

*U.S. protesters march against  
Trump's federal aid freeze,  
immigration policies*

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**Americans gather during a rally in support of federal funding and in opposition to US President Donald Trump's order to pause all federal grants and loans, near the White House in Washington, US, on January 28, 2025. (By Reuters)**

Washington, January 29 (RHC)-- Protesters have staged a rally outside the White House in Washington DC against U.S. President Donald Trump's plan to freeze federal aid as well as his controversial immigration policies.

The protesters shouted slogans such as “This is what democracy looks like” and held banners reading “Unfreeze funds” as they marched outside the White House on Tuesday, following Trump’s decision to pause trillions of dollars in federal funding.

The decision ignited widespread backlash nationwide, with Democrats pledging to challenge the move through legal action. The Trump administration announced a halt to federal grants and loans, creating widespread confusion across the government, Congress, state programs and nonprofit organizations that rely on that funding.

Critics warned that the order could disrupt education, healthcare, poverty reduction and disaster relief schemes.

Officials in Trump’s administration claimed the funding freeze was necessary to ensure that all funding complies with Trump’s priorities, including his crackdown on diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) initiatives.

The Office of Management and Budget, which oversees the federal budget, said in a memo that the freeze included any money intended “for foreign aid” and for “nongovernmental organizations”, among other categories.

Late on Tuesday, a federal judge temporarily blocked Trump's spending freeze minutes before it was due to take effect.

Meanwhile, White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt labeled all undocumented immigrants as “criminals,” amid fears that the Trump administration isn’t just seeking to deport those who commit violent acts.

In her first press briefing on Tuesday, Leavitt said all the 3,500 illegal immigrants arrested by federal immigration authorities in recent days "are criminals" as far as the Trump administration is concerned, stressing that they have illegally broken the country’s laws.

“I know the last administration didn't see it that way. So it's a big culture shift in our nation to view someone who breaks our immigration laws as a criminal, but that's exactly what they are," she added.

This is while being in the United States illegally is a civil a violation, not a criminal one, and the individuals who were arrested have not been convicted of a crime. Tough anti-immigration measures were at the center of Trump’s election campaign in the lead-up to the 2024 US presidential election.

The new policy will affect immigrants already residing in the United States as well as the asylum seekers waiting to be processed at the US-Mexican border.

Trump is expected to order the mobilization of law enforcement agencies across the U.S. government to help him deport record numbers of immigrants.

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