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PRESS RELEASE

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Attorney General Brown Stands with Federal Workers in “Fork in the Road” Federal Buyout Challenge

BALTIMORE, MD (February 9, 2025) – Attorney General Anthony G. Brown, today joined a coalition of 21 state attorneys general, standing with the nation’s federal employees in a challenge to the Trump administration’s federal “buyout” plan. The so-called “Fork in the Road” directive is an attempt to force federal workers to choose, with only days to decide, between accepting a legally fraught “buyout” and potentially being terminated.

The coalition today moved to file [an amicus brief](#) in support of a motion for a temporary restraining order filed by the plaintiffs—the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE); AFGE Local 3707; the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; and the National Association of Government Employees—against the U.S. Office of Personnel Management’s (OPM) “Fork in the Road” directive, issued on January 28, 2025. It gave most federal employees little more than a week (until February 6) to accept “deferred resignation,” which supposedly would allow federal workers to resign and retain pay and benefits without showing up to work until September 30, 2025, with an implicit threat that their positions may otherwise be eliminated anyway.

The plaintiff unions filed suit in the United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts, emphasizing that the directive and associated FAQs—which were revised multiple times—caused widespread confusion and dismay among federal employees, who were faced with an arbitrary deadline based on a directive that the plaintiff unions assert is illegal and contrary to federal ethics regulations. On February 6, 2025, U.S. District Court Judge George A. O’Toole, Jr., delayed the purported deadline of the “Fork directive” until Monday, February 10, 2025, with a hearing to be held at 2:00 p.m. that day in Boston, Massachusetts.

“Maryland is home to thousands of hardworking federal employees who serve our nation with distinction every day,” **said Attorney General Brown.** “I stand firmly with them against this ultimatum that threatens their livelihoods and careers and will disrupt the vital services that they provide to the State and the nation. My office will use every tool at our disposal to protect federal workers and ensure they are treated with the dignity and respect they deserve.”

As Attorney General Brown emphasized in the coalition’s proposed brief, the indiscriminate loss of indispensable federal employees could have a devastating effect on many aspects of federal, state, and local government—from those who care for veterans to those who arrive when natural disaster strikes. The brief also describes the coercive nature of the directive to our nation’s public servants. The coalition urged the court to grant a temporary restraining order to prevent this harm to federal workers—our friends and neighbors—and to protect the public interest.

Joining Attorney General Brown on the proposed brief are the attorneys general of Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Hawai’i, Illinois, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont and Washington.

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