

Trump's election in 2016 didn't halt or even slow action in the states on renewable energy and climate change. Things have hit "pause" during the pandemic, but that should be only temporary. All of this ferment at the state level should help lay the groundwork for future federal action.

Here's what's been happening in some key states:

Florida has long been a laggard on solar power, despite its calling itself the sunshine state. But it has started to catch up, most recently with the approval of the largest community solar project in the country (1.5 GW).

Illinois In response to FERC's new anti-renewables initiatives, the legislature is considering pass legislation allowing Commonwealth Edison to withdraw from the PJM capacity market and setting a 100% renewable goal.

Iowa often brings to mind cornfields, but we should also think of windmills. According to the Energy Information Agency, "wind generation has more than doubled since 2011. Over that period, coal-fired generation decreased from a peak of more than 40 million MWh to less than 29 million MWh. Wind provided 34% of total electricity generation in Iowa in 2018, behind coal (45%)." As of the end of 2019, Iowa had another 1,644 MW under construction and 1,195 MW in advanced development.

Kansas is also a big producer of wind power. According to Governor Laura Kelly, the state has "5,653 MW of wind farm projects currently in operation and an additional 1,900 MW on the way from new projects recently announced." She also touted Kansas has having the highest percentage of power from wind of any state in the nation. She emphasized the economic benefits to the state and the desire of major corporations to have access to even more renewable energy. You have to wonder what people in Iowa and Kansas think about Trump's wild-eyed attacks on wind power.

Massachusetts has finalized a first-in-the-nation renewable requirement for peak hours, which is aimed at promoting energy storage and demand response to avoid the need to use gas generators to cover peaks. Xcel, the state's leading utility, [expects](#) to cut its carbon emissions 80% below 2005 levels by the end of this decade. [Note: this last sentence was rewritten to clarify it after this post first went up.]

Minnesota is another state that's pledging a zero-carbon power in 2050. Close to half of the state's power already comes from carbon-free sources, including hydro and nuclear as well as renewables.

Nevada was the fourth state to target zero-carbon power by 2050. Besides setting this long-term target, the 2019 law allowed utilities with new renewable facilities to charge competitive prices for power, and it adopted a tough new renewable portfolio standard (50% renewables by 2030.)

New Jersey legislation enacted last summer requires the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to establish regulations that reducing emissions 80% below 2006 levels by 2050. An executive order signed in November doubles the state's target for offshore wind.

New Mexico adopted a goal last year of zero-carbon by 2050, with a 2045 deadline for zero-emissions from the power system and interim requirements of doubling renewables by and 50% renewables by 2030.

New York adopted a goal last year of zero carbon emissions by 2050, with a 2040 deadline for eliminating carbon emissions from power generation. A third of all benefits and investments must go to disadvantaged communities.

North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper approved a plan to make the state zero-carbon by 2050, with a 70% emissions cut by 2030. Independently, Duke Power plans to cut emissions across its multi-state service area in half by 2030 and eliminate them by 2050.

Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf has directed the Department of Environmental Protection to go forward with a rule-making that will bring the state into RGGI, the Northeastern states' cap-and-trade system. The regulatory process is now underway.

Rhode Island Gov. Gina Raimondo signed an executive order in January calling for the state to have 100% renewable energy by 2030, the most aggressive target in the country.

Texas produced more energy from wind than coal last year. The share of energy produced by renewables during peak hours is [projected](#) to nearly triple from 2018 to 2022.

Virginia [passed](#) the Clean Economy Act, requiring 100% renewable energy by 2050, and setting one of the highest targets for storage in the country (2.4 GW by 2035). The law also requires 5.2 GW of offshore wind by 2035. At the end of February, the legislature passed a law to make Virginia a member of RGGI, the East Coast carbon trading scheme.

Washington adopted a last year goals of zero reliance on coal by 2025, a carbon-neutral grid by 2030, and 100% renewable energy by 2050. Governor Jay Inslee signed a suite of laws that will increase energy efficiency in buildings, expand incentives for electric vehicles,

and ban HFCs (which are super-potent greenhouse gases). Inslee says these measures are equivalent to take three million cars off the roads.