

House committee plans contempt hearing for EPA boss

June 16 -- The chairman of the House Oversight Committee is threatening to hold EPA Administrator Stephen Johnson and a White House Office of Management and Budget official in contempt of Congress for failing to turn over subpoenaed documents.

Rep. Henry Waxman, D-Calif., sent letters June 13 to EPA Administrator Stephen Johnson and Susan Dudley, an administrator in the OMB Office, informing them he had scheduled a committee hearing for June 20 to consider resolutions citing them for contempt.

The impasse concerns documents the committee has requested pertaining to two EPA decisions within the past six months.

On March 12, the Bush administration issued revised national ambient air quality standards for ozone, which critics contended were not stringent enough. And in December 2007, the administration denied California's petition to regulate greenhouse gas emissions from motor vehicles.

The EPA and administration have turned over several boxes of documents, but not all of the information the committee requested.

Johnson and the committee disagree, in part, about whether he should have to reveal details of communications he had with White House officials prior to issuing his decisions.

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