

Donald Trump to Trump Country: Drop Dead

The president told MAGA voters exactly what he was going to do in 2024. Now he is doing it.

[Ryan Cooper](#)



Alex Brandon/AP Photo

One of the most baffling themes of Donald Trump's second term is how he is specifically ruining the cities and lives of his most loyal voters—taking their factories, their jobs, their health care, their hospitals, and their future.

The first knife Trump drove into the backs of red economies was to repeal almost all of the Inflation Reduction Act. As I've [previously covered](#), President Biden's economic and climate program, particularly the IRA, ended up directing the lion's share of its investment to red states and regions. In part because of more pro-business labor laws like “right to work” in these areas—as well as cheaper land—battery factories, solar factories, EV factories, and much else were mostly going up in Republican districts.

No longer! Most IRA-based future planned investment has been canceled—some of it [moving to China](#) or other countries—and some existing investment has [been abandoned](#). The EV transition, on which American automakers had invested tens of billions of dollars, has been [driven into a ditch](#).

The second knife was enormous health care cuts, with Trump signing the biggest slashes to Medicaid in history, along with refusing to extend Biden-era Obamacare subsidies. It turns out that 57 percent of all enrollees on the Obamacare marketplaces [live in districts represented by a Republican](#), and enrollment is disproportionately large in the South. Unless those moves are reversed, millions of loyal MAGA voters are going to [lose their health insurance](#),

millions more are going to see their premiums go up by roughly [200-400 percent](#), and hospitals in rural areas where Trump habitually posts Assad-scale victory margins are going to [close by the hundreds](#).

The third knife was specifically for the backs of farmers, whose international export markets have been devastated, probably permanently, by Trump's lunatic trade war. China, which imported [\\$12.6 billion](#) of American soybeans last year, is now taking none whatsoever—and has secured alternative supplies from Brazil and Argentina (the latter is also in the midst of receiving a generous U.S. bailout). For fruit and vegetable farmers, Trump is kidnapping their workers by the thousands.

Farmers [complain bitterly](#) that they can't find enough workers to bring in the harvest and/or that there are far fewer places at which to sell it even when they can. As my colleague David Dayen [recently reported](#), Trump's own Department of Labor seemingly admitted the potential problem in a new rule: "The near total cessation of the inflow of illegal aliens combined with the lack of an available legal workforce, results in significant disruptions to production costs and threatening the stability of domestic food production and prices for U.S. consumers." (Though this appears to have been an excuse to cut farmworker wages and bring in foreign guest workers.)

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And now, Trump is yanking tens of billions of dollars of yet more red state high-tech investment that had already been approved as part of the bipartisan infrastructure law. Emily Pontecorvo [has the details](#) over at Heatmap News. Trump's Department of Energy is now planning to cancel 659 grants worth nearly \$24 billion, mostly from the infrastructure law, including all seven grants for "hydrogen hubs," all grants for "direct air capture" projects to remove carbon from the atmosphere, every grant to support EV conversions at 13 auto factories at risk of closure, 11 of 15 grants to support green manufacturing in former coal regions, and 10 out of 38 grants for battery manufacturing and recycling.

Lots of liberal regions will be hurt by these cuts, but on the whole, conservative regions are taking the bulk of the bloodletting. Ex-coal country is overwhelmingly conservative, and both the hydrogen hubs and the EV factories were largely in red states or Trumpy parts of swing states.

Not only is Trump attacking every single part of Biden's climate policy—ensuring U.S. emissions remain as high as possible—but with this action, he is kicking America off the ladder of the 21st-century economy. The idea behind these hydrogen projects, for instance, was to start building up a source of renewable heat energy in applications where

electricity isn't ideal, like concrete production and steel smelting. The point of the EV grants was to prevent the dreaded community-ruining factory closures while giving auto companies and autoworkers a toehold on where car production is obviously going.

Under Biden, America was at least going to get a piece of the high-tech industries of the future. Trump is just handing them all to China on a silver platter, destroying the next generation of jobs for MAGA regions, while also taking their health insurance and hospitals.

If these first nine months of his administration are any indication, Trump won't rest so long as there is a single MAGA voter left employed. It's hard to imagine a more effective way to strangle red state economies over the long term. It's not far off from what a vindictive liberal intent on imposing a Carthaginian peace on red states as retribution for voting in an insurrectionist traitor would do. It's also what MAGA voters heard from Donald Trump over and over, both in his campaign speeches and in [Project 2025](#), about what he would do in office.

The idea of democracy is that people can be trusted to rule themselves through some process of election or sortition. At the very minimum, this requires the voters to be able to perceive that their election choice has directly led to their own harm. Will MAGA see it? I have my doubts.

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