

Josh Kaul
Wisconsin Attorney General



P.O. Box 7857
Madison, WI 53707-7857

NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 31, 2025

Gov. Evers and Attorney General Kaul Announce Temporary Restraining Order in Lawsuit Challenging President Trump's Illegal Federal Funding Freeze

Federal Judge Today Issued Temporary Restraining Order to Restore Funding, Orders Trump Administration Not to Withhold Federal Funding Allocated by Congress

MADISON, Wis. – Gov. Tony Evers and Attorney General Josh Kaul today announced a federal judge in Rhode Island issued a [temporary restraining order](#) in the lawsuit filed by Wisconsin and a coalition of 22 other states challenging President Donald Trump's Office of Management & Budget's memo freezing federal grants and loans. The temporary restraining order prohibits the Trump administration from imposing a blanket freeze on federal funding. This temporary restraining order is valid until the Court rules on a motion for preliminary injunction.

"The Trump Administration's attempts to withhold federal funding from Wisconsin hurts kids, families, seniors, and communities across our state," said Gov. Evers. "This was a bad idea from the beginning, and I will continue to fight these efforts every step of the way."

Attorney General Kaul issued the following statement:

"This order makes clear that the Trump administration's sweeping and reckless funding freeze is blocked for the time being. While we're still in the early stages of this case, this initial ruling is great news."

“Developments in the past few days have offered a glimpse into how radical and dangerous the Project 2025 agenda is. Thoughtlessly disrupting or dramatically cutting funding for public safety, educational programs, public health, and many other essential services threatens to cause serious damage to our communities.

“The Trump administration must reverse course and follow the law.”

The lawsuit, filed by the coalition Tuesday, argued that the Trump administration’s memo violates the U.S. Constitution and federal law by creating new conditions on funding that has already been awarded. On Wednesday, only hours before an initial hearing in this case, the President hastily rescinded the memo, but public messaging both by the White House Press Secretary and on the White House’s official X account indicated that the funding freeze was still in effect. The states argued that rescinding the memo without unfreezing funding was an attempt by the administration to evade the lawsuit. Indeed, during the hearing, a lawyer for the Department of Justice argued that since the memo had been rescinded, the states no longer had standing to sue. The Court, Judge John J. McConnell presiding, called this a “distinction without a difference,” and asked the parties to submit a proposed order for his review.

Today, the Court, Judge John J. McConnell presiding, announced the temporary restraining order, agreeing with the states that the President overstepped his authority by overriding policy choices made by Congress and has violated his obligation to execute the laws passed by Congress by refusing to spend the money Congress has appropriated. Judge McConnell, in his order, stated, “Congress has not given the Executive limitless power to broadly and indefinitely pause all funds that it has expressly directed to specific recipients and purposes and therefore the Executive’s actions violate the separation of powers.”

Joining Wisconsin in this lawsuit are the states of Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington, and the District of Columbia.