

Trump Orders Military to Purchase Electricity From Coal-Fueled Power Plants

The president also received an award from an industry group designating him the 'undisputed champion of beautiful clean coal.'

2/11/2026



President Donald Trump (C) poses with "the Undisputed Champion of Beautiful Clean Coal" trophy handed to him by Jim Grech (L of center), CEO of Peabody Energy, at a "Champion of Coal" event at the White House on Feb. 11, 2026. Saul Loeb/AFP via Getty Images

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WASHINGTON—President Donald Trump signed an executive order on Feb. 11 directing the U.S. military to purchase its power from coal-fired electricity plants.

"We're going to be buying a lot of coal through the military now, and it's going to be less expensive and actually much more effective than what we have been using for many, many years," Trump said during an event in the White House.

Secretary of War Pete Hegseth and Secretary of Energy Chris Wright are instructed to approve long-term agreements to purchase power for the Department of War and other government facilities deemed "mission-critical."

Coal-fired power is prioritized to "enhance grid reliability and blackout prevention, on-site fuel security, and mission assurance for defense and intelligence capabilities," according to a statement from the White House.

The newly signed order emphasizes a need to secure the nation's power grid and improve sustainability and reliability by utilizing the country's vast coal reserves.

"The grid is the foundation of our national defense as well as our economic stability," the order reads. "Any prolonged disruption caused by energy shortages, foreign supply dependencies, or intermittent generation threatens the operational readiness of our Armed Forces and the safety of the American people."

Concerns about the reliability of intermittent energy production from solar and wind power during periods of extreme temperature and weather events include potential risks to national defense.

Trump noted coal's ability to perform when the grid is strained and most in need of support.

"When large parts of our country were hit with winter storms, it was coal that kept the power on, and it was coal that never was bothered by cold weather, warm weather," Trump said. "It's never bothered by anything, just

keeps on chugging right during this vicious storm."

The new law defines how coal-fired power can protect the country.

"Coal generation ensures that military installations, command centers, and defense-industrial bases remain fully powered under all conditions — including natural disasters, or wartime contingencies," the order reads. "Maintaining this capability is a matter of national security, strategic deterrence, and American energy dominance."

He criticized prior administrations for focusing on wind and other energy sources while minimizing the coal industry.

"You got mistreated very badly for a long period of time, but you've never had a better friend in the Oval Office than me," Trump said.

The president highlighted actions his administration took to eliminate burdensome regulations and support coal miners.

"I've saved 74 coal power plants from crushing restrictions and closures that would have been forced to shut down in the very immediate future," Trump said, while announcing that the Tennessee Valley Authority is taking measures to protect two "major coal plants."

Additionally, he ordered the Energy Department to fund operations with \$175 million in upgrades in Kentucky, North Carolina, Ohio, Virginia, and West Virginia.

One coal miner took the stage to thank Trump for his efforts.

"The common sense policies to keep coal plants running implemented by this administration mean that my husband and I can keep working, stay where we are, and continue raising our son in our community that we call home, and the impact is even greater than that, because you, Mr. President, have single-handedly kept utility prices affordable, the lights

on, and our jobs alive," Kayla Blackford said.

"We are real, real people under these hard hats."

Secretary of the Interior Doug Burgum, House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-La.), and Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lee Zeldin joined the president for the signing ceremony, along with Republican lawmakers.

Representatives from the Washington Coal Club presented Trump with an award naming him the "undisputed champion of beautiful clean coal," honoring his commitment to what the president describes as a "clean, beautiful" resource.

"Great to bring it back," Trump said. "Very much appreciated."

Correction: A previous version of this article misspelled the name of Kayla Blackford. The Epoch Time regrets the error.

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