

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

TRUMP USES SHUTDOWN TO PUNISH ENEMIES



ALEX BRANDON, ASSOCIATED PRESS

President Donald Trump speaks Tuesday in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington.

President threatens mass firings, cuts to Dem priorities

LISA MASCARO, JOSH BOAK AND SEUNG MIN KIM
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump seized on the government shut-down as an opportunity to reshape the federal workforce and punish detractors, meeting with budget director Russ Vought on Thursday to talk through “temporary or permanent” spending cuts that could set up a lose-lose dynamic for Democratic lawmakers.

Trump announced the meeting on social media Thursday morning, saying he and Vought would determine “which of the many Democrat Agencies” would be cut — continuing their efforts to slash federal spending by threatening mass firings of workers and suggesting “irreversible” cuts to Democratic priorities.

“I can’t believe the Radical Left Democrats gave me this unprecedented opportunity,” Trump wrote on his social media account.

“They are not stupid people, so maybe this is their way of wanting to, quietly and quickly, MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN!”

Trump has been very direct about his intentions in saying that he believes the



Vought

could cut projects that they wanted, favorite projects, and they’d be permanently cut.”

The Truth Social post was notable in its explicit embrace of Project 2025, a controversial policy blueprint drafted by the conservative Heritage Foundation that Trump distanced himself from during his reelection campaign. The effort aimed to reshape the federal government around right-wing policies, and Democrats repeatedly pointed to its goals to warn of the consequences of a second Trump administration.

Vought offered an opening salvo Wednesday of the pressure he hoped to put on Democrats.

He announced he will withhold \$18 billion for the Hudson River rail tunnel and

Democrats would get the blame if he chooses to fire people or cut spending as part of the shutdown.

“There could be firings and that’s their fault,” the president said in an interview with One America News that was released on Thursday. “I mean, we

Second Avenue subway line in New York City that have been championed by both Democratic leaders, Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer and House Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries, in their home state.

Vought also canceled \$8 billion in green energy projects in states with Democratic senators.

These cuts are likely to affect battery plants, hydrogen technology projects, upgrades to the electric grid and carbon-capture efforts, among many others, according to the environmental nonprofit Natural Resources Defense Council.

The Energy Department said in a statement Thursday that 223 projects were terminated after a review determined they did not adequately advance the nation’s energy needs or were not economically viable.

Officials did not provide details about which projects are being cut, but said funding came from the Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, and other DOE bureaus.

Please see **SHUTDOWN**, Page A2

Shutdown will cut off vital economic data

Delayed release could cause problems for Fed, investors, economists, businesses

CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AND PAUL WISEMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The government shutdown that began Wednesday will deprive policymakers and investors of economic data vital to their decision-making at a time of unusual uncertainty about the direction of the U.S. economy.

The absence will be felt almost immediately, as the government’s monthly jobs report scheduled for release Friday will

likely be delayed. A weekly report on the number of Americans seeking unemployment benefits — a proxy for layoffs that is typically published on Thursdays — will also be postponed.

If the shutdown is short-lived, it won’t be very disruptive. But if the release of economic data is delayed for several weeks or longer, it could pose challenges, particularly for the Federal Reserve. The Fed is grappling with where to set a key interest rate at a time of conflicting signals, with inflation running above its 2% target and hiring nearly ground to a halt, driving the unemployment rate higher in August.

Please see **DATA**, Page A2



SETH WENIG, ASSOCIATED PRESS

Financial information is displayed Wednesday as traders work on the floor at the New York Stock Exchange.