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**NEW YORK, SEATTLE AND PORTLAND SUE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION OVER
DIRECTIVE TO WITHHOLD FEDERAL DOLLARS**

NEW YORK—The cities of New York, Seattle and Portland filed a federal lawsuit today challenging President Trump’s Memorandum titled "Reviewing Funding to State and Local Government Recipients of Federal Funds That Are Permitting Anarchy, Violence, and Destruction in American Cities" ordering federal agencies to withhold federal grant dollars from so-called “anarchist jurisdictions,” and the Attorney General’s unlawful designation of the cities as “anarchist.”

The cities argue the executive branch lacks authority to add conditions to congressionally appropriated funds without congressional authorization, and that the designation was made in an arbitrary and capricious manner based on a set of vague and subjective factors entirely within the U.S. Attorney General’s discretion.

In the lawsuit, the three cities challenge the proposed action on five different grounds, including violation of the Separation of Powers and the 10th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The cities ask that the Court remove the cities’ “anarchist jurisdiction” designations and prohibit the U.S. Department of Justice and Office of Management and Budget from carrying out the administration’s scheme.

"President Trump's attempt to take money from great American cities like New York, Portland and Seattle is not only based on lies, it is unconstitutional," said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. "While we have been laser-focused on responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, the President is using his budget office to play politics and distract from his own failures as Commander-in-Chief. We are confident the court will agree that the President's attempt to withhold funds is without merit."

“We must all join together to fight a global pandemic that has killed over 210,000 Americans. Instead, the Trump Administration threatens to slash our funding based on a fiction of anarchy in our cities. This is a brazen attempt to coerce cities to suppress political speech that he doesn’t like. He’s trying to use federal funds to do it, but he doesn’t control the purse strings of the federal government. We will protect our funds and our residents’ right to protest. And we’ll beat this latest scheme in court where many of the Trump Administration’s unlawful policies have come to an end,” said **NYC Corporation Counsel James E. Johnson**.

“The Trump administration’s political threats against Seattle and other Democratic cities are unlawful and an abuse of federal power. I am confident the Courts will reign him in again. Seattle and people across America need help fighting a pandemic that has claimed over 220,000

American lives, fixing an economic crisis that has left hundreds of thousands of Americans unemployed, and bringing America together during this civil rights reckoning. Instead, the President chooses to ignore science, divide Americans, and threaten the lifeline for many struggling in this time. It's immoral, unconstitutional, and shameful that we are forced to expend any resources on this political theater," said **Seattle Mayor Jenny A. Durkan**.

"On top of the bungled federal response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the administration is now attempting to strip Seattle of funding which could be used to help our residents during the pandemic in many important ways. This lawsuit was necessary to protect our City's interests, and we expect the president's actions to be declared unlawful, as they have in similar past attempts," said **Seattle City Attorney Pete Holmes**.

"The President singled out three progressive cities - Portland, Seattle and New York City - and threatened federal support critical to protecting vulnerable residents," said **Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler**. "These threats include restricting federal funds for coronavirus relief, funds for HIV treatment, and funds for newborn screenings. That's why Portland, Seattle and New York will fight this illegal designation to preserve federal investments designed to help our most vulnerable residents."

The President's memorandum states the "Federal Government provides States and localities with hundreds of billions of dollars every year, which fund a wide array of programs, such as housing, public transportation, job training, and social services," and declares that the "[Trump] Administration will not allow Federal tax dollars to fund" what it deems "anarchist jurisdictions." The cities have received millions of dollars in coronavirus relief funding in 2020.

The cities of Seattle and Portland have previously prevailed against the Trump Administration's similar attempt to withhold congressionally appropriated grant dollars in retaliation for policies that support and welcome immigrant and refugee communities.

The City of New York has defeated attempts by the Trump Administration to divert millions of dollars in federal emergency pandemic relief funds from public K-12 schools, add an illegal citizenship question to the census, to exclude undocumented immigrants from the census count, to take SNAP food assistance away from millions of adults and to discriminate in the provision of medical care and federal health funding based on religious and moral grounds.

The lawsuit was filed the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington today.

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