

Your Health Still at Risk:

How Coal Lobbyist Andrew Wheeler Will Pursue the Trump-Pruitt Industry Agenda at EPA



Industry **Insiders** Hijack the EPA

Andrew Wheeler and industry polluters put profits before people



With Andrew Wheeler now Acting Administrator at the Environmental Protection Agency, President Trump is making sure that oversight of America's

public health and environmental safeguards remains tightly in the grip of corporate polluters.

A former lobbyist for one of America's largest coal mining companies, Wheeler joins a cadre of industry insiders that is attacking foundational EPA safeguards on an unprecedented and dangerous scale.

- With ties to oil and gas, chemical manufacturers, and other polluters, Wheeler and a long list of Trump appointees have been seeking to gut EPA's budget and eliminating government protections for our air, water, and soil. They are carrying out the President's agenda of bending to industry's will at the expense of families and communities.

- Wheeler, a Washington insider with a keen understanding of politics, continues Scott Pruitt's assault on EPA while doing so quietly and more exactly.
- The Agency's mission is to protect human health and the environment. Under the Trump administration, and with Wheeler at the helm, EPA has come to look more like *IPA: the Industry Protection Agency*.

Who is Andrew Wheeler?

Wheeler's history signals a man indebted to industry and special interests — and one whose understanding of Washington could make him an even graver threat than his predecessor, Scott Pruitt.

Will he change course and redirect EPA toward its core mission, or continue the Trump administration's assault on one of the nation's most critical agencies and the science and workforce that undergirds it?

His history is not promising.

Coal Lobbyist Andrew Wheeler

Wheeler's career for nearly a decade, before becoming a senior Trump-appointed leader at EPA, focused on lobbying for **Murray Energy**, one of America's largest coal companies.

It's a startling truth: a former coal lobbyist now sits atop EPA, an agency with the core mission of protecting human health and the environment.

Coal threatens both. Will Andrew Wheeler?

Wheeler apparently had no issue representing the coal industry despite the clear links between coal and its poisoning of the air that families breathe and the water they drink — and changes to climate that are linked to more intense natural disasters and sea level rise.

His lobbying firm collected millions of dollars from Murray Energy. **He even served as President of the Washington Coal Club.**

Now, Wheeler is making decisions that directly impact his longtime client and other industries for which he once worked, such as oil and gas, agriculture, and chemicals.

“He worked for me for 20 years. Didn't want to lose him.”

— **Robert E. Murray**
CEO of Murray Energy
POLITICO Pro Policy Summit
7/17/18

Note: For 10 of those 20 years, Wheeler worked as a congressional staffer — where he was supposed to serve the American taxpayers, not coal executives.

Recent decisions at EPA help the coal industry and threaten children's health

Within his first two weeks on the job, Wheeler passed down a ruling that relaxed rules governing how dangerous coal ash is stored, an action that could allow for more toxins to seep into groundwater and make their way into communities and homes.

Not a good sign of what's to come.

Wheeler lobbied for industry practices that create dirty air and water — hurting Americans and coal workers.



Coal emissions contain mercury, nitrogen oxides, sulfur dioxide and other hazardous substances.

Coal used to power our economy but today it can no longer compete with cleaner, cheaper fuel sources. The dangerous health effects of coal are well known. When burned, it releases toxic air emissions such as mercury and sulfur dioxide that contribute to asthma, lung cancer, heart failure, and more.

The remnant of coal combustion, known as coal ash, can poison waterways and drinking supplies.

Nonetheless, coal lobbyists like Wheeler have been working to prevent and roll back safeguards that limit how toxics are discharged into the air and make their way into water.

Climate change can also largely be attributed to the burning of coal and other fossil fuels. Even as scientists, businesses and global leaders urge a transition away from dirty fossil fuels to cleaner sources of energy in an effort

to thwart runaway global warming, the coal industry has been advocating for fewer safeguards on greenhouse gas emissions and US withdrawal from international climate agreements.

Coal extraction is also one of the most dangerous professions in America, with many coal workers suffering from particularly adverse health problems, such as black lung disease. While Wheeler lobbied for Murray, the coal giant was fined for multiple violations of worker safety standards, and its management allegedly threatened workers who tried to flag safety concerns, according to *The Washington Post*.

Wheeler was long part of the industry's efforts to maintain its profits at the expense of Americans' health, worker safety and global climate.

This is the industry for which Andrew Wheeler chose to work.

Robert E. Murray: Coal Baron. Trump Insider. Wheeler Boss.

Robert E. Murray, CEO of Murray Energy, has waged war against EPA for years. Now, the person he has relied on to be his voice and advocate in Washington, Andrew Wheeler, will head the EPA as Administrator. That could mean easier pursuit of a wish list, crafted by Murray and delivered to the Trump administration, which called for the destruction of various EPA health and safety safeguards and a 50% cut to EPA personnel.

Murray has never hidden his disdain for EPA, saying of the agency, “I have nothing but contempt!” He was overjoyed by Scott Pruitt’s tenure as EPA Administrator, claiming a “wonderful victory” as Pruitt dismantled core public health and environmental protections.

“I have nothing but contempt!”

— Robert E. Murray on EPA

Murray’s history is one riddled with unabashed pollution, employee mistreatment, and attempts to influence government to serve his company at the expense of the public’s need for safe air and clean water.

A Dirty History

- **Murray’s Secret Wish List to Weaken EPA’s Ability to Safeguard Health**

- ◆ According to *The New York Times*, shortly after President Trump took office in March 2017, **Murray sent to Vice President Mike Pence an**

“Action Plan”. It was his priority wish list of tasks that would hollow out EPA and allow the fossil-fuel industry to run rampant, regardless of the effects on people and communities. Those requests included eliminating the Clean Power Plan, withdrawing from the Paris Climate Agreement, and cutting the staff of EPA. Work on the wish list continues, with Murray saying the administration has already fulfilled his first page of wishes.

- **Illegal Discharges that Contaminated Water**

- ◆ Murray Energy repeatedly contaminated waterways due to negligence and spills.

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To limit its liability from discharges, Murray Energy lobbied in 2013 for Congress to stop EPA rules aimed at protecting streams from coal mining.

— Water used to wash newly mined coal spilled from a Murray Energy American Century pipeline in 2010 and fouled waterways in Ohio. Earlier, the company negligently failed to sample and monitor the flow of pollutants and was fined \$7 million in 2008.

● **Miner Safety and Coercion of Employees**

◆ Murray Energy was one of two US mining companies “with the worst safety records,” according to *The Washington Post* in 2010. Murray, along with Massey Energy, had more than 5,700 pending safety violations. 40 lives were claimed in at least three accidents at their sites in the previous decade.

◆ Multiple accusations have been made against Murray Energy’s treatment of employees. In 2014, Murray Energy accused workers of filing too many safety complaints, and told them to think about “your job being suddenly gone.” Said one miner on safety concerns: “We told them and told them, and they didn’t do anything about it.”

◆ Murray also forced employees to attend, without pay, a 2012 campaign rally for presidential candidate Mitt Romney. “If we did not go, we knew what would happen,” said one miner.

● **Hosted Trump Fundraisers with Wheeler in Attendance**





◆ When did Andrew Wheeler become a supporter of President Trump? At a closed-door fundraiser for the Trump campaign sponsored by Bob Murray. It was reportedly there that Murray got behind the Trump candidacy.

Wheeler's Conflicts

Because he has spent his career helping polluters weaken environmental safeguards, Andrew Wheeler will now regularly oversee EPA decisions that could benefit their bottom line. Wheeler's list of clients include many companies that emit pollution that can threaten children and families — and who frequently lobby the EPA for favorable treatment. Wheeler even served as President and Vice President of the Washington Coal Club, a collection of coal companies and their lobbyists.

WHEELER'S CLIENTS	INDUSTRIES
Archer Daniels Midland	Ethanol, food processing
Bear Head LNG Corporation	Liquefied Natural Gas
Celanese Corporation	Chemicals/Materials
Coalition for Domestic Medical Isotope Supply	Health Care
Darling International Inc.	Agriculture
Domestic Fuel Solutions Group	Ethanol
Energy Fuels Resources Inc.	Uranium mining
Enterprises Swanco LLC	Agriculture
General Mills	Food
Growth Energy	Ethanol

WHEELER'S CLIENTS	INDUSTRIES
ICOR International	Refrigerants
Insurance Auto Auctions, Inc.	Used cars
International Paper	Paper
KAR Holdings	Used cars
Martin Farms	Agriculture
Murray Energy	Coal
Nuclear Energy Institute	Nuclear
Sargento Foods Inc.	Cheese
Whirlpool Corporation	Appliances
Xcel Energy	Energy

EPA SAFEGUARDS	WHY IT MATTERS	WHEELER'S WAY
<p>Coal Plants: Requiring Cleaner Air</p>  <p>EPA requires technology to scrub sulfur dioxide from coal plants' air pollution and reduce toxic mercury emissions from coal- and oil-fired plants.</p>	<p>Lung Diseases</p>  <p>Climate Change</p> 	<p>Dirty Air</p>  <p>As lobbyist for coal mining and energy companies, Wheeler fought against scrubbers to increase dangerous pollutants and lobbied to increase allowable public exposure to mercury.¹</p>

¹ <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/politics/ct-epa-andrew-wheeler-lobbying-20180705-story.html>

EPA SAFEGUARDS	WHY IT MATTERS	WHEELER'S WAY
<p>Coal Plants: Requiring Cleaner Water</p>  <p>EPA restricts toxic discharge in waterways of coal ash waste that contains heavy metals like mercury, cadmium and arsenic.</p>	<p>Cancer</p>  <p>Toxic Fish</p> 	<p>Dirty Water</p>  <p>A former coal industry lobbyist, Wheeler has already approved weaker rules on safer ash storage and lessened requirements to monitor groundwater nearby.²</p>
<p>Chemicals: Requiring Cleaner Air & Water</p>  <p>EPA requires industry to use pollution controls and holds manufacturing plants accountable for public harm from release of toxins into environment; protects public health from dangerous chemicals like formaldehyde vapor.</p>	<p>Cancer</p>  <p>Natural Disasters</p> 	<p>Fewer Safeguards</p>  <p>As a lobbyist for a giant chemical producer, Wheeler worked to persuade Congress to allow more pollution and limit liability for chemical spills and explosions that cause public harm;³ as a top Senate staffer, he helped delay a report on formaldehyde risks to human health, similar to one being suppressed at EPA today.⁴</p>

² https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/epa-eases-rules-on-how-coal-ash-waste-is-stored-across-the-us/2018/07/17/740e4b9a-89d3-11e8-85ae-511bc1146b0b_story.html?utm_term=.7dbd961025c

³ <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/politics/ct-epa-andrew-wheeler-lobbying-20180705-story.html>

⁴ <http://thehill.com/opinion/energy-environment/395985-andrew-wheeler-has-the-potential-to-be-even-more-dangerous-than>

Wheeler Stays on the Pruitt Path

“Thanks to the leadership of President Trump and Administrator Pruitt, we have made tremendous progress over the past year and a half.”

— **Andrew Wheeler,**
July 11, 2018

Already, Andrew Wheeler is continuing President Trump’s and Scott Pruitt’s destructive agenda. While most see efforts to degrade agency staff, question sound science, and vanquish critical protections, Wheeler sees “tremendous progress.” That should scare anyone who is hoping for a return to normalcy for an agency that communities need to stay safe.

In his short time in office, Wheeler has already doubled down on some of Pruitt’s most dangerous rulings. It is likely a sign of things to come: more of the same, with less publicity and less scandal. That could make Wheeler an even more serious threat.

Wheeler is continuing Pruitt’s legacy

Since Wheeler became Acting Administrator, his actions have meant more of the same:

Coal ash in the water



One of Wheeler’s first moves as Acting Administrator was to finalize rules on how coal ash waste is stored across the country, a move originally proposed by Pruitt.

This is a move that directly benefits Wheeler’s former client Murray Energy, and will likely result in more toxic mercury and arsenic in the water in coal country.

Formaldehyde



Politico Pro reported that EPA’s political leadership has been suppressing a report that found most Americans are inhaling enough formaldehyde vapor in their daily lives to risk developing leukemia and other ailments.

As a Senate staffer in 2004, Wheeler participated in similar efforts to delay an earlier version of the formaldehyde report and has more recently lobbied on some issues for Celanese, a major manufacturer of formaldehyde. This highly toxic chemical is made or used by politically connected companies, including Koch Industries.

Super polluting trucks



On his last day in office, former EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt said he would stop enforcing pollution limits for dirty diesel trucks. Although Wheeler rescinded the immediate decision amid a hail of lawsuits, he reaffirmed that he intends to exempt these trucks from greenhouse gas regulations in the long term.



“Within the Agency Scott has done an outstanding job, and I will always be thankful to him for this.”

— **Donald Trump** Source: Trump tweet, July 5, 2018

Wheeler's Upcoming Tests

Wheeler has given few signs that he will address the most serious scandal of Pruitt's disastrous tenure: the dismantling of health protections for American families as favors to politically powerful industries. Instead, the former coal lobbyist signaled that he plans to follow Pruitt's path. In Wheeler's first major decision, he gave coal companies exactly what they desired: weakened rules on coal ash storage. He made his priorities clear by stating the change would "save tens of millions of dollars in regulatory costs."

With urgent business on his desk, Wheeler will soon show America who he really is. Here are upcoming decisions that will reveal whether Wheeler is yet another industry insider willing to betray the public trust.

Chemical Disaster Rule



Before Pruitt resigned, he proposed gutting rules EPA adopted after a 2013 chemical explosion killed 15 people at a Texas fertilizer plant, including a dozen first responders. Pruitt's proposal would weaken accident prevention measures and reduce transparency to the local community when an accident does happen.

Wheeler will soon have the opportunity to decide whether to approve this dangerous rollback. ***Will he listen to experts and communities impacted by chemical disasters and stop Pruitt's reckless abandonment of these essential safety measures?***

Wheeler has said he will make "risk communication" a priority. ***Will that apply to communities living near chemical facilities and the first responders who put their lives on the line?***

Lead and Copper Rule



The EPA Inspector General (IG) recently finalized a review of EPA's response to the Flint Water Crisis. One major IG recommendation is that EPA update water safeguards for lead and copper.

Acting Administrator Wheeler said he wants to make lead safety a priority. ***Will that translate to new water protections for vulnerable communities?***

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Will Wheeler capitulate to the polluters pushing the censored science rule? Or will he return science to the core of EPA decision making?

Censored science



Before Pruitt resigned, he proposed a “censored science” rule, championed by polluting industries. This change would effectively bar the agency from using many high-quality scientific studies in the development of safeguards from toxic exposures. Under the guise of transparency, Pruitt’s plan would only allow use of studies that make all their research public, even though gold standard research often relies on personal medical information scientists must protect for legal and ethical reasons. This would effectively censor valid science on chemical risks, air pollution, adverse health effects and other facts that polluters aim to suppress.*

Weakening EPA’s ability to use the best available science will likely result in less protection from harmful pollution.

Budget



President Trump and Pruitt twice proposed budgets that would have gutted EPA’s ability to carry out its mission of protecting human health. These cuts would have meant more air pollution and contaminated water, more exposure to lead and toxic chemicals, more asthma

attacks and more preventable deaths across America. Though Congress rejected these draconian cuts, Wheeler’s top-paying client, Murray Energy Corporation, has put a 50% EPA budget cut on its “Wish List.”

Does Wheeler support President Trump’s call for a crippled EPA, without the means necessary to carry out its mission to protect human health?

Toxic Substances Control Act



Under Pruitt, the EPA put on the backburner proposed restrictions on high-risk toxic chemicals like methylene chloride, trichloroethylene, and N-methylpyrrolidone. ***Will Wheeler finalize these rules?***

EPA has also slow-rolled requirements of the 2016 Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) to establish a stronger federal chemical safety system. ***Will Wheeler finally implement reforms of the TSCA or will he fast-track the process for bringing to market chemicals that may pose threats to human health?***

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* Even without this new rule, [the EPA is suppressing a study](#) that the agency’s Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS) completed in early 2017. Evaluating the health risks of toxic chemicals, this division found that most Americans are inhaling enough formaldehyde vapor to be at risk of leukemia.

Ethics



Wheeler has a long history as a coal lobbyist and ally of the fossil fuel and chemical industries. He has publicly stated that “If I lobbied on something, I don’t think it’s appropriate for me to participate” and he took the Trump ethics pledge to avoid matters related to former employers or clients for two years. But it is unclear whether Wheeler will follow through on these promises.

Calendar

Pruitt took the unprecedented step of hiding his personal calendar from public view. Freedom of Information Act requests showed he was meeting with big energy executives — meetings that should have been publicly disclosed.

Wheeler — despite promises to uphold Trump Administration ethics rules — has already met with at least three former clients since taking office at EPA in April. According to his public calendar, he has also attended events with a corporate leader he is prohibited from meeting with.

Will Wheeler, like every administrator before Pruitt, keep his calendar open for public review and be transparent about his meetings with industry?

Conflicts of interest




Wheeler has yet to indicate whether he will officially recuse himself from decisions that present a conflict of interest with his past employers and clients.

- ***Will Wheeler publicly pledge to recuse himself from any decisions involving the “Wish List” of his former client, coal mining giant Murray Energy, to prop up the coal industry?***
- ***Will Wheeler recuse himself from all ozone pollution decisions, given his history of being paid to oppose limits on ozone emissions?***
- ***Will Wheeler recuse himself from all other decisions that would benefit his former clients?***
- ***Will Wheeler require all officials in his agency who worked for lobbying firms or trade associations to recuse themselves from all decisions involving their former employers’ clients or members?***

Industry Insiders Infiltrating the EPA Headquarters Offices*

As a former coal lobbyist, Andrew Wheeler will be right at home leading Donald Trump's EPA, where his senior team have spent their careers helping polluters weaken environmental safeguards.

Andrew Wheeler
Acting Administrator
Former Coal Lobbyist



Office of Air and Radiation

Bill Wehrum
Assistant Administrator
Former Lobbyist,
American Petroleum Institute and American Chemistry Council

Amanda Gunasekara
Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator
Former Lobbyist, National Association of Chemical Distributors



Office of Water

Lee Forsgren
Deputy Assistant Administrator
Former Lobbyist,
Oil and Gas Industry

Anna Wildeman
Deputy Assistant Administrator
Former Policy Council,
US Chamber of Commerce

Office of Enforcement and Compliance

Susan Bodine
Assistant Administrator
Former Lobbyist,
Agribusiness

Patrick Traylor
Deputy Assistant Administrator
Former Attorney,
Koch Subsidiaries, Dominion Energy, and TransCanada Council





Office of Chemical Safety

Assistant Administrator
Vacant

Nancy Beck
Deputy Assistant Administrator
Former Senior Director,
American Chemistry Council

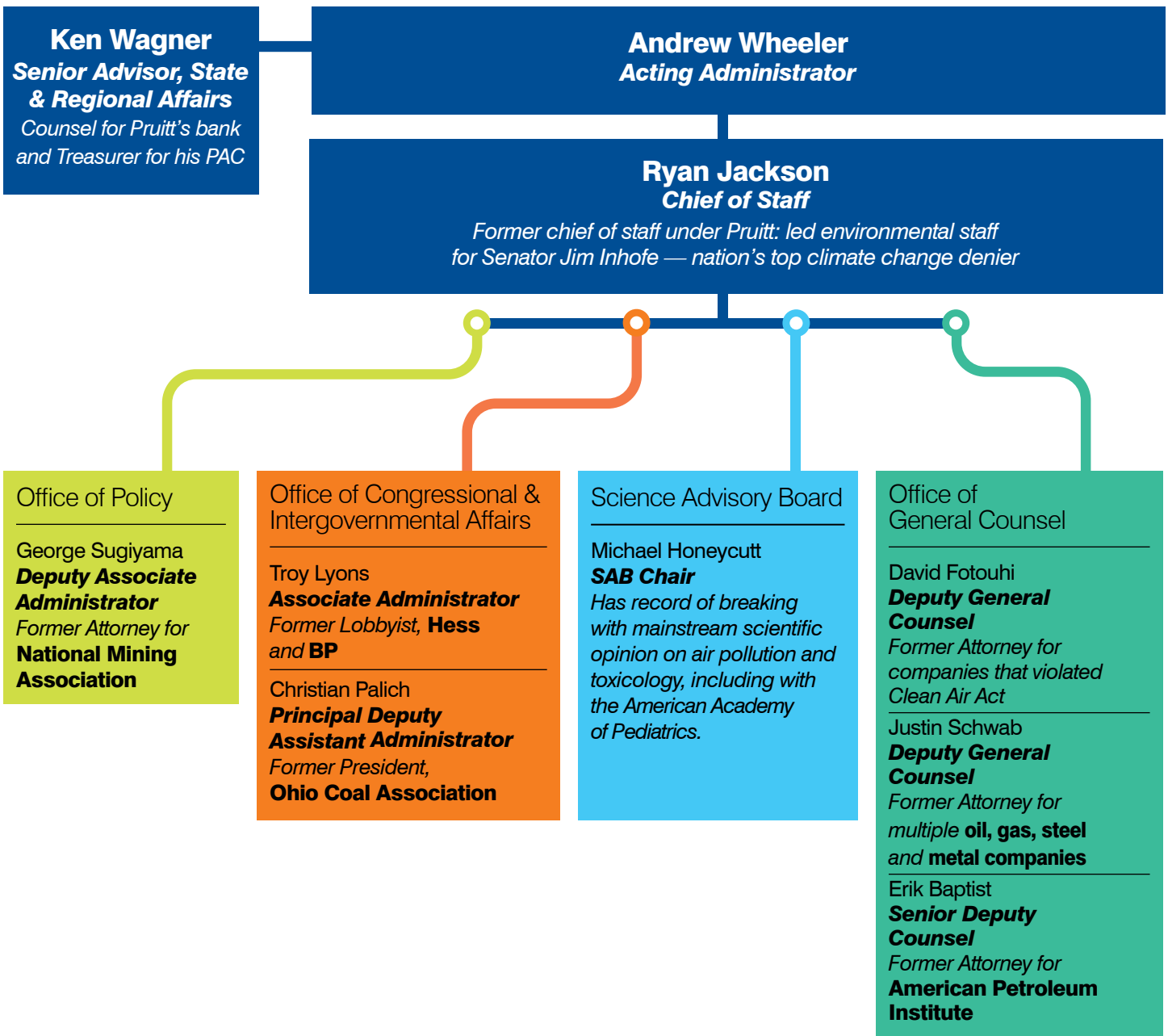
Office of Land and Emergency Management

Peter Wright
Assistant Administrator (*nominated*)
Former Managing Counsel, Dow Chemical



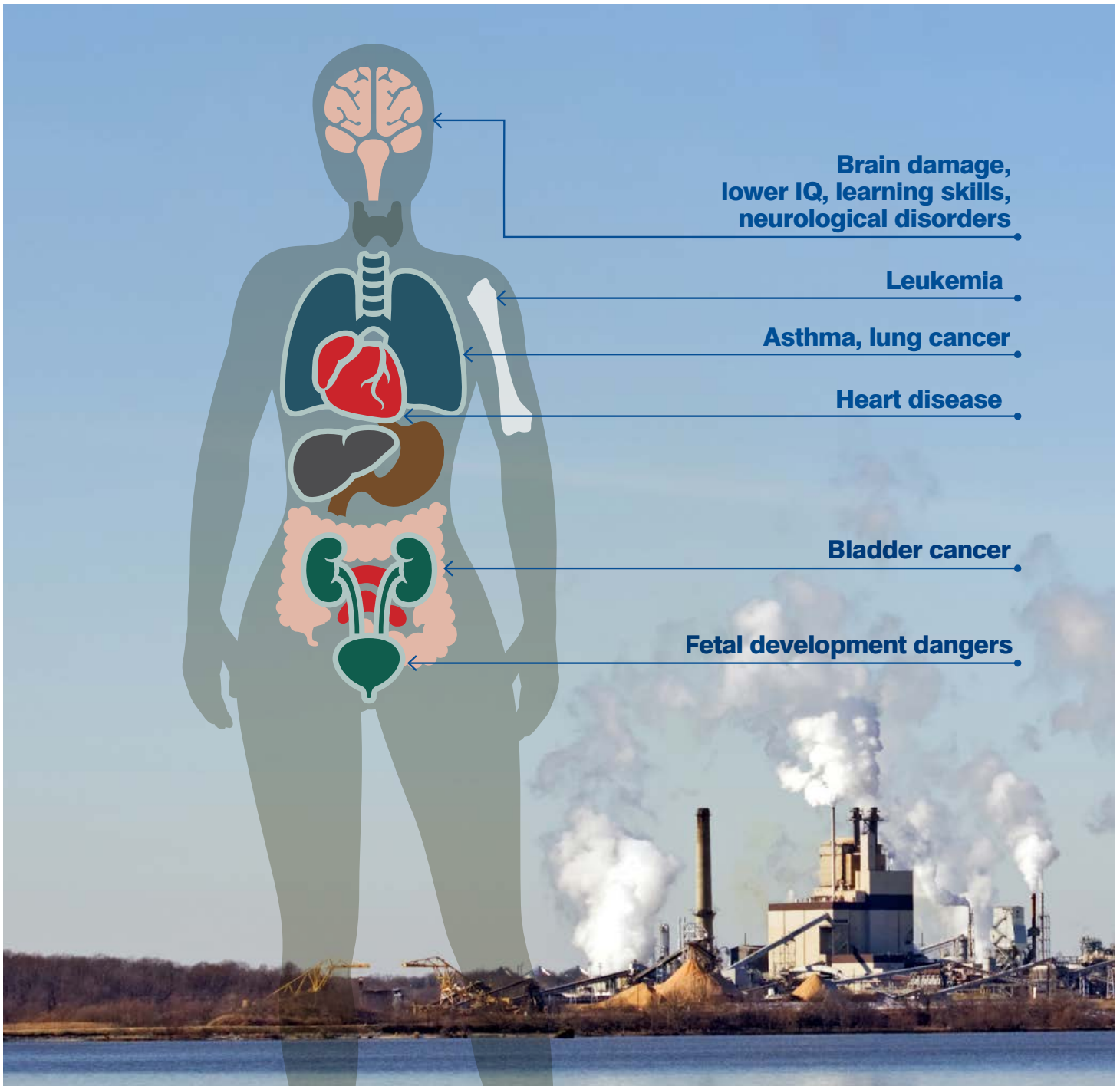
*Not shown are: Administration and Resource Management, the Chief Financial Officer, Environmental Information, Office of International and Tribal Affairs, Office of Inspector General, and Research and Development

Industry Insiders Infiltrating the EPA Office of the Administrator*



*Not shown are the Offices of: Administrative and Executive Services, Children's Health Protection, Civil Rights, Continuous Improvement, Executive Secretariat, Public Engagement and Environmental Education, Small and Disadvantaged Business Development, and Homeland Security.

How Wheeler and Other EPA Industry Insiders' Decisions Affect Human Health





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