

# U.S. must help Ukraine on energy – Lawmakers push for sanctions – Nuclear closures bad news for Obama climate agenda – Alaska sues over ANWR

By **ALEX GUILLÉN** | 03/17/14 10:00 AM EDT

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*With help from Darren Goode and Talia Buford*

**U.S. MUST HELP UKRAINE WITH ENERGY ISSUES, HOEVEN SAYS:** Sen. John Hoeven says the U.S. needs to put together a broad strategy to help Ukraine become more energy secure and reduce its dependence on Russian natural gas. “We have to work on a strategy to help them get energy from other sources,” the North Dakota Republican told POLITICO’s Darren Goode yesterday, fresh off his trip to Ukraine as part of an eight-member bipartisan Senate delegation. The U.S., with help from the European Union, “can work to try to get other global suppliers to deliver product in there,” he said. Darren has more for Pros: <http://politico.pro/1gs0dAy> (<http://politico.pro/1gs0dAy>)

**LAWMAKERS PUSH FOR ECONOMIC SANCTIONS:** The U.S. and other Western powers warned Russia Sunday of new sanctions after the Crimea referendum vote, setting up new tensions for this week. Meanwhile, there’s brewing support among lawmakers. “Look, Russia is a gas station masquerading as a country,” Sen. John McCain said on CNN’s “State of the Union.” “It’s kleptocracy, it’s corruption, it’s a nation that’s really only dependent upon oil and gas for their economy. And so economic sanctions are important.”

Senate Foreign Relations Chairman Robert Menendez said on “Fox News Sunday” that Russia’s response to the threats of sanctions will be telling. “And having those sanctions ready, whether it be against the defense minister, the federal security service, the secretary of the Security Council, possibly the executives of Gazprom and Rosneft, which are their oil and gas companies, send a very clear message,” he said.

Sen. Chris Murphy, who also traveled to Ukraine over the weekend, pinned the success of such sanctions on participated from European powers. “I mean there’s no doubt that if you cut off Russian gas to Europe, it will hurt. There’s no doubt that if you freeze Russian assets in places like Germany and Great Britain, it will hurt them,” the Connecticut Democrat said on ABC’s “This Week.”

**On the other hand:** Russia’s hefty \$160 billion in oil and gas exports may be Vladimir Putin’s “most potent weapon to limit punitive measures,” Bloomberg writes. The news service notes Chancellor Angela Merkel says Germany is willing to take the pain that Russian retaliation to sanctions would bring. More: <http://bloom.bg/1hqG1RN> (<http://bloom.bg/1hqG1RN>)

**Raising tensions:** Via the New York Times: “Tensions mounted on the eve of a secession referendum here in Crimea as helicopter-borne Russian forces made a provocative incursion just outside the peninsula’s regional

border to seize a natural gas terminal, while American and European officials prepared sanctions to impose on Moscow as early as Monday.” NYT: <http://nyti.ms/1irLOEH> (<http://nyti.ms/1irLOEH>)

**PLUS — Lugar pushes LNG exports, KXL as signals to Russia:** Former top Senate Foreign Relations Republican Richard Lugar said Sunday that exporting LNG and building the Keystone XL oil pipeline are strong signals the U.S. can send that the country is still invested in fossil fuels. While the politics of both are tumultuous, and any gas exports will “have to strike a balance” with businesses that rely on cheap natural gas in their production processes, “American interests diplomatically and strategically are clearly to get more permits,” Lugar told Platts Energy Week. “The fact is we do have the ability and that could make a huge difference because we can send this gas strategically in various directions, and a lot of it.” Watch: <http://bit.ly/1fOkftx> (<http://bit.ly/1fOkftx>)

**TRADE WATCH — EU WANTS SECURE ACCESS TO U.S. ENERGY:** The EU on Friday said it wants to secure access to U.S. oil and natural gas supplies as part of a proposed free trade pact with the United States, a proposal that has increased in importance amid the rising tensions with Russia. Doug Palmer has more: <http://politico.pro/1qJ03xs> (<http://politico.pro/1qJ03xs>)

**HAPPY ST. PATRICK’S DAY** and welcome to Morning Energy, where we’re wishing our sister Emily a happy birthday. Send your energy news to [aguillen@politico.com](mailto:aguillen@politico.com) (<mailto:aguillen@politico.com>) , and follow on Twitter [@alexcguillen](http://twitter.com/alexcguillen) (<http://twitter.com/alexcguillen>) , [@Morning\\_Energy](http://twitter.com/Morning_Energy) ([http://twitter.com/Morning\\_Energy](http://twitter.com/Morning_Energy)) and [@POLITICOPro](https://twitter.com/POLITICOPro) (<https://twitter.com/POLITICOPro>) .

\*\* A note from the Air-Conditioning, Heating, & Refrigeration Institute (AHRI): HVACR and water heating companies employ more than 1.2 million Americans across all 50 states, contributing \$5 billion a year in salary and wage income to the U.S. economy. For more information, visit [www.ahrinet.org](http://www.ahrinet.org) (<http://www.ahrinet.org>) . \*\*

**NO NUKES NOT NECESSARILY GOOD NEWS FOR CLIMATE AGENDA:** The nation’s stillborn nuclear renaissance could spell trouble for President Barack Obama’s climate agenda. A wave of shutdowns is hitting U.S. nuclear power plants, to the cheers of many green activists. But environmentalists are dismayed to see fossil fuels stepping in to fill much of the gap — a development that will make it harder to meet Obama’s goals for reducing the nation’s greenhouse gas output. Darius Dixon has the story for Pros: <http://politico.pro/1iUNs4N> (<http://politico.pro/1iUNs4N>)

**FRIDAY NEWS — ALASKA SUES OVER ANWR:** Alaska is challenging the Fish and Wildlife Service's rejection of a seismic exploration plan along the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge's coastal plain. The suit, filed in U.S. District Court for Alaska, alleges that Fish and Wildlife "improperly rejected" Alaska's exploration plan without reviewing it, in opposition to the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act. Alaska is asking the court to order Fish and Wildlife to review the plan and declare it was submitted in a timely manner. Barring that, the state argues that the time limits for submitting the plan violate ANILCA.

**LANDRIEU BUYING UP AD TIME:** Sen. Mary Landrieu (D-La.) has reserved \$2.6 million in air time between mid-April and the end of June, according to a source tracking the ad war in the race for her seat. The endangered incumbent claimed nearly \$2 million in time between April 21 and June 29 for 30-second TV commercials and an additional \$645,000 from April 14 to May 25 for 60-second spots. James Hohmann has more: <http://politi.co/1cH1U26> (<http://politi.co/1cH1U26>)

**Mark your calendars:** Landrieu’s first hearing as chairwoman of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee is scheduled for next Tuesday. The topic: “Importing Energy, Exporting Jobs. Can it be Reversed?” Info: <http://1.usa.gov/1e06bMk> (<http://1.usa.gov/1e06bMk>)

**Also in ad news — AFP hits Udall:** Americans for Prosperity has reserved nearly \$850,000 in airtime for TV ads in

Colorado's Senate race that will begin Monday. A source tracking media buys told POLITICO that about \$500,000 in time has been reserved in Denver and \$340,000 has been reserved in Colorado Springs. The money is spread over three weeks, and comes shortly after Republican Rep. Cory Gardner announced plans to challenge Democratic Sen. Mark Udall.

**POOR LABOR CONDITIONS PLAGUE FUKUSHIMA CLEANUP SITE:** TEPCO is having problems finding workers willing to handle the dangers of cleanup at the Fukushima site, the New York Times writes, in part by shifting the company's attention away from the disaster area and by putting more resources into restarting another plant — and that could spell danger. “That has translated into jobs at Fukushima that pay less and are more sporadic, chasing away qualified workers. Left behind, laborers and others say, is a work force often assembled by fly-by-night labor brokers with little technical or safety expertise and even less concern about hiring desperate people. ...

“Regulators, contractors and more than 20 current and former workers interviewed in recent months say the deteriorating labor conditions are a prime cause of a string of large leaks of contaminated water and other embarrassing errors that have already damaged the environment and, in some cases, put workers in danger. In the worst-case scenario, experts fear, struggling workers could trigger a bigger spill or another radiological release.”

NYT: <http://nyti.ms/1itOxCe> (<http://nyti.ms/1itOxCe>)

**Plus:** The AP looks at the researchers working to track radiation that has drifted across the ocean over the last three years. The levels don't pose a big health risk, but will help develop computer models. <http://bit.ly/1nwlgvE> (<http://bit.ly/1nwlgvE>)

**MORNING MMM:** The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette digs in to the growing barbecue business following the gas boom in Pennsylvania. <http://bit.ly/1qKqsuT> (<http://bit.ly/1qKqsuT>)

## QUICK HITS

— Ethanol prices are up amid cold weather and oil-by-rail traffic. Wall Street Journal: <http://on.wsj.com/1gDciUi> (<http://on.wsj.com/1gDciUi>)

— Encana is in talks to sell Wyoming natural gas fields to the Carlyle Group and NGP Energy Capital Management for around \$2 billion. WSJ: <http://on.wsj.com/Nm5rGO> (<http://on.wsj.com/Nm5rGO>)

— The New York Times writes about the increasing privatization of science research: <http://nyti.ms/1iQTms2> (<http://nyti.ms/1iQTms2>)

— Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz is in Washington state today to meet with Gov. Jay Inslee and top state officials on the Hanford site. Tri-City Herald: <http://bit.ly/1kyUYnH> (<http://bit.ly/1kyUYnH>)

— A high-power transmission line in the Midwest to move wind power eastward is hitting opposition from farmers. AP: <http://bit.ly/1p0U1ol> (<http://bit.ly/1p0U1ol>)

— Massachusetts should embrace hydropower, the Boston Globe editorial board writes: <http://b.globe.com/1e8jiuZ> (<http://b.globe.com/1e8jiuZ>)

**THAT'S ALL FOR ME.** Have a great week.

\*\* A note from the Air-Conditioning, Heating, & Refrigeration Institute (AHRI): HVACR and water heating companies employ more than 1.2 million Americans across all 50 states, contributing \$5 billion a year in salary and wage income to the U.S. economy. AHRI works through independent laboratories to test the energy efficiency of more than 2,500 HVACR and water heating products and systems each year. Products that carry the AHRI Certified™

seal are verified to perform as advertised, helping consumers and business save on their energy bills, and protecting the environment from harmful emissions. AHRI supports the Shaheen-Portman energy bill, which helps avoid unnecessary regulatory duplication by recognizing the important role of AHRI's voluntary industry certification program in saving energy, promoting innovation and creating American jobs. For more information, visit [www.ahrinet.org](http://www.ahrinet.org) (<http://www.ahrinet.org>) . \*\*

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