

Sanders Seeks Deep Freeze for U.S. Energy Hopes

Democratic presidential contender Bernie Sanders on Wednesday threw his weight behind a climate-change bill that would crack down on fossil fuel extraction, a move sure to please activists who want party front-runner Hillary Clinton to make the same commitment.

Sanders, a U.S. senator from Vermont, wants to halt new leases for fossil fuel extraction on public lands and for offshore drilling in the Pacific and Gulf of Mexico. He would prohibit drilling in the Arctic and Atlantic Ocean.

Sanders pushed for the proposal at a rally at the U.S. Capitol on Wednesday, alongside the bill's sponsor, fellow Democratic U.S. Senator Jeff Merkley of Oregon, and environmental leaders such as Bill McKibben, co-founder of the grassroots climate group .

The bill will face fierce opposition in the Republican-controlled U.S. Congress and Merkley acknowledged it is unlikely to become law.

But it should help Sanders appeal to environmental activists and could pressure Clinton, who has said that abruptly halting extraction on federal lands would disrupt the U.S. economy. {eo}

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