

07.31.2025

The \$21.7 Billion Blunder: New PSI Report Reveals Billions in Taxpayer Dollars Squandered by DOGE

Blumenthal calls on OIGs to investigate DOGE's waste, fraud, and abuse following months-long Senate probe

[WASHINGTON, DC] – U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Ranking Member of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations (PSI) released a Minority staff report today unveiling that Elon Musk's brainchild, the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), has generated at least \$21.7 billion in waste across the federal government between January 20, 2025, and July 18, 2025. The report, "The \$21.7 Billion Blunder: Analyzing the Waste Generated by DOGE," follows a months-long investigation into Elon Musk and DOGE and is the most comprehensive effort to date to quantify taxpayer dollars squandered by DOGE despite its ostensible goal of eliminating government waste.

"This report is a searing indictment of DOGE's false claims. At the very same time that the Trump Administration is cutting health care, nutrition assistance, and emergency services in the name of 'efficiency' and 'savings,' they have enabled DOGE's reckless waste of at least \$21.7 billion dollars," said Blumenthal. **"As my PSI investigation has shown, DOGE was clearly never about efficiency or saving the American taxpayer money. I urge Inspectors General to take up our investigation's findings and initiate a comprehensive review of DOGE's careless actions."**

PSI's comprehensive review of publicly available resources and independent analysis has found that DOGE has generated **\$21.7 billion** in waste so far this year, including:

- **\$14.8 billion** through its Deferred Resignation Program for paying approximately 200,000 employees not to work for up to eight months.
- **\$6.1 billion** for over 100,000 employees who have been involuntarily separated from federal service or who remain on prolonged periods of administrative leave pending separation, many of whom were paid to not do their jobs for weeks or months.
- **\$263 million** in lost interest and fee income at the Department of Energy due to dozens of loan freezes meant to finance key utility projects supporting energy affordability and grid resilience.
- **\$155 million** in time costs to require nearly a million employees to send weekly accomplishment emails to the Office of Personnel Management amounting to millions of hours of wasted time.
- **\$110 million** on food aid and medical supplies spoiling in warehouses, set to be destroyed at a further cost to taxpayers.
- **\$66 million** by underutilizing thousands of professional staff to perform entry-level duties for weeks on end, including over \$138,000 for paying scientists to check guests in at national parks.
- **\$41.8 million** to relocate over 250 staff members at one agency closer to a physical office.
- **\$38 million** in sunk costs on unrecoverable investments in science and technology across four projects at the National Institutes of Health and the Internal Revenue Service.
- **\$1.7 million** in time costs to require employees to unnecessarily justify routine expenses at three agencies, including window washing at the Federal Aviation Administration.

PSI's estimate of DOGE-generated waste does not include other direct and indirect forms of waste that may add millions or even billions of dollars to projected waste, such as substantial administrative and legal expenses, undermining public safety and natural disaster response, human costs and health threats, and other hidden economic costs.

Ironically, the \$21.7 billion in DOGE-generated waste could have fully covered President Trump's misguided rescissions package twice over with \$2.9 billion to spare despite the package being promoted as codifying DOGE's purported savings over the next several years. DOGE's \$21.7 billion in government waste could have also been used to:

- Cover **5.3 million** families losing an average of \$146 in monthly food assistance under Republican' budget bill;
- Cover **5 million** Americans expected to lose Medicaid coverage in 2026 under Republicans' budget bill;
- Expand Medicaid coverage to **2.4 million** Americans or **5.7 million** children; or
- Provide free school lunches to an additional **28.6 million children**, covering over 98% of all K-12 students.

Today, Blumenthal referred PSI's findings to Inspectors General at 27 government agencies, including the Department of Agriculture, Department of Commerce, Department of Education, Department of Energy, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Small Business Administration, and the Social Security Administration. In his letters, Blumenthal urged inspectors general to initiate a comprehensive review of DOGE's activities within their agencies in order to determine the full scope of costs that DOGE's careless actions have imposed.

A copy of PSI's Minority staff report is [available here](#). Blumenthal's letters to Inspectors General are [available here](#).

Today's report follows an April 2025 memo completed by PSI Minority staff that estimated the legal liability Elon Musk was able to avoid through his previous efforts to gut the federal workforce and exert influence over federal agencies while he was at the helm of DOGE. PSI found that Musk and his companies were able to avoid at least \$2.37 billion in potential liability due to federal investigations or other regulatory actions. A copy of PSI's memo is [available here](#).