

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 30, 2026

The Honorable Chris Wright
Secretary
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, D.C. 20585

The Honorable Russ Vought
Director
Office of Management and Budget
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20503

Secretary Wright and Director Vought:

Now that court documents have confirmed what we knew to be true, we write to demand that you restore previously awarded funding that the Trump Administration has weaponized in an attempt to punish perceived political enemies.

In October 2025, we wrote to you to express strong opposition to the Administration's callous decision to unlawfully terminate \$8 billion in federal investments for 223 energy projects.¹ You not only acted outside the bounds of the law, but cancelled projects that would have provided jobs, onshored manufacturing, and lowered skyrocketing energy prices. Congress authorized those projects and appropriated funding under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the Inflation Reduction Act, and annual appropriation bills. At the time of the termination of those projects, we expressed outrage that the terminations appeared politically motivated and confined to states that then-Vice President Kamala Harris carried in the 2024 presidential election. The Administration has now admitted in federal court what it denied to Congress and the American people.²

On July 24, 2026, citing court filings, *The New York Times* reported that the Trump Administration acknowledged that it terminated more than \$7.5 billion of grants due to political motivations.³ In a two-step process, the Department of Energy (DOE) first recommended more

¹ Letter from Ranking Members Martin Heinrich and Patty Murray and 35 Senators to Secretary Chris Wright and Director Russ Vought, October 9, 2025. Available: <https://www.energy.senate.gov/services/files/3A420861-F1DE-41F3-8552-10EE307FEE0D>.

² *Thakur v. Trump*, No. 3:25-cv-04737-RFL. Available: <https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.cand.450653/gov.uscourts.cand.450653.211.6.pdf>.

³ "Trump Administration Admits Canceling Grants to States That Did Not Vote for Him," *The New York Times*, July 24, 2026. Available: <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/07/24/business/trump-state-grants-canceled.html>.

than 600 grants for potential termination, including grants in states represented by both Republicans and Democrats. It appears the Office of Management and Budget then selected all the grants in “Blue States” for cancellation, which DOE executed. In court filings, DOE’s lawyers conceded that the cancellations occurred “based solely on the political identity of the grant recipient’s state.”⁴ Specifically, as the court filings stated, “[w]ith one exception, the 284 terminated grants had a recipient location and/or at least one place of performance in a state that awarded its electoral votes to Kamala Harris in the 2024 election and has two Democratic-caucusing Senators (“Blue State” grants).”⁵ Similar grants in Red States, however, remained intact and were not the subject of termination. What’s more, DOE lawyers conceded that the decision to terminate these blue state grants was not “based on any programmatic, statutory, cost-reduction, or performance-based factor.”⁶

Once an Administration begins punishing Americans for how they vote, the threat extends far beyond these projects: no state, community, business, or worker can trust that the federal government will apply the law fairly. This is not only an attack on jobs, affordable energy, and America’s economic competitiveness. It is an attack on the rule of law and the basic democratic principle that the federal government serves the entire country—not merely those who support the President.

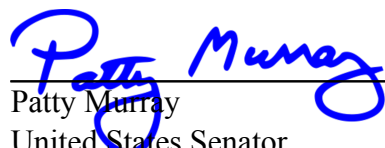
At a time when energy prices are skyrocketing, the Administration is hell-bent on political retribution instead of working to bring down costs for millions of Americans. The American people deserve to have a government that works for them—not one that is willing to push energy prices even higher and put the country’s energy security at grave risk.

For the good of our country, the rule of law, and the American people, we demand that you change course and restore the previously awarded funding.

Sincerely,



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



Patty Murray
United States Senator

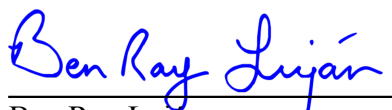
⁴ *Thakur v. Trump*, No. 3:25-cv-04737-RFL. Available:

<https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.cand.450653/gov.uscourts.cand.450653.211.6.pdf>.

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ “Trump Administration Admits Canceling Grants to States That Did Not Vote for Him,” *The New York Times*, July 24, 2026. Available:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2026/07/24/business/trump-state-grants-canceled.html>



Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senator



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



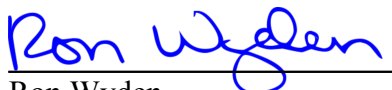
Jack Reed
United States Senator



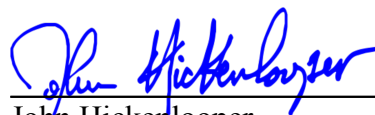
Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



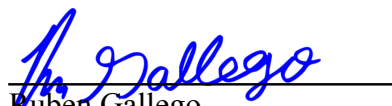
John Hickenlooper
United States Senator



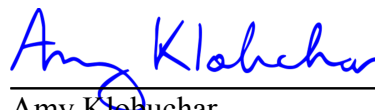
Richard J. Durbin
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Christopher A. Coons
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Ruben Gallego
United States Senator



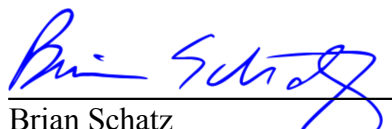
Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Jacky Rosen
United States Senator

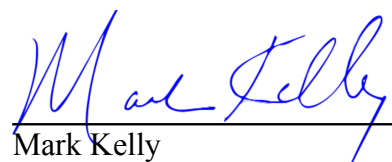


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Brian Schatz
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Richard Blumenthal
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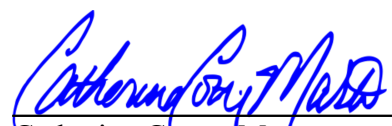

Sheldon Whitehouse
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Mark Kelly
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Adam B. Schiff
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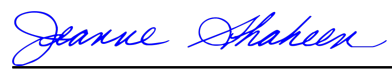

Tina Smith
United States Senator


Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator


Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator

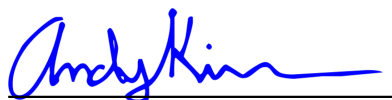

Peter Welch
United States Senator


Bernard Sanders
United States Senator


Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator


Maria Cantwell
United States Senator

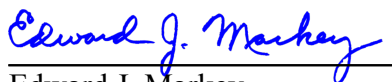

Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator



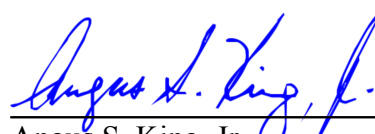
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United States Senator



Lisa Blunt Rochester
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



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United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
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United States Senator