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Project 2025: What's At Stake for Our Courts, Our Rights, and Our Future

What is Project 2025? It's a wish list of right-wing policies, reflecting an extreme Christian nationalist ideology, written by the Heritage Foundation and more than 100 other conservative groups as a blueprint for a potential conservative administration. It is an explicit effort to further empower the presidency, embed ideologues in nonpartisan civil service, and enable the executive branch to unravel the civil rights movement's gains over the last seven decades.

The full agenda, which is more than 900 pages long, would completely reshape our federal government in order to benefit white nationalists, the rich and powerful, and religiously motivated bigots. Here is some important information about how our courts — and ultimately our rights and our future — would be harmed by this radical proposal, especially given what we already know has been done by the authors:

- **Authored by the Same Forces that Manufactured the Takeover of Our Federal Judiciary:** Project 2025 is written by the Heritage Foundation and numerous individuals and organizations who are well known to have manufactured and coordinated the extremist takeover of our federal judiciary. For decades, in response to the progress made by the civil and human rights movement, wealthy and powerful interests have orchestrated a coordinated campaign to take over our courts. This plan's implementation accelerated during the previous administration. Indeed, many of the same organizations and funders behind Project 2025 vetted and created a shortlist of Supreme Court candidates using abortion and health care access litmus tests during the 2016 campaign. That shortlist was used by the previous president for his selection of Supreme Court justices.
- **The Extremist Majority on Our Supreme Court Has Laid the Groundwork for This Extreme Blueprint:** The justices who were hand-selected to roll back our civil and human rights have since followed through on that agenda. The extremist majority on our Supreme Court has taken away the fundamental right to abortion, curtailed voting rights, devastated affirmative action in higher education, destabilized the functioning of our federal government and threatened our civil and human rights protections, and provided nearly absolute immunity on the presidency. All of these decisions, and other cases that are winding their way through our district and circuit courts, have ushered in an environment in which the extremist policies outlined in Project 2025 can be accelerated.

- **Personnel Selection to Implement Civil Rights Rollbacks:** To implement this “mandate,” it requires “a well-conceived, coordinated, unified plan and a trained and committed cadre of personnel.” While the document does not specifically outline the blueprint for training, selecting, and advancing judges and justices, there is an understanding that many of the policies would be reviewed by our courts. In addition, the staff responsible for selecting and vetting nominees in the White House and U.S. Department of Justice are vital to this — ensuring its success not just for four years, but for decades to come through the president’s lifetime appointments to the bench.
- **Dangerously Concentrates Presidential Power:** Notably, Project 2025 calls for the concentration of power in the executive branch. The Court’s extremist majority dealt a devastating blow to the concept of equal justice under law and to the very core of our democracy. They provided the president with near absolute immunity, violating one of the fundamental principles that our country was founded on — that no one, not even the president, is above the law. Project 2025 would further concentrate power in the executive branch. For example, it would classify more federal civil service workers as political appointees who would be employed to be loyal to the president, and it would remove critical checks and balances that are crucial to the basic functioning of our democracy.