

Project 2025 Implementation Under Trump's Second Administration: An Analysis of the First Fifty Days

The Trump administration, now in its seventh week since the January 20, 2025 inauguration, has moved with remarkable speed to implement sweeping changes across the federal government. While candidate Trump publicly distanced himself from Project 2025 during the campaign, calling some of its proposals "absolutely ridiculous and abysmal" ^[1], his administration's early actions demonstrate significant alignment with this extensive conservative blueprint. This report analyzes the implementation of Project 2025 recommendations across executive actions, personnel appointments, and policy initiatives in Trump's second administration based on credible news reporting through March 12, 2025.

Before proceeding to the detailed analysis, it is worth noting that President Trump's administration has rapidly initiated implementation of numerous Project 2025 priorities through executive action, appointed several Project 2025 authors to key positions, and begun structural changes to the federal government that mirror the document's recommendations. The rate of implementation has been swift and deliberate, with more than two-thirds of Trump's initial executive actions directly reflecting Project 2025 proposals.

Project 2025: Origins and Scope

Project 2025 emerged as a product of the Heritage Foundation, a prominent conservative think tank with a history of influencing Republican administrations since the Reagan era ^[2]. The 922-page document, officially titled "Mandate for Leadership: The Conservative Promise," was published in April 2023 and represents a collaborative effort involving hundreds of conservative policy experts ^[3]. In the document's own words, it serves as "the conservative movement's unified effort to be ready for the next conservative Administration to govern at 12:00 noon, January 20, 2025" ^[3].

The project's foreword, written by Heritage Foundation President Kevin Roberts, frames the initiative as "a promise to America" and emphasizes four key pillars: a consensus view of federal agency governance, a personnel database of recommended appointees, an educational system for potential administration officials, and detailed transition plans for implementation ^[3]. Roberts later characterized the effort more dramatically in a July 2024 statement, suggesting America is in "the process of the second American Revolution, which will remain bloodless if the left allows it to be" ^[4].

The document outlines ambitious objectives across all aspects of government, including plans to reshape federal agencies, redirect economic policy, implement conservative social policies, and consolidate executive power ^[5]. During the 2024 campaign, Trump repeatedly disavowed

connection to Project 2025, stating in July 2024: "I know nothing about Project 2025. I disagree with some of the things they're saying" ^[2].

Executive Actions Aligned with Project 2025

Despite campaign distancing, Trump's early executive actions demonstrate substantial alignment with Project 2025 recommendations. According to a CNN analysis, more than two-thirds of the 53 executive orders and actions from Trump's first week in office—specifically 36—evoke proposals outlined in Project 2025 ^[6]. Similarly, a Politico review identified 37 instances where presidential executive actions aligned with portions of the policy document, "including some instances with nearly verbatim language lifted from the report to the White House" ^[7].

The administration's early executive actions that parallel Project 2025 recommendations include:

Restructuring Federal Employment

One of the most consequential early actions involved reinstating and expanding "Schedule F," a classification that makes it easier to fire career civil servants and replace them with political appointees ^[8]. This directly implements Project 2025's call to replace merit-based federal civil service workers with loyalists, described in the document as taking control of the bureaucracy ^[5].

Dismantling Diversity Initiatives

The administration moved quickly to eliminate diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs across the federal government. Trump signed an executive order rescinding a 1965 executive order signed by President Lyndon Johnson that established affirmative action requirements for federal contractors ^[9]. This action mirrors Project 2025's explicit recommendation to rescind that specific order and eliminate the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs ^[9].

Environmental Policy Reversals

Multiple executive orders have loosened environmental regulations and prioritized fossil fuel development, including actions to expand oil and gas exploration ^[7]. These align with Project 2025's calls to reduce environmental regulations, abandon climate change mitigation efforts, and promote fossil fuel development ^[5].

Immigration Enforcement

The deployment of military personnel and National Guard troops to the U.S.-Mexico border ^[10] aligns with Project 2025's recommendation to use military resources for domestic immigration enforcement ^[5]. The administration has also moved to punish countries that refuse deported migrants, as seen when Colombia blocked U.S. military planes carrying deportees ^[6].

Federal Funding Freeze

Perhaps most significantly, a memo from the Office of Management and Budget ordered a sweeping freeze of federal financial assistance, jeopardizing billions in funding for programs like school meals and homeless veteran support^[8]. This action aligns with Project 2025's strategy for bringing the federal bureaucracy under control and ensuring executive branch spending reflects presidential priorities regardless of congressional appropriations^[8].

Project 2025 Personnel in the Administration

The Trump administration has appointed numerous Project 2025 authors and contributors to key positions:

1. John Ratcliffe, CIA Director, was a Project 2025 contributor^[11]
2. Brendan Carr, appointed to lead the FCC, was a Project 2025 author^[11]
3. Pete Hoekstra, Ambassador to Canada, was a Project 2025 contributor^[11]
4. Tom Homan, Border Czar, contributed to Project 2025^[11]
5. Russ Vought, under consideration for OMB Director, authored a key chapter of Project 2025^[11]

The involvement of these individuals is particularly significant as they directly contributed to the same policy blueprint they are now positioned to implement. Paul Dans, who served as director of Project 2025 until July 2024, described Trump's early actions as "home runs" that were "in many cases more than we could have even dared hope for"^[1].

Current Implementation Status

The administration's implementation of Project 2025 recommendations has been swift in areas where executive action alone is sufficient. However, other aspects of the agenda require congressional action and face a more complex path to implementation.

Executive Action Implementation

Areas showing rapid implementation through executive action include:

1. Federal workforce restructuring
2. Immigration enforcement measures
3. Environmental regulation rollbacks
4. Diversity program elimination
5. National security policy shifts, including international agreement withdrawals

Politico characterized the OMB funding freeze memo as "the boldest, and clearest example of the administration not only leaning on the people who wrote Project 2025 but employing its strategies"^[8].

Legislative Agenda Progress

On the legislative front, House Republicans recently passed a government funding bill ahead of a potential shutdown deadline, with a 217-213 vote that saw just one Republican defection^[12]. The bill funds the government through September 30, 2025, decreases overall spending from last year's levels while increasing military spending by about \$6 billion, and provides a boost in funding for Immigration and Customs Enforcement deportation operations^[13].

This funding measure, if passed by the Senate, would provide stable government operations through the fiscal year while beginning to shift spending priorities in directions aligned with Project 2025, albeit with less dramatic changes than the document proposes for areas like tax policy, Medicare, and Medicaid restructuring^[5].

Areas Pending Implementation

Several major Project 2025 proposals remain in early stages or pending implementation:

1. Tax reform proposals (flat tax, corporate tax cuts)
2. Medicare and Medicaid restructuring
3. Complete dismantling of targeted agencies
4. Full implementation of religious conservative social policies
5. Complete overhaul of the Federal Reserve system

Rate of Implementation and Strategic Assessment

Based on the evidence from the first seven weeks of Trump's second term, the administration appears to be implementing Project 2025 recommendations at a remarkably rapid pace, particularly through executive action. The speed and scope of implementation suggest a deliberate strategy to quickly institute changes that do not require congressional approval while laying groundwork for more complex policy shifts.

On a scale measuring implementation progress:

1. Executive branch restructuring: HIGH - Rapid implementation of Schedule F reinstatement and strategic appointments
2. Regulatory rollbacks: HIGH - Multiple executive orders already issued
3. Immigration enforcement: MEDIUM-HIGH - Border deployments initiated but mass deportation infrastructure still developing
4. Economic policy shifts: MEDIUM - Initial steps taken but comprehensive tax reform requires legislation
5. Social policy implementation: MEDIUM - Some reversals of previous administration policies but complex agenda still developing
6. Complete agency restructuring: LOW-MEDIUM - Initial steps through personnel but structural changes require time

A particularly notable aspect of the implementation strategy is the focus on installing Project 2025 authors in positions directly aligned with their contributions to the document. This creates a streamlined pathway from policy blueprint to government action with minimal translation required.

Conclusion: Alignment Assessment

Despite candidate Trump's public disavowal of Project 2025 during the campaign, the evidence strongly suggests his administration is deliberately implementing its recommendations at an aggressive pace. The alignment between the document's proposals and administration actions is too consistent and specific to be coincidental, particularly given the appointment of multiple Project 2025 authors to relevant positions.

As Paul Dans, the former director of Project 2025, stated regarding Trump's early actions: "This is exactly the work we set out to do" ^[6]. The administration appears to be following both the broad strategic framework and specific tactical recommendations outlined in the document, moving most quickly in areas where executive authority is least constrained.

The pattern of implementation suggests that while Trump may have distanced himself from the document for political purposes during the campaign, his administration sees it as a valuable roadmap for achieving its policy objectives. The prospect of continued implementation of Project 2025 recommendations appears high, particularly if the administration can maintain its current momentum and eventually secure legislative cooperation for more complex policy changes.

For those concerned about the direction of these changes, understanding the Project 2025 blueprint and monitoring its implementation provides critical strategic intelligence for developing effective responses to this comprehensive effort to reshape the federal government.

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