

Rural County Representatives of California Reports Interior Secretary Confirmation Hearing Scheduled this Week

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Acting Secretary of the Interior (Interior) David Bernhardt will testify before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee this week for his confirmation hearing to replace his predecessor, Ryan Zinke. Democrats are expected to pose challenging questions to Acting Secretary Bernhardt on Interior's plans to expand off-shore oil drilling and his relationships with the fossil fuels industry.

Senators Dianne Feinstein (D-California) and Kamala Harris (D-California) were among the Senate Democrats who sent a letter to the Acting Secretary this week, requesting an exemption for the Pacific Ocean from Interior's five-year leasing plan for oil and gas drilling projects. Democrats in the Senate are also expected to raise the issue of the Trump Administration's Fiscal 2020 budget request for Interior which would reduce the Department of the Interior's budget by \$2 billion.

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