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Columbus Files Lawsuit Challenging Trump Administration's Funding Cuts for Programs Fighting Homelessness

City says Trump administration unconstitutionally withholding Congressionally-approved funding until cities agree to the President's wild and extreme executive orders attacking diversity, trans people and abortion

COLUMBUS, OH— Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein today announced the City filed a lawsuit in federal court challenging the Trump administration's decision to strip away millions of dollars in grant funding used to fight homelessness if cities do not comply with new conditions mandating compliance with extremist policy positions of the administration.

If allowed to stand, Columbus would lose approximately \$1 million in Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant funding for homelessness support administered by the Community Shelter Board.

“Just last week, the Franklin County Point-in-time-Count showed that homelessness in our region is at an all-time high,” said **Mayor Andrew J. Ginther**. “This funding cut would deprive our community of resources we need to help our most vulnerable residents get back into safe, stable housing. Through this suit, we join cities from around the country in support of our values and our most vulnerable residents.”

According to the lawsuit, the Department recently added new terms and conditions to HUD Continuum of Care (“CoC”) grants that require recipients to comply with various Trump executive orders, including those on gender identity; diversity, equity and inclusion; immigration; and abortion.

The funding in question was passed by Congress, which specified eligible activities, selection criteria HUD must apply in awarding grants, and program requirements—none of which authorized HUD to condition grants based on President Trump's policy agenda. Doing so is a violation of the law and an unconstitutional infringement on congressional funding powers, which led to Columbus' lawsuit.

“Withholding funds to address our nation’s homelessness crisis because cities aren’t in lockstep with President Trump’s extremist policy agenda is both callous and cruel,” said **Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein**. “Columbus is joining cities across the country to fight back against this abuse of power and urge the Court to strike down these unconstitutional mandates that stand to hurt the most vulnerable in our society.”

The CoC program’s goal is to address and end homelessness by funding nonprofit service providers at the state and local level to quickly rehouse homeless individuals and families, promote access to critical services, and equip the most vulnerable with the tools they need to be self-sufficient and live a better life.

Columbus faces a severe affordable housing crisis causing a sharp increase in evictions and homelessness. In 2024, both the number of evictions and the number of homeless individuals reached all-time highs, and a loss of federal homelessness assistance would harm the City’s ability to provide emergency shelter services, which would lead to fewer beds, fewer services and more individuals forced to the streets.

“Continuum of Care plays a critical role in coordinating local efforts to prevent and end homelessness, ensuring that resources are used effectively to meet urgent needs. Federal funding is essential to this work, sustaining shelter, housing, and support services for our most vulnerable neighbors. We stand firmly with the City of Columbus, its municipalities, and our national housing partners across the country to support access to equitable, compassionate care and protect the resources that help people regain stability and housing,” said **Community Shelter Board President and CEO Shannon TL Isom**. “Together, we are steadfast in our commitment to ending homelessness and housing instability in our community.”

Columbus joined New York City, Boston, Santa Clara County, CA, the City and County of San Francisco, Snohomish County, WA, King County, WA (Seattle), and Pierce County, WA, on this lawsuit.