

Management and Business Implications of Project 2025

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Throughout the 2024 Presidential campaign, one topic of interest was discussed from time to time which in many ways can have a profound impact on the American political and economic system for the immediate future. Project 2025 is a concerted movement that rapidly evolved into a conservative political strategy to reform, modify, and reinvent the American system. Well over one hundred respected organizations and conservative political strategists have worked to dismantle and eliminate what many have referred to as the Deep State. As a product of the Heritage Foundation, the Mandate for Leadership. So, what exactly is Project 2025, and what could be its impact on the political and economic system of the United States? This is a discussion of this immensely powerful and deep-rooted movement which could create a significant and disruptive paradigm shift for several decades to come.

Keywords: Project 2025, Donald Trump, Heritage Foundation, MAGA, 2024 election

INTRODUCTION

Contrary to his many denials of his knowledge and interest in Project 2025, President-elect Trump early on after his election used and referred to the plan as a guide to his many picks to staff his new administration. Many of those tapped to head key Federal government agencies are contributing authors to the actual Project 2025 document. As an example, Trump has asked Russ Vought, a major architect of Project 2025, to lead the Office of Management and Budget along with Karoline Leavitt as White House Press Secretary (Smith & Hillyard, 2024). Therefore, it seems apparent that it will be a centerpiece of the Trump governing strategy for how the new administration will be conducted and what priorities it has set for itself. To a great degree, this is probably not a source of great surprise since the Heritage Foundation has been a prominent conservative think tank since it first drafted many of the policy plans and ideas employed by President Reagan in 1981 (Wendling, 2024). Key elements of the plan are to address immigration and border security, to de-weaponize the Federal bureaucracy to make it more accountable, to deregulate American energy policy, more aggressive and protective trade policies, cut government growth and wasteful spending, to reform the educational system and to address biological and sociological issues related to gender identity and reassignment. In one way or another, each of these elements potentially will have an impact on the economy and our current business structure.

Immigration and the Border

Project 2025 suggests the idea of creating a larger and more comprehensive agency to oversee border security and immigration policy which would be made up of a dismantled Department of Homeland Security, Ice, and other entities for a more powerful comprehensive operation. This large overarching

agency would most likely operate based on a concept known as Secure Communities which is a cooperative effort between local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies that would check the immigration status of every person arrested anywhere in the United States (ICE, 2011; Kalhan, 2013; Cox & Miles, 2013). The value of Secure Communities is that it increases information sharing among the various levels of government to clarify and expand information about individuals being investigated. The called-for plan of mass deportations will be a massive undertaking that many doubt can be done effectively and will cost enormous amounts of money in an already strained Federal government budget. Fairness, equity, and rational decision-making in the implementation of this plan seem very unlikely. The mandated forced deportation of noncitizens from the United States based on a formal order of removal would cost about \$13,000 in current dollars for each individual (East, 2024).

Many undocumented immigrants are employed in jobs that are less attractive, dangerous, and low paying that are usually not done by U.S.-born workers. Major reductions in employment in areas such as construction, food services, caregiving, and household services will have a devastating impact on so many levels. Such actions remove important basic jobs for many industries and support systems for American workers and families along with reducing economic consumer demand and lessening the tax base and revenues which will erode the ability of state and local governments to operate and provide services. In addition, mass deportation execution will cause major disruptions and upset American agriculture leading to higher costs in harvesting, processing distribution, and retailing of food products in supermarkets and restaurants with higher costs being passed onto the consumers (Hayes, 2024).

Energy Policy and Deregulation

Project 2025 threatens to create a major backslide on clean energy initiatives put in place during the first half of this decade. There may be dire consequences and potential setbacks in the areas to promote clean energy policy and jobs, reducing household energy costs and dependence on fossil fuels (Katan and Munter, 2024). In addition, Project 2025 could significantly curtail related to the production of electric vehicles, low-income weatherization assistance, climate control and greenhouse gas emissions, and clean energy generation. With its implementation, Project 2025 would increase greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions which would diminish emissions monitoring and cause worsened weather events, heatwaves, and wildfires (Lespier and Ordóñez-Lancet, 2024).

Trade Tariffs and Project 2025

The incoming President's threats concerning the imposition of trade tariffs, while at times seem extreme, are to be taken seriously based on his actions related to trade issues in his first administration several years ago. In some ways, Trump sees the possibility of tariffs completely replacing income taxes (Clausing and Obstfeld, 2024). As was the case before federal income taxes were imposed in 1913, tariffs were a major income driver for the United States between 1790 and 1860 accounting for about 90 percent of federal revenue (Wiseman, 2024). While it may be desirable to eliminate the federal income tax system it is highly unlikely. However, what is likely to happen is a significant increase in overall prices and a negative impact on the economy through higher levels of inflation. Some have speculated that the increased tax burdens might be worth it if workers see a significant industrial recovery and more jobs due to the protections afforded to domestic industries versus foreign competition (Clausing and Obstfeld, 2024). The most recent trade proposals by Donald Trump include both a 10 across-the-board tariff on all trading partners as well as 60 percent or higher tariffs on China along with imposing 25 percent tariffs on both Canada and Mexico (Clausing and Obstfeld, 2024). President Trump's plan to impose tariffs on China, Canada, and Mexico has major implications for the trade policy of the United States as well as its relationship with its major trading partners. In addition to being a direct violation of the USMCA trade agreement, imposed tariffs on Canada would mean significant increases in the building materials for the housing market in general and especially in the construction of affordable housing for low-income families (Quinlan, 2024). This could not only damage a recovering housing market but also could have devastating long-term implications for the homeless and unhoused populations. Trade with Mexico will also be severely impacted more than people realize. As an example, many products that Americans like and use come from

Mexico from 88 percent of the pickups purchased in America, half of all imported fruit and about two-thirds of vegetables, not to mention imported beer which accounts for about 20 percent of all beer consumed by Americans (Sheridan and Castillo, 2024).

Systematic Inequities in the Workplace

Project 2025 specifically calls for the dismantling of any established diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs in place in the workplace as they are considered wrongful and burdensome ideological projects (Raikes, 2024). In addition, there is a marked emphasis on individualism away from any reliance on unions and therefore advocates the reduction of worker rights to organize unions and instead participate in what are called “employee involvement organizations” (McCarty, 2024). In essence, business organizations are seen to be evolving to leveraging worker and workplace experiences to build inclusive workplaces that thrive on embracing concepts such as flexible work models such as remote work, increased use of AI, and more involvement that promotes trust and values alignment.

CONCLUSION

Project 2025, as the Conservative Promise was published in April 2023 and is the result of the analysis of more than 400 scholars and policy experts from around the country. While its purpose was to function as a guide for the conservative agenda for 2025 and beyond it is truly a disruptive paradigm shift. With reactions from both sides of the political spectrum, it will be interesting to see to what extent it is conducted and to what extent it will be successful in its attempt to redesign the American political and economic systems.

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