

AFL-CIO

LEGISLATIVE ALERT

July 17, 2025

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the AFL-CIO, I urge you to oppose the Senate Amendment to the Rescissions Act of 2025 (H.R. 4) scheduled for floor consideration this week. Even after the modest changes the Senate made to the previously passed House version, H.R. 4 would still implement President Trump's submitted proposal under the Impoundment Control Act (ICA) of 1974 to rescind \$9 billion in previously enacted funding—gutting foreign assistance programs and eliminating all federal support for public broadcasting.

The President does not have legal authority to freeze congressionally appropriated funds, either permanently or temporarily, without explicit statutory approval. Yet over the first 134 days of his Administration, hundreds of billions in funding have been unlawfully withheld while the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) dismantled programs and terminated staff—without congressional review.

The Administration's actions are in clear violation of the ICA's 45-day rule that allows the President to only withhold budget authority for up to 45 days after submitting a special message proposing a rescission. After that 45 days period expires and Congress has not taken action, the funds should be released for obligation. Now Republicans seek to pass H.R. 4 in order to fix their missteps—at a cost to international development, global labor rights and the dissemination of trusted public news, emergency alerts, and educational programming.

For example, H.R. 4 includes a rescission of \$83 million from FY25 funding for the Human Rights & Democracy Fund (HRDF), the State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor's flagship program, established to fulfill the bureau's mandate of monitoring and promoting human rights and democracy worldwide. Democracy assistance is critical to ensure America's workers and workers around the world are competing on a more even playing field. These programs protect America's workers from being undercut by countries that exploit forced labor, child labor, and trafficked workers or violate wage, health, and safety laws to gain a leg up in the global marketplace. Despite the proven track record of achievements for worker rights, the Administration is requesting that Congress rescind its support for these programs. Without this funding, authoritarian regimes will face less resistance and feel emboldened to continue silencing dissent.

H.R. 4 would also rescind over \$1 billion in advance appropriations from the nonprofit Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB). CPB disburses funding for public radio and television systems, including the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) and National Public Radio (NPR). Our members work for public television and radio stations across the United States, and on productions created for these outlets. Union members in public media include local reporters, broadcast journalists, writers, editors, producers, control room operators, directors, stage managers, audio and video engineers, technicians, makeup artists, hair stylists, stagehands,

performers, musicians, accountants, and graphic designers, among other roles. These are everyday, middle class Americans who are able to sustain careers that provide family-supporting pay, health insurance, and retirement security. They are part of the more than 19,000 people living in big cities and small towns who make real public media's mission to educate and inform by creating quality, often local, content that is available to virtually every American. Slashing funding for any part of public media will cost jobs and economically hurt these everyday people, while disadvantaging Americans who currently enjoy and benefit from public media programming.

We urge you to vote against the Senate Amendment to the Rescissions Act of 2025 (H.R. 4) and any other subsequent rescissions packages that seek to steal funds and dismantle agencies, depriving the American people of the programs and services which Congress has created, authorized, and appropriated funds for.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jody Calemine". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "C".

Jody Calemine
Director, Government Affairs