

# US declares Florida exempt from offshore drilling plan

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The Trump administration on Tuesday said it would not allow oil drilling

off the coast of Florida after pressure from the state's Republican governor.

The abrupt reversal came days after officials announced a proposal to allow drilling in virtually all [coastal waters](#), drawing immediate criticism from environmentalists.

Republican Governor Rick Scott of Florida was among the early critics of the plan that is part of President Donald Trump's "energy dominance" focus, saying [oil drilling](#) threatened Florida's natural resources, an issue that has long had bipartisan support.

Interior secretary Ryan Zinke announced the move on Twitter, saying: "I support the governor's position that Florida is unique and its coasts are heavily reliant on tourism as an economic driver.

"As a result... I am removing Florida from consideration from any new oil and gas platforms."

The program "proposes the largest number of lease sales in US history," and opens 98 percent of [recoverable oil](#) and gas reserves in federally-controlled waters to development, according to the Interior Department.

While offshore drilling is defended as a vital source of jobs and economic development in a few states like Texas and Louisiana, many other parts of the country have vigorously fought drilling due to environmental hazards and the importance of tourism to their local economies.

Republican governors including Maryland's Larry Hogan and South Carolina's Henry McMaster have balked at offshore [drilling](#), while the practice is anathema in Democratic-leaning California and northeastern states.

California's attorney general Xavier Becerra immediately demanded a similar exemption for his state.

"California is also 'unique' & our 'coasts are heavily reliant on tourism as an economic driver.'" he tweeted.

"Our 'local and state voice' is firmly opposed to any and all [offshore drilling](#). If that's your standard, we, too, should be removed from your list. Immediately."

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