



Written by [Luis Miguel](#) on March 28, 2024

## California Democrats Seek to Insulate State Against a Trump Presidency

The Golden State is already bracing itself in anticipation of a second Trump presidency.

California Gov. Gavin Newsom is taking measures to Trump-proof the state's climate policies in case Biden fails in the upcoming U.S. presidential election. As [Politico](#) reports, the governor has a legion of bureaucrats at his command set to help him ensure the green policies continue no matter who is in the White House this time next year.



Newsom is not without cause to worry. Trump officials have been honest about their intentions to go after California policies if their boss makes it back to the Oval Office. Certain of those officials, who asked not to be named, told *Politico* that California's electric-vehicle program is on their list of targets.

Martin Jambon/flickr

At the signing of a recent climate-change agreement with Sweden, Newsom said: "We know the playbook. We're definitely trying to future-proof California in every way, shape or form."

The most recent indication of these arrangements surfaced last week with an agreement between California and Stellantis, the world's fourth-largest automaker. Stellantis committed to adhering to the state's emissions regulations, thereby bolstering California's climate agenda against legal challenges and any potential federal attempts to scale back its more daring policies.

Even as other blue states, as well as the federal bureaucracy under Joe Biden, take measures to safeguard their progressive agenda, California finds itself at the center of national politics. Trump will potentially assume office in 2025, the final year of Newsom's governorship as he looks ahead to his future endeavors. Newsom is seen as one of the Democratic Party's top potential presidential candidates, and would likely go toe-to-toe against Trump's successor in 2028.

As for how California hopes to buffer itself against President Trump, the state plans to use a combination of legal tactics, voluntary arrangements with industry, and demonstrations of soft power in diplomatic circles.

During his first term, Trump clashed with California on issues ranging from abortion to gun control. However, the most common point of contention was the Golden State's pioneering environmental regulations.

The EPA and Interior Department under Trump rescinded California's autonomy to establish its own tailpipe emissions standards pursuant to the Clean Air Act, sought to enhance water allocations by



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adjusting protections under the Endangered Species Act, and authorized oil drilling on vast stretches of the California coastline.

Karoline Leavitt, the Trump campaign's national press secretary, said in a statement: "The complete and total ban on gas-powered cars and trucks in California and every other state that follows the California rules will decimate countless U.S. auto jobs."

She went on to say that the ban, which will put an end to the sale of new gas-powered automobiles in 2015, will "flood the United States with Chinese-made Electric Vehicles to steal our jobs, and crush working families with the crippling costs and limitations of expensive Electric Vehicles."

*Politico* noted that a key component of California's arsenal is its approach in the judicial system:

The state sued Trump 136 times under Attorneys Generals Xavier Becerra and Rob Bonta, according to Paul Nolette, a Marquette University political scientist who studies states' legal tactics. California achieved at least partial wins in more than half of its challenges, Nolette said, but Trump's defenses sharpened even over his first term — particularly when [he replaced](#) former EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt with veteran energy lobbyist and congressional staffer Andrew Wheeler.

Red states are also waging lawfare on California. A lawsuit spearheaded by Ohio and supported by 17 Republican attorneys general is contesting California's distinctive authority, granted by the Clean Air Act, to establish more stringent pollution standards for passenger vehicles. This case, anticipated to escalate to the Supreme Court, has garnered the support of 17 other states aligned with California's regulations, transforming the litigation into a nationwide dispute over how the automotive industry will be compelled to address climate change.

Moreover, the Democratic congressional representatives from California are urging Biden's EPA to approve all Clean Air Act waivers that the state has sought since the start of his presidency. This includes requests for regulations aimed at curbing pollution from trucks, trains, and even tugboats.

Team Trump has indicated that he would go after these approvals. "On Day One of the Trump administration, not only will Crooked Joe's Electric Vehicle mandate be terminated, but any Biden waiver allowing gasoline-powered cars to be outlawed will be immediately revoked," said Leavitt.

As reported by [NBC News](#), the Sacramento City Council on Tuesday unanimously voted to make the community a "sanctuary city for transgender people."

The resolution, effective immediately, guarantees that city resources will not be utilized to prosecute transgender individuals seeking transition-related care or to collaborate with jurisdictions enforcing laws criminalizing such care in other locations.

In short, Sacramento anticipates federal policies against transgenderism from Washington under a Trump presidency, and the politicians want to cushion their city against it.

Clearly, California Democrats are determined to not let the 2024 presidential be the last word on what happens within the state's borders.



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