



Lisa Jackson (EPA)

Lisa Jackson was up on Capitol Hill yesterday, telling the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works how her EPA will protect scientific integrity. The webcast is available [here](#). In her [written testimony](#), Jackson said:

While the laws that EPA implements leave room for policy judgments, the scientific findings on which these judgments are based should be arrived at independently using well-established scientific methods, including peer review, to assure rigor, accuracy, and impartiality. This means that policymakers must respect the expertise and independence of the Agency's career scientists and independent advisors while insisting that the Agency's scientific processes meet the highest standards of quality and integrity.

She also emphasized the need for transparency about methodologies, data, and "the interpretations and judgments underlying the Agency's scientific findings and conclusions."

Jackson noted that EPA is already acting in accordance with these principles to reverse Bush administration changes that had strengthened the role of the White House (specifically the Office of Management and Budget) in risk assessments for toxic chemicals and minimized the role of agency scientists in the development of air quality standards. Jackson's earlier memo to EPA employees on scientific integrity is [here](#).

Also at the hearing, [GAO endorsed](#) EPA's revisions to the risk assessment process, and the [Union of Concerned Scientists expressed support](#) for Jackson's initiatives but said that EPA ought to go beyond reversing Bush administration mistakes to take affirmative steps to improve transparency, including adopting a formal policy of allowing career scientists to communicate their findings to press and the scientific community and including in the administrative record "drafts of agency documents prepared by scientific or technical staff before they are subjected to White House or interagency review.