

The President announced two new EPA choices: Cynthia Giles as chief of enforcement, and Michele DePass as EPA's assistant administrator for international affairs.

Cynthia Giles is a Berkeley Law grad. She is currently the vice president and director of the Conservation Law Foundation's Rhode Island Advocacy Center, focusing on state and regional programs to combat climate change. She previously headed the Bureau of Resource Protection at the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection.

DePass is a program officer at the Ford Foundation, where she manages the foundation's initiative on environmental justice and healthy communities. She was assistant to the city manager of San Jose, Calif., where she was an adviser on environmental policy matters and served as an environmental compliance manager for the city of San Jose. She has also taught environmental law at the City University of New York and served as executive director of the New York City Environmental Justice Alliance. DePass doesn't have obvious international experience. Her selection may be an indication of a desire to focus EPA's international efforts on environmental justice issues. It also seems to be a strong signal that EPA will not play a strong role in climate negotiations. Presumably, Clinton and Browner will be the key players there.

Note that both nominees have California connections. Both in Congress and in the administration, Californians seem to be playing a key role on environment and energy issues.