

✘Yesterday, Berkeley Law's [Center for Law, Energy, and the Environment](#) hosted a public presentation by EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson. She delivered brief prepared remarks, then took a lot of questions. She didn't announce any new policy initiatives, but she did make it clear that she (and the President) are not going to cave to pressure from Republicans in the House.

Jackson did seem glad to be well outside the Beltway for a while, and who can blame her? She noted that the House has taken some 170 anti-environmental votes this term, more than one for every day it has been in session. And she's been called in for a number of grillings. Although she faced some difficult questions in Berkeley, she noted that at least Dan Farber, who moderated the questions, didn't frame each of them as a five-minute tirade against the EPA, and that she was actually given time to respond. She didn't shy away from any of the questions, which covered the gamut from the delay in issuing new ozone regulations to EPA's role in the Keystone Pipeline decision to regulation of concentrated animal feeding operations and of toxic chemicals.

This is the first time I've seen Jackson speak in person. I was very impressed, with two things standing out for me. First, she truly does seem optimistic despite facing a hostile Congress and challenging (to put it mildly) budget times. She's clearly both tough and resilient. Second, she has absolute command of what's going on in her agency, not just on the regulatory side but also at the research labs, and also of the network of interrelated initiatives at other agencies. Whether you agree with EPA's decisions under her watch or not (and probably most of us, wherever we stand on the political spectrum, can find something to disagree with), you have to respect Administrator Jackson and her approach to her job. She's the kind of public servant I'd like to see more of in Washington.

Video of the session should be available on the CLEE website soon.