

ADC 4

● Dana M. Perino 06/18/2003 06:49:35 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Phil Cooney/CEQ/EOP@EOP
cc:
Subject: Re: RoE/INSIDE EPA article today

----- Forwarded by Dana M. Perino/CEQ/EOP on 06/18/2003 06:49 PM -----



Harrison.Lisa@epamail.epa.gov
06/18/2003 06:39:13 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Doyle.Brendan@epamail.epa.gov
cc: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
Subject: Re: RoE/INSIDE EPA article today

didn't return calls seeking comment? who'd they call? not OPA, as we DO have a comment...

Brendan Doyle

06/18/2003 05:38
Ackerman/DC/USEPA/US@EPA,
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Harrison/DC/USEPA/US@EPA

To: Jarrod
Agen/DC/USEPA/US@EPA,
brown.michael@epa.gov, Suzanne
Diane Esanu, Lisa

cc: Daiva
Balkus/DC/USEPA/US@EPA, Sonia
Altieri/DC/USEPA/US@EPA
Subject: RoE/INSIDE EPA
article today

FYI...part of this story stems from the NACEPT's advice letter that was mentioned in OCEM's FR notice this week.....

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----- Forwarded by Brendan Doyle/DC/USEPA/US on 06/18/2003 05:45 PM

Steve Young

06/18/2003 05:37
Adams/DC/USEPA/US@EPA, Brendan
PM

To: Mike
Flynn/DC/USEPA/US@EPA, Heather
Case/DC/USEPA/US@EPA, Steve
Doyle/DC/USEPA/US@EPA
cc:
Subject: FWD: On RoE:
insideepa.com document
["climate"
issue]

----- Forwarded by Steve Young/DC/USEPA/US on 06/18/2003 05:38 PM -----

Emma
McNamara/DC/USEPA
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To: Steve
cc:
Subject: insideepa.com

document
06/18/2003 04:39
PM

http://insideepa.com/secure/docnum.asp?f=epa_2001.ask&docnum=6182003_omb

Wednesday, June 18, 2003

EPA Drops Climate Data From 'State of Environment' Report After Fight
With OMB

EPA has apparently decided to drop all data regarding global warming

from an upcoming "State of the Environment" report after the agency and the White House's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) sparred over how to portray climate change trends in the report, which is slated for release June 23. Agency officials have been touting the report as one of outgoing EPA Administrator Christine Todd Whitman's final initiatives, laying out the accomplishments of the Bush administration.

But one environmentalist says EPA apparently decided to remove the section on global warming after OMB distorted the language during a review of the report, saying EPA decided "it was probably better to remove it than to have it say something distorted."

EPA did not return calls seeking comment.

The report stems from an initiative championed by Whitman to provide information on actual environmental conditions, that will be released days before Whitman's departure at the end of June. Sources have already said that use of the report's findings are uncertain given Whitman's departure.

Sources tracking the issue have said the report is a landmark document because it is the first time the agency has attempted to comprehensively develop a set of environmental indicators that provide information on the state of various environmental media, including land, water and air.

This spring, EPA and OMB had reportedly been debating how to describe trends in temperature changes in the report. Sources said OMB was reluctant to have the agency include information showing climate change represents a serious problem.

But now, according to draft comments on the report prepared by EPA's National Advisory Council for Environmental Policy and Technology (NACEPT), the agency has entirely eliminated the global warming data. "We were advised that data related to global warming issue were not in the report. EPA will need to be prepared to address why the report does not include global climate change, greenhouse gases, and other major issues," the comments say.

EPA did not provide the report to NACEPT to review, the comments say. The NACEPT's comments were prepared based on a briefing from information chief Kim Nelson.

Environmental groups say they are not surprised by the anticipated omission, given the Bush administration's skepticism about global warming and controversial decision to withdraw from the Kyoto treaty. But one source says it is still "pretty shocking" the agency is releasing a report on the state of the environment that fails to discuss the major issue of climate change. The source says it is part of "a pattern of suppressing information that is contrary to the administration's pre-determined policy view" that major new actions are not needed to address global warming.

The source notes that previous federal reports on the environment, such as reports released by the White House Council on Environmental Quality throughout the 1980s that addressed the issue of global warming "as a significant factor affecting the state of the environment." That history makes EPA's decision to leave out such discussion in its state of the environment report "kind of like going to the doctor and not having your blood pressure taken," the source says.

Meanwhile, the NACEPT says EPA must consider the report's intended

audience, how to portray what it does and does not contain, and how to act on the findings when releasing it to the public.

"At release, EPA will need to clearly inform both the intended audiences and the general public why the report was developed and what it is intended to convey," the NACEPT says. For instance, the NACEPT says, the report raises questions such as "is the report intended to convey agency policies or comment on the success of such policies [and] is the report intended to be a 'snapshot' of the environment or will it provide trend data to show the health of the environment has changed over time?"

The NACEPT's comments also tell EPA to address how the report relates to state and local environmental programs, since the report is national in scale. "To address localized concerns of the report audience, EPA should concurrently provide access to equivalent information on state and local scales. Similarly, the report should acknowledge international environmental issues, such as climate changes and trans-boundary pollution, to provide the appropriate context for judging the health of the U.S. environment."

The NACEPT also says EPA must provide information regarding why certain information was included while other data were excluded. "EPA will need to clearly describe the filtering process used to select information for inclusion in the report." For instance, EPA should explain which environmental indicators were excluded even though the agency collected data for them, like global warming, and why they were excluded, which indicators the agency wanted to include but could not because of data gaps, and how EPA will address data gaps.

Date: June 18, 2003

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