

Headline: California's Newsom to sign climate transparency laws for big business

Byline: Associated Press

Published Date: 12:02 PM September 18, 2023

Section: newsinfo

Word Count: 3110

Content:

California Gov. Gavin Newsom speaks to reporters outside the California Natural Resources Agency in Sacramento, Calif., Oct. 7, 2022. AP FILE PHOTO

California Gov. Gavin Newsom speaks to reporters outside the California Natural Resources Agency in Sacramento, Calif., Oct. 7, 2022. AP FILE PHOTO

NEW YORK — California Gov. Gavin Newsom said Sunday that he plans to sign into law a pair of climate-focused bills intended to force major corporations to be more transparent about greenhouse gas emissions and the financial risks stemming from global warming.

Newsom's announcement came during an out-of-state trip to New York's Climate Week, where world leaders in business, politics and the arts are gathered to seek solutions for climate change.

California lawmakers last week passed legislation requiring large businesses from oil and gas companies to retail giants to disclose their direct greenhouse gas emissions as well as those that come from activities like employee business travel.

Such disclosures are a "simple but intensely powerful driver of decarbonization," said the bill's author, state Sen. Scott Wiener, a Democrat.

"This legislation will support those companies doing their part to tackle the climate crisis and create accountability for those that aren't," Wiener said in a statement Sunday applauding Newsom's decision.

Under the law, thousands of public and private businesses that operate in California and make more than \$1 billion annually will have to make the emissions disclosures. The goal is to increase transparency and nudge companies to evaluate how they can cut their carbon emissions.

The second bill approved last week by the state Assembly requires companies making more than \$500 million annually to disclose what financial risks climate change poses to their businesses and how they plan to address those risks.

State Sen. Henry Stern, a Democrat from Los Angeles who introduced the legislation, said the information would be useful for individuals and lawmakers when making public and private investment decisions. The bill was changed recently to require companies to begin reporting the information in 2026, instead of 2024, and mandate that they report every other year, instead of annually.

Newsom, a Democrat, said he wants California to lead the nation in addressing the climate crisis. "We need to exercise not just our formal authority, but we need to share our moral authority more abundantly," he said.

Newsom's office announced Saturday that California has filed a lawsuit against some of the world's largest oil and gas companies, claiming they deceived the public about the risks of fossil fuels now faulted for climate change-related storms and wildfires that caused billions of dollars in damage.

The civil lawsuit filed in state Superior Court in San Francisco also seeks the creation of a fund — financed by the companies — to pay for recovery efforts following devastating storms and fires.

Subscribe to our daily newsletter

By providing an email address. I agree to the Terms of Use and acknowledge that I have read the Privacy Policy.

RELATED STORIES