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PRESS RELEASE

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**Attorney General Brown Announces Initial Victory 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***

BALTIMORE, MD (January 31, 2025) – Attorney General Anthony G. Brown today announced an initial victory in his lawsuit challenging President Donald Trump’s Office of Management & Budget’s memo freezing federal grants and loans. Today a federal judge in Rhode Island issued a temporary restraining order in the lawsuit filed by Maryland and a coalition of 22 other states. 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 memo was a reckless order that threatened the lives and livelihoods of people across our State and country. It threw Marylanders into a state of chaos, uncertainty, and fear, as millions of people depend on federally funded programs to live full, healthy lives,” **said Attorney General Brown**. “Our Office will oppose any effort to illegally discontinue these much-needed services.”

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 On Wednesday, only hours before an initial hearing in this case, the President hastily rescinded the memo, but public messaging both by the White House Press Secretary and on the White House’s official X account indicated that the funding freeze was still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 Indeed, during the hearing, a lawyer for the Department of Justice argued that since the memo had been rescinded, the states no longer had standing to sue.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

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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.”

Since the order has taken effect, communities and families across Maryland and the country have been harmed. The federal funding that has been frozen supports programs such as: WIC, a nutrition program for pregnant parents and infants; Head Start, providing preschool and support services for low-income children and their families; LIHEAP, providing home energy assistance for households that struggle to stay warm through the winters; Medicare enrollment assistance program; school meals for low-income students; programs supporting homeless veterans reintegrating into our communities; programs that help victims of domestic violence seek support making safety plans and exit unsafe situations; and programs supporting refugees that have already arrived in our communities, by providing clothing, household goods, and rent assistance, as well as English classes and job placement. These programs also support critical public safety programs including those housed within the Attorney General’s Office, supporting the investigation and prosecution of Medicaid fraud and child sexual abuse cases.

In filing the lawsuit, Attorney General Brown joined the attorneys general of Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin.

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