

Trump Administration 2025-2026: Harmful Actions

Contents

Defense And National Security	3
National security	3
International relations	3
NATO relations	4
Munitions stockpiles	4
Taiwan Defense	4
Military leadership purge	5
Stated purge rationale vs. documented pattern	5
US Infrastructure	6
DOGE	6
Infrastructure	6
Environmental / climate regulation	7
Federal Reserve independence	7
Federal workforce / Schedule F	8
Social and Human Rights	8
Social systems	8
Due process and deportation	9
Broader immigration enforcement	9
Other civil-rights-adjacent actions	10
Harm to human suffering reduction programs	10
Harm to human suffering reduction programs (modeled human cost — domestic)	10
Harm to human suffering reduction programs (modeled human cost — international)	11
Research funding	11
Health	12
Structural changes to vaccine policy apparatus:	12
Measles outbreak and deaths — documented, not modeled:	12

Modeled/projected harm	13
Disease surveillance infrastructure	13
Food safety surveillance.....	14
SAMHSA (mental health / addiction services) restructuring	14
Rural hospitals and maternal care	15
Title X (contraceptive/family planning access)	15
Ethics	16
Profiting from office	16
Abuse of Law	17
Cases where the administration is lawlessly ignoring clear court orders.....	18
The broader, quantified pattern.....	19
DOJ politicization.....	20
Press access.....	20
Mid-decade redistricting.....	21
Inspectors General purge.....	21
BLS / economic statistics	22
Fiscal Policy and Budget	23
Budget costs	23
Financial stability of the US.....	23
US credit rating.....	24
Administration's own budget numbers undercut its narrative.....	24

Defense And National Security

National security

- The 2026 National Defense Strategy has been described by the nonpartisan CSIS as unusually partisan in tone, "citing President Trump 47 times" and offering harsh criticism of prior strategies while providing few substantive numbers — a break from past NDS documents. ([CSIS](#))
- The libertarian-conservative Cato Institute has argued Trump's foreign policy approach amounts to treating allies as targets rather than partners, with a "destructively narrow" view of U.S. interests. ([Cato](#))
- Trump has repeatedly declined to rule out declaring a national security emergency to assert federal control over the 2026 midterm elections, a prospect reported by both CNN and The Hill. ([CNN](#), [The Hill](#))
- Tucker Carlson, one of Trump's most prominent 2024 media backers, publicly broke with the administration over its Iran strikes and apologized to his audience for having "misled" them into supporting Trump. ([Wikipedia summary of reporting](#))

International relations

- The Wall Street Journal's editorial board — owned by Rupert Murdoch, generally sympathetic to Republican priorities — has repeatedly and scathingly criticized Trump's tariff escalation against Canada, calling it "The Dumbest Trade War Revisited" and warning it "makes no economic or political sense," is unpopular with GOP voters, and could cost Republicans House seats in the midterms. ([Mediaite summary of WSJ editorial](#), [The Hill](#))
- The same board flagged that a Trump remark dismissing tariff-driven price increases ("I couldn't care less") is likely to end up in Democratic campaign ads against Republicans. ([Yahoo/WSJ summary](#))
- Cato has argued Trump's habit of threatening or sanctioning allied leaders who criticize him — citing threats against Spain and Canada — reflects an erratic, personalist approach to alliance management. ([Cato](#))
- The Council on Foreign Relations notes Trump has not delivered the rapid Ukraine peace deal he promised, has done little on the Sudan conflict, and continues to threaten force against other states even as he seeks a "peacemaker" legacy. ([CFR](#))

NATO relations

- Trump has repeatedly called NATO a "paper tiger," floated withdrawing from the alliance, and told NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte he was "clearly disappointed" with many allies over their limited role in the Iran war — Rutte confirmed this directly to CNN. ([Reuters/AOL](#), [CNN](#))
- King's College London defense scholar Michael Clarke told TIME the "transatlantic element" of NATO "is in deep, deep trouble." ([TIME](#))
- Trump's renewed threats to annex Greenland — a NATO member's territory (Denmark) — have been a recurring irritant, cited by NPR and Euronews as a specific source of allied anger separate from burden-sharing disputes. ([NPR](#), [Euronews](#))

Munitions stockpiles

- A CSIS analysis found that in the first seven weeks of the Iran war, the Pentagon spent about \$24 billion on major munitions, depleting at least 45% of its Precision Strike Missile inventory, roughly half its THAAD interceptor stock, and nearly half its Patriot interceptor stock. ([Fortune](#), [CNN](#))
- CSIS's Mark Cancian (a retired Marine Corps colonel) told CNN and NPR this created a "near-term risk" and a "window of vulnerability" if another conflict arose in the next few years, with alternatives to depleted systems involving "greater risk." ([NPR](#))
- This runs counter to Trump's own public statements that munitions stockpiles have "never been higher or better" and that the U.S. has a "virtually unlimited supply." The Pentagon disputes the "depleted" framing, saying it "has everything it needs to execute at the time and place of the President's choosing." ([Fortune](#))
- CSIS estimates restoring these seven munitions types to pre-war levels will take one to five years depending on the system — Tomahawks 4-5 years, SM-3s 3 years, JASSMs 1 year, PrSMs 8 months — since production capacity, not money, is the bottleneck. ([Al Jazeera](#))
- The Washington Post reported the U.S. expended more advanced missile-defense interceptors defending Israel than Israel itself used during the 40-day war. ([Al Jazeera](#))

Taiwan Defense

- Acting Navy Secretary Hung Cao told a Senate Appropriations subcommittee that arms sales to Taiwan were paused to preserve munitions for the Iran war — a roughly \$14 billion package Congress had already approved but Trump had not signed off on. ([Dawn](#))

- The Washington Post reported this fueled concern among lawmakers and Taiwanese officials that Trump's support for Taiwan was wavering as he balanced the Iran war against a push for détente with Beijing. ([Washington Post](#))
- China deployed over 100 ships along the "first island chain" (Japan–Taiwan–Philippines) during this period, which Taiwan's National Security Council called evidence China is "the one & only PROBLEM" destabilizing the region. ([Dawn](#))

Military leadership purge

- Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth has fired or forced the retirement of at least 24 generals and senior commanders since January 2025 — described by multiple outlets as an "unprecedented purge." ([ECIKS/Guardian reporting](#))
- In February 2025, Trump fired Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Charles "CQ" Brown — replacing him with a retired three-star (Dan "Razin" Caine) rather than a sitting four-star, an unusual step. Minutes later, Hegseth fired Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Lisa Franchetti and Air Force Vice Chief Gen. James Slife in the same announcement. ([CNN via Yahoo](#))
- In April 2026, Hegseth removed Army Chief of Staff Gen. Randy George along with two more Army generals (David Hodne and William Green). The Army has been without a permanent chief of staff since. ([The New Republic](#), [Malay Mail/AFP](#))

Stated purge rationale vs. documented pattern

- Hegseth has publicly framed the purge as rooting out "woke" culture, saying in an October 2025 speech his mission was to "uproot the obvious distractions that have made the War Department less lethal." ([ECIKS](#))
- The Guardian's May 2026 investigation found roughly 60% of those dismissed were Black or female officers, and reported none were cited for performance-related reasons. ([ECIKS summary of Guardian reporting](#))
- Hegseth had previously written in his own 2024 book that Franchetti was a "DEI hire," writing: "If naval operations suffer, at least we can hold our heads high. Because at least we have another first!" — a characterization CNN reported drew criticism given Franchetti was a career officer and the first woman on the Joint Chiefs. ([CNN via Yahoo](#))
- The New York Times reported (per multiple outlets citing that reporting) that Hegseth personally struck female and Black Navy officers from promotion lists — which, if accurate, would depart from merit-based promotion procedure. ([ECIKS](#))

- The New Republic, citing New York Times sourcing from current and former officials, reported the Army has lacked a confirmed chief of staff since George's April firing, and that Hegseth pushed out at least three senior officers who were considered candidates to replace him — during an active war with Iran. Sources described the purge as having "damaged the service's expertise and eroded its top ranks." ([The New Republic](#))

US Infrastructure

DOGE

- GAO's August 2026 audit found DOGE "did not accurately report actions taken on contracts," and that \$110 billion of DOGE's claimed savings were either incorrect or lacked supporting evidence, as of July 2026. ([CBS News](#), [Washington Post](#))
- 108 of 264 leases DOGE took credit for terminating were already being eliminated before DOGE existed. ([CBS News](#))
- GAO found DOGE claimed credit for terminating 13,476 contracts when nearly 2,000 had not actually been ended, including a claimed \$1.7 billion Pentagon IT contract cut that never happened. ([CBS News](#))
- For grants specifically, GAO said DOGE "did not provide sufficient information to verify the method used to calculate 96 percent of DOGE-reported savings" — reported by the conservative Daily Caller, not just left-leaning outlets. ([Daily Caller](#))
- At least one rescinded lease termination backfired, forcing a renegotiated lease at \$1.5 million/year more than before. ([emptywheel summary of GAO report](#))
- Earlier reporting (NYT, AP, The Independent) documented DOGE's "wall of receipts" repeatedly overstating savings by orders of magnitude — e.g., claiming an \$8 billion ICE contract cut that was actually \$8 million. ([The Independent/AOL](#))

Infrastructure

- The administration proposed canceling billions in already-awarded clean-energy and grid-modernization grants; an energy-systems reliability researcher argued in coverage that many canceled grants were "foundational investments" for grid resilience against extreme weather and cyberattacks. ([The Invading Sea](#))
- A federal court ruled in January 2026 that the administration's 2025 freeze of already-appropriated infrastructure funds was unlawful, amid ongoing litigation from states over withheld highway money. ([Legis1](#))

- The administration proposed eliminating the Highway Trust Fund's mass-transit account, which House Transportation Committee Ranking Member Rick Larsen (a critic, not neutral) called something that would "annihilate state and local transportation budgets." ([Smart Cities Dive](#))

Environmental / climate regulation

- In February 2026, EPA finalized the repeal of the 2009 "endangerment finding" — the scientific/legal basis for nearly all federal greenhouse-gas regulation under the Clean Air Act (vehicle emissions, power plants, etc.). EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin called it "the single largest deregulatory action in American history." ([NPR](#), [EPA press release](#))
- CNN quotes NRDC's federal climate legal director noting the 2022 Supreme Court ruling in *West Virginia v. EPA* "never questioned that EPA had the authority to regulate greenhouse gases" — meaning this repeal reopens ground previously treated as settled, not merely applying existing precedent. ([CNN](#))
- The repeal followed the U.S. exiting the Paris Agreement (second time) and moving to withdraw from the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the IPCC. ([Al Jazeera](#))
- More than a dozen health and environmental groups sued; litigation is expected to take years and likely reach the Supreme Court. This is a genuinely open legal question, not a settled harm yet. ([Al Jazeera](#))

Federal Reserve independence

- Trump repeatedly threatened to fire Chair Jerome Powell over interest-rate policy, including posting that his "termination cannot come fast enough." DOJ opened (and later closed, in April 2026) a criminal investigation into Fed building renovations under Powell. ([The Conversation](#), [CryptoNews](#))
- Trump attempted to fire Fed Governor Lisa Cook over mortgage-fraud allegations; a court blocked the removal, and the Supreme Court's ruling was pending as of mid-2026. ([The Conversation](#))
- Powell, after leaving office in May 2026, said publicly that the pressure campaign would "wreck public trust" in the central bank, describing it alongside pressure on courts and universities as a political "stress test." He'd earlier said in real time: "This is about whether the Fed will be able to continue to set interest rates based on evidence and economic conditions—or whether instead monetary policy will be directed by political pressure or intimidation." ([CNBC](#), [NPR](#))

- David Wessel of Brookings (nonpartisan) called this "unprecedented" — economists broadly agree, citing the 1970s Nixon-Burns episode, that political interference with central banks tends to produce worse inflation outcomes, which is the actual mechanism of harm being alleged here rather than just norm-breaking for its own sake. ([NPR](#), [PBS](#))

Federal workforce / Schedule F

- GAO's June 2026 report — nonpartisan — found nearly 378,000 employees separated from just 22 major federal agencies during 2025, with the total workforce across those agencies declining by nearly 256,000 (11%+) from December 2024 to January 2026. Some agencies (Education) saw declines exceeding 30-45%. ([GAO](#))
- OPM finalized "Schedule Policy/Career," reviving a first-term "Schedule F" concept, reclassifying an estimated 50,000 federal employees (~2% of the workforce) into a category agencies can fire without normal civil-service procedural protections, including for "subversion of presidential directives." ([EPI](#), [GovExec](#))
- A federal workforce policy expert and former OMB official under George W. Bush (Robert Shea, another non-Democratic-coded source) told Federal News Network the changes have had a "chilling effect," saying career officials are now more cautious about offering professional advice that might be perceived as resistance. ([Federal News Network](#))
- A concrete downstream effect: an IRS watchdog warned the agency's 25% staffing cut will likely cause problems in the 2026 tax filing season. ([Federal News Network](#))

Social and Human Rights

Social systems

- The Congressional Budget Office estimates the 2025 reconciliation law will cut federal SNAP funding by \$186 billion through 2034 and cause roughly 15 million Americans to lose health coverage by 2034 due to Medicaid work requirements and related changes. ([EdWeek/CBO](#))
- The right-leaning Washington Examiner reported the law imposes 80-hour/month Medicaid work requirements, shortens retroactive Medicaid coverage from three to one month, and adds new SNAP administrative burdens. ([Washington Examiner](#))
- CBO also found — per an academic op-ed — that Medicaid/SNAP work requirements historically have not increased employment, since most recipients already work, are disabled, or are caregivers. ([Yahoo opinion piece](#))

- Community health centers report funding instability after a since-overturned federal funding freeze, with providers describing lasting disruption to planning. ([Fierce Healthcare](#))

Due process and deportation

- Trump invoked the Alien Enemies Act of 1798 — a wartime authority previously used to justify Japanese-American internment in WWII — to deport alleged Venezuelan gang members without a hearing. Reason's Volokh Conspiracy (libertarian legal scholars, not a left-leaning outlet) called this "a staggering abuse," noting the law had never before been invoked in peacetime and that detainees got "no opportunity at all to contest claims" against them. ([Reason/Volokh](#), [Reason/Volokh](#))
- The administration deported roughly 137 Venezuelans to a maximum-security prison in El Salvador; the government itself admitted "many" had no criminal conviction related to the gang membership allegation used to justify their removal. ([Reason/Volokh](#))
- The Supreme Court's April 2025 ruling in *Trump v. JGG* was a split decision: it let deportations resume on venue grounds but affirmatively held that AEA detainees "are entitled to due process of law" and that Trump's invocation of the Act is subject to judicial review — a real check, even as the administration won on the immediate procedural question. ([Reason/Volokh](#))
- Multiple federal courts (including in Colorado) separately ruled against the administration's use of the Act. ([Reason/Volokh](#))

Broader immigration enforcement

- Human Rights First reports the administration has sent people to offshore detention at Guantanamo Bay, terminated protected legal statuses, and in some cases forcibly transferred individuals to third countries where they aren't citizens — actions HRF says federal courts have repeatedly found unlawful. ([Human Rights First](#))
- The Vera Institute reports ICE has begun arresting people at their own scheduled immigration check-ins and court hearings — i.e., people complying with the legal process — which it argues punishes lawful participation in the system. ([Vera Institute](#))
- The Center for American Progress documented specific cases: a Guatemalan man deported without a legally required torture-screening despite a prior kidnapping/rape in that country, and a woman with a pending asylum appeal deported to Guatemala despite the appeal legally barring removal. ([CAP](#))

- The ACLU's July 2026 report characterizes the scale of civil-rights complaints against immigration agents as "without parallel in modern American history," citing incidents at schools, bus stops, and grocery stores. This is advocacy framing, not a neutral count — treat the characterization, not just the underlying incidents, as contested. ([ACLU](#))

Other civil-rights-adjacent actions

- DOJ's Civil Rights Division dropped a lawsuit against Alabama over a voter-roll purge program that a prior administration had argued violated the National Voter Registration Act. ([Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights](#))
- The same tracker cites arrests of student protesters not charged with any crime, and use of physical force against nonprofit and elected officials

Harm to human suffering reduction programs

- CBO projects the 2025 reconciliation act will cause roughly 7.7-10.3 million people to lose Medicaid or ACA Marketplace coverage by 2034, and SNAP funding to fall by \$186 billion through 2034. ([EdWeek/CBO](#))
- USAID was dismantled, with an ~83% cut to its programs — this is the trigger event, not a projection. CNN reports the closure led to documented closures of HIV clinics in South Africa and termination of medical programs in Afghanistan. ([CNN](#))
- 1.38 million dual-eligible Medicare/Medicaid beneficiaries are projected by CBO to lose Medicare Savings Program support (helps pay premiums/drug costs), per the underlying CBO estimate cited in the Yale/Penn technical letter to the Senate. ([Yale letter to Senate](#))
- The CMS 2024 minimum nursing-home staffing rule is being delayed a decade under the bill. ([Penn LDI](#))

Harm to human suffering reduction programs (modeled human cost — domestic)

- Yale/Penn researchers, in a formal technical response requested by Senate Finance and HELP Committee ranking members (Wyden, Sanders), projected 42,500 deaths/year from three provisions: 11,300 from coverage loss, 18,200 from Medicare Savings Program disenrollment, 13,000 from the nursing-home staffing rollback. A later addition for expiring ACA premium tax credits brought the total to 51,000+/year. ([Yale School of Public Health](#))
- A separate, peer-reviewed Harvard/CUNY study in *Annals of Internal Medicine* estimated 16,600+ deaths/year from Medicaid-specific coverage loss alone (a narrower scope than

the Yale/Penn letter), along with 1.3 million people unable to fill needed medications and 380,000 women skipping mammograms. ([STAT News](#), [PNHP/Harvard summary](#))

Harm to human suffering reduction programs (modeled human cost — international)

- The Lancet's peer-reviewed model (Rasella et al., using data from 133 countries) estimated USAID funding had prevented ~91 million deaths over 20 years, and projected the 83% cut trajectory could cause 9.4 million additional deaths by 2030 (14 million in some subsequent framings), including 4.5 million children under 5. An independent expert not involved in the study (Center for Global Development's Lee Crawford) told CNN "we should take the precise numbers with caution," while affirming the directional finding. ([CNN](#), [UCLA](#))
- For the near-term/already-elapsed period, estimates vary far more widely depending on methodology — real-time trackers (ImpactCounter) put 2025 deaths at ~760,000, while the Lancet's own microsimulation put it near 1.78 million (95% uncertainty interval 967,604–2,496,308). ([Factually.co synthesis of multiple sources](#))

Research funding

- NIH terminated nearly 2,000 already-awarded grants in 2025 under guidance ending funding tied to DEI, gender-identity, or COVID-19 research topics — this is undisputed fact, not allegation. ([The Arc](#))
- A federal district court found the terminations "arbitrary and capricious" and unlawful. But in a 5-4 decision (*NIH v. American Public Health Association*, August 2025), the Supreme Court ruled district courts lack jurisdiction to order reinstatement of already-cancelled grants — those claims must go to the Court of Federal Claims instead, a much narrower and slower venue. Justice Jackson's dissent (quoted in Higher Ed Dive) called this sending plaintiffs on "a likely futile, multivenue quest for complete relief." ([NBC News](#), [Higher Ed Dive](#))
- Separately, the First Circuit Court of Appeals upheld a ruling that NIH's attempted 15% cap on indirect research cost reimbursement was unlawful, and DOJ declined to appeal to the Supreme Court — leaving that injunction permanent. This is a case where the administration lost outright and didn't contest further. ([AAMC](#))
- On the NSF side, the Ninth Circuit ordered reinstatement of roughly \$324 million in grants to University of California researchers on First Amendment viewpoint-discrimination grounds (*Thakur v. Trump*, May 2026) — a narrower, university-specific

win for plaintiffs, while broader NSF-wide litigation remains unresolved as of mid-2026. ([CASRAI](#))

Health

Structural changes to vaccine policy apparatus:

- In June 2025, Kennedy fired all 17 members of ACIP (the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices), replacing them with members largely skeptical of vaccines — a move NPR reports led top CDC officials to resign in protest. ([NPR](#))
- The reconstituted panel voted in December 2025 to end the 34-year-old universal recommendation that all newborns receive the hepatitis B vaccine at birth. KFF Health News reported the committee's working group studying the change didn't include recognized hepatitis experts, and quoted Stanford infectious-disease specialist Yvonne Maldonado (a fired former ACIP member) saying "almost every statement made by this committee was misinformation, disinformation, or outright lies." ([KFF Health News](#), [CIDRAP](#))
- Since 1991, universal birth-dose hepatitis B vaccination is credited with a 99% reduction in pediatric hepatitis B infections, per Johns Hopkins data cited by Sen. Alsobrooks's office — this baseline effectiveness figure is well-established in the medical literature, independent of the political framing around it. ([Sen. Alsobrooks](#))
- A federal judge in Boston blocked these changes in March 2026 — both the reduced childhood immunization schedule and the ACIP membership changes — ruling "the government has disregarded those methods and thereby undermined the integrity of its actions." A court, not an advocacy group, found the process itself defective. ([NPR](#))
- HHS canceled roughly \$500 million in mRNA vaccine research contracts. Michael Osterholm (CIDRAP director, a nonpartisan infectious-disease expert) said: "I see a potential here for the dramatic reduction in vaccine access for this country." ([Axios](#))

Measles outbreak and deaths — documented, not modeled:

- Since January 2025, the U.S. has recorded more than 5,000 confirmed measles cases — compared to 4,485 total cases in the entire 2000–2024 period combined. ([MS NOW](#))
- Confirmed measles deaths since 2025 (five total, per CDC/state health department confirmation) exceed the total measles death count for the prior 20 years combined (three deaths, 2000-2020). ([Newsweek](#))

- Of confirmed 2025 cases, more than 70% were children, 93% were unvaccinated, and 11% required hospitalization. ([The Hill](#))
- This is the largest U.S. measles outbreak since the disease's 2000 elimination — 35 years. South Carolina's outbreak alone reached 789+ cases, larger than Texas's initial outbreak. ([NBC News via secondary source](#), [Time](#))

Modeled/projected harm

- A cited analysis found that a 1% annual decrease in vaccination rate could produce ~17,000 additional measles cases, 4,085 hospitalizations, and 36 deaths annually — this is a projection built on epidemiological modeling of vaccination-rate elasticity, not an observed count. ([MS NOW](#))

Disease surveillance infrastructure

- A peer-reviewed study in *Annals of Internal Medicine* (reported by STAT News) found that of 82 CDC surveillance databases that were updated at least monthly at the start of 2025, 38 had gone dark by early 2026 — no new data, no explanation, no resumption timeline. 87% of the paused databases were vaccination-related. ([STAT News](#))
- Medscape reported on a related analysis where the study authors said they couldn't determine definitively whether layoffs, budget cuts, or "changing governmental policy directives" caused the pauses — an important honesty note, since intent is harder to prove than the effect. One editorialist (Marrazzo) argued it "did not matter whether the pauses were due to CDC layoffs or if they were intentional" — either explanation reflects the same practical harm. ([Medscape](#))
- In October 2025, the CDC issued layoff notices to 1,000+ employees, hitting outbreak-response teams, disease detectives, outbreak forecasters, and data/policy offices — during the run-up to winter respiratory virus season. The entire staff of the *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* (MMWR), the CDC's flagship surveillance publication running since 1961, was reportedly let go. ([CNN](#), [Seeking Alpha/WaPo](#))
- Fiona Havers, MD, who oversaw COVID/respiratory-virus surveillance data before resigning in June 2025, told Medscape the current data is "still reliable," but warned that continued budget and staffing cuts threaten the CDC's ability to "continue to track those important public health measures with the same level of accuracy" going forward — a measured, credentialed assessment rather than an alarmist one. ([Medscape](#))

Food safety surveillance

- In July 2025, CDC's FoodNet program — a 30-year, federal-state partnership tracking foodborne pathogens — reduced required monitoring from eight pathogens to two, dropping cyclospora surveillance. ([Newsweek](#))
- By mid-2026, a cyclosporiasis outbreak spread across 17 states, including an unusually large 700-case cluster in Michigan. ([Newsweek](#))
- Colorado's state epidemiology office said that without federal FoodNet funding, it correspondingly scaled back its own surveillance — and is now experiencing its own cyclospora outbreak. ([HuffPost](#))
- CDC's Division of Parasitic Diseases and Malaria was reportedly dissolved in 2025. ([Newsweek](#))
- Janet Hamilton, executive director of the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (a nonpartisan public-health professional body), told TIME: "the scale and magnitude of outbreaks that we're facing right now are unprecedented. It's like we're being eclipsed by the scale and magnitude of these outbreaks with the staffing levels that we have." ([TIME](#))
- RFK Jr. stated at a July 2026 press briefing: "Those criticisms are invalid. We had no cuts in the surveillance program. We did cuts in the FoodNet program, but they were for redundant surveillance." ([TIME](#)) But a University of Minnesota food-safety professor, Craig Hedberg, directly disputed Kennedy's "redundant surveillance" characterization of FoodNet. ([HuffPost](#))

SAMHSA (mental health / addiction services) restructuring

- In March 2025, HHS announced eliminating SAMHSA as a standalone agency, folding it into a new "Administration for a Healthy America" (AHA) — this despite Congress rejecting the reorganization plan, per Partnership to End Addiction's reporting. ([Partnership News Service](#))
- By November 2025, more than half of SAMHSA's staff had been laid off or left — from ~900 employees in January 2025 down to ~400, with only 5 of the agency's 17 most senior leaders remaining. ([Partnership News Service](#))
- Bipartisan-relevant detail: a group of Senators (letter cited via Schiff's office) warned specifically about risk to the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, which SAMHSA administers and which has served 14.5 million Americans since 2022 — warning further cuts "risk decimating the Lifeline." ([Schiff Senate office](#))

- The National Alliance on Mental Illness and 11 other mental-health organizations jointly stated the immediate reduction-in-force meant "these agencies will lose staff with years of experience and expertise, and the pathway for transition of their knowledge... is unclear." ([Becker's Behavioral Health](#))
- HHS's stated rationale, given directly to Psychiatric News: the restructuring aims to "streamline resources and eliminate redundancies" and that "critical programs within SAMHSA will continue" under AHA. ([Psychiatric News](#))

Rural hospitals and maternal care

- The reconciliation law cuts an estimated \$911 billion–\$1 trillion from federal Medicaid/CHIP spending over 10 years (CBO figure). Public Citizen identified 446 hospitals at heightened risk of closure using a methodology based on Medicaid payer-mix share and negative profit margins; a separate UNC analysis identified 338 at-risk hospitals. ([Public Citizen](#), [Maine Morning Star](#))
- The Center for Healthcare Quality and Payment Reform found 27 rural labor-and-delivery units closed in 2025 (up from 21 in 2024), and that 116 rural hospitals have ended or announced ending deliveries since 2020. Only 41% of U.S. rural hospitals now offer L&D services at all. ([Becker's/CHQPR](#))
- Concrete documented cases: Greene County General Hospital (Indiana) ended obstetrics in January 2026; Winner Regional Health (South Dakota) closed its labor-and-delivery unit, forcing patients into 90-mile trips to deliver and 3-hour round trips for prenatal care; MDI Health closed inpatient labor and delivery in July 2025. ([Public Citizen](#), [Feminist Majority Foundation](#), [STAT News](#))
- The Commonwealth Fund (nonpartisan health-policy research organization) notes a specific mechanism: the law caps state-directed Medicaid payments, which had helped rural hospitals offset chronically low reimbursement rates — and separately, expiring enhanced ACA premium tax credits could cost rural hospitals an additional \$1.6 billion in patient revenue. ([Commonwealth Fund](#))

Title X (contraceptive/family planning access)

- Trump's FY2026 budget request proposed eliminating the entire Title X program (\$286 million), which serves 2.8 million people via ~3,744 clinics. It's the government's only program solely dedicated to funding contraceptive counseling, basic infertility services, STI/HIV testing, and related preventive care — not abortion (Title X funds are barred from funding abortion by law). ([Commonwealth Fund](#), [Congress.gov/CRS](#))

- In 2025, the administration withheld 22 Title X grants, affecting 865 family-planning sites and an estimated 842,000 patients, before reversing course after the ACLU sued on behalf of the National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association. ([Snopes](#))
- During the October 2025 government shutdown, HHS laid off the entire office responsible for administering Title X (part of the broader 1,100+ HHS layoffs); those staff were later reinstated as part of the deal ending the shutdown. ([Snopes](#))
- HHS has since signaled it will shift Title X's focus away from hormonal birth control for 2027 funding and reinstate a "domestic gag rule" separating Title X funding from any facility connected to abortion — a policy from Trump's first term, rescinded under Biden. Notably, this has created friction *within* the administration's own coalition: SBA Pro-Life America called the initial decision to keep funding Planned Parenthood-affiliated clinics "political suicide," while HHS delayed reinstating the stricter rule despite pressure from anti-abortion groups. ([NBC News](#), [Roll Call](#))

Ethics

Profiting from office

- Trump's family sold a 49% stake in World Liberty Financial to a UAE royal shortly before he took office; the WSJ reported the deal was worth roughly \$187 million. Months later, the administration approved advanced AI chip exports to that same royal's company, G42 — previously restricted over China ties. ([WSJ via Democracy Forward substack](#))
- Trump's 2026 financial disclosure (927 pages, filed with the Office of Government Ethics) showed the family earned over \$1 billion in a year from crypto ventures and other businesses — more than \$500 million from World Liberty Financial and \$600 million+ from the \$TRUMP meme coin. ([NPR](#))
- Former White House ethics lawyer Richard Painter (who served under George W. Bush) said Trump "stands alone in having such substantial financial conflicts of interest" as president, since — unlike prior presidents — his assets remain under family control rather than a blind trust, with no moratorium on foreign deals. ([NPR](#), [MarketBeat/AP](#))
- Forbes estimated Trump's net worth at \$6.3 billion as of April 2026, roughly triple his estimated \$2.4 billion at the start of 2024. ([American Progress tracker](#))

- A recent Deseret News poll (Deseret leans conservative) found more than 6 in 10 U.S. adults oppose Trump family foreign business dealings — and reported a genuine Republican split on the question, not unanimous defense. ([Deseret News](#))

Abuse of Law

- Just Security's litigation tracker (nonpartisan, run out of NYU/Reiss Center) counted 753 cases challenging administration actions as of April 2026, with a published snapshot showing 272 plaintiff wins vs. 133 government wins (many cases still pending). ([Factually.co synthesis](#), [allaboutlawyer.com](#))
- The New York Times tracker found plaintiffs prevailed in 48 final-merits district-court rulings versus 5 losses in that specific sample — a narrower, more rigorous category (final rulings only, not preliminary injunctions). ([Factually.co](#))
- Forbes found roughly a 60% loss rate for the administration across a sample of 191 rulings since inauguration, weighted toward emergency/short-term rulings. ([Factually.co](#))
- Lawfare's tracker (which treats a district case and its appeals as one matter, a stricter count) had 316 active cases as of April 2026. ([allaboutlawyer.com](#))
- Learning Resources, Inc. v. Trump / Trump v. V.O.S. Selections (Feb. 20, 2026) — Supreme Court, 6-3, ruled IEEPA does not authorize the sweeping "Liberation Day" tariffs; ~70% of the administration's tariff structure was invalidated. Chief Justice Roberts wrote the majority opinion. ([WilmerHale](#), [Levy Institute](#))
- Trump v. Barbara (June 30, 2026) — Supreme Court, 6-3, struck down the executive order attempting to restrict birthright citizenship for children of undocumented parents as unconstitutional. ([NAACP LDF tracker](#))
- AAMC/First Circuit indirect-cost case (Jan. 2026) — First Circuit upheld a ruling that NIH's attempted 15% cap on research indirect-cost reimbursement was unlawful; DOJ declined to appeal, making the injunction permanent. ([AAMC tracker](#) — covered earlier in this conversation)
- Thakur v. Trump (Ninth Circuit, May 2026) — ordered reinstatement of ~\$324 million in NSF, NEH, and EPA grants to University of California researchers on First Amendment viewpoint-discrimination grounds. (covered earlier)
- New York Times v. Department of Defense (March 2026) — federal judge ruled Pentagon press-restriction rules unconstitutional (First and Fifth Amendment violations, "viewpoint discrimination and censorship"). (covered earlier)

- Colorado AEA ruling and other district courts — multiple rulings against the administration's use of the Alien Enemies Act for deportations without due process. (covered earlier)
- Lisa Cook firing — blocked by a federal court; Supreme Court ruling was pending as of mid-2026. (covered earlier)
- F-1 student visa terminations (spring 2025) — more than 100 lawsuits and 50 restraining orders across the country before the administration reversed course and restored registrations. ([Just Security tracker](#))
- NLRB/FLRA removals — federal judges ruled Trump could not remove Gwynne Wilcox (NLRB) or the head of the Federal Labor Relations Authority. ([Rep. Bennie Thompson's tracker citing Just Security](#) — note this is a Democratic congressional office's flyer, so treat as advocacy-sourced, though the underlying Just Security citations are traceable)
- USAID funds — a federal judge ordered the administration to pay nearly \$2 billion in already-completed USAID work. (same flyer, Just Security-sourced)

Cases where the administration is lawlessly ignoring clear court orders

Abrego Garcia — the clearest example, including a Supreme Court order:

- In March 2025, DHS mistakenly deported Kilmar Abrego Garcia, a Maryland resident, to El Salvador's CECOT prison — an error DHS itself acknowledged. ([GW Law Review](#))
- District Judge Paula Xinis ordered the government to "facilitate" his return; the Fourth Circuit affirmed. On April 10, 2025, the Supreme Court ruled 9-0 that the administration must facilitate his return. ([Al Jazeera](#))
- Weeks later, Judge Xinis said on the record: "I've gotten nothing... no real response and no real legal justification for not answering," and found no evidence officials had even attempted compliance. ([NBC News](#), [Democracy Now](#))
- He was eventually returned in June 2025 — but to face new criminal charges, not as compliance with the original order as his own attorneys framed it. They called the government's conduct "flagrant," "vocal and sustained," and asked for contempt sanctions and fines even after his return. ([Yahoo/Reuters](#), [MSNBC](#))

Boasberg / Alien Enemies Act deportation flights:

- Judge James Boasberg ordered deportation flights to El Salvador halted mid-air in March 2025; the planes landed anyway. Salvadoran President Bukele mocked the ruling online: "Oopsie... too late" — which Boasberg cited, along with Secretary of State Rubio

reposting it, as evidence officials "intimated that they had defied the Court's Order deliberately and gleefully." ([Al Jazeera](#))

- In April 2025, Boasberg found "probable cause" to hold administration officials in criminal contempt, writing: "The Constitution does not tolerate willful disobedience of judicial orders — especially by officials of a coordinate branch who have sworn an oath to uphold it." ([Newsweek](#))

The broader, quantified pattern

- Washington Post analysis found that in 57 of 165 lawsuits decided against the administration, officials defied, delayed, or manipulated compliance in ways that undermined the rulings — roughly one in three. Specific documented tactic: after a judge blocked a federal grant freeze, OMB rescinded the memo that caused the freeze but kept the freeze itself in place. Judge Loren AliKhan called this "few things more disingenuous." Separately, NIH cut funding for a transgender youth health program under the very policy a court had enjoined; a different judge (Lauren King) ordered records production and reinstated the grant. ([NationofChange, citing WaPo](#))
- In an ICE-specific case, a federal judge's order documented 96 violations of court orders across 74 cases in January 2026 alone, writing: "ICE has likely violated more court orders in January 2026 than some federal agencies have violated in their entire existence." The order noted the count was "almost certainly substantially understated" since it only covered orders since January 1, 2026. ([Just Security](#), corroborated by [CAP](#))
- Ryan Goodman (NYU law professor tracking the litigation) told Fortune: "What the court system is experiencing in the last year and a half is just qualitatively completely different from anything that's preceded it." Legal scholars and former federal judges cited in the same piece said they could recall "at most a few" violations across full four-year terms of prior administrations, including Trump's own first term. ([Fortune](#))
- Separately, District Judge Sunshine Sykes (a Biden appointee) accused officials of seeking "to erode any semblance of separation of powers," adding they could "only do so in a world where the Constitution does not exist" — unusually blunt language for a sitting federal judge. ([Fortune](#))
- The Brennan Center compiled statements from sitting Republican senators pushing back on the idea that court compliance is optional — including Majority Leader John Thune, and Sens. Lankford and Murkowski explicitly saying the administration must comply with rulings even while appealing them. This matters because it shows the objection isn't purely partisan: ([Brennan Center](#))

DOJ politicization

- After U.S. Attorney Erik Siebert refused to bring charges against New York AG Letitia James, he resigned under what the New York Times/PBS characterized as White House pressure; the administration then indicted former FBI Director James Comey. Both the James and Comey cases were later dismissed by courts after an appeals panel found the replacement prosecutor, Lindsey Halligan, was unlawfully serving. ([The Hill](#))
- Trump publicly posted about James, Comey and others: "They're all guilty as hell, but nothing is being done" — directed at his own Attorney General, per the International Bar Association's account, which also reports aides insisted the message was intended privately. ([IBA](#))
- The IBA reports more than 100 DOJ prosecutors and career lawyers resigned since Trump returned to office — an exodus it describes (citing NYT reporting) as far exceeding normal transition turnover, with many citing political interference or pressure to drop cases against Trump allies. ([IBA](#))
- Richard Painter (Republican, former GW Bush ethics counsel — cited earlier in this conversation too) called this "a direct assault on the non-political administration of justice" and warned it risks the pattern of "political enemies... punished and allies protected," comparing it to Putin's Russia. Painter is a genuinely non-partisan-coded source here, having served a GOP administration. ([IBA](#))

Press access

- In October 2025, at least 30 news organizations (NYT, AP, AFP, Fox News, Military Times, Defense News, among others) forfeited their Pentagon press credentials rather than sign new rules barring them from soliciting any information — classified or not — without prior Pentagon authorization. This is notable for ideological breadth: Fox News declined the rules alongside NYT and AP. ([Wikipedia/First Amendment Encyclopedia](#), [The Intercept](#))
- A federal judge ruled in March 2026 that the Pentagon rules were unconstitutional — violating the First and Fifth Amendments and amounting to "viewpoint discrimination and censorship" — in *New York Times v. Department of Defense*. The Pentagon reissued substantially similar rules days later; the Times moved to compel compliance with the court's order. ([The Intercept](#), [PBS](#))

- The Pentagon subsequently announced it would close the "Correspondents' Corridor" reporters have used for decades, following the judge's ruling reinstating NYT's credentials — the Pentagon Press Association called this a "clear violation of the letter and spirit" of the ruling. ([PBS](#))
- Separately, the White House restricted press corps access to the press secretary's office ("Upper Press") without an appointment, and earlier removed Reuters, AP, and Bloomberg from the permanent press pool (allowing only sporadic participation). ([CNN](#), [Al Jazeera](#))

Mid-decade redistricting

- Trump directly asked Texas Republicans in July 2025 to redraw congressional maps mid-decade — outside the normal once-per-decade, post-census cycle — to create five additional GOP-leaning seats, and pushed several other states to follow. ([NPR](#), [CAP](#))
- Before 2025, only two states had done voluntary mid-decade redistricting since 1970; by early 2026, six states had passed new maps for this cycle — more than any non-post-census cycle since 1983-84, per Votebeat. ([Votebeat](#), [Ballotpedia](#))
- A lower court found the Texas legislature had likely conducted a racial gerrymander; the Supreme Court's conservative majority nonetheless allowed the map to proceed for the 2026 cycle. ([NPR](#))
- As of the most recent reporting, Fox News reports Trump's push has netted Republicans at least 10 additional right-leaning seats, following Supreme Court and Virginia state-court rulings favorable to the GOP maps and a Missouri court allowing that state's map to stand for November. ([Fox News](#))

Inspectors General purge

- In January 2025, Trump fired 17-20 inspectors general (accounts vary slightly — EPI says 17, other reporting says nearly 20) across major agencies in a single Friday-night action, without the legally required 30-day notice and rationale to Congress. ([EPI](#), [American Oversight](#))
- A federal judge later found the firings an "obvious" violation of the law, per Government Executive's reporting. ([GovExec](#))
- Notably retaliatory-looking case: USAID's Inspector General was fired two weeks after his office released a report warning the administration's actions had "significantly impacted USAID's capacity to disburse and safeguard its humanitarian assistance programming," leaving oversight "largely non-operational." ([CBPP](#))

- In October 2025, under cover of the government shutdown, at least 15-28 Inspector General office websites (accounts vary by outlet/date) went dark, cutting public access to watchdog reports and whistleblower hotline links. OMB's stated justification: IGs "have become corrupt, partisan, and in some cases, have lied to the public." ([GovExec](#))
- Mark Greenblatt, former chair of the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE) and a former Interior Department IG — a nonpartisan oversight figure, not a political actor — said: "Shuttering CIGIE will eviscerate transparency in our federal government." ([GovExec](#))
- Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) — a Republican, and historically one of the Senate's strongest institutional defenders of IG independence across administrations — criticized the administration on social media for not notifying Congress about a later IG firing. This is a meaningful bipartisan objection, not purely partisan pushback. ([GovExec](#))

BLS / economic statistics

- On August 1, 2025, Trump fired BLS Commissioner Erika McEntarfer — a Biden appointee confirmed by the Senate with bipartisan support in January 2024, serving a statutory four-year term — hours after BLS released a weak July jobs report that also revised May/June figures down by 258,000 jobs. Trump publicly accused her of manipulating data to embarrass him, without evidence. ([ABC News](#), [amstat.org](#))
- William Beach — a Trump-appointed former BLS commissioner from Trump's first term — publicly condemned the firing: "The totally groundless firing of Dr. Erika McEntarfer... sets a dangerous precedent and undermines the statistical mission of the Bureau." This is a strong data point: this isn't a partisan critic, it's Trump's own prior appointee to the same job. ([ABC News](#))
- Beach separately noted, on the mechanics: "The president and his economic team only see the data the day before publication" — undercutting the claim that career BLS staff or the commissioner had any special ability to rig the numbers to embarrass Trump specifically, since the commissioner doesn't control the underlying data generation. ([NBC News](#))
- Trump nominated E.J. Antoni — chief economist at the Heritage Foundation, a Project 2025 contributor, and a vocal BLS critic — as McEntarfer's replacement. ([Time](#))
- Separately, the government shutdown (Oct-Nov 2025) forced BLS to suspend data collection and release entirely for six weeks; the October jobs report was never fully released because the household survey portion cannot be retroactively conducted once the collection window passes — a permanent data gap, not just a delay. ([PBS](#))

- Later BLS data (released after McEntarfer's firing, so under new leadership) showed the March 2024–April 2025 period had 911,000 fewer jobs than originally reported — the largest revision on record. This complicates the "data was being faked to look bad" narrative Trump used to justify the firing, since post-firing data continued showing weakness. ([Washington Post](#))

Fiscal Policy and Budget

Budget costs

- Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth requested a \$200 billion supplemental from Congress early in the war, and later sought another \$67 billion, warning of "critical shortfalls" without it. ([Fox News](#), [NPR](#))
- Pentagon estimates put the cost at \$11.3 billion for just the first six days, per closed-door congressional testimony reported by Fox News. ([Fox News](#))
- The administration's proposed FY2027 defense budget is \$1.5 trillion — a 44% increase over FY2026 — driven substantially by the need to replenish munitions. ([Al Jazeera](#))

Financial stability of the US

- CBO's February 2026 outlook projects federal debt held by the public rising from 101% of GDP in 2026 to 120% by 2036 — surpassing the prior record set just after World War II (106%). In dollar terms, that's debt growing from ~\$31 trillion to \$56 trillion. ([CRFB summary of CBO](#), [CBO](#))
- The FY2026 deficit is \$1.9 trillion (5.8% of GDP), rising to \$3.1 trillion (6.7% of GDP) by 2036 — well above the 50-year average deficit of 3.8% of GDP. ([CBO](#))
- CBO attributes the deterioration to three main factors since last year's baseline: the 2025 reconciliation act ("One Big Beautiful Bill") adds \$4.7 trillion to deficits through 2035; reduced immigration adds \$0.5 trillion; higher tariffs subtract about \$3 trillion. Net effect: worse than before the law passed, even accounting for tariff revenue. ([CBO Director's statement](#))
- Interest costs alone will more than double, from \$970 billion in 2025 to \$2.1 trillion by 2036 — rising from 3.2% to 4.6% of GDP. CBO calls the fiscal trajectory "not sustainable" in its own words. ([CRFB](#))

- Major trust funds are approaching insolvency on a faster timeline: the Highway Trust Fund depletes by 2028, Social Security's retirement trust fund by 2032, Medicare's Hospital Insurance fund around 2040. ([CRFB](#))

US credit rating

- In May 2025, Moody's stripped the U.S. of its last remaining AAA/Aaa rating, downgrading it to Aa1 — following earlier downgrades by S&P (2011) and Fitch (2023), meaning all three major agencies now rate U.S. debt below top-tier. Moody's cited growing debt and interest-payment ratios "significantly higher than similarly rated sovereigns" and explicitly noted "successive US administrations and Congress have failed to agree on measures to reverse the trend." ([CNN](#), [Axios](#))
- Moody's forecasts federal debt reaching ~134% of GDP by 2035 (up from 98% in 2024) and deficits widening toward 9% of GDP. ([Axios](#))
- Moody's downgrade landed the same day Trump's tax bill stalled in the House on a procedural vote over insufficient spending cuts — timing that undercut the administration's framing of the bill as fiscally responsible. ([Global News](#))

Administration's own budget numbers undercut its narrative

- The White House Council of Economic Advisers projected (pre-passage) that debt would *fall* to 97% of GDP by end of FY2026 and deficits would shrink to \$1.7 trillion. CBO's actual post-passage baseline instead shows debt at 101% and climbing to 120% by 2036 — the administration's own rosier framework has already diverged sharply from the nonpartisan referee's numbers. ([CRFB tracker](#))
- The Penn Wharton Budget Model, an independent academic group, separately estimated the reconciliation bill increases primary deficits by \$3.2 trillion over 10 years (\$3.6 trillion dynamically), while shrinking GDP by 0.3% in 10 years and 4.6% in 30 years. ([Penn Wharton](#))