

'Democracy weeks away from disintegrating': Democratic senator issues warning — and a plan



Chris Murphy, Image via Screengrab.

Written by [David Badash](#) February 05, 2025



As President Donald [Trump](#) and Elon Musk attempt to [systematically dismantle](#) the United States government, agency by agency, they are working to eliminate vast numbers of employees, [removing public data](#) and institutional knowledge, and reportedly [accessing sensitive government records](#) and [personal information](#) of American citizens. In response, many grassroots Democratic voters are demanding to know what their party's elected leaders are doing to stop them.

There appears to be a growing sense among some on the left that top elected Democrats are [out of touch](#), unable or unwilling to grasp the severity of what some say is a [constitutional crisis](#) and others are simply calling a “[coup](#).”

And while a few House and Senate Democrats this week showed up at the Washington, D.C. offices of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and were denied access, and others held a press conference, few elected Democrats appear to have understood this extremely volatile moment — or at least publicly communicated what is actually going on.

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U.S. Senator Chris Murphy (D-CT) has been leading the battle against President Trump and his director of the so-called Department of Government Efficiency, Elon Musk.

For the uninitiated, here’s how [The Washington Post](#) summed up recent events on Tuesday.

“U.S. government officials privately warn Musk’s blitz appears illegal,” the headline reads. “The billionaire’s DOGE team has launched an all-out assault on federal agencies, triggering numerous legal objections.”

“Over the past two weeks, Musk’s team has moved to dismantle some U.S. agencies, push out hundreds of thousands of civil servants and gain access to some of the federal government’s most sensitive payment systems,” The Post reported. The paper noted that “many of these moves appear to violate federal law, according to more than two dozen current and former officials, one audio recording, and several internal messages obtained by The Washington Post. Internal legal objections have been raised at the Treasury Department, the Education Department, the U.S. Agency for International Development, the General Services Administration, the Office of Personnel Management, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the White House budget office, among others.”

Financial Times’ columnist Ed Luce, on MSNBC Wednesday morning, put this moment in starker terms.

“This is a coup that’s happening. It is happening here. It’s happening now,” he declared, as [Mediaite](#) reported. “So I think this requires a far more radical and drastic sort of rethink of what the Democrats’ democratic strategy should be.”

On Tuesday morning, Senator Murphy spoke with MSNBC political analyst Anand Giridharadas, who praised him as a “real leader” who started “early” in the Trump-Musk battle.

Giridharadas [said](#) that “the Democrats’ transition from being asleep during a coup to being awake during a coup is a trend in the right direction — being awake is certainly preferable to being

asleep, and some of that, you know, I think Chris Murphy has been someone who's been a real leader early in this."

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"But at the end of the day, the Democratic Party right now is completely leaderless," he lamented. "There's no real clear sense of fight. You still have these messages of, well, 'we gotta trust in God,' or well, 'we'll pass a law to regulate the Treasury.'"

"There's no understanding that this is a very serious concerted an anti-constitutional coup being waged by very determined actors."

Senator Murphy shared his concerns—and plan—with Giridharadas.

Giridharadas told Murphy he thought the Senator's "present-level thinking about the future of the Democratic Party...has been clearer and starker and more honest."

But he also charged, "I would imagine that 90% of people watching this right now feel profoundly undefended by the Democratic Party."

Murphy replied, "I do think that people understand that we are the minority party. We don't run the White House, we are the minority in the House and in the Senate, but we need to act like a real opposition party in the middle of a constitutional and democracy crisis."

And he offered a plan for his colleagues and grassroots Democrats.

"That means we should not be moving forward nominees or legislation in the United States Senate. Democrats should not be giving votes to nominees or to legislation in the United States Senate until Republicans get serious about this crisis. Democrats should not help Republicans raise the debt ceiling in order to pass their massive tax cut for billionaires and millionaires."

"Democrats should be leading public gatherings all weekend, all across the country to bring Americans out to show Republicans if they will pay a price. And then Democrats need to speak in really stark terms about what is going on here."

Calling it "a billionaire power grab," Murphy said, "I think Elon Musk is trying to steal our money, is trying to steal our data. I think Elon Musk is shutting down the USAD because he wants to do deals with China and make more money. And and I know that there are some in the Democratic Party that, you know, don't like jumping to conclusions, that there are some of the Democratic Party that don't like to call out specific billionaires for what they are doing to all of us, but this is a moment in which we've got to engage in very, very simple and strong terms about what is happening."

“Side by side with being a true opposition party in the Senate, using our tools to make life difficult for complicit Republicans, and then going out there and leading a public engagement, which is I think the next step that we have to do, don’t just fight on the inside, go fight on the outside.”

On social media, Murphy added, “We still have the power to stop this billionaire power grab, but Democrats need to act like our democracy is weeks away from disintegrating—because it is.”

Watch the video below or [at this link](#).

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