

# US judge halts Trump admin's blockade on new wind and solar projects

The federal government's "arbitrary" actions caused 57 gigawatts of wind and solar to be canceled or put at risk of delay beyond 2029, clean energy advocates argued.

By [Maria Gallucci](#) 21 April 2026

A federal judge has ordered the Trump administration to lift [its blockade](#) on new U.S. wind and solar projects.

On Tuesday, Chief U.S. District Judge Denise Casper in Boston sided with nine clean energy organizations that sued to stop the federal government's "arbitrary and capricious" efforts to hinder wind and solar development on public land or wherever federal permits are required — even as fossil fuels and other energy sources carried on as usual.

The judge [issued a preliminary injunction](#) that temporarily blocks the U.S. Department of the Interior and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers from enforcing five administrative actions pending a final decision on the case. Casper said the clean energy groups are likely to succeed in proving that the administration's actions violate federal law and would cause irreparable harm if the court did not step in.

The plaintiffs include Renew Northeast, the Interwest Energy Alliance, and the Southern Renewable Energy Association. The groups argued that the measures "harm the public by delaying and preventing" wind and solar projects, "which in turn threatens the public's vital interest in maintaining a reliable, affordable, and resilient" electricity grid.

"Our coalition has demanded and received an immediate halt to the Trump administration's unlawful permitting actions, which have discriminatorily placed wind and solar technologies into second-class status," the plaintiffs said in a statement. "Clean energy is fast, affordable, and here to stay. We look forward to getting back to work and restarting the impacted wind and solar projects nationwide."

The ruling is the latest in a string of legal losses for the Trump administration, which in the past year has tried but failed to [halt construction of offshore wind farms](#), [freeze federal funding for electric-vehicle chargers](#), and [cancel millions of dollars in federal grants](#) for clean energy projects based on the states in which award winners were located — efforts that nonetheless have caused massive disruptions.

The roadblocks outlined in Tuesday's injunction have collectively led to roughly 57 gigawatts of new "wind, solar, hybrid, and offshore wind capacity" being either canceled or "placed at material risk of delay or cancellation beyond 2029," representing "at least \$905 million in sunk investment costs," according to a study by Charles River Associates referenced in Casper's ruling.

Of the five agency actions that were struck down, the most sweeping is what the coalition calls Interior's "senior political review bottleneck," which included the [July 2025 directive](#) requiring Interior Secretary Doug Burgum to review all decisions related to wind and solar projects. That [memo](#) listed nearly 70 types of permits and other items that would need Burgum's personal sign-off, adding cost, time, and significant uncertainty to projects.

In a related effort, Interior prohibited wind and solar developers from using an [online government planning tool](#) that helps streamline environmental reviews, a move that created yet more costs and complexities for companies. As of Tuesday evening, Interior's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service website still said renewable projects "are currently not eligible" to use the tool.

Other measures stopped by Tuesday's injunction include two similar directives from Interior and from the Army Corps, which provides permits for energy projects near navigable waters. Those policies call for prioritizing projects that generate the most energy per acre, an approach that favors coal, oil, and fossil gas and undercuts renewables — and [is rooted in fossil-fuel industry misinformation](#).

The federal judge also blocked Interior's new legal interpretation of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act that critics say essentially bars developers of offshore wind projects from obtaining new permits.

An Interior spokesperson [told the Associated Press](#) that the department does not comment on litigation, but said, "America sets the global standard for energy production. We do it cleaner, safer, and more reliably than anywhere in the world."

For clean energy proponents, the judge's decision offers important affirmation that the Trump administration's broad attacks against renewables don't hold up under scrutiny.

"This series of lawsuits is building a solid record of legal decisions that prove that contract law is valid here in the U.S.," Stephanie Francoeur of Oceantic Network, a trade group that advocates for offshore wind, told Canary Media. "It also provides developers and the supply chain a path forward to defend their investments, to protect jobs, and to drive energy prices down."

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