



Search The Hill

The Newspaper
for and about
the U.S. Congress

Click here to find out how Congress
can promote cable competition



Sunday March 05, 2006

- The Hill -

- Subscribe -

- Advertise -

- Feedback -

HOME

NEWS

Campaign 2006
Business
& Lobbying
The Executive
Under the Dome

COMMENT

Editorials
Letters
Op-Eds
Dick Morris

WITH CULTURAL
FORCES BEHIND
HER, HILLARY CAN
WIN IN '08

Albert Eisele
John Fortier
Andrew Glass
Ben Goddard
David Keene
Josh Marshall
Lynn Sweet
Byron York
POLLSTERS:
David Hill
Mark Mellman

FEATURES

Capital Living
Hillscape
Social Scene
Capitol
Ambitions
Uncommon Lives
Restaurant
Review
Book Reviews

CLASSIFIEDS

Employment
For Rent
Employer
Spotlight
All Ads

JULY 21, 2005



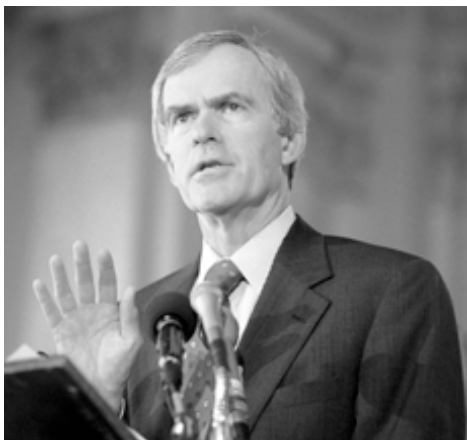
NEWS

Climate-change debate may hinge on Senate committees' jurisdiction

By Kari Lundgren

The opening salvo of a jurisdiction battle over climate-change regulation will be fired today at a hearing of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

The issue highlights a sharp division between leaders of two Senate committees. Energy Committee Chairman Pete Domenici (R-N.M.) and ranking member Sen. Jeff Bingaman (D-N.M.), on one side, have shown interest in passing a bill, while Sen. James Inhofe (R-Okla.), chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee, has called global warming the "greatest single hoax ever perpetrated on the American people."



FILE PHOTOS

Sen. Jeff Bingaman (D-N.M.)

The hearing is the first of two promised by Domenici in June after 53-44 passage of a nonbinding sense-of-the-Senate amendment calling for mandatory action to "slow, stop and reverse the growth" of greenhouse-gas emissions.

Today's hearing will focus on the scientific research behind climate change and the economic strategies to manage global

Are
Americans
willing to pay
more in taxes
for medical
research?

Research!America®

And, cable
prices are
up 86%
over the
last decade

RESOURCES

**PR Newswire
Write Your
Congressman**

**PREVIOUS
ISSUES**

Last Six

HealthWatch

warming.

The Environment and Public Works Committee has said it will hold its own hearings on climate change next week. “We’re interested in hearing whether the U.S. is really behind the power curve on this issue,” said John Shanahan, the committee’s press secretary.

The Senate Commerce Committee’s Subcommittee on Climate Change and Impacts held its first hearing yesterday.

All three committees can claim jurisdiction, which will likely be critical to how future legislation will be handled, staffers and outside interest groups say.

“What both Bingaman and Domenici are going to face is that their bill will be referred to Environment and Public Works, in which case they will have to deal with Chairman Inhofe,” warned Myron Ebell, director of global-warming policy at the Competitive Enterprise Institute, a pro-market public-policy group.

“We welcome action by all committees with relevant jurisdiction,” said Jonathan Black, a member of the Energy Committee’s minority staff, “but don’t want committees to neutralize the debate because they don’t want to move the issue forward.”

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council’s Climate Center was more blunt, saying, “It’s appropriate to look for other avenues, other committees and direct floor action to make sure legislation gets through. There is a lot to be said for Environmental Protection Agency regulating this, but that does not mean you can’t write a program that’s run by the Energy Department.”

Before the passage of the energy bill in June, Bingaman circulated a draft proposal based on the recommendations of the National Commission on Energy Policy (NCEP), a nongovernmental panel funded mainly by the Pew Charitable Trusts. According to research done by the Energy Information Administration (EIA), the NCEP proposal would reduce emissions by 4 percent in 2015 and 7 percent in 2025, at an annual cost of \$78 per household.

Jason Grumet, executive director of the NCEP, will testify at today’s hearing, a fact welcomed by environmentalists as a step forward but dismissed by some industry lobbyists who question the work of the NCEP.

Ads by Goooooogle

**ESP -
greenhouse gas**
data mgmt. Create emissions inventories and more.
www.esp-net.com

Greenhouse Gas Emissions
Learn the Chemical Industry's Part in Reducing Greenhouse Gases.
www.ResponsibleCare-US.com

Lobbying Powerhouse
Cassidy & Associates, Washington's most powerful lobbying firm.
www.cassidy.com

Frontline/World: Tuvalu
Do global warming and rising seas doom the island? Watch online.
www.pbs.org/frontlineworl

Advertise on this site



“The NCEP is not a national commission,” Ebell argued. “It wasn’t created by any official action. It’s a special interest, and it should have no more credibility than any other interest group.”

Ebell said the witness list is stacked in favor of climate-change activists, a charge dismissed by Black. “We picked the broadest, biggest institutions to tell us about climate change. These institutions reflect the center of the debate,” Black said.

Members of the environmental lobby, even those concerned that the NCEP and Bingaman proposals don’t do enough, welcomed the hearing.

“This hearing is a new beginning,” said Frank O’Donnell of Clean Air Watch. “For eight years there has been a ‘Don’t do anything’ attitude and now it is shifting to ‘What should we do?’”

Should Bingaman and Domenici introduce a bill, however, its future is unclear.

“Momentum is against a thing like the NCEP. And the underlying dynamic is not going to get better,” one industry source said. “[Domenici] has picked a jurisdictional fight, he’s picked a fight with another U.S. senator and he’s picked a fight his staff doesn’t have the background for.”

“The Energy Committee is not an easy committee to move things through,” acknowledged Steve Cochran, senior staff member at Environmental Defense, “but it is encouraging to see all of these committees grappling with the issue, and to see some of the jockeying for jurisdiction is very interesting from our perspective.”

A similar battle played out in the House earlier this week between House Science Committee Chairman Sherwood Boehlert (R-N.Y.) and Commerce Committee Chairman Joe Barton (R-Texas). In a tart letter sent July 14, Boehlert chided Barton for pursuing an investigation into several leading climate-change scientists and raised questions over the Commerce Committee’s jurisdiction on the issue.

“The only conceivable explanation for the investigation is to attempt to intimidate a prominent scientist and to have Congress put its thumbs on the scales of a scientific debate,” Boehlert wrote.

every Friday.
Be ahead of the
curve
as The Hill
reports on
what’s next in
Congress.

**WANT TO
REPRINT ARTICLES
FROM THE HILL?**
212-924-2283

© 2006 The Hill
1625 K Street, NW Suite 900
Washington, DC 20006
202-628-8500 tel | 202-628-8503 fax