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Contrasting the Administration's Campaign Against U.S. Wind Energy and Promotion of Oil and Gas, LNG Production, and Microreactor Nuclear Power.

The Trump administration's unprecedented assault on wind energy development in the U.S. is in sharp contrast to its promotion of oil and gas, liquefied natural gas (LNG) production, and microreactor nuclear projects. Agencies have blocked 165 wind projects nationwide while simultaneously spending nearly $2 billion in taxpayer funds to convince energy companies to abandon offshore wind initiatives.

The Scope of Wind Project Blockades

Onshore Wind Restrictions

The administration has halted development across a broad spectrum of onshore wind projects. According to reports from multiple financial publications, wind developers have encountered cancelled meetings with federal agencies; permit and licenses processing delays with applications no longer being reviewed; Pentagon reviews of projects that wouldn't normally require military oversight; and the "silent treatment" from regulators.

The Pentagon has emerged as a key bottleneck, with agencies claiming that national security concerns justify reviewing – and ultimately canceling – wind energy projects. This roadblock represents a significant shift in policy, as wind turbines are now being characterized as potential threats to national security.

Pausing Offshore Wind Leases

A Christmas gift to the offshore wind industry in the U.S. came on December 22, 2025, when the U.S. Department of the Interior announced that it is pausing the leases for all large-scale offshore wind projects under construction in the U.S. due to "national security risks identified by the U.S. Department of War" in recently completed classified reports.

The leases paused included Vineyard Wind 1 (OCS-A 0501); Revolution Wind (OCS-A 0486); CVOW – Commercial (OCS-A 0483); Sunrise Wind (OCS-A 0487); and Empire Wind 1 (OCS-A 0512).

Offshore Wind Buyouts

The "pause" on offshore leases was followed by a more aggressive strategy for offshore wind: direct financial incentives for companies to abandon projects entirely. In April alone, over $2 billion in taxpayer funds have been allocated to lease buyouts, with several major agreements announced.

TotalEnergies ($928 million) received a substantial payout after CEO Patrick Pouyanné stated that the development of offshore wind projects is not in the country's interest. In March 2026, TotalEnergies signed a "landmark agreement" with the Interior Department to relinquish two major offshore wind leases. The U.S. government will reimburse TotalEnergies approximately $928 million. The company must reinvest an equivalent amount into U.S. fossil fuel projects, specifically natural gas and LNG.

In addition, they have cancelled two projects Attentive Energy (NY Bight): A 3-GW project offshore New York/New Jersey; and Carolina Long Bay: A 1.2-GW project offshore North and South Carolina. The reasoning? TotalEnergies cited high development costs in the U.S. and a preference for investing in "more efficient" capital uses like the Rio Grande LNG plant in Texas.

TotalEnergies has therefore committed to invest an equivalent amount – the value of its renounced offshore wind leases – in oil and natural gas and LNG production in the U.S. Specifically, TotalEnergies will invest $928 million in the following projects in 2026:

- The development of Train 1 to 4 of Rio Grande LNG plant in Texas; and
- The development of upstream conventional oil in Gulf of America and of shale gas production.

Following the TotalEnergies model, **Ocean Winds** ($885 million), a joint venture between Engie and EDP Renewables, reached a similar settlement in April 2026. The government will reimburse approximately $885 million in combined lease fees to Ocean Winds and its partners in exchange for investments in U.S. oil and gas assets, energy infrastructure, and/or LNG projects. Ocean Winds has cancelled the following two projects.

Global Infrastructure Partners, a part of BlackRock, has committed to invest up to $765 million, the original bid amount for the **Bluepoint Wind** ($765 million) offshore wind project (OCS-A 0537), into a U.S.-based LNG facility. Following this accelerated investment, the Interior Department will cancel the lease and reimburse the company's bid payment in the amount invested in the LNG project. Additionally, Bluepoint Wind has decided not to pursue any new offshore wind developments in the U.S.

Golden State Wind ($120 million) has committed to voluntarily end its offshore wind lease located in the Morro Bay Wind Energy Area, California (OCS-P 0564). Under the terms of the agreement, Golden State Wind will be eligible to recover approximately $120 million in lease fees after an investment has been made of an equal amount in the development of U.S. oil and gas assets, energy infrastructure, and/or LNG projects along the Gulf Coast. Golden State Wind has also decided not to pursue any new offshore wind projects in the U.S.

Legal Challenges and Pushback

Federal courts have repeatedly thwarted the administration's efforts to block wind development through executive action. Courts struck down the Day One order blocking wind energy development. Judges allowed construction on wind farms already underway to resume. And the administration's requirement that all solar and wind energy projects on federal lands and waters receive personal approval from the Interior Secretary was blocked. *See* this author's January 14 Spencer Fane article and his article in *Power Magazine*.

These legal defeats prompted the shift toward financial incentives and Pentagon-based national security reviews which are mechanisms that may prove more difficult for courts to overturn.

The National Security Justification

The Pentagon's involvement in reviewing wind projects represents perhaps the most contentious element of the administration's strategy. Letters sent to developers in late 2025 and early 2026 indicated that the Pentagon is "reviewing how it evaluates the national security impact of energy projects." A December 22, 2025, press release announcing the pause on offshore leases states:

> As for the national security risks inherent to large-scale offshore wind projects, unclassified reports from the U.S. Government have long found that the movement of massive turbine blades and the highly reflective towers create radar interference called "clutter." The clutter caused by offshore wind projects obscures legitimate moving targets and generates false targets in the vicinity of the wind projects.
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> The Department of Energy in a 2024 report stated that a radar's threshold for false alarm detection can be increased to reduce some clutter, but an increased detection threshold could cause the radar to "miss actual targets."

The specific national security threats posed by wind turbines remain unclear and the rationale has drawn skepticism from energy experts and lawmakers alike.

Advanced Nuclear Power Coming of Age. Departments of the Army, Air Force, and Energy Charge Ahead with New Programs.

For an examination of the history and current status of nuclear power in the U.S., see my February 13, 2026, article and my follow-up article dated February 19, 2026.

More recently, the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) is going full speed ahead on its Defense Innovation Unit (DIU) with the Department of the Army and the Department of the Air Force launching the Advanced Nuclear Power for Installations (ANPI) program. First announced in 2024, the DIU's April 9, 2026, press release states that program is designed to "allow for the design and build of fixed on-site microreactor

nuclear power systems on select military installations to support global operations across land, air, sea, space, and cyberspace." The focus is installation on military sites of nuclear microreactors that are described as providing 1-20 megawatts of power, while being a transportable size – something that could fit within a shipping container.

The announcement stated that the DOD had selected eight companies to be eligible to demonstrate the ability to deliver "compliant, safe, secure, and reliable nuclear power." The companies are now eligible to receive Other Transaction awards to provide "commercially available dual use microreactor technology at various DOD installations." Selected companies for the ANPI program include Antares Nuclear, Inc., BWXT Advanced Technologies LLC, General Atomics Electromagnetic Systems, Kairos Power, LLC. Oklo Inc., Radiant Industries Incorporated, Westinghouse Government Services, and X-Energy, LLC.

Specifically, the U.S. Department of the Air Force has selected three companies to potentially develop and operate a microreactor on Air Force installations, as part of the ANPI initiative.

On April 22, 2026, the service announced that Buckley Space Force Base, Colorado, and Malmstrom Air Force Base, Montana, were the first two sites chosen for the ANPI initiative. Additionally, the service has selected Joint Base San Antonio, Texas, as the third potential location to site a nuclear microreactor under the ANPI initiative.

The selected companies were paired with an Air Force installation:

- Buckley SFB, Colorado – Radiant Industries, Inc.
- Malmstrom AFB, Montana – Westinghouse Government Services
- Joint Base San Antonio, Texas – Antares Nuclear, Inc.

The U.S. Department of the Army (in its Janus Program) chose nine sites as optimal locations for initial deployment of the nuclear microreactors including: Fort Benning, Ga., Fort Bragg, N.C., Fort Campbell, Ky., Fort Drum, N.Y., Fort Hood, Texas, Fort Wainwright, Alaska, Holston Army Ammunition Plant, Tenn., Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., and Redstone Arsenal, Ala.

Simultaneously with the recent Air Force and Army announcements, the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Nuclear Energy and the National Reactor Innovation Center announced the first selections for the Nuclear Energy Launch Pad.

Three of the companies selected are developing microreactors and one is developing fuel supply.

The four companies – Deployable Energy, General Matter, NuCube Energy, and Radiant Industries – were selected from the initial pool of Reactor Pilot Program and Fuel Line Pilot Program applicants, the two precursor programs to the Nuclear Energy Launch Pad.

According to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), inclusion in the program allows these companies to "begin discussion with NRIC on the enhanced technical, regulatory, and deployment support that the Nuclear Energy Launch Pad can provide."

The program is part of a larger Nuclear Dominance – 3 by 33 campaign, which aims to secure a 100% domestic fuel supply chain and accelerate advanced reactor deployment by 2033. Coordinated through the Defense Production Act (DPA) Nuclear Fuel Cycle Consortium (which includes more than 90 domestic companies), the campaign is built around three core goals:

1. *Catalyze a Secure Domestic Fuel Supply*: The primary aim is to rebuild the entire domestic fuel cycle, including milling, conversion, enrichment (like the work done by General Matter), and recycling.
2. *Accelerate Advanced Reactor Deployment*: This goal focuses on fast-tracking the testing and commercial use of next-generation reactors (like those from Deployable, NuCube, and Radiant) while simultaneously working to close the fuel cycle.
3. *Strengthen Infrastructure and Workforce*: The campaign uses the DPA framework to align private finance, specialized workforce development, and innovation to support a massive nuclear build-out.

Broader Policy Context – And Global Trends

The administration's assault on wind energy development and the promotion of both oil and gas development and nuclear power as evidenced by the DOD's ANPI project and DOE's *3 by 33 Campaign*, implement, in part, Executive Order 14156 – Declaring a National Energy Emergency and E.O. 14154 – Unleashing American Energy . The administration is focusing on what it refers to as "external energy dependencies" that create the potential for disruption and risk that are emanating from "constrained grid energy systems, natural disasters, or physical and cyber-attacks to infrastructure."

The wind energy restrictions are part of a larger energy policy framework that is focused on walking away from renewable energy development, further emphasizing fossil fuels, and placing as many regulatory hurdles as possible on solar, wind, and other renewable energy development projects.

The administration's multi-pronged assault on wind energy development represents a dramatic reversal of the previous decade's renewable energy expansion. Whether through regulatory blockades, national security reviews, or direct financial incentives, the administration has made clear its opposition to wind power as a component of America's energy future.

And these policies – the current U.S. "retreat" from renewables – is largely an outlier to global trends that show adoption of renewable energy is accelerating at a record-breaking pace – with the war in Iran stomping on the accelerator. A May 5, 2026, article in *Forbes*, Energy Security is the Real Drive of the Clean Energy Transition, states in part:

Renewables Offer a Different Kind of Energy Security. This is where the energy transition takes on a new dimension. Renewable energy is often framed primarily as a climate solution. Increasingly, it is being recognized as a security strategy. . . . Today, around 40% of global electricity comes from low-carbon sources, including renewables and nuclear. . . . As that share grows, the relative stability of electricity as an energy carrier becomes more attractive compared to oil-based fuels. . . .

But the direction of travel is becoming clearer. The shift to renewable energy is no longer driven only by climate ambition, even if this should be a very strong driver in

itself. It is being reinforced by a more immediate and pragmatic concern: the need for secure, reliable, and controllable energy systems in an increasingly uncertain world.

The administration's "retreat" from renewables faces mounting pressure from multiple directions: court rulings, congressional investigations, the growing power shortage, and the economic argument that wind energy could create thousands of union jobs while meeting electricity demand. The outcome of this conflict will shape America's energy landscape for years to come.

This blog was drafted by John L. Watson, an attorney in the Spencer Fane Denver, Colorado, office. For more information, visit www.spencerfane.com.

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