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Federal Judge Backs Columbus in Challenge to Trump Administration's Grant Conditions

*City Solicitor General says order protects local governments from political
conditions on federal grant funding*

COLUMBUS, OH— Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein today announced that a federal judge has sided with Columbus and nearly 60 other local governments across the country in blocking the Trump administration from enforcing new political conditions on billions of dollars in federal grant funding for housing, transportation, and public health.

In a sweeping order issued yesterday, U.S. District Judge Barbara J. Rothstein expanded an earlier injunction to include additional plaintiffs—including the city of Columbus—and more grant programs administered by the U.S. Departments of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Transportation (DOT), and Health and Human Services (HHS). This ruling means the federal government cannot require local governments to agree to new conditions—such as bans on so-called “gender ideology” or diversity, equity, and inclusion programs—in order to receive funding already approved by Congress.

“Congress—not the President—decides how federal funds are spent,” said Rich Coglianese, Solicitor General for the Columbus City Attorney’s Office. “This grant funding is meant to keep people housed, improve public transportation, and protect public health—not to push a political agenda. This ruling ensures cities like Columbus can continue to deliver for residents without political interference from Washington.”

The lawsuit was first filed in May 2025 after the Trump administration attempted to attach new ideological conditions to federal grant funding for local governments. In June, the court blocked the administration from enforcing these conditions on certain housing and transportation grants. This latest order extends those protections to all plaintiffs in the case, more HUD grants, and key HHS programs, totaling more than \$12 billion in federal funding.

“This decision means we can continue to maintain vital funding for housing, transportation, and public health without being held hostage to an extreme political agenda,” Coglianese said.

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