



The Federal Wind Energy Dance. Round-and-Round It Goes and Where It Stops . . .

The Christmas Pause. The holiday gift from the current administration to offshore wind energy developers came on December 22, 2025, when the U.S. Department of Interior (DOI) announced that it is “pausing – effective immediately – the leases for all large-scale offshore wind projects under construction in the United States due to national security risks.”¹

The [press release](#) states in part:

This pause will give the Department, along with the Department of War and other relevant government agencies, time to work with leaseholders and state partners to assess the possibility of mitigating the national security risks posed by these projects.

“The prime duty of the United States government is to protect the American people,” said Secretary of the Interior Doug Burgum. “Today’s action addresses emerging national security risks, including the rapid evolution of the relevant adversary technologies, and the vulnerabilities created by large-scale offshore wind projects with proximity near our east coast population centers. The Trump administration will always prioritize the security of the American people.”

The January 20, 2025 Presidential Memorandum (the Wind Memo). The DOI action implements, in part, the provisions of [President Trump’s memorandum](#) that he signed on his first day in office to withdraw from wind energy leasing “all areas within the Offshore Continental Shelf as defined in section 2 of the Outer Continental Shelf Land Act, 3 U.S.S. 1331.”

Revolution Wind LLC’s Initial Challenge and Success in Court. Revolution Wind LLC (a partnership between Ørsted and Skyborn Renewables) had nearly finished (80–87% complete) the 700-MW, 65-turbine Revolution Wind Farm off the coast of Rhode Island and Connecticut when the Trump administration halted construction. Of the project’s 65 turbines, 45 had already been installed. Revolution Wind had invested roughly \$5 billion in the project and expected to incur an additional \$1 billion in breakaway costs if the project were permanently halted. The project is projected to deliver enough domestic energy to power more than 350,000 homes in Rhode Island and Connecticut.

On July 29, 2025, the DOI implemented the Presidential Memorandum by issuing a Secretarial Order² requiring the Interior Assistant Secretary of Land and Minerals Management within 45 days to provide a report “with recommendations on the effects of taxpayer-funded subsidies on the wind industry, and impacts that the development of offshore wind projects may have on military readiness, among other things.”

On September 4, 2025, Revolution Wind filed its [complaint](#) in the U.S. District court for the District of Columbia seeking to enjoin the government’s actions.

On September 22, 2025, Senior Judge Royce Lamberth (a President Reagan appointee) issued an [order](#) granting Revolution Wind’s motion for a preliminary injunction finding that the August 22 order issued by the U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management’s (BOEM) to abruptly halt construction of the 65-turbine project was “the height of arbitrary and capricious actions” and unsupported by any evidence of national security concerns and stating further in open court that:

The Bureau does not point to any factual findings that lead them to believe Revolution Wind is implicated in either of these concerns or that those concerns rise to such a level that warrant work cease immediately.

Revolution Wind’s Supplemental Filing. On January 1, 2026, Revolution Wind filed [a motion to supplement its complaint](#) stating:

On December 22, 2025, Defendant Matthew Giacona, the Acting Director of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), issued a Director’s Order to Plaintiff Revolution Wind, LLC (Revolution Wind) “suspend[ing] all ongoing

activities related to the Revolution Wind Project on the Outer Continental Shelf for the next 90 days for reasons of national security” (the Second Stop Work Order).

The Second Stop Work Order is unlawful, like BOEM’s August 22, 2025, Director’s Order to halt activities of the Revolution Wind Farm and Revolution Wind Export Cable (the Project) on the Outer Continental Shelf (the First Stop Work Order), which was preliminarily enjoined by this Court on September 22, 2025.

The Second Stop Work Order is a new BOEM action taken after Revolution Wind’s original Complaint and accompanying Motion for a Preliminary Injunction and Stay Pending Review were filed in September 2025, and after this Court subsequently granted that motion.

The Trump Administration’s Christmas “Pause” Follows on the Heels of its December 8, 2025, Loss in Court.

On December 8, 2025, U.S. District Court Judge Patti B. Saris of the District of Massachusetts granted summary judgment against the Trump administration declaring that the January 20, 2025, executive memorandum directing federal agencies to halt wind energy development (and all related agency actions to implement the memorandum) were unlawful.

The summary judgement decision came in the case filed on May 5, 2025, by 17 states and the District of Columbia, challenging the Wind Memo. The [complaint](#) asked the court to declare that each of the agencies’ actions to adopt and implement the Wind Memo are arbitrary and capricious in violation of the APA; that the actions are not in accordance with law or are in excess of statutory right in violation of the APA; and that the actions are otherwise *ultra vires*.

See this author’s [December 10, 2025, blog](#) that discusses the Court’s decision. See also this author’s [May 7, 2025, blog](#) discussing the underlying complaint in the lawsuit filed by the 17 states.

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1

The leases paused include:

1. Vineyard Wind 1 (OCS-A 0501)
2. Revolution Wind (OCS-A 0486)
3. CVOW – Commercial (OCS-A 0483)
4. Sunrise Wind (OCS-A 0487)
5. Empire Wind 1 (OCS-A 0512)

2

Secretarial Order 3437, "Ending Preferential Treatment for Unreliable, Foreign-Controlled Energy Sources in Department Decision-Making."

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