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City Attorney Zach Klein takes on Trump administration's illegal executive orders on gender and race

City Attorney Klein's latest lawsuit aims to protect approximately \$102 million in federal funding for critical City programs, including food assistance, job training, and Columbus Police's ability to solve violent crimes

COLUMBUS, OH—Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein today announced the City filed a lawsuit against the Trump administration over its illegal attempts to impose ideological constraints on federal grant programs. The suit argues that President Trump broke the law in a pair of executive orders seeking to restrict federal funds to cities who declined to pursue the administration's campaigns against transgender people and diversity initiatives.

“The Trump administration’s attempt to add additional strings to grant funding isn’t just cumbersome, it’s illegal,” said Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein. **“Congress—not the president—decides how funds are spent. That’s government 101. We’re urging the Court to side with cities to ensure these funds will continue to flow. Without them, the City will be unable to fully fund critical programs that feed our kids, provide job opportunities to our residents, and help fight domestic violence and other crimes in our community.”**

The two executive orders challenged in the lawsuit date to the earliest days of President Trump's second term. The lawsuit argues the orders attempt to intimidate and bully cities into adopting the administration's extreme policy positions targeting diversity, equity and inclusion programming and transgender people.

At stake in the lawsuit are approximately \$102 million dollars directed toward the city's Department of Public Utilities, Columbus Public Health, the Recreation and Parks Department, the Department of Development, the Sustainable Columbus agency, and the Department of Public Safety. These funds make up approximately one fourth of the city's federal funding.

Among the programs supported by these funds are the Aspyr workforce development and job training program, food assistance for Columbus children and families, the City's lead pipe replacement efforts, water treatment and pollution reduction assessments, drug addiction and domestic violence resources, City pool safety programming, and funding to support City

facilities tasked with solving violent crimes. If these funds are illegally stripped away, the City would face a significant budget shortfall that would threaten not only these programs, but other essential services for workers and residents.

The filing seeks to extend protections for Columbus and several other cities who are arguing that Trump's orders effectively rewrite federal laws without any constitutionally required act of Congress. An injunction stemming from this filing would mean that Trump administration officials would not be able to strip funds from or impose new conditions on city departments that have already been approved for funding by Congress.

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