



Written by [James Murphy](#) on September 23, 2023

Trying to Raise His National Profile, California's Newsom Declares War on Fossil Fuel Industry

In a transparent attempt to boost his national political profile, this week California Governor Gavin Newsom boarded a carbon-spewing jet and headed to New York to participate in the UN Climate Ambition Summit. Claiming that California is “burning up” due to climate change, Newsom sent another volley in his long war against the fossil fuel industry.

While Newsom has already signaled his support for Joe Biden in 2024, he appears to be laying the groundwork for a 2028 presidential run, using the mostly made-up climate crisis as his ticket to the political dance.

“I say all of that very mindful that if you read the newspaper or turn on your TV, that you see a state not just of dreamers and doers, but you see a state that’s burning up,” Newsom [told](#) the audience, which included UN Secretary-General António Guterres of “global boiling” fame. “A state that’s choking up. A state that’s heating up with wildfires and floods and droughts. Places, lifestyles and traditions being destroyed right in front of our eyes, despite all of that leadership, despite that ambition.”

Instead of taking responsibility for incredibly poor forest management and water policies that contribute greatly to the state’s woes, Newsom instead chose to attack the fossil fuel industry.

“This climate crisis is a fossil fuel crisis. This climate crisis persists. It’s not complicated. It’s not complicated. It’s the burning of oil. It’s the burning of gas. It’s the burning of coal. And we need to call that out,” Newsom ranted.

He accused fossil fuel interests of being deceitful.

“For decades and decades, the oil industry has been playing each and every one of us in this room for fools,” the governor charged. “They’ve been buying off politicians. They’ve been denying and delaying science and fundamental information that they were privy to that they didn’t share or they manipulated. Their deceit and denial, going back decades, has created the conditions that persist here today.”

Newsom pretended that he was reaching out to Republicans and the UN delegates, ostensibly out of



AP Images
Gavin Newsom



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concern for the planet.

“And I say all of that in closing with a spirit not of a closed fist, but of an open hand in an appreciation that we are all in this together, and mindful that all of us have unique circumstances, all of us have unique traditions, all of us have unique challenges.”

In reality, Newsom is simply going back to an old playbook that California politicians have used in the past: When in doubt, attack big oil. Last year, he accused oil companies of profiteering in the midst of record-high gas prices and signed [legislation](#) allowing unelected bureaucrats — namely the California Energy Commission — to monitor gasoline pricing and force oil companies to provide extensive new supply-chain data. The legislation also allowed those same bureaucrats to determine proper margins for oil companies, and included hefty penalties for companies that exceeded those margins.

So, inflate pricing through taxation and regulatory hurdles, then blame the companies when prices are unnecessarily high — not exactly capitalism.

While California has had the highest gas prices in the nation, price gouging has never been the issue. Instead, government has its grimy fingers all over those high gasoline prices. For instance, California has the [highest fuel taxes](#) in the nation — and it’s not even close. As of July of this year, California charged nearly 78 cents per gallon of fuel in taxes. Illinois was the next highest, at 66.5 cents per gallon. By contrast, Alaska only charged 9 cents per gallon.

Newsom has also restricted the siting of new oil wells and otherwise looked to halt energy exploration in the state.

Earlier this week, he provided an [update](#) on how the new policies are working, saying in a statement:

With California’s new gas price transparency law, we now have the tools to see where this market is broken. We can see how refiners that go offline for maintenance without adequately preparing for it limit supply and drive up prices. We can see the unusual spot market transactions that create unexplained spikes in prices that Californians pay at the pump.

He concluded, “We will no longer be left in the dark as private traders and corporate interests make record profits while Californians foot the bill. We’ll continue using our new tools to hold Big Oil accountable and shine a light on these operations that have, until now, functioned in the shadows.”

These are the types of policies that Newsom and his ilk hope to impose nationally — nonsensical, anti-capitalist, and anti-freedom.



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