# Florida Governor Signs Law Prioritising Natural Gas over Offshore Wind Energy



Florida Governor Ron DeSantis signed a new bill into law on January 17, 2024, significantly altering the state’s energy policy. The legislation, which omits many references to climate change, gives preference to natural gas and bans offshore wind energy projects. DeSantis emphasized that this move counters what he described as a radical climate agenda.

The law deletes the term "climate" eight times from state policies, particularly those about mitigating climate change impacts or purchasing climate-friendly products. It also removes requirements for state-purchased vehicles to maintain fuel efficiency.

Experts such as Emily Hammond of George Washington University and Michael Gerrard from Columbia University have noted that this bill is unprecedented in rolling back existing climate laws. Gerrard highlighted Florida's particular vulnerability to rising sea levels and extreme heat, conditions that have worsened in recent years.

While Florida is investing in community resilience projects, such as elevating highways and installing flood pumps, the state has refused federal funds aimed at green energy programs. DeSantis also vetoed over $29 million in federal energy rebates and efficiency grants.

The bill, which comes into effect on July 1, 2024, intends to expand natural gas usage and reduce regulations on gas pipelines and appliances, reinforcing Florida's reliance on fossil fuels.