



## Top Stories

**2/21/17** – In a [letter](#) to the National Ethanol Conference, President Donald Trump indicated his support for renewable fuels. The president also emphasized the administration’s work on eliminating regulations.

**2/17/17** – The Senate confirmed, [52-46](#), [Scott Pruitt](#) to be the administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Pruitt served in the Oklahoma state legislature, prior to serving as the state’s attorney general.

**2/15/17** – EPA [published](#) the “Draft Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks: 1990-2015.” The report summarizes annual U.S. emissions by source category and sector. The draft found that greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions decreased 2.2 percent between 2014 and 2015, largely due to a transition from coal to natural-gas-fired power plants, warmer weather and decrease in electricity demand. Additionally, the report found that carbon dioxide accounted for 81 percent of GHG emissions in 2015. The report showed that methane emissions have decreased by 16.7 percent since 1990, and hydrofluorocarbons increased 4 percent from 2014 to 2015.

**2/3/17** – The White House [released](#) interim guidance on regulatory requirements to agencies for issuing new rules in response to an earlier executive order [issued](#) in late January. The guidance specifies what types of new regulations would require, at least two prior regulations to be identified for elimination. The guidance also states that the cost of the planned regulation must be offset by the elimination of existing costs associated with at least two prior regulations.

**2/3/17** – EPA [issued](#) a final rule, moving ahead with its publication of “findings of failure” for 15 states and the District of

Columbia who have not yet turned in complete state implementation plans to meet the 2008 ozone air quality standards. The rule will take effect on March 6, marking the start of a two-year timetable for the named jurisdictions to file complete plans before federal regulators intervene.

## From Congress

**2/22/17** – A bipartisan group of four senators [asked](#) EPA Administrator Pruitt to leave the Renewable Fuel Standard as is, as “a change would needlessly inject uncertainty into the fuels market and deter future investments in biofuels.”

**2/16/17** – Congress is considering a number of resolutions to repeal final rules issued over the last six months of the Obama administration, through the use of the Congressional Review Act (CRA). The Congressional Research Service compiled a [list](#) of over 50 finalized rules which are subject to removal by the CRA. Currently, President Donald Trump has signed two CRA resolutions of disapproval into law, including [H.J. Res 38](#) which undoes the [Stream Protection Rule](#). A number of resolutions are awaiting a Senate vote, including a resolution to undo the Bureau of Land Management’s rule related to [venting and flaring](#) of methane, and one disapproving its [Planning 2.0 rule](#). See [NCSL’s Info Alert](#) for more detail.

**2/16/17** – The U.S. House of Representatives Agriculture Committee approved the [Pesticide Registration Enhancement Act of 2017](#), which would be the fourth reauthorization of the Pesticide Registration Improvement and Extension Act, which requires pesticide companies to pay EPA a fee in order to get their products reviewed for approval within regular time frames. Additionally, the committee approved [H.R. 953](#), making this the

fifth time the committee has supported removal of Clean Water Act requirements for pesticide application near waterways.

**2/14/17** – The House Oversight and Government Reform Committee approved three regulatory reform measures, the "[Searching for and Cutting Regulations That Are Unnecessarily Burdensome \(SCRUB\) Act](#)," would authorize an appropriation of up to \$30 million to help establish a nine-member body that would assess which regulations are outdated or unnecessarily burdensome and would sunset after five years with a goal of reducing 15 percent of rules. The "[Regulatory Integrity Act](#)," would require agencies to disclose actions and public communications surrounding pending rules, and would prohibit agencies from using those communications to lobby the public for support. The "[Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs \(OIRA\) Insight, Reform and Accountability Act](#)," would establish a working group within OIRA to review regulations, streamline processing and aid small businesses with compliance.

**2/9/17** – The Congressional Research Service (CRS) [published](#) a report, "Withdrawal from International Agreements: Legal Framework, the Paris Agreement, and the Iran Nuclear Agreement." The report suggests that the president could not withdraw from the Paris Agreement until November 2019, and leaving the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change might "invoke the historical and largely unresolved debate over the role of Congress in treaty termination."

## From the Administration

**2/2/17** – EPA [issued](#) a request for proposals (RFP) for community air toxics monitoring grants. The RFP is for projects designed to assist state, local and tribal communities in identifying and profiling air toxics sources, assessing emerging measurement methods, characterizing the degree and extent of local air toxics problems, and tracking progress of air toxics reduction activities. RFPs are due by March 22, 2017.

## Other

**2/17/17** – The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit [ruled](#) that Virginia's moratorium on uranium mining can stand. The Court agreed with a decision from the district court that federal

law does not preempt state regulation of conventional uranium mining.

**2/15/17** – Ralph Lancaster, the Supreme Court-appointed special master for [Florida v. Georgia](#) wrote that he couldn't grant Florida's request to set a consumption cap on Georgia water use because the Army Corps of Engineers was not a party to the case. He recommended the Court reject Florida's claims concerning Georgia's water use of the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint River Basin.