IndependentWomen®

POLICY FOCUS

APRIL 2025

Unaccountable Bureaucracy, the Civil Service, and Constitutional Government

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HIGHLIGHT

The Trump administration is engaged in a battle to assert democratic control over the unaccountable bureaucracy that has largely grown used to governing the United States with little input from either Congress or its ostensible elected head, the president. At stake is not just introducing sanity and good management to the executive agencies, but restoring constitutional government.

INTRODUCTION

For the first time in a century, the United States is poised to take serious stock of the efficiency, legitimacy, and constitutionality of the *de facto* "fourth branch" of our government: the federal bureaucracy. For decades, nearly three million unelected bureaucrats in a sprawling set of executive agencies have essentially been given free rein to govern America.

During the 2016 election and the first Trump administration, it became clear to many that the "deep state" was not only failing at its promise to be efficient and meritocratic, but also to be apolitical, and to merely execute

the will of the elected president. For four years, illegal abuses of power, #resistance, and copious leaking **characterized** the relationship between the elected head of the executive branch and the employees ostensibly working under him. But a longtime web of regulations and complex appeal systems made it difficult to fire or discipline federal workers, even as they refused work, threw up bureaucratic barriers to policy implementation, and openly defied the directions of the president.

In the past two months, the new Trump administration has made it clear that they plan to bring the administrative state and federal employees to heel and restore lines of political, democratic, and constitutional accountability in the executive branch. The battle being waged between the head of the executive branch and the bureaucrats who staff it may well determine the shape of American governance for the next century.

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THE STATUS QUO OF CIVIL SERVICE PROTECTIONS AT A GLANCE

Excessively vague delegation from Congress and a web of **civil service protections** for federal employees work together to grant enormous and largely unaccountable powers to the federal bureaucracy.

The argument for those delegations and protections has been that modern governance is too "complex" for Congress to keep up with and that efficiency and fairness require that regulation be written by allegedly neutral and apolitical experts. All of these arguments and assumptions are being challenged by the Trump administration today as they try to both downsize and exert political control over the federal bureaucracy.

Far from Apolitical: Neither the public actions of agencies nor the political donations of federal employees paint a picture of political neutrality. **Ninety-five percent** of federal employee donations went to Hillary in 2016, and many agencies continued to have similarly **lopsided** donations (above 90 percent to a single party) in 2020 and 2024.

Hired Without Regard to Merit: There hasn't been a general civil service exam implemented in the United States since the early 1980s, when it was scrapped due to concerns about racial balancing and disparate impact. The only generalized exam currently in use only asks applicants to self-evaluate their own fitness on various skills and requirements.

Nearly Impossible to Fire: Prior to 2025, a tiny fraction of federal employees were dismissed every year, something that even surveys of federal employees and their managers say incentivizes poor performance and makes efficient administration impossible. Since the Covid pandemic, this lack of incentivizing tools combined with remote work to create enormous flexibility with almost no accountability among federal workers.

It's possible these protections have become so strong that they substantially and unconstitutionally interfere with the president's

Article II responsibility to faithfully execute the laws. Meanwhile, the vast majority of American private sector workers are employed at-will, meaning they can be fired for any reason.

Anti-Democratic: The only democratic accountability that voters can wield over federal workers runs through our presidential elections every four years. But when the president only has hiring and firing authority over a tiny percentage of appointees at the top, and those appointees have few ways to discipline or fire workers beneath them, the lines of political and democratic accountability are cut.

A SCLEROTIC AND UNACCOUNTABLE BUREAUCRACY

Most Americans agree our current federal bureaucracy is neither efficient nor effective; a strong **majority** in a recent Pew poll found government agencies to be "almost always wasteful and inefficient." A Government Accountability Office (GAO) study in 2021, for example, estimated that the average EPA environmental review took **close to five years**, and to be blunt, most people do not expect competent or efficient service from most government agencies.

It will therefore surprise very few to learn that in most years, less than 0.2 percent of the federal bureaucracy is **dismissed** from their positions, and that most of those dismissed are in their introductory probationary period. For comparison, **0.6 percent of private sector workers** are fired each year. The process of documentation required to dismiss—or even withhold promotion from—the poorest performers in the federal government is so lengthy that it often takes years to complete, incentivizing managers to just shuffle employees along the federal pay scale without regard to work quality, an intolerable process

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which even federal employees themselves object to. Half of federal employees say in **surveys** that their agencies have poor performers who are allowed to remain in their jobs without any evidence of improvement.

Even if a supervisor decides an employee's performance is bad enough to bother starting the process to let him or her go, it can take months or even years, **averaging** 170 to 370 days. After a documented period under a performance improvement plan and meetings with union representatives, the employee can appeal any decision to the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB).

Then, the whole matter ends up before an administrative law judge, with both sides submitting evidence for a hearing as though dismissing a poor performer were a civil trial. Even if that appeal fails to save his job, the fired employee can take his appeal to the Article III courts and usually retain his paycheck throughout all these years of potential appeals, sometimes even while in jail after being convicted in a criminal court of a crime while on the job.

These processes can be incredibly arcane and onerous.

As an Independent Women **Policy Focus** pointed out in 2018:

> There are two separate processes an agency can follow, each with its

own onerous pathway to dismissal, documented on a 12-step or more flowchart. The process is so ridiculous that a 2013 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report admits that many supervisors choose to ignore consistently poor-performing employees rather than go through it.

Nothing better demonstrates the Herculean efforts required to fire federal workers for the most obvious reasons than the fact that, in 2017, Congress had to pass a special **law** cutting through the process in order to grant supervisors the ability to fire civil servants for watching pornography on government computers during work hours. And even that didn't really work, there are still **many** employees using their taxpayer-paid time to emulate Jeffery Toobin.

Since the Covid-19 pandemic, a new layer of insularity has been added to federal employment: large percentages of workers at home. Work-from-home has many advantages, but it is a **uniquely bad fit** for the current work rules for government employees, since WFH arrangements depend even more upon the ability of the manager to demand deliverable work targets with the ultimate sanction of termination.

The seemingly indiscriminate firing of employees on probationary status that has happened in some agencies and the "Fork in the Road" offers to employees to resign under DOGE's review must be understood within this larger context of the thick protections against firing incompetent and even openly hostile employees. If a president wishes to downsize a department, letting probationary employees go potentially represents one of the only ways to do so.

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A POLITICALLY WEAPONIZED BUREAUCRACY

The federal bureaucracy is also the furthest thing from apolitical.

In the 2024 election, about **70 percent** of federal employee political dollars were donated to Democrats, but even this lopsided figure does not really reflect the political skew of those who work for most of the federal agencies, since it includes the roughly evenly split military departments. The civilian agencies have a much higher Democratic skew, comparable even to other places where Republicans are virtually extinct, like university faculty lounges.

For example, *zero* donations were made to Republicans by Department of Education employees, and at many large and important government agencies the **overwhelming majority** of donations went to Democrats such as at the Department of Labor (95 percent), the Department of Commerce (92 percent), or the Department of the Interior (98 percent). At **USAID**, the agency first caught in the DOGE spotlight, employees of the agency donated 97 percent to Democrats.

It is time to dispense with the Wilsonian conceit that people who work in government service don't exercise a political will of their own.

"POLITICIZATION" OR DEMOCRATIC ACCOUNTABILITY?

Often, the word "politicization" is thrown around as a bad thing with regard to the

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bureaucracy. But the process of promulgating the regulations that now swamp the actual lawmaking in this country has never been an apolitical activity, by definition. Governance is necessarily political; decisions about overfishing enforcement, or for that matter how to balance the risk of infection with a novel pathogen against the economic and personal damage of a lockdown, are inherently *political* judgment calls in a way that no glossing over about neutral expertise can change. The question, then, is not whether the executive branch agencies are politicized but *whose* politics they are enacting and who they are ultimately accountable to for the political decisions they inevitably make.

When critics are more honest, they admit that there is no such thing as truly apolitical expertise.

For example, a column in the Washington Post **admits**:

> Nonpartisan civil servants are an important policy check on presidents — and not just Republican presidents or Trump. In a country of 50 states, thousands of cities and more than 340 million people, Congress can't write laws that exactly specify what should happen in any given situation. So the implementation of laws is always contested. Civil servants aren't explicitly tied to a particular party or president. So though I don't think civil servants (or anyone else) are fully objective, career government employees often have more useful biases than political appointees.

What does it mean for unelected bureaucrats to be a "policy check on presidents"? The word for unelected bureaucrats enacting their own independent political judgment—a judgment that has an overwhelming correlation with one political party—is tyranny, not democracy, and there is no legitimate sanction in our constitutional form of government for executive branch actors unresponsive to elections.

"MERIT" VS. POLITICS?

One of the arguments advanced by those invested in keeping the status quo with regard to federal employment is that democratic accountability through the president is somehow opposed to "merit" in the career civil service. Nothing could be further from the truth. The reality is, instead, that the current protections not only insulate federal employees from political accountability but also from the kind of ordinary responsiveness to the desires and evaluations of their bosses that the rest of America takes for granted.

Since the **Pendleton Act** of 1883, the justification for the web of protections around career bureaucrats has been that political alignment had crowded out merit, which is

why the Act not only established the earliest of those protections, but alongside them a generalized merit exam to attempt to single out the best and brightest applying to work for the United States.

But those days are long gone; there hasn't been a generalized merit exam since the Federal Service Entrance Examination (FSEE) was dissolved in 1981. Another general exam was briefly floated in its place but dropped due to lawsuits alleging that the facially neutral exam had an negative impact on the numbers of black and Hispanic government workers hired, an early attempt to do what is now the familiar manipulation of tacit racial **quotas** (*Luevano v. Campbell*).

There still exists an "exam" for entrance to the civil service, but it consists largely of asking applicants to rate their own fitness for various roles, apparently the only type of examination that did not allegedly disadvantage black and Hispanic applicants, despite the former being considerably overrepresented in the federal government compared to the population baseline.

Ironically, while the general exam was thrown out for producing a disparate racial impact, it has been largely replaced by another signal that also has a disparate racial impact: undergraduate and professional degrees. Not only does the credentialism that bumps candidates higher for consideration for government employment not solve the racial disparity problems, it adds the financial burden of student loan debt to government employees, and, because government employees are eligible for special loan forgiveness programs, ultimately shifts the cost for those degrees to the taxpayer in a way a simple merit exam did not.

A CLARIFICATION: "WHO VOTED FOR DOGE AND ELON MUSK?"

A lot of the coverage of DOGE and Elon Musk's activities in his role as a "special government employee" has intentionally confused the lines of accountability with handwaving questions about "who elected Elon Musk?" This argument implies two premises: that Elon Musk himself has the authority to cut government programs, and those government funds are appropriated to their respective recipients. Neither of these premises are true.

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As a recent cabinet meeting made clear, Elon Musk has little authority to "make cuts" himself; his job is, instead, to highlight potential cost savings and efficiencies to the heads of agencies, with all parties involved ultimately being responsible to the elected president. This makes his involvement completely different in a core respect than Donald Trump's complaints about "unelected bureaucrats." The bureaucrats, as laid out above, have operated without any real fear of losing their jobs for contradicting the will of the president, while Elon Musk (and all cabinet-level agency heads) are employed at will and can be fired tomorrow by the president if their actions contradict his political direction.

Second, the assumption that most of the money for various programs is specifically appropriated by Congress simply isn't accurate. It's true that DOGE is looking for savings and efficiencies, but its mission is made possible not only by the historical impoundment power cited by the Trump administration, but by the fact that most of the grants flowing from the federal government are designed and awarded to specific causes or organizations by unelected agents themselves, not by Congress.

The ultimate goal of stopping and redirecting funding streams ought not to be only to save money, but also to restore accountability. Somebody directly responsible to and fireable by the president should oversee these programs. Of course, ultimately, Congress has the final say and could direct these funds wherever lawmakers choose (more on that in the delegation section).

THE POWER TO SAY "YOU'RE FIRED"

The Constitution's separation of powers only imagines power struggles between Congress and the president or either with the judiciary; the Founders did not anticipate the rise of executive agencies that would for all *de facto* purposes function without direction from the elected president. Nothing better demonstrates the independence of the executive agencies than the last four years of Joe Biden's presidency, when it is now well known he did not have the mental capacity to govern.

When it comes to the question of the president's power to remove those officials, who are supposed to be his employees in service of faithful execution of the laws, precedent both before and since FDR falls on the side of having the broad latitude to choose those who serve under him.

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Myers v. United States (1926)
An 1876 law required that postmasters be removed from their posts only with the consent of the Senate. The Supreme Court invalidated the law as an unconstitutional restriction on the president's removal power and ability to choose whom he hires to help him "faithfully execute" the laws.

Humphrey's Executor v. United States (1935)
This landmark case curtailed President Franklin D. Roosevelt's ability to remove the head of the Federal Trade Commission because limitations on that position's removal had been instituted by Congress. However, the logic in *Humprey's Executor* relies on the idea of a multi-person governing board that adhered to standards of both bipartisan appointment and comprising of a "body of experts," both assumptions easily challengeable in more recent decades, and which the modern court has distinguished.

Selia Law LLC v. CFPB (2020)
In recent years, the Supreme Court has chipped away at the heart of *Humphrey's Executor*, although it hasn't formally overruled it. *Selia* was an opportunity to do so, but ultimately, the Court chose to distinguish the CFPB's structure from the FTC's by noting that it was under the leadership of a single head,

not a bipartisan or expert body. However, this case did take a direct shot at *Humphrey's Executor* by challenging its conclusion that the FTC exercised "no part of the executive power," paving the way for further narrowing or outright rejection of the case's conclusions.

Collins v. Yellen (2021)

The congressionally-established structure of the CFPB under a single director who could only be removed "for cause" was found to be an unconstitutional incursion into the powers of the executive. Once again, the Supreme Court narrowed the scope of *Humphrey's Executor* and reaffirmed the broad constitutional powers of the president to choose who does, and doesn't, work for him in order to faithfully execute the laws. Once again, however, the Court chose to narrow rather than directly overturn *Humprey's Executor*.

Overall, the trend of recent Supreme Court cases has been to flirt with—but not fully embrace—overturning the main precedent against the president's broad power of removal of those who work under him with policymaking power, even when congressional statutes provide protection for those employees. In the next year, we will likely see the Court tackle the same question with regard to civil service protection statutes, and evaluate whether they constitute an unconstitutional intrusion into the president's power to faithfully execute the laws and choose his own officers and employees to do so.

CHRONIC DELEGATION OF CONGRESSIONAL POWERS TO THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH

The Constitution vests "all legislative powers" in Congress, and we're frequently bombarded with pictures of massive omnibus bills filling offices, yet executive agencies produce about twenty times the **pages of regulations** annually. A huge part of modern governance is simply outsourced to the bureaucracy, and unfortunately, it's clear that Congress wants it that way.

The plain language of the Constitution requires Congress to legislate and the executive branch to execute faithfully. But for decades, the reality has been that statutes in Congress have amounted to little more than vague direction to the executive branch. Phrases like "the Department shall," and "the Secretary will promulgate" litter federal law, granting vast and vague powers to unelected bureaucrats to fill in increasingly large blanks while members of Congress grandstand for or against the ultimate consequences as best suits their reelection chances, an offloading of political responsibility onto actors who don't share in any political accountability.

This trend towards broad delegation has coupled with increasing civil service job protections in a toxic stew that hands more and more political power to actors who are not responsible to voters in any capacity. Members of Congress stand before voters every two or six years, but write only gauzy statements difficult to disagree with into law, where they

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are kicked over to bureaucrats who cannot be fired by the president to interpret into hard and fast realities that govern the lives and fortunes of Americans. This avoidance of political accountability from either Congress or the executive may be convenient for Washington operators, but it is contrary in letter and spirit to the design of our three branches of government.

However, in recent years, the Supreme Court has signaled that it may be ready to reconsider the constitutionality of this type of "legislating," which has made Congress a willing vestigial organ of government and allowed it to divest itself of its primary responsibility of legislating (and being responsible to voters for those decisions).

Grundy v. United States (2019)
In this case dealing with a sex offender registry statute, the Court upheld the statute by saying that it did pass the threshold of "intelligible principle" to guide the executive agencies in interpretation. But Justices Gorsuch, Roberts, and Thomas wrote a strong dissent based on the idea that the Constitution demands a higher level of specificity in order to fulfill the separation of powers, a signal that the Court was ready to reconsider putting teeth into the separation of powers and the non-delegation doctrine.

West Virginia v. EPA (2022)
The Court ruled that the EPA had exceeded its authority under the Clean Air Act by stretching vague language about pollutants to cover carbon dioxide, invoking the "major questions doctrine" for the first time in the majority, and signaling the Court's willingness to reinvigorate the requirement that Congress legislate with specificity rather than deferring to executive agency bureaucrats to flesh out important questions of law.

EXAMPLE OF USAID

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has been in the news because the Trump administration curtailed millions of dollars of grants going to sometimes transparently insane projects—like the $8 million to promote LGBTQI+ in the African country Lesotho, which Trump highlighted to laughter in his **recent address to Congress**. But USAID provides a good example of the problems of vague delegation to executive agencies.

The enabling legislation that ostensibly provides the support for USAID is the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, which provides only the gauziest direction for the pot of money in question, for example, the law stipulates that funds must be used to "promote the foreign policy, security, and general welfare of the United States by assisting peoples of the world in their efforts toward economic development and internal and external security, and for other purposes." It being 1961, one of the very few specific directives on how the money ought to be used is that it is not to go to Communist countries, unless to help them withdraw from the "international Communist conspiracy."

So how did we get from that legislative language to LGBTQIA grants to small African nations? Most of those decisions were not made by elected representatives in Congress. Those representatives only voted for money to support the foreign policy of the United States. All the specific contours of the grants were designed by unelected bureaucrats in the executive branch—bureaucrats who argue that the president has no power to direct their efforts or fire them. Effectively, they are making law and directing the real budgetary priorities of much of the money appropriated under such vague terms from Congress.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION ACTIONS

President Trump has made a number of changes to the work rules for federal employees in his first two months in office. These changes have been characterized as radical departures from the "norm" for government service, but in fact, most of them **derive** either from the Jimmy Carter or Ronald Reagan administrative playbooks, and it is only in the last 40 years or so that civil service protections so thick and entrenched have become the default. Those rules are the result of multiple rounds of collective bargaining with the public sector unions that even big government Democrats like President Franklin Roosevelt condemned as a dangerous idea.

- **Restoring Accountability for High-Level Federal Workers Who Wield Policy Power:** Trump's executive order, "**Restoring Accountability for Career Senior Executives**," requires plans from each top career (SES) employee for performance reviews, with boards managed by appointees rather than other career officials. It also cuts off previously near-endless appeals to the MSPB for these top positions, bringing the most powerful players in the federal bureaucracy closer to the at-will status that most Americans have at their own private sector jobs.

Similarly, Trump's **Schedule F reforms** force mid-tier leadership in agencies—those people who have a substantial influence on policy decision-making and formation (what in a constitutional system we would call the lawmaking power of Congress)—to be more responsive to their political appointee bosses and, ultimately, the president himself.

- **An End to WFH Without Accountability:** Trump's executive order, "**Return to In-Person Work**," directed agency heads to demand a return to the office from all employees as soon as practicable. While there are situations where work from home can be a boon to families, particularly women, the difficulties in firing and disciplining federal workers make work-from-home arrangements basically **impossible** to execute responsibly, since they rely so heavily on direct accountability for assigned work that cannot be implemented under current civil service laws.

- **Workforce Reductions and Buyouts:** Because it's so difficult to go through the process of firing even obviously underperforming employees, the savings and department reductions desired by the Trump administration have focused on either employees on probationary status (either because they are new or because they recently changed positions within the government) and encouraging voluntary resignations via generous buyout.

None of these actions are unprecedented, nor has the concern about an unaccountable bureaucracy been limited to Republican presidents. The last major reform of accountability in the civil service happened under the late President Jimmy Carter, and was kept around in the subsequent Reagan

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years. It was only undone in favor of our current system that makes it much harder to fire government employees in the 1990s, under pressure from public sector unions. All of these actions are embroiled in ongoing litigation brought by public sector union organizations at the time of this publication.

LITIGATION AGAINST THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION'S PERSONNEL DECISIONS

There are no fewer than a half-dozen cases currently being litigated regarding the Trump administration's power to fire federal employees of various kinds.

Bessent v. Dellinger

The president chose to remove Hampton Dellinger from his Biden-appointed position as Special Counsel, and Dellinger took his removal to court, arguing that the statute that creates that office requires cause for removal. In an aggressive and unprecedented step, the district court judge decided to reinstate Dellinger to his position (as opposed to previous cases where at maximum, courts have allowed employees to start petitions for back pay if they are ultimately judged to have been removed improperly).

Even the famously liberal D.C. Circuit reversed the order that forced the president to have a particular employee working for his executive branch, but in the 17 days Dellinger had back in office, he took his case to the Merit Service Protection Board (MSPB) to build an administrative case against his removal. The MSPB, of course, agreed with Dellinger and, in addition to his case, reinstated six more employees fired by the Trump administration, noting there could be thousands of probationary employees removed to whom their order might apply.

Harris v. Bessent

Dellinger's case set the course of action for the next part of the administrative state's strike back against employee removal. Cathy Harris was appointed to the MSPB under the Biden administration, to a term that was supposed to run through to 2028. The Trump administration fired her, and she, like Dellinger, took her case to a district court judge, who took the same radical step of reinstating her to her position on MSPB. She then used her reinstatement to hire back 6,000 probationary employees in the Department of Agriculture who had been laid off by the Trump administration.

Wilcox v. Trump

Over in the National Labor Relations Board, Gwynne Wilcox's firing and reinstatement followed a similar track to that of Harris and Dellinger, although the structure of the NLRB, the MSPB, and the Office of Special Counsel all vary, which could become relevant if the Supreme Court ultimately chooses to narrow rather than overturn *Humphrey's Executor*.

American Federation of Government Employees et al. v. U.S. Office of Personnel Management et al.

There is also a more general case brought by public employee unions against the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) for a directive that told agency heads to look for probationary employees to dismiss. Once again, district courts have followed the unusual tack of reinstatement rather than preserving back pay until the merits are adjudicated, and unlike the D.C. Circuit, the 9th Circuit chose not to block that remedy.

Nearly every removal the Trump administration has attempted, whether they fired probationary employees or employees with policymaking powers, will likely run the same court gauntlet. Most of these employees

are legally protected with a complicated web of statutes, collective bargaining agreements, and MSPB administrative precedent.

All or some combination of these cases is virtually guaranteed to end up before the Supreme Court, which will ultimately have to decide if the president's ability to choose who works under him is so compromised by these various restrictions that it amounts to an unconstitutional restriction on his Article II responsibility to execute faithfully the laws. In other words, the entire structure of the administrative state is headed to court.

POLICY SOLUTIONS

Reinstitute a neutral civil service examination for all aspiring federal employees. Challenge the illegitimate court interpretations of our civil rights laws that demand dropping neutral standards because racial groups may perform not perfectly in alignment with their proportion of population.

Move towards at-will employment—the condition under which **three-quarters** of the workforce in America labors—in which all executive branch employees ultimately serve at the pleasure of the president. This will restore competency and good faith effort in government endeavors, allow federal agencies to function more efficiently, and save the taxpayer money. It also makes remote work possible and responsible. But most importantly, it will restore democratic accountability to the executive branch by ensuring that unelected policymakers are accountable to the elected president.

At minimum, if Congress is going to broadly delegate authority, **all employees with any regulatory or policymaking authority should be accountable directly to the president**, who is then held accountable by voters. Broadening the definition of policymaker to include anyone who has input on this quasi-legislative activity, as the Trump administration has begun to do with Schedule F reforms, is a good first step towards making sure that everyone *de facto* engaged in "making law" in the United States is directly accountable to someone who has to stand for election.

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Ultimately, the **U.S. Supreme Court will have to rule on the legitimacy of the administrative form of government** that has displaced the constitutional system and will have to place limitations on broad delegation to the executive branch, as well as remove limitations on the president's ability to control his own executive bureaucracy.

CONCLUSION

Regardless of personal opinions on any of the particular policy outcomes, what is really at stake in these battles over the control of the bureaucracy is a stark choice between two totally different forms of governance. The current structure of our government, the weaponized terminus of about a century of administrative development starting under President Woodrow Wilson, is based on the

premise that it is "neutral" expertise that makes modern government possible and that the expert class needs a permanent seat at the table unrestrained by democratic oversight.

The government the Trump administration is attempting to resurrect is the vision of the constitutional system many of us learned in fifth-grade civics: the three co-equal branches of government, with a legislature that passes the laws and a unified executive branch tasked with execution under the direction of the elected president. There is no room in that constitutional system for an independent fourth branch exercising "expertise" rather than the expression of democratic will.

Despite claims of both authoritarianism and novelty, the Trump administration represents the first serious attempt in nearly a century to restore the original constitutional structure of our government. Ultimately, the question is very simple: *To whom, if anyone, do the unelected bureaucrats who make such a large portion of the day-to-day decisions of the U.S. government answer*? The answer is either the will of the American people, as channeled through the president they go to the polls to elect every four years, or no one but themselves.

The outcome of these Trump administration actions, and the ensuing court battles, will determine whether we will continue to live under the illegitimate political persuasions of millions of bureaucrats who exercise important political powers while never having to run for election, or whether we will restore the Founders' vision of a government of the people, for the people, and by the people.

WHAT YOU CAN DO!

Get Informed

Learn more about civil service reform and taming the bureaucracy. Visit:

- Policy Focus: Civil Service Reform
- Trump's Fight Against the Bureaucracy Has Been Wildly Successful—So Far
- Let's End Remote Work Without Accountability in the Federal Workforce

Talk to Your Friends:

Help your friends and family understand these important issues. Tell them about what's going on and encourage them to join you in getting involved.

Become a Leader in the Community:

Start an Independent Women's Network chapter group so you can get together with friends each month to talk about a political/policy issue (it will be fun!). Write a letter to the editor. Show up at local government meetings and make your opinions known. Go to rallies. Better yet, organize rallies! A few motivated people can change the world.

Remain Engaged Politically:

Too many good citizens see election time as the only time they need to pay attention to politics. We need everyone to pay attention and hold elected officials accountable. Let your Representatives know your opinions. After all, they are supposed to work for you!

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Independent Women is dedicated to building support for free markets, limited government, and individual responsibility. Independent Women, a non-partisan, 501(c)(3) research and educational institution, seeks to combat the too-common presumption that women want and benefit from big government, and build awareness of the ways that women are better served by greater economic freedom. By aggressively seeking earned media, providing easy-to-read, timely publications and commentary, and reaching out to the public, we seek to cultivate support for these important principles and encourage women to join us in working to return the country to limited, Constitutional government.