



Top Stories

12/13/16 – President-elect Donald Trump [announced](#) former Texas Governor, Rick Perry as his nominee for Secretary of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE).

11/29/16 – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) [finalized](#) the 2017 volume requirements for the Renewable Fuel Standards (RFS) program. EPA set the volume requirements and percentage standards for all categories of biofuels, including cellulosic biofuel, advanced biofuel, renewable fuel and biomass-based diesel. The final volume rule requires 15 billion gallons of conventional biofuels, to be added into the nation's fuel supply, a 0.2 increase from the proposed 14.8 gallons EPA [proposed](#). For more information, see [NCSL's Info Alert](#).

From Congress

11/21/16 – Both the [House](#) and the [Senate](#) announced their tentative schedule for the 115th Congress, 1st Session. The Senate will be in session for 37 weeks in 2017 compared to 26 weeks in 2016, and the House will be in session for 13 more days compared to 2016.

From the Administration

12/15/16 – The Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) charged that China's administration of its tariff-rate quotas (TQR) for rice, wheat and corn breaches the nation's World Trade Organization (WTO) commitments. This is the 15th trade enforcement challenge the administration has launched against China at the WTO. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) estimates that China's TQRs for the above-mentioned commodities were worth over \$7 billion in 2015.

12/15/16 – The North American Electric Reliability Corp. (NERC) released its [2016 Long-Term Reliability Assessment](#), which indicated that many regions of the nation are becoming too reliant on natural gas for electricity. The report states that while reliance itself may not cause issues, "a single point of disruption, such as unavailable storage facilities, pipeline rupture, or other gas infrastructure failure," could reduce the amount of reserve generation a region can use in event of an emergency.

12/14/16 – USDA's Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) [released](#) its [Farmer Fair Practices Rules](#). The rules are comprised of an interim final rule and two proposed rules which aim to restore fairness and reduce the burden for farmers seeking justice under the [Packers and Stockyards Act](#).

12/13/16 – The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) [approved](#) the [TransWest Express Project](#), which spans more than 730 miles from Wyoming to southern Nevada, and [PacifiCorp's Energy Gateway South](#), spanning over 400 miles from southeastern Wyoming to Utah. The transmission lines aim to move renewable power generated in remote areas to population centers in the West.

12/12/16 – The White House and the Government of Canada [announced](#) the release of their [Joint United States-Canada Electric Grid Security and Resilience Strategy](#), fulfilling the commitment made in March in their joint statement on [Climate, Energy and Arctic Leadership](#). The Strategy describes joint goals and objectives to address the vulnerabilities of the two nation's respective and shared electric grid infrastructure as a matter of both energy and national security.

12/7/16 – DOE [proposed](#) to issue procedural regulations following the Secretary of Energy’s issuance of an emergency order in the event of a Presidential declaration of a Grid Security Emergency. The proposed procedure is intended to ensure the expeditious issuance of emergency orders under the Federal Power Act.

12/6/16 – DOE [announced](#) the issuance of a Record of Decision and a Presidential Permit for the New England Clean Power Link Transmission Line. The 154-mile underground and underwater direct current transmission line will bring up to 1,000 megawatts of hydropower from Canada to Vermont.

11/30/16 – EPA [proposed](#) that the greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) standards currently in place for model year 2022-2025 light-duty vehicles remain appropriate under the Clean Air Act (CAA) and do not need to be amended to be more or less stringent. The rulemaking [establishing](#) the National Program for federal GHG emissions and corporate average fuel economy (CAFE) standards for MY2017-2025 light duty vehicles included a regulatory requirement for EPA to conduct a Midterm Evaluation of the GHG standards established for MY2022-2025.

11/28/16 – The Government Affairs Office (GAO) [released](#) a report detailing the Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) efforts to respond to questions it receives regarding its produce safety rule, [Standards for the Growing, Harvesting, Packing and Holding of Produce for Human Consumption](#). The report found that the FDA had responded to 72 percent of the questions it received between September 2015 and September 2016.

11/25/16 – The Department of Interior’s (DOI) Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR) [announced](#) that disbursements from energy production on federal and American Indian lands, and offshore areas totaled \$6.23 billion in FY 2016. More than \$1.3 billion of that revenue was disbursed to 37 states. The top states receiving funds include Wyoming (\$664 million), New Mexico (\$369 million), and Colorado (\$84 million).

11/22/16 – DOE [finalized](#) energy efficiency standards for ceiling fans. The final rule aims to cut the energy use of ceiling fans by

more than 25 percent, and would result in more than two quadrillion British thermal units of energy reduction, saving consumers \$12 billion over a 30-year period. The rule exempts “highly decorated” fans.