



Project 2025's Plan To Gut Checks and Balances Harms American Workers

By Colin Seeberger August 12, 2024

The new authoritarian playbook would devastate American workers in many ways.

Project 2025 is a plan to [gut America's system of checks and balances](#) in order to enact an extreme, far-right agenda that would hurt all Americans. The plan proposes taking power away from everyday people to give politicians, judges, and corporations more control over Americans' lives. Here are specific ways that Project 2025 harms American workers.

Use the QR code to find more of our work on Project 2025.



Cutting Social Security

Project 2025's authors have [supported plans to cut Social Security](#) by raising the retirement age. This idea is reflected in the two most recent Republican Study Committee [budget proposals](#), which increase the Social Security retirement age from 67 to 69 for [74 percent of Americans](#)—more than 245 million people. All new retirees [would see their benefits cut](#) between roughly 12.5 percent and 14.3 percent by the time the increase were fully phased in. A median-wage retiree would lose [\\$46,000 to \\$100,000](#) over 10 years, depending on when they claim Social Security.

Allowing employers to not pay overtime

Project 2025 [proposes](#) changing overtime eligibility and benefits and is designed to confuse and disempower workers. Its version of overtime would put more power in the hands of employers to exploit employees and pad corporate bottom lines at the expense of workers. Specifically, Project 2025 proposes letting employers set the time period in which hours are measured, lowering the overtime pay eligibility threshold, and giving employees time off—that employers would still approve or disapprove—in lieu of additional pay. Beyond the many ways Project 2025 proposes reducing employee power in the overtime system, even just reverting to the former overtime pay rules put in place by the Trump administration would take overtime away from [4.3 million workers](#).

Undermining the right to organize and collectively bargain

Project 2025 [proposes](#) a ban on “card check,” one of the main ways workers can organize a union and bargain collectively for better wages, benefits, and working conditions. The proposal also weakens the National Labor Relations Board’s watchdog role, which would make it harder to form a union and have that union recognized. Furthermore, the plan urges a ban on public-employee unions and allows states to ban unions entirely. According to the AFL-CIO, the [plan](#) also “make[s] it easier for employers to get rid of workers’ unions in the middle of ... contracts.” Unions, of course, [play a critical role](#) in helping lift workers’ wages and growing the middle class. Finally, Project 2025 seeks to replace unions’ high-quality training and apprenticeship programs with lower-quality and likely substandard training programs designed to benefit corporations and pad their bottom lines.

Weakening child labor protections

Project 2025 [instructs](#) the U.S. Department of Labor to issue new regulations allowing minors to work in dangerous jobs. The proposal builds on [efforts by 28 states](#) to weaken child labor laws and comes despite the fact that since 2019, there has been an 88 percent increase in cases where children were found to be employed in violation of child labor laws.

Making it easier for employers to discriminate

Project 2025 [sabotages](#) the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, making it more difficult to track violations of the Civil Rights Act’s Title VII protections. Doing so would enable employers to more easily discriminate against people based on their identities. People of color, women, those with disabilities, and those who identify as LGBTQI+ would be disproportionately affected.

Conclusion

These proposals represent just a small fraction of Project 2025 policies that hurt American workers. Others, such as plans to [increase taxes on working families](#) and [repeal the bipartisan infrastructure law](#), would leave workers with less disposable income and fewer job opportunities, while the playbook’s proposal to [eliminate the Head Start program](#) would make it harder for low-income workers to maintain employment in the absence of affordable child care options. Taken together, Project 2025 would pull the rug out from under American workers and make it harder to earn a spot in America’s middle class, all while giving [massive tax breaks](#) to the ultrawealthy.