

A project by **Democracy Forward** | June 2024



The People's Guide to Project 2025



**Mandate for
Leadership**
The Conservative Promise

Breaking down the far-right playbook
to take our country **backward**.

Project 2025 is among the most **profound threats** to the American people.

What is Project 2025?

The Project 2025 Presidential Transition Project is a well-funded (eight-figure) effort of the Heritage Foundation and more than 100 organizations to enable a future anti-democratic presidential administration to take swift, far-right action that would cut wages for working people, dismantle social safety net programs, reverse decades of progress for civil rights, redefine the way our society operates, and undermine our economy.

A central pillar of Project 2025 is the “Mandate for Leadership,” a 900+ page policy playbook authored by former Trump administration officials and other extremists that provides a radical vision for our nation and a roadmap to implement it.

We read Project 2025’s entire 900+ page “Mandate for Leadership” so that you don’t have to.

What we discovered was a systemic, ruthless plan to undermine the quality of life of millions of Americans, remove critical protections and dismantle programs for communities across the nation, and prioritize special interests and ideological extremism over people.

From attacking overtime pay, student loans, and reproductive rights, to allowing more discrimination, pollution, and price gouging, those behind Project 2025 are preparing to go to incredible lengths to create a country only for some, not for all of us.



If these plans are enacted, even without congressional approval, **4.3 million people** could lose overtime protections, **40 million people** could have their food assistance reduced, **220,000 American jobs** could be lost, and much, much, more. The stakes are higher than ever for democracy and for people.

These threats aren't hypothetical. These are their real plans.

The Heritage Foundation and the 100+ organizations that make up the Project 2025 Advisory Board have mapped out exactly how they will achieve their extreme ends. They aim to carry out many of the most troubling proposals through an anti-democratic president and political loyalists installed in the executive branch, without waiting for congressional action. And, while many of these plans are unlawful, winning in court is not guaranteed given that the same far-right movement that is behind Project 2025 has shaped our current court system.

To combat the threats posed by Project 2025, we have to first understand them.

What follows are some of the most dangerous proposals that make up Project 2025, specifically those that could be implemented through federal agencies and a far-right executive branch.

The majority of Americans share the same values and priorities, but Project 2025 wants to push an extreme, out-of-touch agenda on all of us. **By reading this guide and sharing it, we can begin to address these threats and go on offense towards building a bold, inclusive democracy for all people.**



Project 2025 Snapshot

Proposals from Project 2025, discussed in detail throughout this guide, that could be implemented through executive branch action alone – so without new legislation – include:

Cut American Rescue Plan (ARP) programs that have created or saved

220,000 jobs

Limit access to food assistance, which an average of more than 40 million people rely on monthly,

21.6 million households

Roll back civil rights protections

across multiple fronts, including cutting diversity, equity, and inclusion-related (DEI) programs and LGBTQ+ rights in health care, education, and workplaces.

Eliminate the Head Start early education program, which serves over

1 million children

Stop efforts to lower prescription drug prices

Cut overtime protections for

4.3 million workers

Push more people towards Medicare Advantage and **other worse, private options**, that's

33 million people

Restrict access to medication abortion

Deny students in 25 states and Washington, D.C. access to student loans because their school provides in-state tuition to undocumented immigrants

Expose the

368,000 children

in **foster care** to risk of increased discrimination

Contents:

Here's what's under attack



<u>Cut Wages, Create Unsafe Workplaces, and Destabilize Our Economy</u>	06
<u>Make It Harder for Americans to Make Ends Meet</u>	11
<u>Restrict Reproductive Rights and Access to Healthcare</u>	17
<u>Enable Discrimination Across Society</u>	24
<u>Set Polluters Loose and Undo Climate Action</u>	31
<u>Make Education Unaffordable and Unwelcoming</u>	36
<u>Undermine Government's Ability to Deliver for People</u>	41

Their proposals will:

Cut Wages, Create Unsafe Workplaces, and Destabilize Our Economy



Project 2025 would enable corporations to cut overtime pay, relax worker safety rules, allow workplace discrimination, and more.

1 How they'd do it:

Stop people from earning overtime pay. Project 2025 wants the Department of Labor to make it harder for people to earn overtime pay.

In 2024, the Biden administration issued a policy that will make over [four million workers](#) newly eligible to qualify for overtime pay. The U.S. Department of Labor did this by raising the “overtime threshold,” which is the salary ceiling under which salaried workers still qualify automatically for overtime pay if they work more than 40 hours in a week, even though those workers are not paid hourly. Raising the overtime threshold increases the number of workers with guaranteed overtime protections. Currently, the threshold protects non-hourly workers who make up to \$43,888 annually, and it’s set to rise again in 2025 to apply to people making up to \$58,656.

Project 2025 doesn’t want to raise this threshold. Instead, Project 2025 proposes lowering the threshold and taking away overtime eligibility for millions of workers. This would leave at least four million working people in industries that pay annually but still at lower wages stuck working long hours without overtime pay – everything from hospitality to manufacturing, administrative roles, and more.

From Mandate for Leadership p. 492

2 How they'd do it:

Cut funding for local job-creating programs. Project 2025 proposes to destroy a program that plays a pivotal role in facilitating transformative economic growth for local economies.

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) was responsible for investing billions of ARP dollars into transformative infrastructure projects across the nation. According to their 2022 [report](#), these investments resulted in 220,000 jobs and generated nearly \$20 billion in private investment.

Project 2025 proposes that EDA grants “should be consolidated with other programs and/or eliminated,” which would undermine the ability of the federal government to invest in communities across the nation – with effects that could devastate working people, small businesses, and the overall health of our economy.

From Mandate for Leadership p. 664

3 How they'd do it:

Manipulate data that businesses rely on to keep our economy functioning. By consolidating the Bureau of Economic Analysis, Census Bureau, and Bureau of Labor Statistics, Project 2025 would kneecap the data-collection capacities of these important agencies – with effects felt by working people across the nation.

Data compiled by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) is [intentionally independent](#) from partisan interests and is frequently relied on by the public, employers, researchers, and government organizations. According to [BLS](#), they “measure employment, compensation, worker safety, productivity, and price movements. This information is used by jobseekers, workers, business leaders, and others to help them make sound decisions at work and at home.”

Project 2025, however, wants to consolidate the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis and Census Bureau with BLS into one agency. While formal reorganization [requires](#) explicit delegation from Congress to go through, the Trump administration made an [attempt](#) in 2018 to bypass Congress and use other executive powers to do so. If an extremist were to occupy the executive branch again, Project 2025 would want them to go even further.

Politicizing BLS and reducing the data collection capacity of the agency by consolidating it into the Census Bureau would make it harder to know how our economy is doing, whether families' paychecks are growing, and what steps we may need to take to make sure small businesses are thriving and people have enough in their bank accounts to make ends meet.

4 How they'd do it:

Weaken child labor protections. Project 2025 would amend hazard regulations to allow employers to put young people in unsafe working conditions.

The authors of Project 2025 think that young people should be able to work in "inherently dangerous jobs," in roles that are currently not permitted due to significant safety concerns that have long been established and enforced by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL).

Project 2025 would change DOL policies and allow America's youth to work these jobs, meaning young people entering the labor force out of economic necessity could be subjected to more dangerous work because they need the income more than others — and cannot access a safer job or get paid as well.



In their own words: Hazard-Order Regulations. Some young adults show an interest in inherently dangerous jobs. Current rules forbid many young people, even if their family is running the business, from working in such jobs. This results in worker shortages in dangerous fields and often discourages otherwise interested young workers from trying the more dangerous job.”

Mandate for Leadership p. 595



Their proposals will:

Make It Harder for Americans to Make Ends Meet



A strong democracy is one where people have the resources they need to thrive, not worry about how they will make ends meet. Project 2025 proposals would only make daily life harder for people – with fewer people able to access food assistance and affordable early education, less support for veterans with disabilities, and cuts to support for farmers.

1 How they'd do it:

Restrict access to food assistance. Project 2025 would make it harder for people to access food assistance by adding ineffective requirements and reevaluating important programs.

According to research from the [U.S. Department of Agriculture \(USDA\)](#), 86% of all Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits go to households that include a child, elderly person, or person with disabilities – and ~92% of all SNAP benefits go to households with income at or below the federal poverty line.

The Thrifty Food Plan plays an important role in ensuring recipients of food assistance are able to access food that composes a balanced and nutritious diet. In tandem, the Biden administration has increased food assistance outlays to account for increased costs associated with more nutritious foods.

Project 2025 wants to reverse course and reimpose ineffective work requirements – which [recent studies](#) have shown do not actually increase employment but do still drive down the number of people who use food assistance – onto SNAP and reevaluate the Thrifty Food Plan.

From Mandate for Leadership p. 299 & 300

2 How they'd do it:

Eliminate the Head Start program. Project 2025 would destroy a program that is critical to uplifting children across the nation from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.

Head Start is a critical program that helps over [one million children](#) across the nation become ready for school by providing them with mental, emotional, and social support programming. This program provides targeted assistance to low-income children as an important method to bridge inequities and ensure that all children receive a solid foundation as they embark on their educational journey.

Project 2025 proposes to eliminate the program. Without Head Start, families who are already struggling financially could experience even greater economic burdens as they would have to spend more on childcare and education.

From Mandate for Leadership page 482

3 How they'd do it:

Limit which disabilities qualify veterans for benefits.
The authors of Project 2025 think that too many veterans qualify for disability benefits.

Disability benefits are often critical lifelines for veterans who became disabled as a result of their military service – and can be the difference between a veteran being able to put food on the table or not”

Project 2025 proposes to have the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs cut costs by having fewer health conditions qualify veterans for disability benefits – a proposal could greatly restrict disabled veterans’ access to life-sustaining benefits.

*From Mandate for Leadership
p. 649-650*



4 How they'd do it:

Remove safety nets for farmers. Project 2025 thinks that farmers are receiving too much assistance.



The people who put food on our tables and ensure our communities get fed are often subject to the whims of unpredictable weather patterns and market conditions. This means that while some years a farmer may be doing great, the next they could be on the brink of economic failure. That's where safety nets come in.

Project 2025 wants to restrict safety nets for farmers to 'unusual situations' – even though we know that the difficult conditions farmers experience are not unusual but common. A restriction of assistance to farmers would disparately impact low-income farmers and those without extensive assets to fall back on when things go awry.

From Mandate for Leadership p. 297

5 How they'd do it:

Eliminate funding for key public transportation projects. Despite its transformational investments in communities across the U.S., the Capital Investment Grants (CIG) program is a Project 2025 target for elimination.

The CIG program plays an important role in awarding federal grants to local communities in order to fund infrastructure projects. After the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law was passed in 2021, CIG was responsible for awarding [billions](#) of dollars for key public transportation projects across the country.

Project 2025 wants to eliminate CIG, which could make it much harder for Americans without cars to get to work and travel around town – to work or just to be with family and friends.

From Mandate for Leadership p. 635



Their proposals will:

Restrict Reproductive Rights & Access to Health Care



Despite the majority of Americans supporting comprehensive health care and reproductive freedom, Project 2025 would prefer a far different reality. Their attacks would undermine Medicare, keep prescription drug prices high, and restrict access to reproductive care.

1 How they'd do it:

Keep the cost of lifesaving medication too high. Project 2025 would undo Medicare's new ability to negotiate lower prescription prices for seniors.



Medicare's new ability to negotiate lower prescription drug prices for seniors, established through the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), will be transformative for millions of seniors in the United States.

According to the Center for American Progress, these negotiations are targeting some of the most expensive drugs frequently used by seniors, saving hundreds of thousands of dollars in drug costs each year. These negotiations are also critical for advancing health equity, given that many of the prescriptions targeted by the negotiations treat conditions disparately experienced by people who have historically experienced marginalization because of their race or gender.

While Project 2025's plan is to specifically instruct Congress to repeal this part of the IRA, they could also easily advise the Department of Justice (DOJ) to stop defending Medicare's ability to negotiate drug prices in courts, where the program currently faces numerous challenges.

Project 2025's attacks on Medicare's ability to negotiate drug prices would negatively impact millions of elderly Americans, particularly elderly people of color and those with low incomes.

From Mandate for Leadership p. 465

2 How they'd do it:

End medication abortion use, or make it incredibly difficult to access. Project 2025 would revoke approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), criminalize mailing medication abortion, or even enlist the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as part of their anti-abortion efforts.

Over two decades of medical practice show that mifepristone – medication abortion – is safe and effective. In fact, just last year, [nearly two-thirds](#) of all pregnant people relied on medication abortion for their abortion care. This is one of the last lifelines for millions of pregnant people across the United States, as many state governments are ramping up attacks.

The anti-abortion extremists behind Project 2025, not content with merely overturning *Roe v. Wade*, want to attack access to medication abortion nationwide by any means necessary.

- a. *Project 2025 would weaponize the long-dormant Comstock Act to try and make the delivery of medication abortion by mail illegal.*

Originally passed in the 19th century to restrict the types of things that could be mailed, the *Comstock Act* is, today, in District Court Judge Robert Chambers' own words: a "widely abrogated 19th century statute."

Despite the DOJ, the courts, and Congress already making clear that the *Comstock Act* does not apply to legal abortion care, Project 2025 plans to weaponize the DOJ and resurrect this Act to ban nationwide medication abortion access.

From Mandate for Leadership p. 562

- b. *Project 2025 would have the FDA reverse approval of this safe and effective medication.*

Reversing federal approval of medication abortion could deprive people of essential health care, even in states where abortion remains legal. In states where abortion

is banned or restricted, this would further subject people to the whims of state legislatures, many of which have actively [pushed or enacted](#) abortion restrictions since the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*.

From Mandate for Leadership p. 458

- c. *Project 2025 would further undermine medication abortion by mail by reimposing unnecessary and burdensome requirements that mifepristone be dispensed in person and by a doctor.*

Post-*Dobbs*, the FDA has played an important role by allowing the distribution of mifepristone by mail and at certain pharmacies. This has allowed increased access to care, given that not everyone has the privilege of convenient in-person doctor access. If these plans were implemented, it will become harder for everyone to access abortion care, particularly low-income pregnant people and those in rural communities.



In their own words: A bare-minimum policy of limiting abortion pills to the pre-2016 policy of 49 days gestation, returning to the pre-2021 in-person dispensing requirement, and returning to requiring prescribers to report all serious adverse events, not just deaths, to the drug sponsor would increase women’s health and safety.”

Mandate for Leadership p. 459

- d. *If all else fails, Project 2025 would turn to the EPA to apply restrictive regulations to medication abortion.*

Project 2025 wants an anti-democratic president to direct the EPA to classify medication abortion as containing ‘forever chemicals’ – which are subject to stricter regulations. If the EPA were to classify medication abortion as a “forever chemical,” it would stifle the approval and distribution of medication abortion.

[According to Politico’s ‘Anti-abortion forces plan for a Trump return’:](#)



In their own words: Using the EPA to classify the chemicals in abortion pill mifepristone as “forever chemicals” subject to stricter regulations.”

3 How they'd do it:

Push people towards private Medicare plans that worsen health outcomes. Under the guise of allowing greater choice, Project 2025 would push policies that favor private, worse-performing alternatives to Medicare.

While many of Project 2025's plans for Medicare require congressional action, they also encourage a future administration to use all possible levers, including the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), to alter this critical program however they can.

Several of their proposals would push people towards private Medicare alternatives, which are not real alternatives at all – with [reports](#) showing that “Medicare Advantage plans threaten rural hospitals and patients” and [misled](#) people into signing up for them. While Project 2025 may pitch these Medicare ‘reforms’ as encouraging consumer choice, in reality they will leave seniors worse off across the country – putting the health of many of the [33 million people enrolled in traditional Medicare](#) at risk.



In their own words: Medicare regulations restrict choice of coverage and care. The next Administration should reintroduce and restore regulations and demonstrations from the Trump Administration that were withdrawn, weakened, or never finalized by the Biden Administration”

Mandate for Leadership p. 463



4 How they'd do it:

Make it easier for extremists to access personal information about patients' reproductive care.

Project 2025 would remove protections the Biden administration put in place post-*Dobbs* to protect the personal information of people who receive reproductive care.

In the immediate aftermath of the *Dobbs* decision that overturned *Roe v. Wade*, the Biden administration issued HIPAA [guidance](#) to “ensure doctors and other medical providers and health plans know that, with limited exceptions, they are not required – and in many cases, are not permitted – to disclose patients’ private information, including to law enforcement.” The administration later finalized a [rule](#) to shield the medical records of patients from criminal investigations if they cross state lines to seek an abortion where it is legal.

Even as extremists in [Texas](#) actively try to use the courts to access information about people receiving abortions out of state, Project 2025 claims that the Biden administration’s privacy guidance is “fear mongering” and would have a future administration withdraw it. As more states move to pass increasingly severe efforts to criminalize abortion, this would put medical providers and all pregnant people at increased risk.



In their own words: OCR should withdraw its Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)⁸⁶ guidance on abortion. OCR should withdraw its June 2022 guidance⁸⁷ that purports to address patient privacy concerns following the *Dobbs* decision but is actually a politicized statement in favor of abortion and against *Dobbs*.”

Mandate for Leadership p. 497

Their proposals will:

Enable Discrimination Across Society



Threatened by decades of progress in advancing civil rights and equality for all, the authors of Project 2025 want to create a country that allows for more discrimination where we live, study, work, and play — and roll back hard-fought victories by our movements for progress.

1 How they'd do it:

Embolden racial discrimination in everything from housing to education to employment. Project 2025 proposes that the president should remove a key tool that the federal government uses to enforce civil rights protections.

Project 2025 proposes that the federal government stop the long-standing use of “disparate impact” in assessing discrimination by ending its use in discrimination cases and even bringing lawsuits that challenge the standard’s constitutionality.

The disparate impact standard has long been used in determining discrimination, under Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Fair Housing Act of 1968. It is important for evaluating when ‘facially neutral’ programs have disparate impacts on certain groups of people. The Civil Rights Division of the DOJ [determines](#) disparate impact as, “does the adverse effect of the policy or practice fall disproportionately on a race, color, or national origin group?”

This standard provides an important remedy for DOJ and others to bring civil rights cases when groups of people have their civil rights violated in areas such as employment discrimination and fair housing, so discontinuing its use will make it harder for the federal government to enforce civil rights protections in everything from housing to education to employment.

Disparate impact standards have long been ruled constitutional by the United States Supreme Court, so Project 2025’s attempts are baseless.



In their own words: Courts have ruled that even without evidence of overt, intentional discrimination, such results might suggest discrimination. This doctrine of disparate impact could be ended legislatively or at least narrowed through the regulatory process by a future Administration.” ***Mandate for Leadership p. 72 (and p. 583)***

2 How they'd do it:

Make it harder for historically under-resourced communities to access Medicaid, Head Start, and other government programs. Population counts can be essential to groups receiving appropriations and resources from the federal government like Medicaid, Head Start, community mental health programs, and much more — so Project 2025's plans to undercount or undermine the accuracy of these counts would hurt communities that have been economically marginalized.

The special interests behind Project 2025 want to reverse the longstanding body of work by civil rights activists who have encouraged the federal government to collect more sophisticated data when it comes to racial and ethnic groups, which has helped ensure communities that have been historically under-resourced because of their racial demographics receive proper allocations of resources.

As recently as March 2024, the Biden administration issued a revision to [Statistical Directive No.15](#), which governs “standards for maintaining, collecting, and presenting federal data on race and ethnicity.” The revision is for more accurate and useful race and ethnicity data collection across various agencies of the U.S. federal government.



In their own words: Review forthcoming changes to race and ethnicity questions. The current Administration has announced its intent to change data collection methods regarding race and ethnicity by combining the two questions on the decennial questionnaire and increasing the number of available options. A new conservative Administration should take control of this process and thoroughly review any changes.” *Mandate for Leadership p. 680*

Project 2025 would advise a future administration to hamstring these revisions by instructing the White House Office of Management and Budget to reverse them and ensure that other federal agencies are not aiding in the collection of more accurate data. This would leave historically underrepresented communities at a disadvantage when it comes to accessing critical programs we rely on every day – from Medicaid to Head Start.

3 How they'd do it:

Undermine gender equity across the government. Project 2025 would eliminate the White House Gender Policy Council, which is key to promoting contraception access, gender-based violence prevention, and women's health equity.

Under the Biden administration, the White House Gender Policy Council has led efforts to increase access to [contraception](#), published the [National Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#), and begun groundbreaking research into how [women's health](#) is studied across the country. Project 2025 would immediately disband the Council and prioritize coordinating efforts that push for “promoting life” and emphasize a narrow vision of what defines a “family.”

From Mandate for Leadership p. 62



4 How they'd do it:

Allow more discrimination against LGBTQ+ youth in adoption and foster care agencies. Project 2025 would make it easier for state and child welfare agencies — which are charged by the public to provide appropriate care for children — to cite religious exemptions as a way to promote bigotry.

In 2022, more than [368,000 children were enrolled](#) in foster care in the U.S. Project 2025 would instruct the Department of Health and Human Services to repeal a 2016 regulation that provides additional protections for foster youth, related to sexual orientation and gender identity.

Enabling adoption and foster care agencies to subject vulnerable children to the whims of extreme religious beliefs would be detrimental to the physical, mental, and emotional health of fostered/adopted youth, especially LGBTQ+ youth, who are already dealing with intense adversities.

From Mandate for Leadership p. 477

5 How they'd do it:

Put Black communities and others that have historically borne the brunt of health impacts from pollution and other environmental harms at increased risk. Project 2025 proposes to eliminate the EPA's Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights.

EPA's newly-created Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights is the agency's dedicated office for ensuring that environmental and public health policies are crafted and implemented in ways that ensure no communities are left behind or disproportionately harmed.

Eliminating this office would put the communities that have historically borne the brunt of harms from pollution, climate change, and other hazards — which are too often Black and brown [communities](#) — at increased risk.

6 How they'd do it:

Enable discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. By misinterpreting Supreme Court precedent and allowing more religious exemptions, Project 2025 would roll back protections against discrimination against LGBTQ+ people and others in the workplace.

LGBTQ+ Americans have had to fight for protections under the law and in recent years we have witnessed important gains, including the Supreme Court's confirmation of federal protections in the workplace, which logically extend to other areas like health care and schools. Yet, Project 2025 wants to reverse this progress.

Project 2025 plans to restrict the application of a critical 2020 Supreme Court case called *Bostock v. Clayton County* that assures workplace protections for LGBTQ+ people through making clear that discrimination against LGBTQ+ people is a form of sex discrimination prohibited by our federal civil rights laws. Project 2025 would try to enable greater workplace discrimination through allowing employers to impose their religious or moral beliefs on their employees.

Additionally, the Biden administration has helped to ensure protections from gender identity discrimination across many aspects of our lives, [including](#) "health care, housing, education, credit and lending services, and community safety programs."

Project 2025, however, would roll back and severely limit those protections and leave already-vulnerable people at increased risk for discrimination when trying to rent an apartment, go to school, and more.

From *Mandate for Leadership* p. 584 & 586

Their proposals will:

Set Polluters Loose and Undo Climate Action



We've waited decades for meaningful and robust federal action to combat climate change and protect people from the harms of pollution. Project 2025 couldn't care less about these threats — and now they want to destroy our hard-fought gains.

1 How they'd do it:

Make our air dirtier and worsen climate change. Project 2025 would make it even harder for the EPA to take action against climate change by attacking the “Endangerment Finding.”

Much of what the EPA does is tied to the Endangerment Finding, which [according](#) to the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) “requires the EPA to take action under the Clean Air Act to curb emissions of carbon dioxide, methane, and four other heat-trapping air pollutants from vehicles, power plants, and other industries.”

Project 2025, however, wants to establish a system to ‘update’ the 2009 Endangerment Finding. According to [NRDC](#), ‘updating’ the Endangerment Finding means restricting the federal government’s mandate to combat climate change in order to advance the public health and welfare of the American people and our lands.

If Project 2025 were successful in getting the federal government to ‘update’ the Endangerment Finding, it could become much harder for the EPA, under the Clean Air Act, to take measures to combat greenhouse gas emissions, pollution, and other harmful effects of climate change.

From Mandate for Leadership p. 425

2 How they'd do it:

Cut off weather, ocean, and climate data by disbanding NOAA. Project 2025 would disband the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), which provides critical weather data and insightful scientific research.

The National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) plays a critical role in helping us understand the effects of human behavior on the world's oceans and atmosphere. NOAA [issues](#) "daily weather forecasts," "severe storm warnings," and more. It also monitors the climate, manages fisheries, restores coastal environments, and supports marine commerce. According to [NOAA](#), the agency's "products and services support economic vitality and affect more than one-third of America's gross domestic product."

Additionally, NOAA's reports have made important discoveries about the effects of climate change. NOAA's expertise is [frequently relied on](#) by other federal agencies to "understand how they can respond to and adapt to climate change."

The proposal to disband NOAA would leave federal agencies unequipped to combat climate change, not to mention deprive scientists, businesses, and the public of key data.



In their own words: The National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) should be dismantled and many of its functions eliminated, sent to other agencies, privatized, or placed under the control of states and territories." *Mandate for Leadership p. 664*



3

How they'd do it:

Transfer environmental funding away from mission-based entities to state regulators who, in many cases, do not support sustainable policies. Project 2025 seeks to undo progress made through the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) by any means necessary.

The IRA creates ambitious and expansive investment in climate action and infrastructure development, and is a top target of Project 2025. Even without new legislation, Project 2025 advocates to shift climate-related IRA funds away from mission-based organizations with subject matter expertise and toward state regulatory entities. This would, in our estimation, allow state leaders not committed to climate sustainability (or those who deny climate change altogether) to misuse funds in a way that would set back climate action.

From Mandate for Leadership p. 424

4 How they'd do it:

Expand offshore oil and natural gas drilling on public lands and waters. Project 2025 would push the Department of the Interior to allow oil and natural gas lease sales “to the maximum extent permitted.”

The groups behind the Mandate for Leadership want to “conduct offshore oil and natural gas lease sales to the maximum extent permitted.”

This section of the Mandate for Leadership was written by William Perry Pendley, a former Trump administration official who had to [recuse himself](#) from dozens of matters before the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) while he was leading it, due to flagrant conflicts of interest as the former president of a special interest organization that called for the widespread transfer of federal public lands to private holders. Not only that, Pendley has [referred to climate science as ‘junk science’ and likened the existence of climate change to unicorns.](#)

This proposal would allow fossil fuel companies to drill on more public lands and waters, undoing progress made by the current administration to [decrease](#) this harmful practice.



In their own words: Conduct offshore oil and natural gas lease sales to the maximum extent permitted under the 2023–2028 lease program,³⁴ with the possibility to move forward under a previously studied but unselected plan alternative.” *Mandate for Leadership p.523*

Their proposals will:

Make Education Unaffordable & Unwelcoming



Our public schools are foundational to our democracy. When special interests undermine public schools, they undermine the ability of students from all backgrounds to learn, feel safe in their community, and develop skills and knowledge that enable students to thrive. If Project 2025 has their way, our public schools could be **stripped of funding, protections for students, and high-quality curricula.**

1 How they'd do it:

Cut federal loan programs that help parents of college students, graduate students, and immigrants afford higher education. Project 2025 would roll back federal student loan programs that are critical to ensuring higher education is not reserved for only the wealthy and well-connected.

As the cost of higher education soars in the country, accessible and stable student loans are a critical way to ensure that people from all backgrounds can access higher education.

The special interests behind Project 2025 want to kneecap the federal government's provision of student loans — taking away the ability of parents of college students to take out Parent PLUS loans, graduate students to take out Graduate PLUS loans, and undocumented immigrants to take out federal loans entirely. This would devastate the futures of millions of college students.

They would also deny loan access to students at schools that provide in-state tuition to undocumented immigrants. That means students in [25 states and Washington D.C.](#) will not be able to access student loans.

From Mandate for Leadership p. 167 & 354

2 How they'd do it:

Make public schools even more dangerous for LGBTQ+ students. Project 2025 would have the Secretary of Education remove a host of protections for LGBTQ+ students in schools.

Public schools are already dangerous for LGBTQ+ students across the nation, especially LGBTQ+ students of color. Project 2025 would make matters even worse by directing a future Secretary of Education to rescind the Biden administration's expanded Title IX protections for LGBTQ+ students, and reinstate the regressive rules previously imposed by the Trump administration. Project 2025 emphasizes that any definition of 'sex' under Title IX should mean only biological sex assigned at birth.

These actions threaten to put transgender, non-binary, and gender nonconforming students at risk, particularly when their gender identity doesn't correspond with their sex assigned at birth.



In their own words: On its first day in office, the next Administration should signal its intent to enter the rulemaking process to restore the Trump Administration's Title IX regulation, with the additional insistence that "sex" is properly understood as a fixed biological fact. Official notice-and-comment should be posted immediately."

Mandate for Leadership p.333-334

3 How they'd do it:

Push ideology onto funding for international business programs. Project 2025 wants to dictate what students learn in higher education by disproportionately funding programs that push an ideological agenda that they agree with.



In trying to dictate what people can and cannot learn, the special interest authors behind Project 2025 want to direct funding to international business programs that teach their preferred subjects, with nearly half (at minimum) of Department of Education funding going to these programs. These programs are geared towards providing students a better understanding of markets across the world, in all different forms.

From Mandate for Leadership page 356

4 How they'd do it:

Make it easier for charter schools to discriminate against LGBTQ+ students. Project 2025 would loosen data collection requirements for charter schools, undoing recent progress made by the Biden administration which has ensured that data collection better includes transgender, non-binary, and gender nonconforming students.

Data collection that better includes people across gender identities and sexual orientations is important for ensuring LGBTQ+ students' civil rights are protected.

During the Biden administration, the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights (OCR) has required all charter schools to enhance the accuracy of student demographic data collection by requiring that schools provide "nonbinary" as an option for self-selection.

Additionally, in 2021 OCR instructed charter schools to retire collection of data that presents purely binary depictions of the composition of school sports teams — meaning that data demographics of these teams were relegated to strictly male and female — at the exclusion of nonbinary and gender nonconforming students.

Project 2025 would advise the Department of Education to rescind these changes and issue a new Civil Rights Data Collection instructive that "will collect data directly relevant to OCR's [authority]." In other words, that would mean only the data that Project 2025's authors think are valid — which excludes LGBTQ+ students. Without this data, it will be harder to know where LGBTQ+ students are experiencing discrimination, allowing it to fester and harm people across the country.



In their own words: The new Administration must quickly move to rescind these changes, which add a new "nonbinary" sex category to OCR'S data collection and issue a new CRDC that will collect data directly relevant to OCR's statutory enforcement authority."

Mandate for Leadership p.332

Their proposals will:

Undermine Government's Ability to Deliver for People



Civil servants are federal employees who work and live in all 50 states — the more than 2 million people who keep our air clean, water safe, consumers protected, and mail delivered. Attacks on the nation's civil service are attacks on the government's ability to work for the people.

1 How they'd do it:

Replace non-partisan federal employees with partisan loyalists. Project 2025 would have a future president reissue the Trump administration's Schedule F executive order to make it easier to fire federal employees.

Civil servants deliver our mail, keep our air and water clean, and protect consumers from abuse. President Trump's Executive Order 13957 (Schedule F) attempted to remove critical protections for millions of these federal employees so it would be easier for him and his cronies to fire them. If Schedule F were to be reinstated, these functions could be in the hands of partisan loyalists instead of qualified experts.

Firing civil servants at will simply because they're not hyperpartisan or extreme enough would be a disservice to the millions of Americans who depend on federal workers and the services they deliver every day.

Democracy Forward submitted a comment on behalf of 27 organizations in support of the Biden administration's final rule, in addition to other supportive comments, that proactively creates additional protections for the nation's civil service – and provides an important safeguard against a potential anti-democratic administration.

Democracy Forward sent a letter on behalf of 27 organizations in support of the Biden administration's final rule, in addition to other supportive comments, that proactively creates additional protections for the nation's civil service – and provides an important safeguard against a potential anti-democratic administration.





In their own words: The Trump Administration issued Executive Order 13957 to make career professionals in positions that are not normally subject to change as a result of a presidential transition but who discharge significant duties and exercise significant discretion in formulating and implementing executive branch policy and programs an exception to the competitive hiring rules and examinations for career positions under a new **Schedule F**. It ordered the Director of OPM and agency heads to set procedures to prepare lists of such confidential, policy-determining, policymaking, or policy-advocating positions and prepare procedures to create exceptions from civil service rules when careerists hold such positions, from which they can relocate back to the regular civil service after such service. The order was subsequently reversed by President.” **Mandate for Leadership p.80-81**

2 How they'd do it:

Force career experts out of government by relocating federal agencies. While the vast majority of civil servants already live and work outside of Washington, D.C., Project 2025 still proposes to relocate D.C.-based offices in an effort to box out long-serving, nonpartisan experts.

Of the 2.2 million federal employees, [most already do not work in Washington, D.C.](#) Still, we know that many of our nation's foremost experts in their respective fields are situated in Washington, D.C., serving the American people every day at federal agencies.

In 2019, the Trump administration relocated the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to Colorado, resulting in [77%](#) of the bureau's employees resigning from their positions.

If federal agencies are relocated without thoughtful consideration and public input, critical agencies could lose major sects of their labor force, limiting the ability of the federal government to deliver for the people it is meant to serve.



In their own words: BLM headquarters belongs in the American West... the Trump Administration's decision to relocate BLM headquarters from Washington, D.C., to the West was the epitome of good governance"

Mandate for Leadership p.524, also read p. 535

3 How they'd do it:

Administer ideologically biased or discriminatory tests for federal workers. Project 2025 would issue problematic civil service tests for prospective federal employees.

The special interests behind Project 2025 want to create their own pipeline for important roles within our federal government, and they have already created a personnel [database](#) for those who would like to be considered for positions during a future administration. Registration for this database includes a questionnaire which evaluates candidates through ideologically biased questions.



They would also utilize legislative or regulatory processes – including through the Office of Personnel Management – to reinstate the usage of general intelligence tests, which have not been in use since the Carter administration. At the time, civil rights groups [contended](#) that the general intelligence exam (the Professional and Administration Career Exam, or PACE) used to hire for certain agency positions was discriminatory. After a class action lawsuit alleging employment discrimination [led to a consent decree](#), Carter administration officials [abolished](#) the use of the exam for hiring.

Judging prospective candidates for federal employment in ideological or discriminatory ways is a dangerous way to govern. People across the U.S. depend on federal employees every day, and replacing experts with partisan loyalists would be a tremendous disservice.



In their own words: Pillar II is a personnel database that allows candidates to build their own professional profiles and our coalition members to review and voice their recommendations. These recommendations will then be collated and shared with the President-elect's team, greatly streamlining the appointment process.”

Mandate for Leadership p.xiv

4 How they'd do it:

Meddle with national security by altering security clearances. Project 2025 would remove civil servants' security clearances and politicize the granting of clearances.

Security clearances are typically revoked according to a [formal process](#) that does provide some due process rights for those whose clearances are revoked. Project 2025, however, would encourage a future administration to “remove IC (intelligence community) employees” under vague criteria that risk increased politicization.

In addition to revoking clearances, Project 2025 would empower the Director of National Intelligence and the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency to expedite the issuance of security clearances to those deemed necessary to meet the administration's "mission needs."

Expediting the issuance of security clearances paves way for more unqualified and inept leaders to be charged with our nation's most sensitive national security matters. Take Jared Kushner: when two national expert security specialists refused to issue him a clearance (due to concerns of foreign influence over him), the Trump administration [overruled](#) their expertise and gave him one anyway.



In their own words: The President should immediately revoke the security clearances of any former Directors, Deputy Directors, or other senior intelligence officials who discuss their work in the press or on social media without prior clearance from the current Director."

Mandate for Leadership p.213

The threats from Project 2025 do not end here.

This People's Guide only begins to catalog the people and communities who would be harmed if a future presidential administration began to implement Project 2025's proposals. Businesses and industry across the country could be harmed not just from the lack of data collection discussed above, but also from proposals to politicize the Federal Reserve or to restrict free trade. Our country's national security itself, too, is threatened by proposals to concentrate military decisionmaking, further undermine our intelligence agencies, or promote isolationist policies.

We continue to analyze these policies and their harms to people, and expect to release updated versions of the People's Guide with reports on the threats that would make it harder to run a business, put our security at risk, and more. [Click here to sign up to receive the updated reports directly in your inbox.](#)



We cannot let
Project 2025 write
the next chapter of
our nation's story.



To learn more about how we can confront the threats presented in this guide head-on and begin to build a bold, vibrant democracy for all people, visit democracyforward.org/action/join-2025.