

Project 2025: The Trump presidency wish list, explained

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President Joe Biden's Democrats are mobilising against a possible governing agenda for Donald Trump if he is elected this November.

The blueprint, called Project 2025 and produced by the conservative Heritage Foundation, is one of several think-tank proposals for Trump's platform.

Over more than 900 pages, it calls for sacking thousands of civil servants, expanding the power of the president, dismantling the Department of Education and other federal agencies, and sweeping tax cuts.

The Heritage Foundation unveiled its agenda in April last year, and liberal opposition ramped up as former President Trump has taken a lead in polls after President Biden's poor debate performance.

On Wednesday, Heritage president Kevin Roberts raised the prospect of political violence during a podcast interview. "We are in the process of the second American Revolution, which will remain bloodless if the left allows it to be," Mr Roberts told the War Room podcast, founded by Trump advisor Steve Bannon. The remarks prompted pushback from the Biden campaign, which accused Trump and his allies of "dreaming of a violent revolution to destroy the very idea of America".

The comments have renewed attention on the Project 2025 document. It is common for Washington DC think tanks to propose policy wish lists for potential governments-in-waiting. The liberal Center for American Progress, for example, was dubbed Barack Obama's "ideas factory" during his presidency.

But Democrats have taken aim at the Heritage paper, seeking to get campaign value out of some of its more drastic measures.

Last month, Congressman Jared Huffman of California announced a Stop Project 2025 Task Force. Mr Huffman said: “Project 2025 is more than an idea, it’s a dystopian plot that’s already in motion to dismantle our democratic institutions, abolish checks and balances, chip away at church-state separation, and impose a far-right agenda that infringes on basic liberties and violates public will. “We need a coordinated strategy to save America and stop this coup before it’s too late.”

Heritage has previously said Mr Biden’s party was scaremongering with “an unserious, mistake-riddled press release”. “House Democrats are dedicating taxpayer dollars to launch a smear campaign against the united effort to restore self-governance to everyday Americans,” said Mr Roberts in an early June statement. “Under the Biden administration, the federal government has been weaponized against American citizens, our border invaded, and our institutions captured by woke ideology.”

The Project 2025 document outlines four main aims: restore the family as the centerpiece of American life; dismantle the administrative state; defend the nation’s sovereignty and borders; and secure God-given individual rights to live freely.

It is one of several policy papers for a platform broadly known as Agenda 47 - so-called because Trump would be America's 47th president if he won.

Heritage says Project 2025 was written by several former Trump appointees and reflects input from more than 100 conservative organizations.

Here’s an outline of several key proposals.

Government

Project 2025 proposes that the entire federal bureaucracy, including independent agencies such as the Department of Justice, be placed under direct presidential control – a controversial idea known as “unitary executive theory”. In practice, that would streamline decision-making, allowing the president to directly implement policies in a number of areas.

The proposals also call for eliminating job protections for thousands of government employees, who could then be replaced by political appointees. The document labels the FBI a “bloated, arrogant, increasingly lawless organization” and calls for drastic overhauls of this and other federal agencies, including eliminating the Department of Education.

Immigration

Increased funding for a wall on the US-Mexico border – one of Trump’s signature proposals in 2016 - is proposed in the document.

However, more prominent are the consolidation of various US immigration agencies and a large expansion in their powers.

Other proposals include increasing fees on immigrants and allowing fast-tracked applications for migrants who pay a premium.

What a Trump second term would look like

Climate and Economy

The document proposes slashing federal money for research and investment in renewable energy, and calls for the next president to "stop the war on oil and natural gas".

Carbon-reduction goals would be replaced by efforts to increase energy production and security.

The paper sets out two competing visions on tariffs, and is divided on whether the next president should try to boost free trade or raise barriers to exports.

But the economic advisers suggest that a second Trump administration should slash corporate and income taxes, abolish the Federal Reserve and even consider a return to gold-backed currency.

Abortion

Project 2025 does not call for a nationwide abortion ban.

However, it proposes withdrawing the abortion pill mifepristone from the market.

Tech and education

Under the proposals, pornography would be banned, and tech and telecoms companies that facilitate access to such content would be shut down.

The document calls for school choice and parental control over schools, and takes aim at what it calls “woke propaganda”.

It proposes to eliminate a long list of terms from all laws and federal regulations, including “sexual orientation”, “diversity, equity, and inclusion”, “gender equality”, “abortion” and “reproductive rights”.

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The Heritage Foundation is one of the most influential of a number of think tanks that has produced policy papers designed to guide a possible second Trump

presidency. Since the 1980s, Heritage has produced similar policy documents as part of its Mandate for Leadership series.

Project 2025, backed by a \$22m (£17m) budget, also sets out strategies for implementing policies beginning immediately after the presidential inauguration in January 2025.

Trump has endorsed a number of the Project 2025 ideas in his speeches and on his website, although his campaign has said the candidate has the final say on policy.

Many of the proposals would face immediate legal challenges if implemented.