

## **CLIMATE: Inslee offers bill to force EPA decision on California waiver**

**Darren Samuelsohn, *E&E Daily* senior reporter  
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A House Democrat introduced legislation yesterday that would force U.S. EPA into deciding by Sept. 30 on California's request to enforce its own new global warming standards for cars and trucks.

Rep. Jay Inslee (D-Wash.) unveiled the bill aimed at speeding up EPA's review of the state petition filed nearly 18 months ago. Inslee's home state of Washington is one of 12 states that wants to implement the California regulations but cannot move until EPA approves the waiver.

"Delaying the decision on California's petition is another tactic the administration is using to avoid substantive action on global warming during the Bush presidency," said Inslee, a member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee.

Inslee's legislation also would set a deadline requiring EPA to respond within 180 days on all future waiver requests.

Sens. Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) and Bill Nelson (D-Fla.) introduced a similar bill last week and vowed to try attaching it to other fast-moving legislation before the August recess. Inslee spokeswoman Christine Hanson said her boss has a similar strategy. "We're definitely keeping that option open as a means to make this work faster," she said.

EPA Administrator Stephen Johnson plans to make his decision at the end of the year, prompting a lawsuit threat from California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (R). Johnson also is scheduled to testify next Thursday before Boxer's Senate Environment and Public Works Committee -- his second appearance on Capitol Hill this year specifically on the waiver request.

Under California law, new cars and trucks with a model year of 2009 or later must produce fewer emissions of heat-trapping carbon dioxide. The reductions: 22 percent by 2012 and 30 percent by 2016.