

INHOFE RECEIVES UNANIMOUS SUPPORT TO BE CHAIRMAN OF EPW COMMITTEE

Inhofe announces committee priorities and staff hires

WASHINGTON, DC – U.S. Sen. Jim Inhofe (R-Okla.) today was given unanimous support from his colleagues on the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee to become chairman for the 114th Congress. In conjunction, Inhofe announced today top priorities for the EPW Committee as well as announced staff hires to serve the EPW majority.

“I am honored to have unanimous support of my peers in being re-elected to serve as Chairman of the U.S. Senate Environment and Public Works Committee,” said Inhofe. **“The two years ahead of us will be active and ambitious as we seek to champion fiscally responsible policies as well as adhere to guiding principles from the Constitution to serve the betterment of the American people and our economy. Together, our committee will examine the benefits of policies versus the costs on regulations such as greenhouse gas emissions (GHG), methane emissions, ozone standard, the social cost of carbon, the Waters of the United States, and others. President Obama has been candid about his plans to pursue climate change policies detrimental to the U.S. economy as a cornerstone of his legacy in his last two years in office. However, I plan to lead the committee with conviction for protecting the American people and our economy while being a conscious and responsible steward of our nation’s great resources.**

“Our first priority out of the gate will be to craft and pass a fiscally responsible transportation reauthorization bill that builds upon reforms of MAP-21. It is my duty, and deepest conviction, for the EPW Committee to be an integral part of fulfilling Congress’s constitutional responsibility to maintain our nation’s roads and bridges, and eliminating the red tape restricting economic growth and preventing job creation. With my Republican colleagues on the committee, we can work to ensure a safe and prosperous future for our next generation and put America back on the map as the place to do business.”

Inhofe released the top four priorities of the committee in the 114th Congress:

Highway Transportation Bill (MAP-21) – The current patch will expire at the end of May. Top priority will be to pass a fiscally responsible, long-term transportation bill that builds upon reforms in MAP-21, better coordinates funding needs with private and state partners, and eliminates wasteful spending.

Conduct rigorous oversight of EPA regulations – The committee will conduct oversight hearings on EPA regulations and work toward legislation, targeted CRA opportunities and riders to address the following actions from the EPA: greenhouse gas rule, Waters of the United States rule, expected methane oil and gas emissions guidance, Ozone NAAQS rule, President’s Climate Action Plan, and the social cost of carbon tool.

EPA's regulations under the Obama Administration will increase the cost to do business in America, make our electricity grid less reliable and less affordable, and restrict economic opportunity for future generations.

Endangered Species Act – The committee will conduct needed oversight on ESA to restore local control of conservation efforts and expose and settle gaming of the program. ESA expired in 1992 and has continued each year by appropriations. ESA, as it stands, disincentivizes states and local communities from setting their own goals to meet or even exceed ESA standards. Resources are also being depleted responding to lawsuit after lawsuit from radical environmental groups rather than being used for important conservation on species that are a high priority for protection.

Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) reauthorization – This statute has not been reauthorized and modernized for the chemical sector since 1976. With bipartisan effort, the committee has the opportunity to make Senate history in assisting valuable industries to help spur development for the many products we use in daily life. At the end of the 113th Congress, TSCA reauthorization included 26 bipartisan cosponsors including Senate Democratic leadership. TSCA, as it stands, has resulted in regulatory uncertainty for businesses and incomplete and inadequate state regulations to the detriment of the health and safety of American families.

The following is the announced majority staff for the EPW Committee in the 114th Congress:

RYAN JACKSON will serve a dual role as staff director of the EPW Committee and continue as chief of staff for Inhofe's personal office, a position he has held since 2011. Jackson has been with Inhofe working on 16 years and worked as EPW counsel from 2003 to May 2007 and then as Inhofe's legislative director from 2007 to 2011.

ALEX HERRGOTT will serve as deputy staff director. In the 113th Congress, Herrgott joined Inhofe's personal staff as legislative director after working nearly two years as the transportation director for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. From 2004 to 2011, Herrgott worked as a professional staff member of the EPW Committee under Inhofe's leadership.

DONELLE HARDER will serve a dual role as Communications Director for the EPW Committee and for Inhofe's personal office, overseeing messaging and continuing as the primary spokesperson for Inhofe. Prior to joining Inhofe's office in 2012, Harder worked as the Online Communications Advisor to Congressman Kenny Marchant (TX-24). From 2007 to 2010, Harder was the executive account manager at the Pinkston Group, a media relations firm in Northern Virginia.

KRISTINA BAUM will serve as press secretary and the primary media contact for the EPW Committee. Baum comes from Generation Opportunity where she worked as a Regional Press Secretary in 2014. Her prior experience includes being an Account Executive at DCI Group from

2012 to 2014 with clients in the energy and environment industries, a RTTNews reporter and editor in 2012, and a Platts Energy editor from 2007 to 2010.

SUSAN BODINE joins the staff as chief counsel. Since 2009, Bodine has been a partner of Barnes and Thornburg law firm in Washington, D.C. From 2006 to 2009, Bodine was the assistant administrator for the EPA's Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response. From 2001 to 2005, she served as the staff director of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment and from 1995-2001 as the subcommittee counsel.

SHANT BOYAJIAN will serve as senior counsel on highways and infrastructure policy. Boyajian comes from the House Transportation and Infrastructure subcommittee on Highways and Transit where he worked as counsel since 2012.

BYRON BROWN will serve as an oversight counsel. Brown comes from the House Committee on Natural Resources where he served as counsel and oversight director since 2011. Prior, Brown worked in the Office of General Counsel at the EPA from 2001-2011, serving as an associate deputy general counsel and assistant general counsel.

LAURA ATCHESON will continue as a Clean Water Act counsel where she has worked since 2013.

DIMITRI KARAKITSOS will continue as senior counsel on policy regarding fossil fuel regulations, chemicals, hydraulic fracturing, and Toxic Substances Control Act reform. Karakitsos has worked on the EPW Committee since 2011.

MANDY GUNASEKARA will serve as a Clean Air Act and climate change counsel. Gunasekara comes from the National Association of Chemical Distributors and previously worked as counsel for Congressman Robert Latta (R-OH) and as counsel for the Senate Health, Education, Labor & Pensions Committee.

HILARY MOFFETT will serve as counsel working on Endangered Species Act oversight, the Army Corps of Engineers, and Clean Water Act permitting. From 2009 to 2012, Moffett served as the legislative director and legislative assistant to then-Congressman Dan Boren (D-OK).

CHRIS TOMASSI will be serve as counsel working on Endangered Species Act and the National Environmental Policy Act oversight. He has served as an EPW professional staff member since 2013. Prior, Tomassi was a legislative assistant from 2004 to 2012 for Sen. Mike Enzi (R-WY).

JENNIE WRIGHT will serve a dual role as counsel for transportation infrastructure and will continue as a legislative assistant in the personal office. She joined the Inhofe office in 2012.

ANNA BURHOP will continue as a professional staff member on the committee focusing on the Clean Air Act. Burhop has worked on the committee since 2011.

ANNIE CAPUTO will return as a senior policy advisor on oversight of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and nuclear energy regulation. In the 113th Congress, Caputo worked as a senior policy advisor on the House Energy and Commerce Committee. From 2009 to 2012, Caputo worked as a professional staff member on the EPW Committee under Inhofe's leadership.