



## A 2nd U.S. judge says Trump administration must pause its federal spending freeze

JANUARY 31, 2025 · 9:04 PM ET

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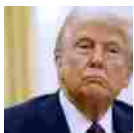
President Trump speaks to journalists in the Oval Office on Friday. A federal judge in Rhode Island has issued an order blocking the administration's efforts to freeze some federal spending.

*Roberto Schmidt/AFP via Getty Images*

A judge with the U.S. District Court for the District of Rhode Island has [issued a temporary restraining order](#) blocking the Trump administration's efforts to freeze payments for grants and other programs.

The Friday ruling stems from a lawsuit filed earlier this week by Democratic attorneys general in 22 states and the District of Columbia. It is separate from a lawsuit filed by Democracy Forward and other non-profit groups that resulted in a separate federal judge's decision [to temporarily block the plan](#) as originally detailed in a memo by the Office of Management and Budget. The White House later rescinded that OMB memo, but stated that its review of federal funding remained in effect.

Judge John J. McConnell, Jr. who issued the Friday order, noted that he came to his conclusion after reviewing statements by the Trump administration [in response to the widespread confusion](#) sparked by the OMB memo. The judge's review included [a post on X](#) issued by White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt issued after the OMB memo was rescinded. As the judge noted, the post said that the president's executive orders on federal funding "remain in full force and effect and will be rigorously implemented."



POLITICS

### **White House response adds to confusion on federal funding freeze**

For now, the order blocks any suspension of federal dollars to the 22 states that were party to the suit — as well as the District of Columbia.

In issuing the order, the court stated: "During the pendency of the Temporary Restraining Order, Defendants shall not pause, freeze, impede, block, cancel, or terminate Defendants' compliance with awards and obligations to provide federal financial assistance to the States, and Defendants shall not impede the States' access to such awards and obligations, except on the basis of the applicable authorizing statutes, regulations, and terms."

New York's Attorney General Letitia James, who is among those leading the suit, believes the temporary restraining order extends beyond the January 28 administrative stay as well as the rescinded OMB memo and is directed at President Trump's actions that have called for a pause in federal funding.



POLITICS

### **Judge pauses Trump's federal funding freeze as confusion and frustration spread**

"I led a coalition of attorneys general in suing to stop this cruel policy, and today we won a court order to stop it. The President cannot unilaterally halt congressional spending commitments. I will continue to fight against these illegal cuts and protect essential services that New Yorkers and millions of Americans across the country depend on," James said in a statement released Friday.

A senior administration official who was not authorized to discuss the decision publicly called Friday's ruling a backdoor attack on the president's executive orders, and described the decision as unconstitutional.

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