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Newsom signs California offshore wind bill

BY COLBY BERMEL

Gov. Gavin Newsom on Thursday signed a bill that directs California regulators to plan for offshore wind development, one of the first steps toward building out the nascent sector.

Impact: California, normally a trendsetter on energy and environmental matters, has lagged its East Coast counterparts on offshore wind development. Newsom signed [CA AB525 \(21R\)](#) just months after his administration reached a long-sought agreement with the federal government on where floating turbines would be installed in U.S. waters off the California coast.

Details: AB 525 by Assemblymember David Chiu (D-San Francisco) requires the California Energy Commission to set goals for how much offshore wind should be installed by 2030 and 2045. The CEC is also required to coordinate with sister agencies on a strategic plan for the permitting and construction of floating turbines.

Just one state lawmaker, Assemblymember Laurie Davies (R-San Juan Capistrano), voted against AB 525 when it came up in both houses. The near-unanimous votes reflected the measure's support from interests that don't normally see eye to eye: labor and environmentalists.

Background: Earlier this year, the Energy Commission said in its [CA SB100 \(17R\)](#) report that California needs 10 gigawatts of offshore wind — enough to power 7.5 million homes — to meet the state's requirement of 100 percent clean energy by 2045. AB 525 was initially held up when the bill set an installation target, but it was later amended to let regulators, not lawmakers, decide, clearing the way for its passage.

What's next: AB 525's installation goals are due Jun. 1, 2022, and its strategic plan is due Jun. 30, 2023.