

Summary

Democrats have hesitated to support a proposal to streamline the issuance of permits for energy projects, because they feared that Trump would just wait and then yank the permits. Trump chose this moment to do it again.

Just as sponsors are making a push to get a bipartisan permit reform bill through the lame duck session of Congress, the Trump Administration has apparently decided to sabotage the process. Democrats have worried that it does no good to streamline permitting for clean energy projects if the government simply yanks the permits later. That's exactly what the Administration is planning to do, yet again, in a case where it has repeatedly lost in court.

The backstory involves a series of bad faith efforts to torpedo a project that had long since been approved. In January, a federal judge [ruled](#) against a last-minute effort by the Trump Administration to stop construction of the 704-megawatt Revolution Wind project. At that point, the project was almost 90% complete. It had a score of federal and state approvals, including one from the federal bureau regulating offshore energy. It had also spent or committed more than \$5 billion. The government issued a stop work order in September 2025, lost in court, and then issued another one just before Christmas based on newly discovered (or newly concocted) national security concerns. The court, along with other federal district courts, overturned that one too. The project was completed and began delivering power.

The Trump Administration naturally decided to try again. In a separate lawsuit brought by the [Administration's anti-wind allies](#), the Administration filed a motion for summary judgment against itself that would remand the permit decision to the agency. The obvious aim is to retroactively deny the permit.

This is an outrage if you believe in any one of the following:

- * The U.S. needs more power to meet increasing demand.
- * Governments should provide a stable environment for investments.
- * Government actions should be based on reasoned policies rather than the President's pet peeves.

- * The government should make decisions in good faith, or
- * We need to save the planet from climate change.

On the bright side, if the government succeeds, the next Democratic President will have a legal roadmap for playing the same trick on offshore oil. The Trump people seem to be incapable of looking that far down the road or even a few weeks forward to the lame duck session. I guess the “m” in Trump stands for “myopia.”