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AFTERNOON NEWSLETTER

CALENDAR DATAPPOINT DIRECTORY DOCUMENTS LEGISLATION

Trump hosts critical auto standards confab

By **GARRETT ROSS** and **DAVID BEAVERS** | 05/11/2018 05:05 PM EDT*With help from Kelsey Tamborrino*

TRUMP HOSTS CRITICAL AUTOS CONFAB: President Donald Trump hosted a meeting today with automakers who are pressing the president to strike a deal with California on how to ease fuel standards, Pro's Eric Wolff reports. Joining the meeting were DOT Secretary Elaine Chao, EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt, U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer, and Larry Kudlow, director of National Economic Council. A group of 12 executives from automobile manufacturers and trade associations also made their way to the White House for the effort, including Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers CEO Mitch Bainwol. Read more from Eric here.

Bainwol said he was grateful for Trump's invitation and passion for the industry and preserving American jobs. "The Administration will soon issue a range of proposals for future fuel economy and greenhouse gas regulations, and we look forward to reviewing their notice of rulemaking and providing comments along with other stakeholders," Bainwol said in a statement following the meeting.

INK NOT YET DRY ON BIOFUELS? The White House is preparing to issue a document that would lay out the changes Trump set in motion for the Renewable Fuel Standard at a meeting earlier in the week, according to ethanol and oil industry sources. The document would include the permanent expansion of sales of 15 percent ethanol fuels, but it is expected to be vague on other elements, including details around allowing ethanol exports to qualify for Renewable Identification Numbers, and how EPA would reallocate ethanol volumes lost due to the exemptions it granted to small refiners.

Also up in the air was how the administration planned to change the test for determining whether those small refiners should receive new exemptions. "What is totally unclear right now is how are they going to define the hardship exemption. They don't have clarity on that," said a refining source. "And the export RIN, does that stay forever, or does that go away at some point in time?"

Welcome to Afternoon Energy! We're your hosts Garrett Ross and David Beavers. Send suggestions, news and tips to gross@politico.com, dbeavers@politico.com, mdaily@politico.com and njuliano@politico.com, and keep up with us on Twitter at [@garrett_ross](https://twitter.com/garrett_ross), [@davidabeavers](https://twitter.com/davidabeavers), [@dailym1](https://twitter.com/dailym1), [@nickjuliano](https://twitter.com/nickjuliano), [@Morning_Energy](https://twitter.com/Morning_Energy) and [@POLITICOPro](https://twitter.com/POLITICOPro).

**** A message from Chevron:** This is a story about DOERS, small businesses, and the billions Chevron spends with them. Watch the video to hear the whole story: <https://politi.co/2rzuoHO> **

WHEN IN ROME: EPA's Pruitt did not meet privately with Cardinal George Pell during his visit to Italy last June and did not know that the Australian, who has been charged with sexually abusing multiple children, would be in attendance at a dinner with more than a dozen Vatican officials and leaders on June 9, EPA spokesman Jahan Wilcox said today. The statement came as a response to reporting by New York Times reporter Eric Lipton, who alleged that Pruitt arranged a one-on-one meeting with Pell. On June 29, Pell was charged with the crimes in his Australian home state of Victoria, for which he will now stand trial.

CONFIDENCE STILL: When asked if he still has confidence in Pruitt today, Trump said, "Yes, I do," according to a pool report. The latest comment on Pruitt came after today's meeting with auto industry executives, as Pruitt sat one seat away from the president. White House legislative director Marc Short said earlier this week Pruitt would remain in his post for the "foreseeable future." [Read more here.](#)

MAIL CALL! NEW JERSEY NEEDS MORE TIME: New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy wrote to

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke last week to ask for more time to analyze the potential impacts of offshore wind development in his state — particularly on the fishing industry. Murphy wrote that the allotted 45-day comment period from BOEM for comments on wind development in the New York Bight “is simply not enough time.” Murphy instead requested a 180-day extension of the public comment period.

— **Rep. Raúl Grijalva (D-Ariz.) wrote to Zinke Thursday** seeking further details and the total costs to taxpayers associated with the decision to send national park police personnel to the U.S.-Mexico border.

SUNNY OUTLOOK FOR CALIFORNIA SOLAR: In light of the California Energy Commission’s vote Wednesday to require that solar panels be installed on all newly built single-family and low-rise multifamily buildings, GTM Research predicts that new residential installations will account for more than 900 MW of rooftop solar from 2020-2023 — of which 650 MW comes directly from the CEC decision. New-build residential installations will count for between 18 and 23 percent of total solar over that period, according to the GTM report.

COALITION AIMS TO PROTECT PUBLIC LANDS: A new coalition of venture capitalists, investors and business executives is aiming to push Congress to make progress on climate change. The group, Business Coalition for Conservation and Climate, was launched this week by clean energy lobbying firm 38 North Solutions and will advocate for the conservation of public lands and urge the U.S. government “to steward the public’s land in a manner that reduces greenhouse gas emissions.” Isaac Brown, a managing partner at 38 North, said the initial goal is to raise awareness with the public, who he said has the ability to spur change. “We can’t measure success or failure only in financial gain,” Brown said in an interview with AE. “We have to think about the public good as well.”

The coalition hopes to start off by creating a public database to provide information on the effects of greenhouse gases on public lands. “The federal government should be tracking, making available and disclosing the carbon consequences” on public lands, Brown said. After that, it will press Congress, either through stand-alone legislation or the appropriations process, to “compel” the Interior Department to create such a tool.

MOTHERS MOBILIZE: In honor of Mother’s Day this Sunday, members of Moms Clean Air Force are hosting 10 “Mama Summits” across the country this week and next as part of its new Moms & Mayors program. The group is organizing events in Las Vegas, Phoenix and Reno, Nev., on Saturday. Heather McTeer Toney, former mayor of Greenville, Miss., and EPA regional

administrator for the Southeast Region under former President Barack Obama — and a mom of three — is leading the initiative.

— **Your hosts owe a lot of gratitude** to our original editors, AE moms Liz Ross and Brenda Beavers, for a whole lot of help on a whole lot of five-paragraph essays over the years. Our homework for readers: Don't forget to call your moms this weekend (and it's not too late to order flowers)!

RIGS ON THE RISE YET AGAIN: In the wake of Trump's announcement that the U.S. will reimpose sanctions on Iran, which sent shock waves through the oil industry, energy companies added oil rigs for the sixth week in a row, according the Baker Hughes report. Ten new rigs went to work this week, bringing the total to 844. "After the United States pulled out of the Iran nuclear deal earlier in this week, U.S. crude futures were trading around \$71 a barrel, their highest since November 2014. That is up sharply from the \$50.85 average hit in 2017 and \$43.47 in 2016." Read more from Reuters here.

QUICK HITS:

- U.N. votes to take first step toward a global environment pact, Associated Press.
- Solar panel makers ramp up U.S. manufacturing plans, The Wall Street Journal.
- How a D.C. law firm installed solar panels to help low-income people save on utilities, The Washington Post.
- FWS whistleblower runs to change a system that burned him, E&E News.
- It's not just hybrids: Pickup trucks and sedans have gotten more efficient, too, The New York Times.

WIDE WORLD OF POLITICS:

- Schneiderman succession jockeying grips New York
- Trump frees some jailed Americans overseas — but endangers others
- Conaway races to nail down farm bill votes before House floor debate

**** A message from Chevron:** Chevron helps keep small businesses doing by spending billions with them. And, when one small business gets doing, it gets other DOERS doing, too. Watch the

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