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Governor Shapiro Files Lawsuit Challenging Trump Administration's Unconstitutional Federal Funding Freeze in Order to Protect Pennsylvania Interests

Pennsylvania state agencies unable to access \$1.2 billion in Congressionally-appropriated federal funding as of February 12, 2025, with an additional \$900 million requiring an undefined review by federal agencies.

Despite efforts to work with Pennsylvania's Congressional delegation and multiple court rulings ordering federal agencies to restore access to funding, dollars for critical Pennsylvania-based initiatives remain frozen.

Governor Shapiro is taking action to unfreeze these funds and ensure Pennsylvania is legally protected.

February 13, 2025

Harrisburg, PA – Today, **Governor Josh Shapiro** filed a lawsuit challenging the Trump Administration's unconstitutional freeze of federal funding. As of today – even after multiple court orders to release the federal funds and Governor Shapiro's engagement with Pennsylvania's federal representatives — state agencies still remain entirely unable to access \$1.2 billion in federal funding, with an additional \$900 million requiring an undefined review by federal agencies before it can be drawn down. To ensure the interests of our Commonwealth and its residents are protected, Governor Shapiro is taking legal action to restore access to this funding.

“The federal government has entered into a contract with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, promising to provide billions of dollars in Congressionally-approved funding that we have committed to serious needs – like protecting public health, cutting energy costs, providing safe, clean drinking water, and creating jobs in rural communities,” said **Governor Shapiro**. “With this funding freeze, the Trump Administration is breaking that contract – and it's my job as Governor to protect Pennsylvania's interests. Over the past two weeks, my team and I have engaged with our Congressional delegation to try to restore access to all the federal funding Pennsylvania has been promised under law – but despite those efforts, state agencies remain unable to draw down these critical dollars. While multiple federal judges have ordered the Trump Administration to unfreeze this funding, access has not been restored, leaving my Administration with no choice but to pursue legal action to protect the interests of the Commonwealth and its residents.”

Almost immediately after the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued a directive on January 27, 2025, Commonwealth agencies realized that billions in federal funding appropriated by Congress to Pennsylvania were no longer accessible. Federal agencies suspended access to billions of dollars in funding without supplying a plausible explanation as to why certain funds are being suspended, giving any consideration to the harm their action would cause, or considering how Commonwealth agencies have relied on receiving that committed funding.

Since then, the Shapiro Administration has worked with its federal partners and Pennsylvania's Congressional delegation in an attempt to fully restore access to these funds. Simultaneously, multiple federal judges have ordered the Trump Administration to unfreeze this funding – however, because Pennsylvania was not involved in previous litigation, it is not guaranteed that future litigation in those cases will protect Pennsylvania's interests and funding.

As of February 12, 2025, despite those multiple court orders, over \$1.2 billion in federal funding owed to Pennsylvania agencies remains suspended – and more than \$900 million in funding is now marked as requiring further (but unarticulated) federal agency review before reimbursement requests can be approved.

While Commonwealth agencies cannot draw from certain federal accounts, they are stuck incurring debts and obligations in federally approved projects that the Trump Administration currently is refusing to reimburse. While agencies have some reserves and discretionary dollars to cover small, unexpected debts, the scope of the federal freeze will far exceed those reserves.

Federal funding is in jeopardy for critical Pennsylvania-based initiatives including reclaiming abandoned mine land, capping and plugging orphan wells, and lowering consumer costs. For example, abandoned mine land dollars that are currently frozen will allow the Commonwealth to reclaim 24,000 acres of abandoned mine land across Pennsylvania, construct or maintain 16 water treatment systems that deal with toxic runoff from abandoned mines, and respond to about 60 emergency events per year. Left unaddressed, abandoned mines can cave in and form sinkholes, causing significant property damage and even death – as happened in Westmoreland County in December 2024. Additionally, the federal funding freeze has restricted access to funding that would help plug more than 500 orphaned and abandoned wells that are releasing toxic chemicals in Pennsylvania communities, as well as funding that would help up to 28,000 Pennsylvania households lower their utility bills.

The U.S. Constitution clearly states that federal agencies do not have the power to suspend states' access to money that Congress appropriated or to impose new conditions on money already appropriated and obligated. Governor Shapiro is taking action to unfreeze these funds and ensure Pennsylvania is legally protected so that Commonwealth agencies can continue their work to improve Pennsylvanians' lives.

Read the full complaint [here](#).

Media Contacts

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Governor's Office Media

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