

EPA Sued for Records of Andrew Wheeler Meetings with Oil Lobbyists

By [Center For Biological Diversity](#)

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The Center for Biological Diversity and Friends of the Earth [sued](#) the Environmental Protection Agency today for refusing to release public records concerning meetings and communications with the lobbying firm Faegre Baker Daniels, the former employer of EPA Acting Administrator Andrew Wheeler.

“Wheeler is crippling environmental protections that inconvenience his old clients,” said Bill Snape, the Center’s senior counsel. “The public needs to know what happened between Wheeler’s former employer and the environmental agency he’s now running into the ground. We seem to have another fox guarding the henhouse.”

Today’s lawsuit was filed in U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C. Before joining the EPA, Wheeler worked for almost a decade at Faegre Baker Daniels, where he lobbied for the fossil fuel industry against environmental protections. Wheeler promised to avoid conflicts of interests with his former clients during his Senate confirmation.

“Andrew Wheeler is continuing Scott Pruitt’s toxic, polluter-friendly agenda at the Environmental Protection Agency,” said Lukas Ross, a senior policy analyst at Friends of the Earth. “The public has a right to know just how much power Wheeler’s lobbyist friends have over the EPA. This lawsuit will help expose the dangerous influence of corporate polluters and root out corruption at the EPA.”

Under Wheeler the EPA has moved to weaken a wide range of environmental protections, including a proposal last month to gut a 2016 rule curbing methane pollution from oil and gas facilities.

The Center and FOE filed Freedom of Information Act requests with the EPA about meetings and communications with the oil industry in Spring 2018. In October 2018 the groups notified the agency that it’s in violation of the Act. Seven months have passed, and the agency has failed to release detailed records.

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