



FACT-CHECKING RUSS VOUGHT'S LIES ABOUT RESCISSIONS

“POCKET RESCISSIONS” = LINE-ITEM VETO

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Director Russ Vought has broken the law and attacked Congress’s constitutional power of the purse. Time after time, he has claimed that the President can steal congressionally approved public funds to advance his own agenda. Decades of legal precedent – and the Constitution – tell us that is simply not how it works.

His next goal: Convince the American people that he somehow found a hidden loophole that allows him to unilaterally cancel or steal billions of dollars in investments promised to the middle class, the working class, and vulnerable Americans without Congressional permission.



**He is obsessed with what he calls the “pocket rescission.”
Make no mistake, this is a line-item veto, and it is unlawful.**

As the nonpartisan Government Accountability Office (GAO) wrote in response to a 2018 bipartisan request:

We conclude that the [Impoundment Control Act of 1974] ICA does not permit the impoundment of funds through their date of expiration. The plain language of the ICA permits only the temporary withholding of budget authority and provides that unless Congress rescinds the amounts at issue, they must be made available for obligation. Amounts proposed for rescission must be made available for prudent obligation before the amounts expire, even where the 45-day period provided in the ICA approaches or spans the date on which funds would expire.

GAO B-33030, December 10, 2018

The President and OMB Director have one very simple choice if they want to cut spending: come to Congress and request changes to the law. Absent Congressional legislation, the Constitution and the rule of law require the Administration to deliver to the American taxpayers the investments passed by both chambers of Congress and signed into law by the President. Anything else would be a betrayal of their oaths of office.

They Say...

...presidents have inherent authority to freeze or cancel appropriations.

"[T]he president has run on the issue of impoundment and has reminded the country that 200 years of presidents have used this authority..."

— OMB Director Vought, 1/15/25

They are ...

WRONG

...completely wrong and demonstrates a willful ignorance of history and the law.

What's the real story?

"inherent Presidential power to impound" has been disavowed by the Supreme Court, the Department of Justice's Office of Legal Counsel, and the Government Accountability Office as well as through enactment of the Impoundment Control Act (ICA) of 1974.

Take it from multiple Supreme Court justices and the GAO, [quotes available here](#), and read the true history on the *Myth of Presidential Impoundment Power*, [here](#).

...they have not impounded anything yet because "impoundment" is only when money is frozen until it expires.

"We have not impounded any money. We are in a programmatic review."

— Vought, 6/04/25

WRONG

...completely and intentionally misleading and wrong, even by the Administration's own standards.

The Office of Management and Budget's [official guidance to agencies](#) acknowledges that the definition of impoundment is "any Executive Branch action or inaction that **temporarily** or permanently withholds, delays, or precludes the obligation or expenditure of budgetary resources."

...the ICA did not eliminate impoundments, it controlled them.

"But even the very Impoundment Control Act, notice it's not called the Impoundment Elimination Act."

— Vought, 6/01/25



...another example of how deeply confused Vought is.

A president needs **specific** statutory authority to freeze spending. The ICA provides a specific authority to **temporarily** freeze **some** spending in **certain** circumstances, and only **after** rigorous procedures are followed.

...'pocket rescissions' are real. The ICA allows a president to unilaterally cancel funding_:

"Secondly, the very Impoundment Control Act itself allows for a procedure called pocket rescissions..."

— OMB Vought, 6/01/25

WRONG

...completely wrong and invents a power that nobody has granted the President.

So-called "Pocket Rescissions" – a misnomer designed to give the illegitimate attack on the rule of law a veneer of legitimacy – are unlawful. At the time the ICA was debated Congress specifically acknowledged that it could not abdicate its role over controlling spending, and Supreme Court precedent since has further underscored that fact.