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PRESS RELEASE

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Attorney General Brown Files Lawsuit to Stop Mass Firings of Federal Probationary Employees

BALTIMORE, MD (March 6, 2025) – Attorney General Anthony G. Brown led a coalition of 20 attorneys general in filing a [lawsuit](#) against numerous federal agencies for conducting illegal mass layoffs of federal probationary employees. These mass firings will cause irreparable burdens and expenses on the part of the states, both to support recently unemployed workers, and to review and adjudicate claims of unemployment assistance. Moreover, the unlawful layoffs will harm state finances and undermine vital state-federal partnerships.

“President Trump’s unlawful mass firings of federal workers are a blatant attack on the civil service, throwing thousands of hardworking families into financial turmoil,” **said Attorney General Brown.** “Instead of following the law and notifying states, his administration blindsided Maryland, forcing us to deal with the devastating economic fallout and social consequences. We won’t stand by while he disrupts lives and undermines our State, which is why I’ve taken legal action to stop these unjustified terminations and protect Marylanders.”

In an effort to dramatically reduce the size of the federal government, the Trump administration initiated mass terminations of federal employees, ordering numerous federal agencies to fire thousands of probationary employees. These personnel are newly hired or have recently been promoted or changed offices, and they are generally subject to a probationary period of one or two years.

While federal agencies claimed, in the form of termination letters, that these probationary employees were fired for unsatisfactory performance or conduct, the firings were clearly part of the administration’s attempt to restructure and downsize the entire federal government. In the lawsuit filed today, the coalition of attorneys general asserts that the administration was therefore required to follow federal laws and regulations that govern large-scale federal “Reductions in Force” (RIF). These critical protections ensure that personnel such as military veterans are given preference in retaining their jobs.

When a RIF results in a layoff of 50 or more employees, the agency must generally give at least 60 days’ advance notice to states governments, so they can provide vital “rapid response” information, resources, and services to affected workers. The federal agencies named in the

lawsuit failed to provide any advance notice to Maryland, causing significant injury and burden on the state as it scrambles to respond to the sudden mass layoffs of its residents. Over 800 terminated federal employees in Maryland have already applied to the state for unemployment benefits.

With the lawsuit filed today, Maryland is asking the court to:

- Rule that the mass firing of probationary employees is illegal;
- Reinstatement unlawfully fired employees;
- Stop further similar terminations; and
- Identify affected employees

Joining the coalition are the attorneys general of Minnesota, the District of Columbia, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawai'i, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Wisconsin.

View a video statement on this legal action from Attorney General Brown [here](#).

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