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2020 Election Activities

Watch our new category 2020 Election Activities for Presidential campaigning, as well as House, Senate and local/regional election activities. Also, the category White House focuses on Presidential involvement with biofuels.

Here are a few examples:

Many U.S. Farmers Fume at Washington, Not Trump, over Biofuel, Trade Policies

by P.J. Huffstutter and Tom Polansek (Reuters)  … Many farmers are angry, and some are directing their anger not at the Republican president, but at Washington’s bureaucracy. Trump has faced ...
September 10, 2019 Read Full Article

Trump in High-Stakes Balancing Act between Oil and Corn ahead of 2020 Bid

by Humeyra Pamuk and Jarrett Renshaw (Reuters)  At a closed-door meeting at the White House on Aug. 19, President Donald Trump looked increasingly alarmed as his top envoy to China delivered  … September 6, 2019 Read Full Article

(Politico) … All of the candidates have embraced a target of “net-zero” emissions by 2050 or earlier, and they all propose spending trillions of dollars over the next decade to get … September 6, 2019 Read Full Article

Highlights of CNN Climate Town Hall First Half – Castro, Yang, Harris, Klobuchar and Biden AND CNN Climate Town Hall Part 2: Sanders, Warren Butttigieg, O’Rourke, Booker

(Our Daily Planet) The CNN Town Hall on the Climate Crisis was a marathon session — seven hours of nearly uninterrupted climate conversation. With so many candidates and so much ground … September 5, 2019 Read Full Article

2020 Dems Aim to Capitalize on Trump’s Ethanol Policy

by Brian Dabbs  (National Journal) Democratic presidential candidates are exploiting a controversial White House ethanol policy to try to generate support among President Trump’s staunchest backers. The Environmental Protection Agency … August 22, 2019 Read Full Article

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Policy: US and International

There's lots of overlap with policies, legislation, regulations and litigation. Find articles about policy developments in the US, other countries and states here. For details, click on the name of the country or state that appears along the right margin of our website. Or click on tags such as:

Transportation Fuels Policy
Energy Policy
Environmental Policy

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Federal Legislation

For more legislative news (including Executive Orders), click here. Scroll down for Regulations and Litigation news.

Daily on Energy: How the US Could Get Caught up in a ‘Carbon Trade War’

by Josh Siegel & Abby Smith (Washington Examiner) … Readers are probably familiar with the concept of the U.S. imposing “border carbon adjustments” on other
countries. This has been a regular feature of carbon tax proposals in Congress and a component of Democratic presidential climate plans, as a mechanism to avoid harming ...

September 13, 2019 Read Full Article

**Republican Mike Braun Looks to Bring GOP ‘in the Game’ with Bipartisan Climate Caucus**

by Abby Smith (Washington Examiner) The Senate will soon be getting its own bipartisan caucus focused on addressing climate change. A bipartisan duo of Sens. Mike Braun of Indiana and Chris Coons of Delaware are organizing the new caucus, which is still in the planning stages and will be formally unveiled in ...

September 13, 2019 Read Full Article

**Subsidize My Electric Car, Please: Auto Makers Want Congress to Expand This Gift to the Affluent.**

(Wall Street Journal) The great myth of political subsidies for business is that they will help an industry get started and then go away. We'll soon see if Congress can for once live up to its temporary promise and block the emerging effort to continue subsidizing the affluent to buy ...

September 3, 2019 Read Full Article

by Jim Lane (Biofuels Digest)  There’s nothing like a former fed to give a unique perspective on federal programs and policy. Paul Argyropoulos, President of Policy Nexus Advisors, gave this illuminating overview of what he thinks the future holds, influencing factors and drivers that can change the whole planes, trains ... September 3, 2019 Read Full Article

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**Booker: We Will Stop the Oil Refinery Waivers, as Part of $3 Trillion Clean Energy and Infrastructure Plan**

by Jim Lane (Biofuels Digest) In New Jersey, Senator Cory Booker announced that, if elected as US President, he would “Immediately end the granting of unwarranted RFS small refinery waivers to big oil companies, and substantially increase funding for the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP). Booker became the second US ... September 3, 2019 Read Full Article

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**What’s the Plan to Increase Ethanol Use? Low Carbon Octane Standard Could Be the Way to Increase Ethanol Use beyond E15.**

by Brian Jennings (Ethanol Producer Magazine/American Coalition for Ethanol) … Are we simply going to play defense on the RFS and hope the E15 market develops quickly, or can we turn the page, go on offense and initiate a new legislative or regulatory strategy to increase ethanol use far beyond ... September 3, 2019 Read Full Article
A Farmer’s Plea to the President: Fix our Fuel
by Doug Sombke (The Hill/Farmers Union Enterprises and the South Dakota Farmers Union) … I recently wrote a letter to the president suggesting a pathway out from under the proverbial rock. I urged him to direct the EPA to enforce the mandatory provision of the Clean Air Act that requires it to reduce the toxic ... September 1, 2019 Read Full Article

Wound up over Waivers
by Alex Guillén (Politico’s Morning Energy) EPA’s internal watchdog is being asked to determine how the agency decided to grant the vast majority of exemptions from the Renewable Fuel Standard that oil refiners have requested. EPA approved 31 petitions for waivers from the 2018 requirements, while rejecting just six, and . August 21, 2019 Read Full Article

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Federal Regulation
See also articles in Legislation and Litigation for overlapping topics.

Forest Products Industry Barriers to Producing Biofuels
(Bioresnewable Deployment Consortium) BDC is a 501c3 organization focused on education and brokering partnerships in order to accelerate the deployment of economic bioprocesses and assist the forest products industry to get the most value from the tree. BDC membership represents bioprocess companies and the major forest products companies. BDC believes ...

September 16, 2019 Read Full Article

USDA Numbers Confirm Declining Demand For Ethanol

by Amy Mayer (Iowa Public Radio) The national average price for corn this season is back to $3.60 a bushel, about where it’s been most of this year except for an early-season spike ($4.16 in July) before the size and quality of the crop was known. That’s not great news for corn growers, ...

September 16, 2019 Read Full Article

Trump Weighs Boosts to Biofuels

by Kelsey Tamborrino (Politico’s Morning Energy) The White House is considering a plan that could limit the number of small refinery exemptions to the RFS, increase the volumes of biofuels that must be blended into gasoline and boost the spread of 15 percent ethanol fuels, four industry and other sources ...

September 16, 2019 Read Full Article

Biodiesel Manager Says EPA’s Waivers “Ironic”
by Julie Harker (Brownfield Ag News)  An Iowa biodiesel business manager has testified at a House subcommittee hearing that his business is contributing to the clean energy economy, saying strong consistent federal policy is needed, “It’s ironic that the EPA has such concern for the economic hardships facing small (oil) ...September 13, 2019 Read Full Article

Cooperative Relies on RFS Waivers: CountryMark Sits on Both Sides of Small-Refinery Waiver Controversy

by Todd Neeley (DTN Progressive Farmer) The farmer-owned CountryMark cooperative and fuel refinery is caught in the middle of the small-refinery exemption controversy. The company operates in Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio and Kentucky — most of its customers at more than 100 retail stations are farmers and rural communities that have ... September 13, 2019 Read Full Article

Science and Technology Policy Office Request for Information on the Bioeconomy DEADLINE: October 22, 2019

(Federal Register)  The Office of Science Technology and Policy (OSTP) requests input from all interested parties on the U.S. Bioeconomy. The Bioeconomy represents the infrastructure, innovation, products, technology, and data derived from biologically-related processes and science that drive economic
growth, promote health, and increase public benefit. Through this

**Oil Refining Representatives to Rally in Toledo against Trump Biofuels Policy**

by Jon Chavez (The Blade) Members of Ohio’s oil refining industry will rally in Toledo Thursday at One Government Center downtown to urge President Trump not to tamper with laws regulating U.S. biofuels policy, because doing so could put smaller refineries, including the Toledo Refining Co. operation in Oregon, at risk ...

**White House Presses Biofuel, Oil Executives for Compromise**

by Mario Parker and Jennifer A Dlouhy (Bloomberg/Investors Business Daily) Discussions aimed at breaking logjam over biofuel plan; Friday deadline issued for ideas on potential compromise — Trump administration officials are squeezing biofuel and oil refining executives to agree to a plan to bolster corn-based ethanol and soy-based biodiesel. In ...

**Landfill, Skyfill and the Opportunities, Dangers Within**

by Jim Lane (Biofuels Digest) Many have asked, why do we need mandates for renewable fuels, carbon prices, and all that. Isn’t that a government subsidy, a hand-out for politician-friendly
technologies that can't make it in the marketplace? Well, that depends, my friend, how you think about the community landfill.

About landfills ... September 12, 2019 Read Full Article

White House to Meet With Biodiesel Producers in Quest for a Deal

by Mario Parker and Jennifer A. Dlouhy (Bloomberg) Trump administration officials are set to meet with renewable fuel producers on Wednesday, as they seek to entice industry endorsements for a plan to bolster corn-based ethanol and soy-based biodiesel. The meeting is slated to include executives from Louis Dreyfus Co., Renewable Biofuels ... September 11, 2019 Read Full Article

Ethanol Advocate & Former South Dakota Sen. Tom Daschle Meets with Farmers Union Members in D.C.

(South Dakota Farmers Union) It’s a critical time for the ethanol industry said former South Dakota Sen. Tom Daschle today, Sept. 9, 2019, when he met with more than 300 farmers, ranchers and agriculture supporters in D.C. as part of the National Farmers Union Fly-In. “It’s a critical time, not only for agriculture, ...September 10, 2019 Read Full Article

Political Pollster Plugs E85

by Cindy Zimmerman (Energy.AgWired.com) Political consultant, pollster, and “public opinion guru” Frank Luntz gave a surprising
plug for the use of E85 (85 percent ethanol blended fuel) and the need for more flex fuel vehicles (FFVs) during an appearance on FOX News Channel’s The Ingraham Angle with Laura Ingraham last Thursday. “There’s … September 9, 2019 Read Full Article

King Willing to Debate Feenstra, Taylor

by Ty Rushing (NWestIowa.com) … During his town hall, King addressed multiple topics including immigration, trade negotiations and the struggles of the agricultural renewable fuels community. POET Biorefining, the nation’s largest ethanol producer, has a plant south of Ashton, which King made reference to when questioning a recent decision by the … September 9, 2019 Read Full Article

Arnold Schwarzenegger: Trump Can’t Erase a Decade of Clean Air Progress with a Sharpie

by Arnold Schwarzenegger (Washington Post) California has been a leader in the fight to clean our air since one of my heroes, Ronald Reagan, was our governor. The Trump administration, for some reason, is hellbent on reversing decades of history and progress. Whether it is political pettiness, shortsightedness or just plain jealousy, … September 9, 2019 Read Full Article

Biofuel Plan Faces Fresh Backlash from U.S. Agricultural Trade Groups
by Chris Prentice, Stephanie Kelly and Jarrett Renshaw
(Reuters) U.S. agricultural trade groups on Friday told the Trump administration a proposed biofuel reform package falls short of expectations, four sources familiar with discussions said, complicating plans the administration had for presenting the proposal to President Donald Trump. … The plan … September 8, 2019 Read Full Article

QUOTE OF THE WEEK — Humeyra Pamuk and Jarrett Renshaw (Reuters)

According to Reuters' reporters Humeyra Pamuk and Jarrett Renshaw, Terry Branstad, the former Iowa governor and now U.S. ambassador to China, showed a map of counties that had flipped in Trump’s favor in 2016 but were now considered at risk in the November 2020 election. Branstad also listed quotes from … September 6, 2019 Read Full Article

White House Weighs Biofuel Quota Boost Amid Appeals From Iowa

(Bloomberg) Trump officials honing plan to benefit ethanol, biodiesel; Latest initiative would spike 2020 quotas by 1 billion gallons — Top administration officials have developed plans to give a 5% boost to U.S. renewable fuel-blending quotas in 2020, as President Donald Trump seeks to temper farm-state criticism he has undermined U.S. … September 6, 2019 Read Full Article
California, Trump Clash over Cars

by Kelsey Tamborrino (Politico's Morning Energy)  California and the Trump administration will duke it out in court today over EPA’s initial decision to undo Obama-era auto emissions standards. … It’s California vs. Donald Trump today at the D.C. Circuit in an early test of the clash between the state and federal .... September 6, 2019 Read Full Article

National Chicken Council Submits Comments to EPA on the RFS Program Standards for 2020 and Biomass-Based Diesel Volume for 2021

(Biobased and Renewable Products Update) On August 30, 2019, the National Chicken Council submitted a letter to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) expressing concerns with the proposed required volume obligations (RVO) for 2020 combined with the recent waiver that will increase the use of ethanol-15 (E15) under the Renewable Fuel Standard .. September 6, 2019 Read Full Article

Petroleum Industry Warns Trump It Will Fight Ethanol Moves

by Dave Boyer (The Washington Times) A leading trade group for the petroleum industry warned President Trump on Tuesday to ditch his plan to boost ethanol production, saying it would be a “disastrous political decision.” … He (Frank Macchiarola, a vice president of the American Petroleum Institute) said the petroleum industry ... September 5, 2019 Read Full Article
**Trump, Biofuels, 2020 and the Prospect of a Farmer Flip**

by Matt Carr (Biofuels Digest/New Energy America)  

President Trump has repeatedly buckled under pressure from fossil fuel interests and their Wall Street backers, giving an unprecedented number of “small refinery waivers” to oil refiners that have reported record profits year over year, significantly undermining biofuel production by destroying nearly 4 ... September 4, 2019 Read Full Article

**Circuit Court Rejects Challenges to EPA’s Renewable Fuel Standards**

by Tim Ryan (Court House News)  

The D.C. Circuit on Friday upheld the Environmental Protection Agency’s renewable fuel standards in the face of challenges from energy companies, biofuel producers and industry groups. Under longstanding EPA policy, the burden of introducing more renewable fuel into the U.S. market falls on fuel ... September 3, 2019 Read Full Article

**E15 Rewards For Hopkins Drivers**

(Minnesota Bio-Fuels Association)  

The Minnesota Bio-Fuels Association (MN Biofuels) and KS95 FM teamed up today to reward consumers who fueled up with Unleaded Plus (E15) at Hopkins Express Minnoco. During the hour-long promotion from 12 pm to 1 pm, consumers who fueled up with E15 were rewarded with prizes that ... September 3, 2019 Read Full Article
EPA’s Final 2020 Volume Obligations Must Restore Lost Gallons

(Renewable Fuels Association) In formal comments submitted today (August 30, 2019) in response to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s proposed 2020 renewable volume obligations, the Renewable Fuels Association called on the EPA to follow the law and make up for the lost blending volumes resulting from the numerous secretive refinery waivers ...

September 3, 2019 Read Full Article

Renewable Natural Gas: The Climate Change Solution with Limited Awareness of Its Potential

by Michael Bakas (Utility Dive/Ameresco) When it comes to addressing climate change, we must pursue the many diverse approaches for reducing carbon emissions. One of the most overlooked opportunities in our arsenal today is renewable natural gas (RNG). It’s simply not getting enough attention in relationship to its potential for major impact. ... September 2, 2019 Read Full Article

QUOTE OF THE WEEK — American Petroleum Institute

In a February 2018 letter to the EPA from the American Petroleum Institute: “…RIN costs are largely recovered by refineries, both large and small, through the increased value of gasoline and diesel fuel they supply to the market.” … “These
Five Reasons Why Big Oil Is Wrong

by Scott Richman (Renewable Fuels Association) On Wednesday, the American Fuel & Petrochemical Manufacturers and the American Petroleum Institute sent a letter to President Trump in response to reports that the administration is considering measures to mitigate the harm that the renewable fuels industry has experienced as a result of the ... September 1, 2019 Read Full Article

Trump Teases Work on Policy Package to Boost Ethanol

by Erin Voegele (Ethanol Producer Magazine) President Donald Trump issued a tweet Aug. 29 suggesting his administration is working on a “giant package” to boost demand for ethanol. He did not indicate what the timeframe for the release of that package might be. Trump’s tweet followed weeks of outrage by ... September 1, 2019 Read Full Article

Costs Inhibit Government Purchases of Electric Vehicles: GAO

by Maxine Joselow (E&E News) Federal agencies have been reluctant to buy electric vehicles because of high prices and a lack of charging infrastructure, the government’s internal watchdog said in a report released yesterday. READ MORE
FEDERAL VEHICLE FLEETS: Agencies Have Continued to Incorporate Alternative Fuel Vehicles into Fleets, but ... August 29, 2019 Read Full Article

Iowa Governor Planning DC Meeting over ‘Short Term Crisis’ in Ethanol Industry

by O. Kay Henderson (Radio Iowa) Governor Kim Reynolds and Midwest governors are planning a trip to Washington, D.C. to talk with President Trump about unrest in farm country. “Let him know first-hand what’s happening on the ground,” Reynolds said this morning. The Trump Administration recently granted waivers to oil companies, ... August 28, 2019 Read Full Article

Klobuchar: In First 100 Days as President, Pledges Moratorium on Oil Refinery Waivers, Restoration of Renewable Fuels Tax Credit and More

by Jim Lane (Biofuels Digest) Klobuchar says “I will stop the oil refinery waivers”: In Iowa, US Senator Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota said that, if elected President in 2020, would in her first 100 days in office order a moratorium on oil refinery waivers issued under the Renewable Fuel Standard, restore the .. August 28, 2019 Read Full Article

Internal White House Documents: EPA Ignored Trump Administration Recommendations to Redistribute Small Refinery Waived Volumes
(Renewable Fuels Association) Documents obtained by the Renewable Fuels Association (RFA) show that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) ignored strong recommendations from within the Trump Administration to redistribute Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) blending obligations lost to small refinery exemptions in the proposed rule for 2020 Renewable Volume Obligations (RVOs). According to .. August 27, 2019 Read Full Article

ACE Conference: An Update on Litigation Affecting the Industry

by Matt Thompson (Ethanol Producer Magazine) Bryan Stockton gave attendees of the American Coalition for Ethanol's annual conference in Omaha, Nebraska, an update on some of the litigation affecting the ethanol industry. Stockton is an attorney at Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP is working on behalf of the industry to ... August 26, 2019 Read Full Article

Trump Orders Biofuel Boost in Bid to Temper Farm State Anger

by Jennifer A Dlouhy and Mario Parker (Bloomberg) 2021 quotas will jump to make up for oil refinery exemptions; Move could alienate Rust Belt refinery workers in Pennsylvania — President Donald Trump, seeking to tamp down political fallout in U.S. farm states essential to his re-election, has ordered federal agencies ... August 26, 2019 Read Full Article
**Trump Set to Discuss Biofuels Thursday with USDA, EPA: Sources**

by Humeyra Pamuk and Stephanie Kelly (Reuters) President Donald Trump, faced with mounting anger in the farm belt over policies that allowed oil refineries to use less corn-based ethanol, is set to meet with cabinet members on Thursday to discuss ways to boost biofuel demand, four sources familiar with the matter said. .. August 22, 2019 Read Full Article

**EPA Mulling Ethanol Reallocation, Sources Say**

by Alex Guillén (Politico’s Morning Energy) The Trump administration is considering reallocating the volumes of ethanol that were reduced when it allowed dozens of refineries to waive their Renewable Fuel Standard requirements to blend the biofuel with gasoline, four industry sources with knowledge of the discussions told Pro’s Eric Wolff. ... August 22, 2019 Read Full Article

**Biofuel Lobby Sues EPA Over Renewable Fuel Standard Exemptions**

by Michael McGrady (Inside Sources) The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is facing a legal challenge from a coalition of biofuel and agriculture industry groups regarding the agency’s proposal for reduced renewable fuel volumes. According to a press release from the coalition, the organizations
Governors Ask EPA to Clarify Biogenic CO2 Not Regulated under CCA

by Erin Voegele (Biomass Magazine) Governors representing Iowa, Indiana, Kentucky, Nebraska and North Dakota recently sent a letter to U.S. EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler urging the agency to clarify biogenic CO2 is not a pollutant subject to regulation under the Clean Air Act. “We respectively request that you prioritize regulatory reform .. August 21, 2019 Read Full Article

Addressing Two Objections to My Midwest Ethanol Plan

by Robert Rapier (Forbes) … My proposed solution is for the Midwestern states to band together to provide sufficient state incentives to develop a major Midwest corridor where E85 — a blend of 85% ethanol and 15% gasoline — is the primary fuel of choice for consumers. There is enough ... August 19, 2019 Read Full Article

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Regulations Open for Public Comment

EPA Opens Section 610 review of RFS DEADLINE: August 22, 2019  REVISED DEADLINE: September 23, 2019

by Erin Voegele (Ethanol Producer Magazine) The U.S. EPA published a notice in the Federal Register June 24 announcing it has opened a review of the Renewable Fuel Standard under Section 610 of the Regulatory Flexibility Act. According to the notice, section 610 of the RFA requires that an agency review, ...

June 26, 2019 Read Full Article

MORE OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT REQUESTS

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Federal Litigation

For more on federal litigation, click here.

Korein Tillery Files Class Action Lawsuit Alleging Market Manipulation of Ethanol Futures and Options Prices by Archer Daniels Midland
Korein Tillery attorneys filed a class action lawsuit against Archer Daniels Midland Company ("ADM") in the United States District Court for the Central District of Illinois, alleging that ADM has manipulated a key benchmark for the settlement and pricing of ethanol futures and options contracts dating back to as early as November 2017, ... September 12, 2019 Read Full Article

**Justice Dept. Launches Antitrust Probe of Automakers over Their Fuel Efficiency Deal with California**

by Juliet Eilperin and Steven Mufson (Washington Post) The Justice Department has launched an antitrust investigation of four leading automakers over an agreement they forged with the state of California to maintain higher fuel efficiency standards than those sought by the Trump administration, escalating the stakes in the long-running battle between ... September 6, 2019 Read Full Article

**California, Trump Clash over Cars**

by Kelsey Tamborrino (Politico’s Morning Energy) California and the Trump administration will duke it out in court today over EPA’s initial decision to undo Obama-era auto emissions standards. … It’s California vs. Donald Trump today at the D.C. Circuit in an early test of the clash between the state and federal ... September 6, 2019 Read Full Article
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Biofuel Lobby Sues EPA Over Renewable Fuel Standard Exemptions

by Michael McGrady (Inside Sources) The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is facing a legal challenge from a coalition of biofuel and agriculture industry groups regarding the agency's proposal for reduced renewable fuel volumes. According to a press release from the coalition, the organizations filed a petition in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the .. August 21, 2019 Read Full Article

Report: Trump Ordered Waivers: Ongoing Court Challenges May Be Only Avenue Left for Biofuels

by By Todd Neeley and Chris Clayton (DTN Progressive Farmer)  …The president sided with oil refinners over ethanol
producers and corn farmers, just two months after reiterating his support for ethanol at a rally held at Southwest Iowa Renewable Energy in Council Bluffs, Iowa, to celebrate the approval of year-round ...

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For example, a suggestion for taxing the non-renewable part of transportation fuels is here.

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Joanne Ivancic, Executive Director

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