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NATIVE SUN

Attorney General Nessel files lawsuit against President Trump, agencies to stop mass federal firings

LANSING - Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel filed a lawsuit (PDF), as part of a coalition of 20 attorneys general, against President Donald Trump and numerous federal agencies for conducting illegal mass layoffs of federal probationary employees. The coalition argues in their lawsuit these mass firings will cause irreparable burdens and expenses on the part of the states, both to support recently unemployed workers and to review and adjudicate claims of unemployment assistance. Moreover, the unlawful layoffs will harm state finances and undermine vital state and federal partnerships. Attorney General Nessel announced the lawsuit in a video here.

"These mass firings are illegal and likely to cripple important federal initiatives throughout the country and in Michigan, and so we're once again taking the White House to court," said Nessel. "Beyond being unlawful, these layoffs are indiscriminate, irrespective of performance and specialized skills, and destructive not only to the livelihoods of thousands of hardworking Americans in public service but also their communities and state programs in place to support those newly unemployed."

Reflecting their widespread contempt for many hard-working civil servants, the Trump Administration initiated mass terminations of federal workers, ordering numerous federal agencies to fire thousands of probationary employees in apparent violation of Federal law. These personnel are newly hired or have recently been promoted or changed offices,

and they are generally subject to a probationary period of up to two years.

While federal agencies claimed, in the form of termination letters, that these probationary employees were fired for unsatisfactory performance or conduct, the firings were actually clearly part of the administration's attempt to decimate the entire federal government. In the lawsuit, the coalition of attorneys general asserts that the administration was therefore required to follow federal laws and regulations that govern large-scale federal "Reductions in Force" (RIF). These critical protections ensure that personnel such as military veterans are given preference in retaining their jobs.

When a RIF results in a layoff of 50 or more employees, the agency must generally give at least 60 days' advance notice to state governments so they can provide vital "rapid response" information, resources, and services to affected workers. The federal agencies named in the lawsuit failed to provide any advance notice to the State of Michigan.

In this filing, Attorney General Nessel is seeking an immediate ruling by the Court to:

Reinstate unlawfully fired employees; Stop further similar terminations; and Identify affected employees.

Joining Attorney General Nessel in this coalition are the attorneys general of Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Wisconsin.

Trump moves to dismantle Department of Education



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The Trump administration is preparing to issue an executive order directing newly confirmed Education Secretary Linda McMahon to begin dismantling the Department of Education. While the president lacks the authority to unilaterally shut down the agency—requiring congressional approval—McMahon has been tasked with taking "all necessary steps" to reduce its role "to the maximum extent permitted by law." The administration justifies the move by claiming the department has spent over \$1 trillion since its 1979 founding without improving student achievement. However, data from The Nation's Report Card shows math scores have improved significantly since the 1990s, though reading levels have remained stagnant. The pandemic further widened achievement gaps, leaving many students behind.

The Education Department provides about 10% of public-school funding, primarily targeting low-income students, rural districts, and children with disabilities. A recent Data for Progress poll found that 61% of voters oppose Trump's efforts to abolish the agency, while just 34% support it. In Washington, D.C., where student proficiency rates remain low—22% in math and 34% in English—federal funding is crucial. Serenity Brooker, an elementary edu-

cation major, warned that cutting the department would worsen conditions in underfunded schools.

"D.C. testing scores aren't very high right now, so cutting the Department of Education isn't going to help that at all," she told Hilltop News. A report from the Education Trust found that low-income schools in D.C. receive \$2,200 less per student than wealthier districts, leading to shortages in essential classroom materials. The department oversees programs under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), serving 7.5 million students. Transferring IDEA oversight to another agency, as Trump's plan suggests, could jeopardize services and protections for disabled students.

The Office for Civil Rights also plays a key role in enforcing laws that protect students from discrimination. Moving it to the Department of Justice, as proposed in Project 2025, would make it harder for families to file complaints, leaving vulnerable students with fewer protections. Federal student aid programs, including Pell Grants and loan repayment plans, could face disruption if the department is dismantled. Experts warn this could worsen the student debt crisis, pushing more borrowers into default. "With funding cuts, they don't have the materials they need, like books or things to help with math," Brooker said. "It makes learning less fun for them."

Attorney General Nessel and multistate coalition secure court order blocking Trump administration from withholding critical federal funding

LANSING - Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel and a coalition of 22 other attorneys general recently won a preliminary injunction against the Trump Administration (PDF) to block its illegal policy that would withhold funding for essential federal agency grants, loans, and other financial assistance programs. Judge John J. McConnell of the U.S. District Court for the District of Rhode Island granted the preliminary injunction after Attorney General Nessel and the coalition sued the Trump Administration to stop withholding federal funding.

"I am grateful that my colleagues and I were able to secure this victory to preserve essential programs for Michiganders while stopping President Trump's illegal attempt to strip funding for vital government services," Nessel said. "I will continue working closely with program partners across Michigan to ensure the Trump Administration complies with this injunction and make sure these critical resources reach the people who need them most."

The U.S. District Court for the District of Rhode Island granted Attorney General Nessel and the coalition's request for a preliminary injunction, halting the implementation of the administration's policy. The Court concluded that the states had demonstrated a high likelihood of success on their claims that the actions making up the policy were unlawful. The Court noted the States' "inability to feasibly take a program-by-program, grant-by-grant approach to raising their challenges is the consequence of the Defendants' broad, sweeping efforts to indefinitely stop nearly all faucets of federal funding from flowing to carry out the President's policy priorities, without regard to Congressional authorizations. One cannot set one's house on fire and then complain that the firefighters smashed all the windows and put a hole in the roof trying to put it out."

The Court also required the administration to provide evidence of their compli-

What to say (and not say) to police during an arrest

PRNewswire/ -- Being arrested is often an overwhelming and stressful experience, but how you handle yourself in those critical moments can have a lasting impact on your future. Every word you say—and don't say—can influence the outcome of your case. Don't fall victim to oversharing when stressed; make note of what to say (and not say) during an arrest, according to our criminal defense attorneys in Wichita, Kansas! Our team at the McConnell Law Firm is detailing everything you need to know so you can remain diligent in exercising your rights while also protecting your future.

Do: Provide Your Name and Personal Info
When interacting with officers, always remember that it's more than casual conversation—anything you say can later be used as a statement in court. When approached by police officers, remain compliant in their requests for any basic identifying information such as your name, address, and date of birth. However, you are not obligated to (and should not) answer further questions without legal representation present!

Do Not: Consent to Searches of Vehicles
While many people may not realize this, you do not legally have to consent to searches of your vehicle. If officers believe they have probable cause to arrest you or have a search warrant, they may be able to legally search your vehicle. However, simply consenting to a request to search outside of these parameters may have severe consequences, as any evidence found during a search could be admissible in court. If a law enforcement officer requests to search your vehicle or property, clearly state, "I do not consent to a search." While a search may still take place, not consenting preserves your right to challenge the legality of the search later on in court.

Do: Remain Silent

ance with regard to withholding FEMA funds by March 14 and to alert all agencies about the Court's order.

The administration's policy, issued through an array of actions, including a January 27 memorandum from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), illegally withheld trillions of dollars in federal funds for states and other entities like nonprofit organizations and community health centers. The policy caused immediate chaos and uncertainty for millions of Americans who rely on state programs that receive federal funds.

Attorney General Nessel and the coalition sued the administration over their attempt to withhold funding on January 28, and on January 31, the court granted the attorneys general's request for a temporary restraining order (TRO) blocking the policy's implementation until further order from the court.

On February 7, Attorney General Nessel and the coalition filed motions for enforcement and a preliminary injunction to stop the illegal policy and preserve federal funding that families, communities, and states rely on. On February 8, the court granted the motion for enforcement, ordering the administration to immediately comply with the TRO and stop freezing federal funds. On February 28, Attorney General Nessel and the coalition filed a second motion for enforcement seeking to stop the Trump Administration from withholding hundreds of millions of dollars in grants to the states from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Joining Attorney General Nessel on this lawsuit are the attorneys general of Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin.

If you're an avid viewer of crime and police shows, you're probably aware that you have the right to remain silent during an arrest. This shouldn't be taken lightly, as anything you say can and likely will be used against you in court! When invoking your Fifth Amendment right, simply remain silent or state to the arresting officer, "I am going to remain silent. I would like to speak to an attorney." This should prompt officers to stop questions until an attorney is present.

"The more questions you ask during an arrest, the more you open yourself up to conversation with the officer, which may not be helpful for your case," said Jonathan W. McConnell, founding criminal defense attorney at the McConnell Law Firm. "Let's say you're being arrested for a DUI; if you continue to answer and ask questions, you're giving the officers further evidence of intoxication should you be slurring your words, repeating yourself, etc."

Do Not: Admit Guilt

While it may seem obvious, never give admissions or partial admissions of guilt during an arrest. Such interactions can prove to be stressful, and you might feel compelled to explain your situation; however, it's crucial to avoid making any statements that could be interpreted as an admission of guilt. Refrain from discussing the incident and do not give any explanations or excuses as to what has transpired.

Do: Ask for an Attorney

Above all else, assert your right to legal counsel immediately upon arrest. This can be easily done by simply stating, "I would like to speak to an attorney." Once the request is made, officers are legally required to stop questioning you until your attorney is present. An experienced criminal defense attorney will ensure that your rights are protected and can provide you with guidance on navigating the legal process.