

Tell Your Legislators: Federal funding is vital for our communities' health and well-being

Toolkit for Federal Grant and Loan Recipients

January-February 2025

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Federal Grants and Loans are Critical for our Appalachian Communities

From water infrastructure to disaster relief, and from black lung clinics to abandoned mine land clean up, federal funding and grant opportunities are vital for the health and safety of Appalachian communities. Local governments, states, and nonprofits rely on stable federal funding to provide essential services to their constituencies. These federal programs were created by Congress in law to be executed by the Executive Branch.

What's Happening with Federal Grants and Loans?

On January 20, the Trump-Vance Administration instituted policies that pause federal funding from being dispersed through numerous grant and loan programs. As of February 10th, multiple courts have blocked the executive order pausing grant and loan funds from being implemented, but unfortunately, many grants remained paused, in defiance of these court orders.

What programs are impacted?

While ensuring federal taxpayer dollars are not wasted is important, many grant and loan programs are providing overdue opportunities for Appalachian communities. One example of a frozen program is the Rural Energy for America Program, which provides grants and loans to rural businesses and farmers. The grants are reimbursable, meaning that the farm or business purchases equipment with their own money, then requests reimbursement from the USDA. This program is now frozen, so small businesses and farmers who purchased equipment can't get reimbursed, meaning thousands or tens of thousands of dollars in costs they were not planning for and may not be able to withstand.

Countless other programs that Appalachians rely on to get by and strengthen our communities have been affected and are now less certain, including:

- Funding for abandoned mine lands that restores our landscape, fixes historical pollution issues, and puts our land back into productive use with new economic opportunities.
- Black lung clinics that provide essential health services and administrative support for ailing coal miners.
- Additional programs from the U.S. Department of Agriculture that support rural farmers and small businesses with loans, grants, and technical assistance to help their businesses thrive.
- Programs at the Department of Energy that are creating good jobs in clean energy development and preserving our clean air and water.
- Drinking water programs that help states and towns make improvements to their water systems and make sure our water is safe to drink.

While some federal agencies are continuing to offer and implement grants, others have put

programs on hold. [See a full list of targeted programs online here.](#)

Congress has the ability to take action and advocate for administration policy changes; Members of Congress need to hear from their constituents that the Trump-Vance Administration must release grant funding to our communities that have been promised this support.

Take Action!

[Call YOUR Representatives](#)
[Amplify on Social Media](#)

[Write to YOUR Representatives](#)

Office	Office Phone Number	Office Legislative Director	Email
Rep. Morgan Griffith (VA-9)	202-225-3861	Davis Michols	davis.michols@mail.house.gov
Rep. Ben Cline (VA-6)	202-225-5431	Paula Nicole Manley	nicole.manley@mail.house.gov
Rep. Hal Rogers (KY-5)	202-225-4601	Austin Gage	austin.gage@mail.house.gov
Sen. Rand Paul (KY)	202-224-4343	John Maniscalco	john_maniscalco@paul.senate.gov
Sen. Mitch McConnell (KY)	202-224-2541	Tiffany Ge	tiffany_ge@mcconnell.senate.gov
Rep. Chuck Edwards (NC-11)	202-225-6401	Ryan Dierker	ryan.dierker@mail.house.gov
Rep. Virginia Foxx (NC-5)	202-225-2071	Bryan McVae	bryan.mcvae@mail.house.gov
Rep. Pat Harrigan (NC-10)	202-225-2576	Collin Sabine	collin.sabine@mail.house.gov
Rep. Tim Moore (NC-14)	202-225-5634	Thomas Bell (Legislative Assistant)	thomas.bell@mail.house.gov
Sen. Thom Tillis (NC)	202-224-6342	Corey Weber	corey_weber@tillis.senate.gov
Sen. Ted Budd (NC)	202-224-3154	Ryan Alban	ryan_alban@budd.senate.gov
Rep. Diana Harshbarger (TN-1)	202-225-6356	Susan Falconer	susan.falconer@mail.house.gov

Rep. Tim Burchett (TN-2)	202-225-5435	John Stout	john.stout@mail.house.gov
Rep. Chuck Fleischmann (TN-3)	202-225-3271	Ian Merritt	ian.merritt@mail.house.gov
Sen. Bill Hagerty (TN)	202-224-4944	Lucas Da Pieve	lucas_dapieve@hagerty.senate.gov
Sen. Marsha Blackburn (TN)	202-224-3344	Jamie Susskind	jamie_susskind@blackburn.senate.gov
Rep. Riley Moore (WV-2)	202-225-2711	Ryan Rasins	ryan.rasins@mail.house.gov
Rep. Carol Miller (WV-1)	202-225-3452	Emily Henn	emily.henn@mail.house.gov
Sen. Shelley Moore Capito (WV)	202-224-6472	James Mann	james_mann@capito.senate.gov
Sen. Jim Justice (WV)	202-224-3954	Kathryn Cromack (Legislation and Policy Counsel)	kathryn_cromack@justice.senate.gov

1) Call YOUR Representatives

Senators: <https://www.senate.gov/senators/senators-contact.htm>

Representatives: <https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>

Congressional Switchboard: 202-224-3121

Grant Recipient/Community Leader:

Sample Script

“My name is _____ and I am the [TITLE] of [TOWN/ORG]. I’m calling today to express my concern about the threats to halt federal grants and loans in my community. We are receiving federal funding that supports:

[choose what concern is most relevant in your community. A few examples here]:

- Disaster recovery
- Brownfields and superfund site clean up
- New energy jobs
- Economic development projects
- Abandoned mine land clean up
- Black lung clinics
- University research

Ensuring federal taxpayer dollars are not wasted is important, but doing so does not have to be disruptive to businesses and organizations in our community, and programs that provide overdue

opportunities to our communities must not be cut. On behalf of [your constituents in TOWN/ ORGANIZATION], please defend these programs. Our communities can't afford to lose this funding."

2) Write to YOUR Representatives - Short Version

Dear Senator/Representative _____,

My name is _____ and I am the [TITLE] of [TOWN/COUNTY/ORGANIZATION]. I'm writing to express my concern about the threats to halt federal grants and loans for essential services in my community. We are receiving federal funding that supports:

[describe the concerns most relevant in your community. A few examples here]:

- Disaster recovery
- Brownfields and superfund site clean up
- New energy jobs
- Economic development projects
- Abandoned mine land clean up
- Black lung clinics
- University research

Ensuring federal taxpayer dollars are not wasted is important, but programs that provide overdue opportunities to our communities must not be cut. On behalf of your constituents in [TOWN/COUNTY], please defend these programs. Our communities can't afford to lose this funding.

4) Write to YOUR Representatives - Long Version

Subject: Concern and Request for Support on Potential Freeze of Federal Funding

Dear [Senator _____, Senator _____, and Representative _____]:

I write on behalf of [ORGANIZATION NAME] to request your guidance and support on the potential that the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and federal agencies may freeze federal funding for grants in a way that would have substantial impact on our [TOWN/ ORGANIZATION]'s ability to serve [your state's] citizens and families through projects that you have championed for federal award and through other support.

The January 20 Presidential Executive Order on "Unleashing American Energy" (and the subsequent January 22 memorandum on that EO), and subsequent memos propose potentially significant delays, funding freezes, and even cancellation of already obligated federal grants. While there have been reassurances that the orders are narrowly targeted, the plain language of these White House directives are all-encompassing, our grant officers in the federal agencies

are uncertain whether or when they can proceed with grant disbursements, and the entire situation is very unclear.

This will have a real impact on our service and efforts to revitalize the economy of [Your State]. Specifically, we are undertaking the following federally funded grant projects now:

- [List the specific grants you have by federal agency, name of project, amount of grant, whether it is under contract or still pending to be under contract, and a 1-sentence description of what your project will do. If your members of Congress or state lawmakers supported you getting this grant in any way, mention that.]

While our projects can certainly withstand a short, reasonable delay of federal funding, we want to make sure that you are apprised of the substantial, negative impacts on [your state] and our organization that could take place if these delays go well past February 10, 2025 or there is a grim result that our grant is canceled or otherwise ended after White House review:

- [Have you stopped construction?]
- [Have you held off purchasing equipment?]
- [Have you stopped a hiring process?]
- [Will you have to furlough or fire staff?]
- [Are there constituents you are serving who are vulnerable to impact like job trainees, workers, entrepreneurs?]
- [Are there deadlines for your federal project, or associated with other funds in your capital stack, that could be missed?]

We respectfully request that you [help us determine whether and when these federally-backed projects can proceed], and provide us continuing support to implement these projects for the benefit of [people in your state]. We would be grateful if you could help communicate to the federal agencies governing our grants listed above, and also the White House OMB, that these specific programs are consistent with the President's policy priorities, that our projects are solid and worthy to proceed, and that these program funds should be released from the current delay orders forthwith.

All of the projects that we are bringing to your attention are about local economic development, community revitalization, and workers.

Thank you for your continuing leadership and support.

Sincerely,

[NAME, TITLE, AND ORGANIZATION]

5) Get Legal Support

If you have a grant or loan that is in question; if your funding was removed from ASAP; or if you were otherwise denied a draw down, request that the agency reinstate your funds or allow you draw down. If you need support, [fill out Lawyers for Good Government's fund protection clinic intake form](#) so they can track this violation and reach out to you about potential next steps.

6) Amplify on Social Media

Share X posts or on other social media and tag Congressional leadership + YOUR reps:
@LeaderJohnThune @SpeakerJohnson #RebuildingAppalachia #FundAppalachia

Sample message:

- [@INSERT HANDLE] Federal grant programs drive economic growth and repair our lands in Appalachia. We need Congress to protect vital federal grant and loan funds.
#RebuildingAppalachia #FundAppalachia