

Trump's efforts to cut federal government are bearing fruit

Shrinking the federal Leviathan

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While rumors of a “The Apprentice” reboot abound, Americans need look no further than the federal government workforce to see President Trump deploy his signature catchphrase, “You’re fired!”

Hundreds of thousands of unproductive public sector workers have been cut since the president’s inauguration, most notably through the Department of Government Efficiency’s efforts. Tens of thousands have taken government buyout options to expedite the process.

In early June, Mr. Trump signed an executive order making it easier to remove 8,000 more federal workers. Slashing bureaucracy and red tape was a key part of his agenda during his first term. He returned to the White House for a second term, determined to cut federal headcounts and flatten the curve of what truly threatens Americans’ economic prosperity: government growth.



Under the Trump administration, the total federal workforce has reached its lowest level since 1966, at roughly 2.68 million employees, down from a peak of 3.01 million in Oct. 2024. This means that just 1.6% of the civilian labor force is employed by Uncle Sam.

The president’s dedication to reducing counterproductive and duplicative government headcounts is a clear reversal from the Biden administration, under which the monthly jobs numbers depended on artificially expanding the federal workforce.

Reducing the size and scope of government has many economic benefits.

With fewer taxpayer-funded employees, fiscal savings are large. The Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget estimates that a 10% cut in the civilian federal workforce would save \$350 billion over 10 years, with larger savings for deeper cuts.

In the past 18 months, the federal workforce has been reduced by more than 11.5%, or roughly 348,000 employees.

The potential efficiency gains from reallocating resources to the productive private sector are also significant. The inefficient federal government lacks market incentives, often leading to rules and regulations that slow business activity. Private firms, by contrast, are better equipped to innovate, create jobs and contribute to economic growth.

In the recently released Bureau of Labor Statistics “Employment Situation” report, the private sector grew by roughly 120,000 jobs in May, driven by leisure and hospitality. Reductions in public bureaucrats also continued, with non-Postal Service positions within the federal government decreasing by approximately 2,600.

Studies by The Heritage Foundation and the Cato Institute find that bloated government spending, including federal headcounts, correlates with slower economic growth. Taxpayer dollars spent on federal salaries and unproductive public programs could be put to better use in the private sector.

Mr. Trump is therefore saving taxpayer dollars by trimming waste in the federal bureaucracy while boosting private sector and broader economic growth.

Deregulatory efforts have also fostered a thriving private sector, contributing to job growth. In his first term, the president signed Executive Order 13771, which instituted a “one in, two out” rule for issuing new regulations.

By the end of fiscal year 2025, the administration had taken 646 deregulatory actions versus five regulatory actions — a ratio of 129-to-1 — allowing businesses to use savings for reinvestment, expansion or hiring more workers.

Employment gains have accelerated not just within the private sector but also among native-born workers. Foreign-born employment surged under the Biden administration, whereas from January to June 2025 under Mr. Trump, native-born workers accounted for all net job growth.

In fact, during 2025, approximately 2.7 million native-born Americans gained employment, while 972,000 foreign-born workers lost employment. This is attributed to stricter immigration policies.

The administration continues to tighten restrictions on work visa programs, including a recently announced crackdown on fraud in Optional Practical Training student job programs. These efforts reduce the prevalence of foreign-born labor inflows and boost opportunities for native-born workers.

Under Mr. Trump, hundreds of thousands of private sector jobs were added to the economy, the unproductive public sector shed jobs, and employment gains were concentrated among native-born Americans. The labor market is shifting away from bureaucracy toward private sector productivity, returning jobs to American workers.

Shrinking the public sector even tackles the affordability crisis by eliminating inefficiencies, reducing deficits and slowing the growth of the national debt.

Mr. Trump's success in reining in the administrative state has exceeded expectations. With a commitment to reducing government headcounts, Americans can remain confident that waste is being eradicated and the federal leviathan is being defeated.

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