



Written by [Luis Miguel](#) on December 22, 2023

## Democrats Scrambling to Prevent a Trump-driven Purge of the Deep State

The Deep State is refusing to go down without a fight.

The establishment is alarmed by Donald Trump's promise to drastically reform the federal government if he returns to the White House. As seen in an article at [NBC News](#), the media is depicting Trump's plan as a way of gutting America's civil service, whereas Trump claims he wants to defang the unelected bureaucracy that is unaccountable to elected officials and to the people.

The outlet notes that "With less than a year left until next fall's election, President Joe Biden's administration, lawmakers and advocacy groups are already trying to stop the return of a short-lived executive order dubbed 'Schedule F.'"

That executive order, signed during Trump's final weeks in the White House, made it easier for a president to fire bureaucrats, removing job protections from career officials in policy roles.

Opponents of Schedule F are employing two main strategies to keep the Deep State alive:

The first involves regulation, adopted in September, related to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). The new regulation increases job security for civil servants and restricts the positions that can have those protections taken away.

Trump's opponents also want to tackle the issue on the legislative front with a bill championed by Representatives Gerry Connolly (D-Va.) and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-Pa.), and Senator Tim Kaine, (D-Va.). The bill would require that any plan to create new employee designations in the federal workforce first obtain approval from Congress.

Advocacy groups, many of them so-called pro-democracy organizations, are also playing a role by putting out public messaging and raising awareness.

"I've been sounding the alarm bell on this since Trump was president," Connolly told [NBC News](#). "And I don't think there's sufficient appreciation of what a threat this poses."

The outlet further reported:

As president, Trump was routinely outraged that officials in his own government — some of whom he had nominated — investigated his ties to Russia or appeared to stymie his policy initiatives. Now, he and his allies are working to ensure a potential second administration is different from the get-go.



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When he announced his “ten-point plan to dismantle the deep state” this year, his top policy point was reinstating the Schedule F executive order. (The second was “Overhaul federal departments and agencies, firing all of the corrupt actors in our National Security and Intelligence apparatus.”)

At the same time, the Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank, aims to build a database of as many as 20,000 potential future administration officials by the end of next year. Kevin Roberts, the president of Heritage, told *The New York Times* that the goal is to “flood the zone with conservative personnel” in a way the right didn’t do after Trump’s 2016 victory.

Trump’s aim to radically reshape the makeup of the federal government by purging the bureaucracy has been echoed by other Republican primary contenders, such as Florida Governor Ron DeSantis and businessman Vivek Ramaswamy.

James Sherk, a former Trump administration official who came up with the idea for Schedule F, expressed that the as-yet unfinalized OPM regulation will be only a minimal hurdle to Trump — or any future Republican — who wishes to reform the bureaucracy.

“I don’t think this rulemaking is going to delay Schedule F’s potential reinstatement very much, even if a court does not strike it down,” Sherk told NBC. “They’ve got a very weak hand.”

One of the challenges currently faced by Trump’s opponents is finding the right messaging. Conservatives have had success in branding what leftists call the “civil service” as a bureaucracy and “Deep State.” While Democrats contend that insulating these government employees from the president makes them impartial, Republicans argue that this only serves to enable bureaucrats with agendas of their own to thwart the will of the people.

When it comes to messaging, Trump’s detractors have tried saying that he wants to take the country back to the “Spoils System” — the days, prior to reforms in the late 19th century, when presidents had more leeway in who they could appoint, often filling government posts with loyalists.

Jeff Hauser, the leftist founder and director of the organization Revolving Door Project, gave his opinion that the “Spoils System” rhetoric is not compelling because the average voter already sees Washington, D.C., as being rife in corruption and bribery.

Sherk, the former Trump administration official, maintains that the status quo favored by Democrats does not ensure that the best people fill key positions, but instead allows underperforming bureaucrats to remain.

“They make it difficult to hire the best candidates and prohibitively difficult to dismiss employees for all but the worst offenses,” Sherk argued.

Ultimately, Democrats are acting against their supposed love of “democracy” by favoring a system that empowers elites over the representatives chosen by the people.

The reason has to do with power and ideology: The Left has successfully filled the civil service with its ideologues over the last several decades; they know that cleaning house would result in a major loss of the influence they wield in the executive branch even when they are ostensibly out of power.



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