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The President's Slush Fund: A Gift to the Anti-Abortion Movement and a Blow to Our Democracy

On May 18, 2026, the Trump administration's Department of Justice announced it would be setting up a \$1.776 billion fund to compensate Americans whom the agency claims are victims of the "levers of government power [by Democrat elected officials](#)...for improper and unlawful political, personal, and/or ideological reasons." The fund is part of a settlement secured in exchange for President Donald Trump dropping a lawsuit he had filed against his own IRS.

Ultimately, the fund will serve as a political tool used to funnel taxpayer dollars to the president's political allies, and to compensate his supporters who face lawful federal investigations and convictions.

Among those likely to benefit from the slush fund are the 23 anti-abortion extremists who committed acts of harassment, intimidation, and violence against abortion clinics, staff, and patients, but were pardoned by the president on the third day of his second term.

How the Trump Administration Protects Violent Anti-Abortion Extremists

In 1994, Congress passed the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances (FACE) Act, which makes it unlawful to use physical force, threats, or violence to intentionally block or intimidate someone from getting or providing reproductive health care. Passed on a bipartisan basis as a response to an escalation of violent tactics by anti-abortion activists, the law also makes it illegal to damage a facility that provides reproductive health care. The FACE Act has offered some deterrents from anti-abortion violence, obstruction, threats, and property damage for over thirty years.

In 2025, just days into his second term, [President Trump pardoned](#) 23 people convicted of violating the FACE Act. The pardoned violators include a group of nine people who barricaded the doors of the Surgi-Clinic in Washington, D.C. with locks and chains. The group attacked a woman seeking medical care, and pushed a nurse, spraining her ankle. Shortly after, the Department of Justice announced that, except in "extraordinary circumstances," it would no longer enforce the FACE Act—leaving abortion providers and their patients at risk.

Recently, the Trump administration published an almost [900-page report](#) alleging that the Biden administration had “weaponized” the FACE Act against “peaceful, pro-life demonstrators.” Now, it has set aside almost \$2 billion to enrich violent anti-abortion extremists and others whose views and tactics the president endorses.

An Assault on Our Democracy

The FACE Act was enacted to protect people who are providing or obtaining abortion and other reproductive health care. Access to abortion is essential to a robust, pluralistic democracy like the United States. When half the population lacks the autonomy to make critical decisions about their bodies, lives, and futures, they cannot meaningfully participate in our democracy.

Political payoffs and cronyism are hallmarks of authoritarianism, and a two-tiered system of justice—where the president’s allies are immune from the law—should set off alarm bells for all Americans.

Since his first moments in office, President Trump has sought to punish his perceived enemies while rewarding his allies. Giving taxpayer funds to anti-abortion extremists via the slush fund does both. Trump can enrich some of his most loyal supporters while instilling fear in abortion providers, seekers, and supporters.

Emboldening Violence

Similar to President Trump’s pardon of the Jan. 6 insurrectionists and his pardons of those who were lawfully prosecuted under the FACE Act, the slush fund communicates to lawbreakers that they will not face justice so long as they are Trump’s political allies. The existence of the fund will add to the fear and the very real violence and harassment that abortion providers and patients already experience—which would put care even further out of reach for many.

The most recent [Violence & Disruption report](#) from the National Abortion Federation shows that, following Trump’s pardon of 23 extremists and announcement that the administration would not enforce the FACE Act, anti-abortion extremists have increased their threats:

- The number of incidents of stalking and death threats against abortion providers and clinic staff more than doubled from the previous year
- Clinic blockades jumped from one in 2024 to six in 2025
- Clinic arson incidents went from zero to four in 2025

Gender justice and democracy are intimately linked. Where one falters, the other is close behind. This president continues to be a threat to both, and this slush fund is just the latest dangerous example.

The president’s complete retreat from the FACE Act has predictably emboldened the anti-abortion movement. This latest effort to reward extremists for disruptive, threatening, and violent behavior will only make access worse for those who provide and seek essential health care.

Resources

- [NWLC’s Abortion Access Legal Defense Fund](#)
- [Research Demonstrates that Centering Values in Abortion Messaging Makes a Difference](#)
- [Abortion Values Messaging Guide](#)
- [NWLC: SCOTUS Ruling on Abortion Pill Preserves Access but Threat Remains](#)
- [Pronatalism: Just White Christian Nationalism in Disguise](#)