

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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Ranking Member Gerald E. Connolly
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
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Congressional Republicans have finally admitted that President Trump and Elon Musk do not have the legal authority to “delete” whole federal agencies. Nor do they have the legal authority to take a chainsaw to beloved programs like Social Security and Medicaid, or to purge the federal workers that care for veterans, keep our food supply safe, and fight cancer.

Congressional Republicans also know these dangerous, deeply unpopular cuts would never be approved by Congress through regular order. So now they’ve brought us H.R. 1295, the so-called Reorganizing Government Act, in a desperate attempt to circumvent the normal Congressional process.

This bill isn’t about reorganizing government, it’s about dismantling it.

H.R. 1295 would use the shell of a long-dormant statute as a Trojan Horse to give President Trump and Elon Musk unprecedented, filibuster-proof authority to eliminate federal departments and agencies, statutory programs, government services, and regulatory protections that promote the health and well-being of American families.

This dormant authority was used in the past—between 1932 and 1984—to allow a president limited authority to present plans to reorganize limited portions of the government, which could then be fast-tracked through Congress with a simple majority vote in both the House and Senate.

Congress has chosen not to renew this authority in over four decades despite requests to do so from both President George W. Bush and President Barack Obama.

In the past, presidential reorganization authority was used to respond to the needs of the American people, including by creating the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

And it came with key limitations and guardrails. H.R. 1295 dramatically and recklessly expands the power it would give to President Trump and Elon Musk, and without those key limitations and guardrails. In fact, the bill would include new presidential powers that Congress explicitly prohibited the last time it granted this authority.

For example, it would strike language that prevented past plans from abolishing whole executive departments and independent regulatory agencies and terminating any enforcement functions or statutory programs.

The Dismantling Government Act would grant Donald Trump and Elon Musk a filibuster-proof pathway to get their reckless actions blessed by Congress, and we already know exactly what they'll do with that power.

They will abolish whole federal departments and agencies.

President Trump could use his new power to abolish the Department of Education, the Department of Commerce, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, the National Labor Relations Board, and any other federal entity with a simple majority vote in both the House and the Senate.

They will wipe away statutory programs authorized by Congress.

Trump would be able to use this power to eliminate statutory programs through his reorganization plans—a feature that was expressly prohibited in the past. Republicans in Congress would not be able to amend the plans, so they would be forced to support a broad reorganization package that cuts or eliminates Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, or other programs beloved by their constituents—or otherwise incur the coercive wrath of Presidents Trump and Musk.

They will eliminate regulatory protections that keep people safe and healthy.

President Trump will use this new power to gut agencies' abilities to enforce laws and regulations and to eliminate rules and regulations that he and Elon Musk deem "unnecessary and burdensome." Goodbye regulations that are protecting Americans from junk fees, air pollution, and lead in their drinking water.

And they will use this authority to eliminate the defenses we have against their reckless purges of our federal workers.

Unlike the previous reorganization authority, Trump's new power would explicitly authorize any plan he deemed necessary to reduce the number of federal employees and to eliminate federal operations that he or Elon Musk believe "do not serve the public interest."

With Trump and Musk's purges fast-tracked through Congress, the courts would no longer be able to condemn and reverse the disastrous dismantling of our government.

The Dismantling Government Act does nothing more than hand even more power over to Elon Musk. It is an unconscionable affront to the American people, and I urge my colleagues to oppose it.

I yield back.

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