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Attorney General Brown Joins Coalition Opposing President Trump's Unlawful Freeze of Foreign Aid Funds *Brief Argues Against Extreme Executive Overreach and Details How Freeze of USAID Funds Have Harmed the States and Their Residents*

BALTIMORE, MD (June 13, 2025) – Attorney General Anthony G. Brown today joined a group of 23 attorneys general opposing the Trump administration's unlawful decision to withhold billions of dollars of United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funding for foreign aid programs.

In an [amicus brief](#) filed in *Global Health Council, et. al v. Trump*, the coalition of attorneys general pushes back on the administration's extraordinary assertion that it can unilaterally withhold funds that Congress has appropriated based on its own policy judgments. The coalition also details how the Administration's termination of foreign aid funding has substantially harmed the states by cutting off billions of dollars in funding for research grants and contracts that flowed through USAID that benefitted United States farmers, universities, nonprofits, and small businesses. The brief urges the United States Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit to reject the Administration's extraordinary view of executive power—a view that would diminish Congress's constitutional authority and risk substantial harm to the states and others.

“The Trump administration did not follow the proper process when it froze billions of dollars in foreign aid that Congress approved,” **said Attorney General Brown**. “This unlawful withholding of funds hurts Maryland organizations that serve immigrants and refugees and has cost hundreds of Marylanders their jobs. We won't stand by while the administration ignores the law and harms workers and families.”

In January 2025, President Trump signed an executive order directing members of the Executive Branch to freeze federal funding for foreign aid programs at USAID and the State Department. This included halting funding for critical public health and humanitarian assistance projects that were already in progress abroad, as well as funding for health and agricultural research that was ongoing within the United States. A group of foreign aid nonprofits challenged the withholding of these funds; a federal district court granted their request for a preliminary injunction and ordered the Executive Branch agencies and officials to “make available for obligation the full amount of funds that Congress appropriated for foreign assistance programs.”

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In the brief, the coalition urges the appellate court to uphold the preliminary injunction. In doing so, the attorneys general:

- **Urge the court to reject the Administration’s contention that the Executive Branch can unilaterally choose to withhold funds Congress has appropriated.** The Constitution gives Congress, not the President, the authority to appropriate funds. Where Congress has appropriated funds for specific purposes, the President does not have unilateral authority to, by executive order, refuse to spend those funds.
- **Argue that the unlawful freezing of foreign aid funds is actively harming Maryland and the other states.** By halting the flow of billions of dollars of funding for foreign assistance programs, the President and other Executive Branch officials have inflicted substantial harms on universities, farmers, nonprofits, and small businesses. For example, the President’s unlawful actions threaten millions of dollars allocated to Maryland universities and nonprofits.

Attorney General Brown is joined in filing the brief by the attorneys general of Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Hawai’i, Illinois, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin.

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