hq.doe.gov](mailto:ali.nouri@hq.doe.gov)>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Weber SPR Visit Request

Hi Ali –

Alicia Molt West gave me your contact information to reach out.

Congressman Weber has a large portion of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve in his district, specifically Bryan Mound in Jefferson County, Texas.

If possible, he would like to visit the facility, possibly with some other members. It would potentially be a bipartisan group touring facilities on the Gulf Coast.

Could you let us know if this is something we might be able to coordinate through you? Ideally, the date we would like to look at is Tuesday, October 18<sup>th</sup>.

Appreciate any help you could offer.

Thanks!  
Jeanette

Jeanette Whitener  
Chief of Staff  
Congressman Randy Weber (TX-14)

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