

# EPA chemicals adviser candidates include Trump 1.0 vet, industry scientists

The agency published a list of candidates for its Science Advisory Committee on Chemicals.



BY: **ELLIE BORST** | 04/13/2026 03:55 PM EDT

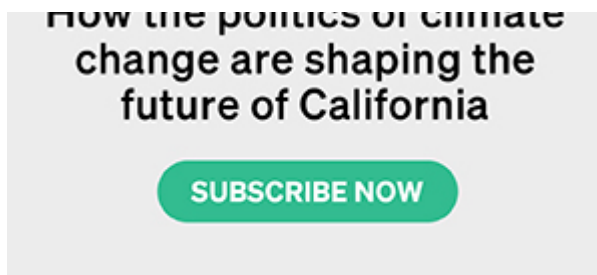


EPA headquarters in Washington. | Justin Sullivan/Getty Images

**E&E NEWS PM** | EPA is looking to fill 11 of its 20 spots on its Science Advisory Committee on Chemicals, a group of independent experts who give advice on the agency's risk evaluations.

Among the 29 candidates under consideration are a toxicologist for billionaire Elon Musk's automobile company Tesla, a contractor working on NASA's Mars mission and a controversial figure from President Donald Trump's first term, according to [a list published earlier this month](#).

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Candidate Michael Dourson, who leads the nonprofit Toxicology Excellence for Risk Assessment, was Trump's first pick to lead EPA's chemical safety office in 2017 but [backed out amid public pressure](#) and growing skepticism from senators over a history of understating risks from chemicals.

It's not Dourson's first attempt to become a member of one of EPA's groups of independent advisers; he [was a nominee for the agency's](#) Science Advisory Board in 2021, as well.

Other notable nominees include Sanket Gadhia, staff toxicologist at Tesla; Debjani Mukherjee, the lead subject matter expert for the Mars mission project, partially funded by NASA; and Wade Barranco, senior toxicologist for Lyondell Chemical Co.

The SACC was established in 2016 to help advise regulators on chemical evaluations under the Toxic Substances Control Act. The committee is meant to include representatives from "science, government, labor, public health, public interest, animal protection, industry, and other groups," the chemical safety law says.

The agency published its list of candidates and biographical information, seeking public comments by June. It is ultimately EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin's choice on who is chosen for the panel.

*Annie Snider contributed.*

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