

House Energy Bill to Fund CCS

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House Democratic leaders are poised to unveil a major energy bill that will include a pending proposal for funding carbon capture and sequestration (CCS) projects, according to a brief summary released by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA). The bill, which is expected to come up for a vote next week, is being drafted in response to pressure on Democrats to lift a current federal ban on offshore oil drilling. The bill will include a broad range of proposals for expanded domestic energy production and the promotion of clean-energy sources.

Though the summary gives few details, it makes direct reference to a bill being pushed by House energy and air quality subcommittee Chairman Rick Boucher (D-VA), the Carbon Capture and Storage Early Deployment Act. Boucher's bill would create a federal corporation to assess a fee on utilities for fossil fuel-based electricity and distribute those funds for CCS projects.

The promotion of CCS is seen as an important first step in ensuring the continued viability of coal in a carbon constrained economy.