

Topics

- Government presents energy reform legislation
- Initiative tagged as "Reform Light"
- PRI expresses general support
- Opposition seizes Congress
- Cuauhtémoc calls package a 'mugging of the Constitution'
- PRD electoral commission can't complete vote count

Key Dates

- 4/21-22:** Security and Prosperity Partnership Summit, New Orleans
- 4/30:** End of the regular congressional session
- 7/06:** Nayarit state elections
- 9/01:** Presidential Informe
- 9/28:** Coahuila state elections

Energy Secretary Georgina Kessel delivered the government's **energy reform package** to the Senate (see attached fact sheet). President Calderón's televised address to the nation warned, "We must act now, because time—and oil—is running out." Among the points highlighted by officials during the week were small denomination 'citizen bonds' that would enable ordinary Mexicans to have a stake in Pemex's results, and the plan to have the private sector build two new refineries to cut gasoline imports. The President also said he hoped the package could be voted on before the end of the month, when the regular congressional session ends. (Presidencia, Reforma 4/9, Proceso 4/13)

"The initiative offers a '**reform light**'...limited by the conservatism of a political class that is unable to understand that a vigorous opening will bring greater benefits to Mexicans," said columnist Sergio Sarmiento, while adding: "Experience tells us that it is better to have a limited reform that gets approved than an excellent reform that winds up in the rubbish bins of the political class." Business columnist Alberto Aguilar characterized the proposal as the "minimum possible" and said it "goes in the correct direction, but is far from what Mexico requires or what the more pessimistic experts were expecting." (Reforma 4/10, Universal 4/10)

The **PRI's national leadership** met and reportedly **endorsed the reform**, subject to greater revenue sharing with the (mostly *priista*) oil-producing states. One unnamed governor was quoted by *Reforma* as saying, "The unanimous agreement was very clear: yes to the reform, but we won't be pressured. The PRI will establish the timetable, and [the reform] will be approved during an extraordinary session of Congress." (Universal 4/11, Reporte Indigo 4/11, Reforma 4/12)

Twenty senators from the **PRD, PT, and Convergencia** led by Ricardo Monreal seized the podium of the Senate to protest the energy package, and deputies did the same in the lower house. They have said that they **will keep Congress shut down** until the PAN and the PRI meet their demand to hold a broad national debate on energy policy, both inside and outside Congress. AMLO held a rally in the Zocalo where he said that the first objective was already in sight: to keep the package from being approved in April. Police estimated attendance at 47,000, fewer than past AMLO rallies. (Proceso 4/13, Reforma 4/13)

PRD founder **Cuauhtémoc Cardenas**, who has inclined toward Pemex reform, **attacked the government's proposal** in a letter. He said that allowing the private sector to operate pipelines, storage facilities, and refineries was "a mugging of the Constitution" and "a caving in to pressures to sellout to the private sector parts of the oil industry that are reserved exclusively to the State." (Reforma 4/11, Jornada 4/11).

The **PRD electoral commission (CTE)** said it could not complete the count of the **March 16 internal elections**. Results from 23 of the 32 states showed Alejandro Encinas with 131,784 votes and Jesús Ortega with 118,245. The CTE said, "Every effort has been made to complete [the count], but the strong political tension that exists prevented it." On Sunday, the CTE agreed to try again. The term of current party president Leonel Cota ends on April 22. (PRD website, Reforma 4/7, 4/11, 4/14)

Polls

A nationwide Mitofsky poll (3/27-30) showed the PRI overtaking the PAN in terms of voter preferences for the first time since before the 2006 national elections. Support for the congressional PAN has declined by over 8% since the start of the Calderón government, while support for the PRI has gone up by 6%. (www.consulta.com.mx)

