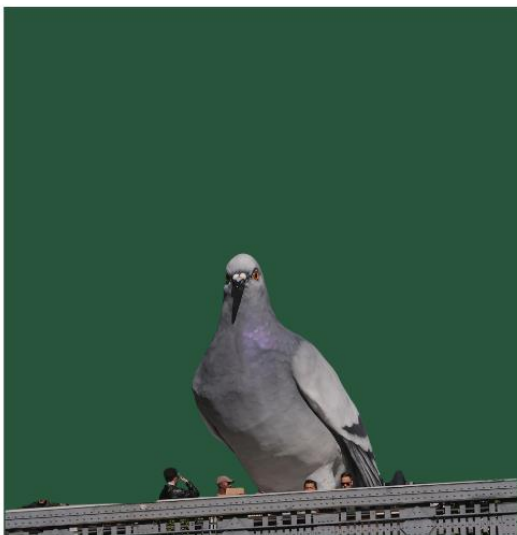




# THE FESTIVUS REPORT 2024



# The Festivus Report 2024

Happy Festivus!

How is 2024 already wrapping up? It feels like we blinked, and history dumped a year's worth of plot twists on us. Donald Trump dodged *two* assassination attempts, Vice President Kamala Harris ousted President Biden from the presidential race last minute only to fail spectacularly, the 2024 Summer Olympics in Paris captured global attention with a brilliant display of breakdancing from our friends in Australia, and November handed control of Congress to the Republicans. Yet, even amid these seismic events, one issue remained unchanged—the ever-mounting national debt.

Last Festivus, we bemoaned the national debt nearing \$34 trillion. In just a year, Washington's career politicians and bureaucrats have managed to push it beyond \$36 trillion—unsurprisingly, with hardly a second thought.

Who's to blame for our crushing national debt? Everybody. This year, members of both political parties in Congress voted for massive spending bills, filled with subsidies for underperforming industries, continued military aid to Ukraine, and controversial climate initiatives. As Congress spends to reward its favored pet projects, the American taxpayers are forced to pay through high prices and crippling interest rates.

The same big spenders teamed up, yet again, to continue sending Americans' hard-earned money to foreign countries, funding endless wars, all while STILL ignoring our wide-open southern border.

And our mountain of debt will continue to pile even higher. The Congressional Budget Office predicts we will add an average of \$2.1 trillion in debt annually for the next decade. According to a July House Budget Committee Report, the U.S. government will add over \$6.4 billion of debt every single day for the next ten years, borrowing over \$268 million every hour, \$4.5 million every minute, and over \$74,401 every second.

This year, I am highlighting a whopping **\$1,008,313,329,626.12**. That's over \$1 trillion in government waste, including things like ice-skating drag queens, a \$12 Million Las Vegas pickleball complex, \$4,840,082 on Ukrainian influencers, and more! No matter how much money the government has wasted, politicians keep demanding even more.

As always, taking the path to fiscal responsibility is often a lonely journey, but I've been fighting government waste like DOGE before DOGE was cool. And I will continue my fight against government waste this holiday season.

So, before we get to the Feats of Strength, it's time for my Airing of (spending) Grievances!

**I have a lot of problems with federal spending, and now it's time to hear all about them!**

**Ghost Towns on the Government's Dime:** The federal government spent \$10 billion on maintaining, leasing, and furnishing almost entirely empty buildings

**A Pandemic Plunder:** A Florida man stole \$8 million in COVID-19 Relief funds to buy an island and more

**Your Tax Dollars at Play:** The Department of the Interior (DOI) spent \$12 Million on a Las Vegas Pickleball Complex

**Taxpayers Fund a Disinformation Index:** The Department of State (DOS) wasted \$330,000 to fund censorship of non-liberal and conservative media

**Snack Attack:** The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) awarded a \$2 million grant to study kids looking at Facebook ads about food

**Taxpayers Dollars Down the Drain in Nevis:** The Department of State (DOS) spent \$108,272 on a non-functioning hotel

**Direct File Fail:** Congress spent \$15 million to turn the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) into an unconstitutional force to prepare, file, and audit your hard-earned money

**Oh Rats! HHS Spends Nearly Half a Million on a Depressing Study of Lonely, Starved Rats:** The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) spent \$419,470 to determine if lonely rats seek cocaine more than happy rats

**Hold on to Your Steering Wheels:** The Department of Energy (DOE) spent \$15.5 billion to push Americans toward electric vehicles they don't want

**The Influencer Effect Hits Foreign Policy:** The Department of State (DOS) squandered \$4,840,082 on influencers

**Cirque du Taxpayer:** The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) spent \$365,000 to promote circuses in city parks

**Girls Just Wanna Have Funds:** The Department of State (DOS) spent \$3 Million for 'Girl-Centered Climate Action' in Brazil

**A State Department Production Featuring Your Hard-Earned Money:** The Department of State (DOS) paid the Royal Film Commission \$873,584 for movies in Jordan

**Goalposts and Grandstanding:** The Department of State (DOS) spent \$345,434 on football engagement to counter terrorism

**When Bailouts Go Bust:** The United States Department of the Treasury (USDT) granted a failed trucking company a \$700 million pandemic-era loan

**Flocking Together! DEI Takes Flight:** The National Science Foundation (NSF) spent \$288,563 to ensure bird watching groups have safe spaces aka "Affinity Groups"

**Interest-ingly Wasteful:** Americans are paying \$892 billion in fiscal year 2024 on the interest on Uncle Sam's Credit Card

**Hashtag to Handouts in Ethiopia:** The Department of State (DOS) spent \$500,000 to expand the U.S. Embassy in Ethiopia's #USInvestsInEthiopians social media campaign to a larger national public relations campaign

**Bibbidi-Bobbidi-Boo, There Goes Your Tax Dollars Too!** The federal government spent \$7,026,689 on various magical projects

**Because Who Needs a Secure U.S. Border, Anyway?** The Department of State (DOS) spent \$2.1 million for Paraguay's Border Security

**The High Price of High Line Art:** Since 2015 the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) has awarded \$385,000 for art displays on the High Line

**Money to Manure:** The Department of Agriculture (USDA) is spending \$20 million on the Fertilize Right Initiative to advance fertilizer use in Pakistan, Vietnam, Colombia, and Brazil

**Fauci Funded Feline COVID Experiments:** The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) spent \$2.24 million on COVID experiments

**Going Viral for World Peace:** The Department of State (DOS) is spending \$123,066 to teach Kyrgyzstan youth how to go viral

**Spinning Kittens for Science and Motion Sickness:** The National Institutes of Health (NIH) spent \$1,513,299 on a study of waste and cruelty

**Cat-Stipated?:** The Department of Defense (DOD) spent \$10,851,439 on Orwellian cat experiments

**More Ducking Waste in Mexico:** The Department of the Interior (DOI) spent \$720,479 on wetland conservation projects for ducks in Mexico

**Big Bird Goes to Baghdad:** The Agency for International Development (USAID) is spending \$20 million on “Ahlan Simsim” a new Sesame Street show in Iraq

**News We Wish Was Fake:** The Department of State (DOS) sent \$253,653 to Bosnia to fight “misinformation”

**Abandon Ship: The Navy Sinks Billions on LCS Vessels:** The U.S. Navy is set to waste almost \$90 billion on ineffective Navy vessels

**Dragging Tax Dollars onto Thin Ice:** The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) awarded the Bearded Ladies Cabaret a \$10,000 grant to support a cabaret show on ice skates focused on climate change

**Taxpayers Get Spun:** The Department of State (DOS) allocated \$32,596.12 for breakdancing

## Ghost Towns on the Government's Dime

*The federal government spent **\$10 billion** on maintaining, leasing, and furnishing almost entirely empty buildings*



Source: GAO-23-106200

As the average American taxpayers struggle to pay rent, their hard-earned dollars are ironically funneled into more real estate—Uncle Sam's deserted buildings and storage facilities. A recent Government Accountability Office (GAO) report highlights a glaring inefficiency. **Our government senselessly wasted nearly \$10 billion on empty offices.**<sup>i</sup>

Most federal offices are ghost towns, with 17 out of 24 agencies using only 25% or less of their space in 2023. **Even the busiest offices barely reach 50% capacity.** This problem predates the pandemic, but COVID-19's telework boom made it worse. **These buildings were underused even before we all learned how to unmute ourselves on Zoom.**

The GAO calculated building capacity based on usable square feet per employee. It found that many of these buildings are just oversized, expensive storage units for empty desks.

In addition to the whopping \$2 billion annual maintenance cost, **the federal government is spending \$5 billion on leases.** This isn't a new

issue either. In a 2022 waste report, I noted the government spent \$1.7 billion on 77,000 empty, unused properties.<sup>ii</sup>

**Despite empty offices, the federal government also spent \$3.3 billion on high-end office commodities between 2020 and 2022.**<sup>iii</sup>

To share just a couple examples, while the CDC fear-mongered the American public into closing schools and wearing ineffective masks, it was busy installing **solar-powered picnic tables costing a total of \$237,960.**



Source: Disease Control and Prevention, EnerFusion Inc.

Another example of this outrageous spending comes from the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation's (PBGC) **\$15 million splurge on new furniture** even though its offices largely remain empty.

The GAO's findings are a call to action: it's time to get serious about office space management. **Trimming down on unused space and not spending our hard-earned cash to furnish those empty offices could save a bundle, freeing up funds for more pressing needs—like literally anything else.**

## A Pandemic Plunder

*A Florida man stole \$8 million in COVID-19 Relief funds to buy an island and more*



Source: Sweetheart Island, one of the purchases made by fraudster Patrick Parker Walsh. Julio Aguilar / Associated Press

Amidst the serene Floridian beauty, a dark tale of modern piracy unfolds. Patrick Parker Walsh, a Florida businessman turned pandemic plunderer, made headlines for his audacious escapades. <sup>iv</sup>

He stole nearly **\$8 million** in federal COVID-19 relief funds to buy Sweetheart Island, a private paradise of his own. This bold act of fraud, which led to his sentencing to 66 months in federal prison, sheds light on a saga of taxpayer dollars gone astray and governmental mismanagement. <sup>v</sup>

The court documents illustrate brazen acts of deceit: 16 fraudulent applications for Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans featuring fictitious employees and companies fabricated out of thin air. These documents outline a staggering **\$11,950,439 in requested PPP loan funds, of which he managed to obtain \$4,996,167.**

Unsatisfied with one illicit endeavor, he delved into Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDLs), **raking in an extra \$2,822,000 through deceptive applications.**

**With little oversight or accountability, the COVID-19 relief programs represented an**

**opportunity for plunder that only Blackbeard could have imagined.**

Walsh's case is just one jewel in a treasure trove of governmental oversight failures where the swindlers of the pandemic relief programs ran rampant. According to an analysis by the Associated Press, individuals engaged in fraudulent activities potentially **stole over \$280 billion from COVID-19 relief funding, with an additional \$123 billion being squandered or misused.**

These losses account for approximately 10% of the **\$4.2 trillion** that the U.S. government has allocated thus far for COVID-19 relief aid.

Additionally, the AP report provides some illuminating commentary: **"Here was this sort of endless pot of money that anyone could access,"** said Dan Fruchter, chief of the fraud and white-collar crime unit at the U.S. Attorney's office in the Eastern District of Washington. <sup>vi</sup>

The real casualty of this isn't just the theft of 8 million dollars but the erosion of trust in government. **It's a cautionary tale for Congress and federal agencies: always read the fine print, especially when safeguarding \$4.2 trillion of Americans' hard-earned money** from the clutches of modern-day pirates.

## Your Tax Dollars at Play

*The Department of the Interior (DOI) spent \$12 Million on a Las Vegas Pickleball Complex*



Source: City of Las Vegas

**Ah, the federal budget—an enigmatic beast where our hard-earned money transforms into a kaleidoscope of public projects, some of which make us scratch our heads and ask, "Really?"** The 2024 Festivus Waste Report shines a spotlight on a grant that's bouncing its way into the hearts of pickleball enthusiasts everywhere: the grand vision of a 30-court regional pickleball complex in Las Vegas, Nevada. <sup>vii</sup>

**Apparently, Las Vegas has more pickleball players than Elvis impersonators, and these racket-wielding enthusiasts are running out of places to play.** The city's pickleball players are in such a pickle that the federal government has set aside 5.43 acres to ensure they have ample space to serve, volley, and smash their way to pickler fame. <sup>viii</sup>

Not to mention, the architects of this complex aim to put Las Vegas on the global pickleball map by hosting tournaments from local to international levels. Move over "World Series of Poker," there's a new game in town.



Source: KSNV

**However, not everyone in Sin City is happy about this development.** According to local news outlet KSNV, "Homeowners had petitioned the city to vote against the agreement and consider moving the complex elsewhere citing concerns about noise nuisance, increased traffic and parking congestion, and an overall decrease in their quality of life and home value." <sup>ix</sup>

There's irony in a city synonymous with high-stakes gambling investing 12 million American tax dollars in pickleball—a sport often associated with retirees looking for a low-stakes, leisurely pastime. In short, you've been pickled!

## Taxpayers Fund a Disinformation Index—But the Real Fake News is That It's Useful!

*The Department of State (DOS) wasted \$330,000 to fund censorship of non-liberal and conservative media*



Source: UnHerd, Clare Melford is co-founder of the 'Global Disinformation Index'

Historically, the largest purveyor of disinformation is the U.S. government, without question. And now, once again, the government has decided to position itself as the ultimate judge of what's true and what's not. The latest chapter in this ongoing saga involves the State Department channeling taxpayer dollars into efforts to silence non-liberal and conservative voices.

Through the National Endowment for Democracy—a private foundation bankrolled by the State Department—and the Global Engagement Center, **\$330,000 of your money was handed over to the Global Disinformation Index (GDI).** <sup>x</sup>

It's bad enough the U.S. government is wasting your money, but now they're using it to undermine your freedom—with the help of GDI, a British organization, no less!

With your tax dollars, GDI cooked up a so-called "disinformation index" to blacklist conservative and non-liberal media outlets,

effectively making it tougher for them to secure advertising and compete in the marketplace of ideas.

These lists were then handed off to Xandr, an advertising firm owned by Microsoft. Xandr and other companies took the bait and refused to place ads on websites that GDI slapped with a "risky" label, **according to emails leaked to the Washington Examiner.** <sup>xi</sup> So, taxpayers footed the bill for an attack on free speech.

Among the ten "riskiest" outlets identified by GDI are The New York Post, American Spectator, Newsmax, The American Conservative, The Blaze, One America News, The Daily Wire, Reason, RealClearPolitics, and The Federalist. Their crime? **Not toeing the line of a particular political narrative.** <sup>xii</sup>

Meanwhile, left-leaning outlets like The New York Times, HuffPost, NPR, and BuzzFeed, were conveniently labeled as "less risky."

This is nothing short of a disgraceful misuse of public funds, aimed squarely at stifling free speech, competition, and manipulating public discourse. It's an attack on the very freedoms this country was built on.

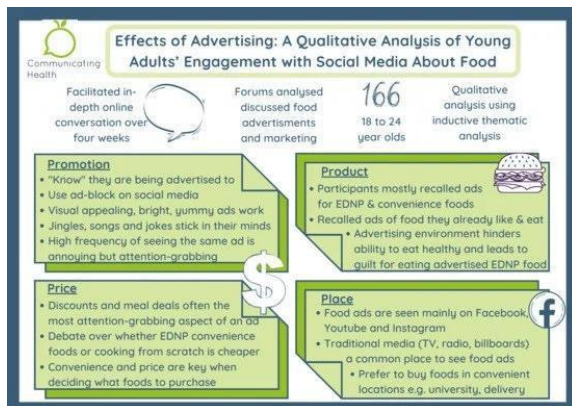


## Snack Attack

*The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) awarded a \$2 million grant to study kids looking at Facebook ads about food*

Ever notice how a seemingly harmless Oreo ad on your social media feed can suddenly ignite a craving you didn't even know you had? It feels like a no-brainer to conclude that advertising affects our eating habits—we've all been tempted by a well-placed snack ad.

**Yet, what seems obvious to the everyday consumer has warranted an extensive, taxpayer-funded investigation at one of the nation's leading universities. It's like we're paying to prove water is wet.**



Source: <https://www.mdpi.com/2072-6643/13/6/1934>

**The Department of Health and Human Services has allocated a generous \$2 million to a research team at New York University, tasking them with a mission to unravel the influence of social media food advertising on the dietary choices of adolescents. <sup>xiii</sup> While the well-being of our youth is undoubtedly a top**

priority, the necessity of such a study might raise a few eyebrows, especially considering that similar research has consistently arrived at the same conclusion: there is a notable link between food advertising and the eating behaviors of young people. <sup>xiv</sup>

Let's break down what this really means. We're talking about taxpayer dollars funding a study to watch teens watch ads. Then, those teens eat snacks. Finally, researchers use fancy eye-tracking technology to see where the teens are looking—because apparently, finding out if they're staring at the chips, the "likes," or the model is a matter of national importance.

**It's like Big Brother, but instead of monitoring for national security threats, we're monitoring for snack attacks.**

One might reasonably predict that this latest study will echo the findings of its predecessors, reaffirming what we already know—ads work, and they work well. **However, is this the most pressing issue that warrants such a hefty investment of federal funds?** In a world brimming with challenges to the safety and health of our children, one must question the necessity of a deeper understanding of Doritos' Facebook ad strategies.

Indeed, the idea of spending millions to revalidate established knowledge could be seen as redundant at best. **The key question remains: Will this new research bring any groundbreaking insights, or are we merely repeating the same experiments with a slightly different flavor?**

## Taxpayer Dollars Down the Drain in Nevis — A Hotel That Is No Longer A Hotel

*The Department of State (DOS) spent \$108,272 on a non-functioning hotel*



Source: Destinations, Detours and Dreams website.

What do you get when you mix U.S. taxpayer dollars with a crumbling, non-functional hotel in the Caribbean? Apparently, a \$108,000 bill.

As part of the Department of State's Global Ambassador's Fund for Preservation (AFCP program), in 2023, the **Bath Hotel in Nevis, a building that hadn't operated as a hotel for years, with a bath house that is boarded up and not in use anymore**, received a substantial renovation funded by a grant from the U.S. Embassy.

**The grant aims to preserve the historical features of the Bath Hotel and bring the building up to safety standards.** <sup>xv</sup>

Putting aside the fact this grant sends your tax dollars overseas, there's one glaring issue: The Bath Hotel isn't open for business and hasn't been for a long time! **Yet U.S. taxpayers were**

**still tapped to foot the bill for everything from electrical wiring and plumbing repairs to roof sealing.** <sup>xvi</sup>

The AFCP is known for being highly competitive, with cultural organizations from around the world vying for a slice of the limited funding pie. While preserving cultural heritage is important, it raises the question: Shouldn't we prioritize our own backyard before spending taxpayer dollars abroad on a hotel that doesn't even operate?

**And here's the kicker: this renovation plan has been gathering dust since 2011** <sup>xvii</sup>, only now being funded by U.S. taxpayers, who have been cast as the unwitting financiers of this folly. It seems we've been patiently waiting for over a decade to throw money into a project that doesn't have a practical endgame.



Source: Nevis Island Administration website.

It's another case of our government's misplaced priorities, where taxpayers foot the bill for projects that don't serve the public or make economic sense.

The Bath Hotel project is a prime example of why we need to scrutinize where our money goes—and demand better.

## Direct File Fail

*Congress spent **\$15 million** to turn the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) into an unconstitutional force to prepare, file, and audit your hard-earned money*



Source: IRS

Democrats said they passed the so-called Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) to make everyday items more affordable for hard-working Americans struggling to make ends meet. Aside from doing nothing to actually lower inflation,<sup>xviii</sup> they also managed to slip in \$15 million for a task force whose purpose **is to turn the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) into an unholy force of tax preparing, filing, and auditing** via their Direct File Pilot program.

The plan? **Spend millions to see if the IRS could take over tax preparation—because who wouldn't want the same people auditing them also to do their taxes?** And if you think this was an unbiased effort, think again.

Democrats handed off the study to a left-leaning think tank with ties to Obama and Clinton.<sup>xix</sup> Independent? Sure, if you squint hard enough.

According to the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration, **only 12% of taxpayers were eligible to use the Direct File Pilot program, which could cost up to \$249 million a year.**<sup>xx</sup> Burning

\$15 million to study a system that already exists in the private sector and is free to use?<sup>xxi</sup> Sounds like classic government waste.

But wait, there's more! Not only does Direct File create an unholy amalgamation of IRS tax authority, **it's also unconstitutional!** The IRA only allowed for a study, but the IRS jumped the gun, developing the system without Congressional approval.

So, instead of saving Americans money or lowering inflation, the government is spending your money on an unconstitutional, expensive, and largely unwanted project. Wasteful and unconstitutional? **Just another day in Washington!**

## Oh Rats! HHS Spends Nearly Half a Million on a Study of Lonely, Starved Rats

*The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) spent **\$419,470** to determine if lonely rats seek cocaine more than happy rats*

Despite spending over **\$1 trillion**<sup>xxii</sup> to try and solve the drug crisis, cocaine, one of the most harmful and addictive drugs, continues to gain popularity in communities nationwide.<sup>xxiii</sup>

Significant funding has been allocated to the study of cocaine addiction, but there seems to be no solution in sight.<sup>xxiv</sup> **This raises the question, how are these scientific studies and grants really using your tax dollars?**

One of these studies examining cocaine use took place at New York University (NYU). **They received \$419,470**<sup>xxv</sup> **from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)** to investigate whether rats placed in positive environments would be more likely to abstain from cocaine than rats in negative and isolating environments.

While half a million dollars may just be a small nibble in the grand scheme of the nation's growing deficit, those nibbles add up fast.

Researchers first placed rats in small compartments and injected them with cocaine to create a positive association with that location. The rats were then divided into different test groups. One group was allowed to socialize and had substantial access to food and toys. The other group was kept in isolation with no toys and limited access to food.



Source: sipa/ Pixabay

**After four weeks, researchers compared the two groups' reactions.** To no one's surprise, the rats subjected to starvation and the more isolated environment sought their cocaine-associated compartments more than those in the enriched social environment.

These types of results aren't limited to just rats; we saw a clear example of these behaviors in the realworld during the federal government's unscientific COVID-19 lockdowns in 2020.

Following lockdowns, **NYU determined the isolation of people led to increased levels of anxiety, depression, loneliness, and drug usage**<sup>xxvi</sup>.

Now, did the government really need to spend nearly half a million dollars to verify that social isolation and starvation may lead to increased drug usage? **One thing is for sure, we must end this rat-wheel of waste!**

## Hold on to Your Steering Wheels: DOE is Revving Up to Burn Taxpayer Dollars

*The Department of Energy (DOE) spent \$15.5 billion to push Americans toward electric vehicles they don't want*



Source: Joseph Sohm.

**Electric Vehicle owners report to have nearly 80% more problems than owners of gas-powered vehicles** <sup>xxvii</sup> facing issues like unreliable performance, difficulty finding charging stations, EV batteries struggling in cold weather, long charging times, higher maintenance costs, and limited driving range. Despite the growing list of headaches for EV owners, The Biden Administration is eager to waste your hard-earned dollars on an unpopular transition.

**Americans have spoken and they overwhelmingly prefer reliable gas-powered vehicles.** <sup>xxviii</sup> So why is the government pouring money into EVs that face more challenges and less demand?

Vehicle manufacturers are feeling the sting of producing vehicles that consumers don't want, losing money on every EV car they build <sup>xxix</sup>. Ford reported a whopping \$1.3 billion loss in its EV division in the first quarter alone, <sup>xxx</sup> Lucid Motors reported losses of \$227,000 per car sold, <sup>xxxi</sup> and

Rivian reported losses of \$1.45 billion in the same period. <sup>xxxii</sup> These numbers are so big they make my head spin faster than a Tesla on Ludicrous+ mode. <sup>xxxiii</sup>

Still, the Biden Administration is determined to throw \$12 billion at automakers to push EV production forward. It's as if they think throwing taxpayer dollars at the problem will magically make us forget that Americans still prefer their trusty gas-powered vehicles.

Of the \$12 billion, \$10 billion will come from the Energy Department and the additional \$2 billion will come from the Inflation Reduction Act grants. **And that's not all — The Energy Department will also make \$3.5 billion available to expand domestic manufacturing of batteries for EVs and the U.S. grid, despite the fact that most battery materials are imported from abroad. It's like trying to bake a cake without any flour!** <sup>xxxiv</sup>

President Biden seems to believe that he can force Americans to abandon their beloved gas vehicles by sheer force of will—or sheer force of spending. But here's the reality check: consumers aren't buying it, literally and figuratively. **Americans want reliable vehicles that won't leave them stranded, and they aren't clamoring for EVs with all of their issues and limitations.** <sup>xxxv</sup>



Source: Blazer Ev Forum.

The Biden Administration needs to understand that Americans prefer reliability over risk, and it's time to put the brakes on this runaway spending spree.

## The Influencer Effect Hits Foreign Policy

*The Department of State (DOS) squandered \$4,840,082 on influencers*

As American taxpayers struggle under the weight of inflation and economic uncertainty, the government continues to spend recklessly on initiatives that serve little purpose and present significant risks.



Source: Getty Images

This time the State Department has decided to throw millions of dollars at influencers.

**Despite American taxpayers providing nearly \$174 billion in aid and military assistance to Kyiv<sup>xxxvi</sup> since the beginning of Russia's war in Ukraine, someone over at State thought it was a brilliant idea to drop an additional \$4.8 Million for "KYIV, Ukraine public affairs - Influencer Staff"<sup>xxxvii</sup>.**

Apparently, what we really need in a war zone are more Instagram stories and TikTok dances.

**The dangers here are more than just cringeworthy content; this kind of spending opens the door to disinformation, propaganda, and international PR disasters. And don't even get me started on the potential to escalate tensions with other nations. After all, nothing says**

**"peacekeeping" like a viral video.<sup>xxxviii</sup>**

But the absurdity doesn't end there. **The State Department also splurged \$15,220 on an "influencers event"<sup>xxxix</sup> and another \$22,231 on a "USAID Social Media Influencers Campaign."<sup>xi</sup>**

At a time when Americans are scraping by, it's baffling to see our government burning through taxpayer dollars on what amounts to a glorified selfie-fest.

We need to remind the government that taxpayer dollars should be used to protect our nation's interests, not to fund the next viral sensation. Let's leave the Instagram fame to someone else and get back to serious diplomacy.

## Cirque du Taxpayer

*The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) spent **\$365,000** to promote circuses in city parks*



Source: Gary Payne

The federal government's funding of a circus is a sideshow. Over the past several years, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) granted Fern Street Community Arts, Inc. **\$365,000 for circus performances.**<sup>xii</sup>

It started in 2018 with a **\$20,000** grant for an after-school program in circus arts.<sup>ii</sup> In 2019, a **\$20,000** grant supported the creation and tour of circus arts across city parks.<sup>xiii</sup>

Then, in 2020, there were two grants. The first was **\$25,000** for a circus tour across city parks. The second was a different story.<sup>xiii</sup>

During the pandemic, the government notoriously shut down parks. Because what's more dangerous than being outside in the fresh air? To make up for it, the NEA granted these park performers an additional **\$50,000** payday.<sup>xiv</sup>

In 2021, the NEA allocated **\$15,000** to fund pandemic relief efforts for the group, offsetting the economic destruction from government-imposed restrictions and job losses.<sup>xiv</sup>

2022 was different, but only because the NEA added another zero to its check this time. Fern Street Community Arts, Inc. received **\$150,000** to fund the circus performers who weren't performing due to the pandemic lockdowns.<sup>xvi</sup> Then to keep the clowns from crying, the NEA sent another **\$20,000.**<sup>xvii</sup>



Source: CBS 8 News

2023 was another great year for these circus artists. The NEA granted them **\$35,000** to continue their city performances.<sup>xviii</sup>

The most recent NEA act was a **\$30,000 grant for "free" circus art performances in 2024.**<sup>xix</sup>

As the late and great **David Boaz** argued, **"Government funding of anything means government control. As we should not want an established church, so we should not want established art."**

## Girls Just Wanna Have Funds

*The Department of State (DOS) spent \$3 Million for 'Girl-Centered Climate Action' in Brazil*



Source: Paloma Costa.

**While American households need to spend an additional \$1,095 each month or \$13,138 per year to maintain the same consumption basket they had in January 2021,** <sup>ii</sup> the State Department decided to do what it does best: spend your money on something you never asked for and probably never will.

This time, they've outdone themselves by sending **\$3 million of your hard-earned tax dollars to a Netherlands-based organization.** <sup>iii</sup>

Apparently, the climate can't be saved without first dividing it up into gender-based silos. Because, as we all know, carbon emissions and rising sea levels are deeply concerned with inclusivity.

Let's dig a little deeper into this boondoggle, shall we? What exactly is "girl-centered climate action," and why does it warrant \$3 million of American taxpayer money?

**According to the grant details, the program is designed to empower young women to become climate leaders by integrating equity and inclusivity into environmental activism.** <sup>iiii</sup>

That means we're spending millions of taxpayer dollars to teach Brazilian girls how to be the most woke climate warriors they can be.

No one disputes the importance of empowering young women, and no matter where you fall in the climate change debate, one has to question the logic of sending millions overseas for a program that, at its core, appears to be more about political posturing than tangible results, especially when **17 of the 23 Climate Voices to follow in 2023 happen to be women.**<sup>iv</sup> Last time I checked, birds, trees and oceans don't really care who's leading the charge to save them, and neither should we.

Apparently, it wasn't enough for the **Biden Administration to create a "climate corps" in United States.** <sup>iv</sup> But let's not forget the irony here: while the State Department was busy funding ideological crusades in Brazil, they seem to have forgotten that their primary responsibility is to the American people. You know, the folks who are footing the bill. It's as if they're playing a game of "How far can we stretch the taxpayers' patience?" And unfortunately for us, they're winning.

What's next? A taxpayer-funded campaign to ensure that squirrels in Central Park have equitable access to acorns? Or maybe a federal grant to teach raccoons about recycling in a gender-neutral environment?

It's time to stop this kind of wasteful spending and get back to basics: taking care of the American people first.



## A Department of State Production Featuring Your Hard-Earned Money

*The Department of State (DOS) paid the Royal Film Commission \$873,584 for movies in Jordan*

Grab your popcorn and settle in for a government production you never asked for. **It's got it all: action, drama, and mind-boggling expenditures.** Jordanians get the THRILLS, the Americans get the BILLS in this cinematic masterpiece!



Source: <https://www.facebook.com/filmjo>

For the pre-production of this feature, Americans were forced to ensure the future of Jordanian cinema is lit—literally. **For a mere \$4,699.56, you've funded a five-day workshop on handling a boom mic and getting those shadows just right.** <sup>iv</sup> Nothing screams "foreign policy," like ensuring that Jordanian filmmakers can properly adjust their lighting setups.



Source: [www.broadcastprome.com/news/royal-film-commission-screens-star-wars-the-rise-of-skywalker-in-jordan](http://www.broadcastprome.com/news/royal-film-commission-screens-star-wars-the-rise-of-skywalker-in-jordan)

Here comes the Imperial March for Act 1 because the Department of State has struck again, **spending \$20,000** <sup>vi</sup> to promote a movie franchise that earned **\$1,074,144,248** worldwide. <sup>vii</sup> And while George Lucas isn't making the newer films, he's still laughing all the way to the bank while American taxpayers foot the bill for a Star Wars premiere in Jordan.

**It's the movie premiere you never knew you funded.** <sup>lviii</sup>

**Act 2 is a riveting saga of filmmaking capacity-building workshops with the price tag of \$65,149.55.** <sup>ix</sup> In this chapter, American taxpayers equip Jordanian filmmakers with the skills to enter the film and TV industry.

**Nothing quite strengthens international alliances like helping a few Jordanian filmmakers achieve their cinematic dreams.**

**For just \$50,000, Act 3 takes us to the American Film Days Project,** <sup>x</sup> where the DOS aims to dazzle Jordanian audiences with a showcase of high-art films. Hollywood and the entire film industry should thrive based on merit and private funding like any other sector of our economy. Disney doesn't need public subsidies.



Source: <https://www.nywift.org/nywift-partners-with-the-royal-film-commission-jordan-on-training-and-mentorship-initiative/>

Act 4 delves into a **\$298,160** two-year project to connect established American women filmmakers from New York Women in Film and Television (NYWIFT) to filmmakers in Jordan and advise them as they develop and produce new documentaries and web series. <sup>bii</sup>

Who needs to address the rising cost of groceries when the federal government can drop nearly 300 grand to produce niche content in a foreign country that will be viewed by...well, who knows?

The final act is America's real box office bomb—**\$435,575** of your tax dollars spent to “increase the appeal of Jordan's film industry.” <sup>bii</sup>

**That brings the budget to about \$873,584 for projects that have about as much impact on U.S. national interests as a straight-to-DVD sequel.** <sup>biii</sup> The critics and the taxpayers have spoken: it's time to roll the credits on these unnecessary expenses.

## Goalposts & Grandstanding

*The Department of State (DOS) spent **\$345,434** on football engagement to counter terrorism*

Everyone enjoys football – known as soccer here in the U.S. It’s frequently cited as the most popular sport across the world, as well as the most widely played.

**While kids and adults all around the world play the game, apparently thanks to the U.S. State Department, more in Albania will be able to partake in it.**

**In 2022, the U.S. Department of State spent \$98,765 on a grant to “counter recruitment and build resilience against terrorism and violent extremism for at-risk communities in Albania primarily using sport (football) as a means of engagement.”**<sup>lxiv</sup> This grant went to the Football for Peace Foundation, which is based out of London, England.<sup>lxv</sup>

Not only did the U.S. government spend nearly \$100k on football, or according to the recipient’s website, “advancing sports diplomacy initiatives,”<sup>lxvi</sup> in another country, but the State Department also apparently believed funding this initiative would help stop violent extremism.

**Then in 2024, the DOS allotted \$246,699 to the UK Football for Peace Foundation to promote peaceful football in Serbia and the Maldives.**<sup>lxvii</sup>

Who knew all it took to stop terrorism was football and a well-placed hashtag like #FootballSavesLives.

Furthermore, as you dig into *Football for Peace*, you’ll find that Prince William, the Duke of Cambridge, is involved in the organization.<sup>lxviii</sup> Certainly, the British Royal Family has enough money to fund this initiative without our American

tax dollars.



Source: <https://www.footballforpeace.org.uk/our-campaigns/football-saves-lives/>

**While Football for Peace might be a great organization for private funds and volunteer work, the U.S. government doesn’t have money for their charity, we already struggle to fix our own bridges and roads. And, no matter how the State Department spins this, football likely won’t stop terrorism.**

## When Bailouts Go Bust

*The United States Department of the Treasury (USDT) granted a failed trucking company a \$700 million pandemic-era loan*



Source: David Paul Morris/Bloomberg via Getty Images

Imagine you're flailing in the ocean, gasping for air. When you're about to give up, someone tosses you a life preserver—except instead of keeping you afloat, you still end up sinking. That is the story of Yellow (formerly YRC Worldwide Inc.).

**It's akin to entrusting your life savings to someone with a severe gambling problem and a history of colossal losses.** You wouldn't, would you? But fear not; the government is here to save the day. After all, they are renowned for their prudent handling of taxpayer funds, aren't they?

**Under the CARES Act's 4003 Loan Program, Uncle Sam went on a spending spree, handing out cash like Monopoly money.** <sup>lxxix</sup> One lucky recipient was Yellow, a trucking company that's been stuck in reverse since 2008. <sup>lxxx</sup>

To the tune of \$700 million in taxpayer money, Yellow was given a shot at redemption. <sup>lxxxi</sup> Spoiler alert: it didn't go well.

**The Department of the Treasury defended this move by pointing out that Yellow was vital for transporting supplies for the Department of Defense.** Nothing says "secure the homeland" quite like betting on a company that's been teetering on the brink of

collapse for over a decade. <sup>lxxii</sup> Even when the world was clamoring for ventilators and shipping medical supplies nationwide, Yellow couldn't manage to stay in the black.

Back in the early 2000s, Yellow embarked on an acquisition spree, swallowing up competitors like Roadway and transforming into a behemoth. However, the 2008 financial crisis arrived like an uninvited guest and punctured their dreams. **The drama with the Teamsters Union didn't help, and customers started fleeing like rats from a sinking ship.**

On August 6th, they filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy, marking the biggest implosion in U.S. trucking history. <sup>lxxiii</sup> And guess what? **If Yellow defaults on that loan, taxpayers—yes, you—will be left holding a \$700 million bag of IOUs.**

So, next time you think about how your hard-earned tax dollars are being spent, remember this: our government gave a \$700 million high-five to a company that's been swirling the drain for years.

Meanwhile, if this had been a private company's decision, their executives would've been tossed out. **But in Washington? Sadly, that's just business as usual, my friends.**

## Flocking Together! DEI Takes Flight

*The National Science Foundation (NSF) spent \$288,563 to Ensure Bird Watching Groups Have Safe Spaces aka “Affinity Groups”*



Source: Emma Lee/WHYY.

In yet another shining example of wasteful government spending, the National Science Foundation has decided that the world of bird watching needs a dose of diversity, equity, and inclusion. To that end, **they’ve approved a grant of \$288,563 to create “affinity groups” within ornithological societies—basically, bird-watching clubs— based on identity characteristics.** <sup>lxxiv</sup>

**Nearly \$300,000 of your tax dollars are being used to sort bird watchers into groups based on who they are or how they identify themselves, rather than what they love— watching birds.** <sup>lxxv</sup> It seems that even the peaceful pastime of observing our feathered friends isn’t safe from the DEI craze that has taken over our country.

The goal, they say, is to ensure that bird-watching communities are more “inclusive”. But do we really need to spend nearly a quarter of a million dollars to tell people how to organize their bird-watching hobbies? Do bird watchers really need the help of the government to form groups based on identity? Are birds somehow more enjoyable to watch when done so in identity-based groups? Somehow, that’s

hard to believe!

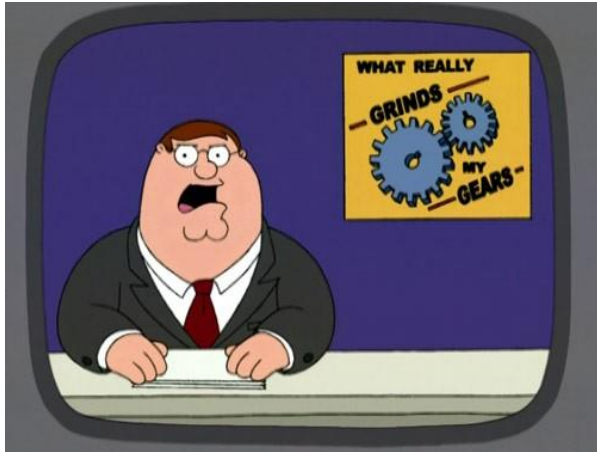
**This is a classic example of how the federal government’s obsession with identity politics leads to ridiculous outcomes.**

Instead of letting people enjoy their hobbies as they see fit, Washington has decided it needs to step in and organize them according to some arbitrary standard of diversity. It’s a solution in search of a problem, and it’s costing taxpayers nearly \$300,000.

**At a time when our country is facing real issues—like out-of-control spending, a national debt spiraling out of control and accruing \$1 Trillion every five months, <sup>lxxvi</sup> and a humanitarian crisis at our border to name a few <sup>lxxvii</sup> — they’re busy micromanaging the hobbies of everyday Americans, and charging us for the privilege.**

## Interest-ingly Wasteful

Americans are paying **\$892 billion** in fiscal year 2024 on the interest on Uncle Sam's Credit Card



Source: Family Guy Wiki

**Do you know what really grinds my gears** <sup>boviii</sup> and is one of the most wallet-draining aspects of federal spending? The astronomical sums of money we are wasting just to be able to cover the interest on our national debt.

Let's start with the facts —as John Adams once said, “Facts are stubborn things; and whatever may be our wishes, our inclinations, or the dictates of our passions, they cannot alter the state of facts and evidence.” <sup>bovix</sup> As of the end of fiscal year 2023, our net federal debt hit a staggering \$23.7 trillion with a “T”. <sup>bovix</sup>

**And what did that mean for hard working taxpayers? It meant Americans forked over \$658 billion—or about 10 % of the entire federal budget—just to cover the interest on that debt.** <sup>bovix</sup>

**That's 10% of the entire federal budget, gone—not to build bridges, not to fund education, not to improve healthcare, but just to keep the creditors from knocking on your door.** Imagine spending 10% of your income every year just to cover the interest on your credit card debt. Now imagine that on a national scale.

You might want to hold onto your wallet, because it gets even more ridiculous. **The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has looked into its crystal ball, and what it sees is enough to make even the most optimistic among us break out in a cold sweat.** In fiscal year 2024, we're on track to pay \$892 billion in interest alone. That's nearly a trillion dollars just to tread water.

**But wait, it gets worse. By 2025, we'll hit the trillion-dollar mark for interest payments. And if we keep on this path, by 2034, we'll be forking over \$1.7 trillion a year just to cover the interest on our debt. In total, over the next decade, we're projected to spend \$12.9 trillion just on interest payments,** <sup>boviii</sup> that won't be going toward tangible priorities. It won't be paying down the debt. It's just interest – the cost of Congress's inability to live within its means.

This isn't just some theoretical problem for future generations to deal with. No, this is a problem that's affecting us right here, right now. That's \$12.9 trillion we will spend on interest over the next decade instead of things that actually matter. **It's \$12.9 trillion that could have gone to improving our healthcare system or lowering taxes for hardworking Americans.**

Instead, that money goes straight into the pockets of our creditors—many of whom aren't exactly our best friends on the global stage.

If we don't get serious about lowering our debt, we're going to spend the next few decades working to pay off the interest on money we've already spent. **It's like signing up for a gym membership you never use but keep paying for, year after year – except in this case, the gym is the size of a small country, and the bill is bankrupting your kids and grandkids.**

It's time to cut the waste, stop the reckless spending, and lower the debt.

## Hashtag to Handouts in Ethiopia

*The Department of State (DOS) spent \$500,000 to expand the U.S. Embassy in Ethiopia's #USInvestsInEthiopians social media campaign to a larger national public relations campaign*

The role of the Department of State is to protect U.S. interests abroad and implement foreign policy initiatives, not serve as a de facto public relations firm for foreign investments. <sup>lxxxiii</sup>

### **So why did the DOS attempt to launch a full-blown public relations extravaganza with the hashtag #USInvestsInEthiopians?**

In 2019, the DOS spent \$500,000 of your tax dollars to expand the U.S. Embassy Addis Ababa in Ethiopia's #USInvestsInEthiopians social media campaign to a larger national public relations campaign. <sup>lxxxiv</sup>

**The objective of the project notes that it would, "support the achievement of U.S. foreign policy goals and objectives, advance national interests, and enhance national security by informing and influencing foreign publics and by expanding and strengthening the relationship between the people and government of the United States and citizens of the rest of the world."** <sup>lxxxv</sup> It's quite doubtful that a hashtag is enhancing national security.

The grant was given to the College of Humanities, Language Studies, Journalism and Communications at Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia. <sup>lxxxvi</sup> **So, not only did the State Department fund this absurd campaign, but they outsourced the work to a foreign university.**

The campaign's progress was frequently delayed due to COVID-19 and the unstable political

situation in Ethiopia, but ended this year. <sup>lxxxvii</sup>

**And the results? Let's just say you've probably never seen the hashtag unless you live deep in the most obscure corners of the internet.** Even when researching this waste item, my team could find very little showing the \$500k was well spent (see the uninspired and poorly designed graphic below).



Source: <https://et.usembassy.gov/slide/joint-statement/usinvestsinethiopians/>

**We can all agree your tax dollars should not be spent on a public relations campaign in Ethiopia.**

## Bibbidi-Bobbidi-Boo, There Goes Your Tax Dollars Too!

*The federal government spent \$7,026,689 on various magical projects*

Behold, dear taxpayer, your hard-earned money is disappearing faster than you can say: “*three-season podcast series exploring how magical beliefs and practices have evolved in the United States from the early 1600s to the present!*”<sup>lxxxviii</sup>

Thanks to the visionary minds at the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) in cooperation with the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, we can revel in the mystifying podcast, “*Magic in the United States.*”

For the astonishing price of \$388,863, you can now enjoy the six-episode-per-season deep dive into magic.<sup>lxxxix</sup> Unfortunately, this isn’t the kind of magic that will fix our roads or lower our taxes—just the usual bureaucrats making your money disappear with a wave of their hands.



Source: [magicintheunitedstates.com](http://magicintheunitedstates.com)

When it comes to solving 21<sup>st</sup>-century problems, there’s nothing more relevant than witches, shamans, and some guy waving a wand somewhere in colonial New

England. Each episode promises to take us on a historical rollercoaster through the spells, superstitions, and “magico-religious” movements of America’s history.

More magical examples of waste to note:

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) awarded \$250,000 to the American Museum of the Moving Image to update its exhibition on “magic lantern shows and nickelodeons.”<sup>xc</sup>

The National Science Foundation (NSF) awarded \$94,006 to study *The Magic School Bus*.<sup>xcii</sup>

This last trick we’ll reveal is a mind-boggling \$6,293,820 from the Department of Defense (DOD) on a Magic City Discovery Center.<sup>xciii</sup>

**We should limit the federal government’s involvement in cultural and educational affairs overall. Cutting government-funded magically inspired projects is a great place to start.** After all, if you can’t find private funding for your magical project—poof!—it probably doesn’t need to exist.



## Who Needs Border Security Anyways?

*The Department of State (DOS) spent \$2.1 million for Paraguay's Border Security*

In the latest chapter of government spending gone wrong, **we've handed over \$2.1 million to provide enhanced border security, but not for the U.S. where record-high arrests and a humanitarian crisis are unfolding. Instead, we sent taxpayer funds abroad to help Paraguay secure their border.** <sup>xcvii</sup>



Source: John Moore/NBC News.

While our own border tallied an all-time high of almost **250,000 encounters with undocumented immigrants on the U.S. – Mexican Border in December of 2023,** <sup>xcviii</sup> the powers that be decided it was the perfect time to focus on securing a border thousands of miles away in Paraguay. Nothing says “America First” like securing someone else’s border when our own is in complete chaos! **This figure alone represents a 31% increase from November of 2023 and a 13% rise over December of 2022, which had already set the previous all-time high.** <sup>xcv</sup>

These numbers paint a picture of a border in crisis, with border patrol agents stretched to their limits and communities having to grapple with the influx of undocumented immigrants. There have been over 10 million encounters with illegal immigrants since President Biden took office. <sup>xcvi</sup>

Recent revelations from a top Biden Administration official revealed that around 400,000 unaccompanied children have been released into the U.S. to live with a vetted sponsor, however, the Biden Administration lost track of 85,000 children as of February of 2023. <sup>xcvii</sup>

It’s as if Washington has lost its map and can’t quite remember which border they need to protect. Or maybe they just figured, “If we can’t fix our border, let’s see if we can manage someone else’s.” It’s like watching your house catch fire, and instead of calling the firefighters and doing everything to stop the blaze, you decide to head over to your neighbor’s yard to mow their lawn and water their plants. The logic is impeccable!

This, folks, is government idiocy at its finest—where the problems at home are so overwhelming that the best apparent solution is to jet off to Paraguay to take a vacation and fix someone else’s problems instead.

## The High Price of High Line Art

Since 2015 the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) has awarded **\$385,000** for art displays on the High Line

It's a bird! It's a plane! No, it's a 16-foot-tall pigeon sculpture funded by your taxpayer dollars!

The famous High Line in New York, originally built for pedestrian safety, has become home to an array of art displays. And while they do paint a picture, it's not a pretty one.

Since 2015, the **National Endowment for the Arts** has spent **\$385,000** on art for New York's High Line. <sup>xcviii</sup>

Let's take a stroll through some of our government's art museum of waste.

Exhibit A is entitled the Brick House. The first commission for the Plinth, this bronze woman morphed with a clay house was put on display in 2019. What a sight that is!



Source: The High Line, Brick House

Let's move to Exhibit B: the Musical Brain Series, which was awarded \$55,000. <sup>xcix</sup> That's a breathtaking use of taxpayer funds for sure!



Source: The High Line, The Musical Brain

Exhibit C is a 16-foot-tall pigeon sculpture that will soon grace the streets of New York. That's right, a \$40,000 grant from the NEA this year has allowed this commission to take flight! <sup>c</sup>



Source: The High Line, Dinosaur

These are just some of the pieces created with your tax dollars. But take heart, while Americans are struggling to make ends meet, we have a giant pigeon to serve as a terrifying distraction from the real problems our country is facing.

## Money to Manure

*The Department of Agriculture (USDA) is spending **\$20 million** on the Fertilize Right initiative to advance fertilizer use in Pakistan, Vietnam, Colombia, and Brazil*

Ironically, while American farmers are struggling to turn a profit—burdened by inflation and high production costs, the USDA reports that **in countries like the United States, more than 50% of fertilizer is lost to waste.** <sup>ci</sup>

Instead of addressing this domestic issue, the USDA has decided to send \$20 million overseas to teach others how to fertilize properly. <sup>cii</sup> **The federal government can't seem to solve the problem at home, yet they're eager to advise others on how to fix it.**

The initiative begins with four countries—**Pakistan, Vietnam, Colombia, and Brazil**—each receiving funds for projects that vary in design and goals.



Source: U.S. Mission Pakistan

The Fertilize Right initiative in Pakistan is a **\$4.5 million “Green Alliance” program** which will likely yield more reports than results. <sup>ciii</sup> The USDA is trying to solve the problems of Pakistani farmers with stakeholder groups and gender research. <sup>civ</sup> When it comes to advancing fertilizer, the USDA seems to think the missing ingredient

is feminism.



Source: PPD Hosts Fertilize Right Event

**Vietnam's Fertilize Right initiative is a \$4.4 million bureaucratic partnership** that aims to curb greenhouse gas emissions and boost the incomes of farmers...in Vietnam. <sup>cv</sup>

Next, we find that **Colombia's Fertilize Right initiative is receiving \$4 million** for a USDA team to work with the Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) to fine-tune fertilizer. **But with all of the buzzwords, endless meetings, and field visits (aka tropical vacations),** <sup>cvi</sup> **this feels more like bureaucratic busywork.** <sup>cvi</sup>

Finally, **Fertilize Right Brazil is a \$1.2 million** <sup>cvi</sup> **initiative to bring artificial intelligence (AI), big data, and bio-stimulants into one big taxpayer funded science fair.**

**Altogether, the Fertilize Right initiative accounts for \$20 million in taxpayer funding.** While the USDA has yet to allocate some of those hard-earned dollars, this initiative is already a costly exercise in misplaced priorities.

Perhaps it's time to focus on more pressing issues with American agriculture before we send millions of dollars we don't have overseas.

## Fauci Funded Feline COVID Experiments

*The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) spent **\$2.24 million** on COVID experiments*

Once again, Dr. Anthony Fauci and his NIAID are experimenting on animals in the name of science. We all remember *BeagleGate* where Dr. Fauci gave \$375k to a Tunisian dog lab that drugged and locked beagles' heads in mesh cages with biting flies to be eaten alive – all for essential scientific study, of course. <sup>cx</sup> And **who could forget Fauci's \$1.68 million study that injected and force-fed experimental drugs to beagle puppies**, cut their vocal cords out so they couldn't bark in the lab while being abused, and then eventually killed them? <sup>cx</sup> Well, this time instead of puppies and dogs, Dr. Fauci has targeted kittens and cats.

Since January 2022, **Dr. Fauci's NIAID and the USDA have given Cornell University \$2.24 million to study whether felines can contract and transmit COVID-19.**

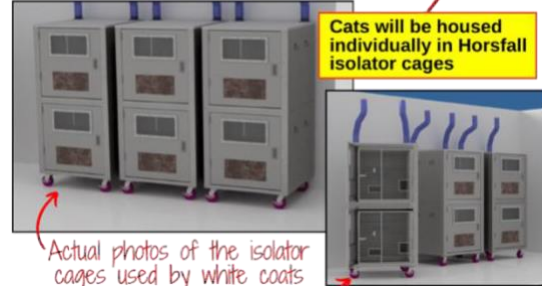
Through a University of Illinois subgrant, the NIAID awarded Cornell University \$1.59 million over the course of the last two years. <sup>cx</sup> **Cornell University additionally received a grant through the USDA for \$650k, bringing their total for this cat-apocalyptic experiment to \$2.24 million.** <sup>cxii</sup>

Not only is this a waste of over a million in taxpayer dollars, but the experiments have led to the suffering and death of over thirty cats.

The methodology of the experiment requires scientists to infect perfectly healthy cats with COVID-19, watch them suffer through infection for different lengths of time, and then kill them in groups of four. Some were

killed as early as two days after being infected. Some weren't even infected with COVID-19 since they were the "control" group, yet they were still killed. Throughout the experiment, the cats were completely isolated in cages. <sup>cxiii</sup>

experimental design for each target species and viral variant tested (Table 1). Cats will be housed individually in Horsfall isolator cages, and pigs and sheep will be housed in groups of 4 animals  
Obtained via FOIA by White Coat Waste Project



Source: White Coat Waste Project

**The NIAID funding is supposed to continue through 2025, and the USDA project is slated to run through May 2026.** <sup>cxiv</sup>

It's a mystery as to why the U.S. government continues to fund these barbaric types of studies, especially when the knowledge gained is either useless to society or could be learned without torturing an animal. Besides that, the U.S. taxpayer has already doled out far too much money on COVID-19. **We don't need to spend an additional \$2.24 million on COVID cat experiments.**

## Going Viral for World Peace

*The Department of State (DOS) is spending \$123,066 to teach Kyrgyzstan youth how to go viral*

Have you ever stumbled upon a cringeworthy graphic or social media video? You'll be thrilled to know that the federal government is coming to the rescue by generously pouring your hard-earned tax dollars into social media and marketing training...in Kyrgyzstan.



Source: Getty Images

**In 2023 and 2024, the State Department decided it was absolutely vital to spend \$123,066 of your hard-earned tax dollars to teach the youth of Kyrgyzstan how to go viral.** <sup>cxv</sup> This grand initiative features a one-day “Go Viral” celebration festival focused on developing the creative industry and providing a platform for exchanging ideas, business opportunities, and cultural innovation. <sup>cxvi</sup>

Another grant is intended to empower content creators to increase citizens’ awareness of environmental issues in Kyrgyzstan by training content creators and youth filmmakers on documentary structure and storytelling techniques. <sup>cxvii</sup> The largest grant of the program came in at \$80,123 to provide training in graphic design and social media marketing for Kyrgyzstan’s youth because nothing screams “economic opportunity” quite like mastering Instagram! What a brilliant way to change the world, one graphic at a time! <sup>cxviii</sup>

The State Department would like to have you

believe that grants like these enhance national security and advance American interests around the globe. However, it’s unclear how teaching youth in foreign countries how to go viral on social media benefits the American taxpayer. After all, many of these skills can be conveniently learned online through a plethora of free tutorial videos.

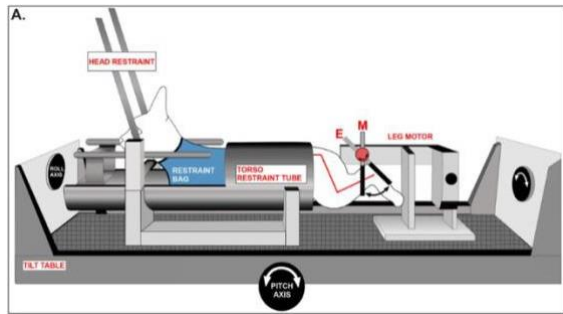
According to the State Department, taxpayers have given Kyrgyzstan over \$2.1 billion since 1992, which includes efforts to improve internet access. <sup>cxix</sup> So, these types of free tutorial videos should be more than accessible to the country’s youth.

To make matters worse, **Kyrgyzstan has recently begun taking steps to censor free speech, suspending independent media outlets and removing access to the popular social media app TikTok.** <sup>cx</sup> Wonder who gave them that idea...

One thing is for sure: there is absolutely no reason why the American taxpayer should be footing the bill to teach the youth in foreign countries how to go viral on social media, especially countries that seemingly don’t allow their citizens to engage in free speech online.

## Spinning Kittens for Science and Motion Sickness

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) spent **\$1,513,299** on a study of waste and cruelty



Source: White Coat Waste.

If you learned that your money is being used to electro-shock young kittens, torturing them for hours on end, and to the point that they vomit, would you believe it? Since 2019, \$1,513,299 worth of taxpayer money has been going to these medieval-type experiments. This is not some distant, dystopian future; it's happening right now at the University of Pittsburgh, courtesy of a grant from the NIH.

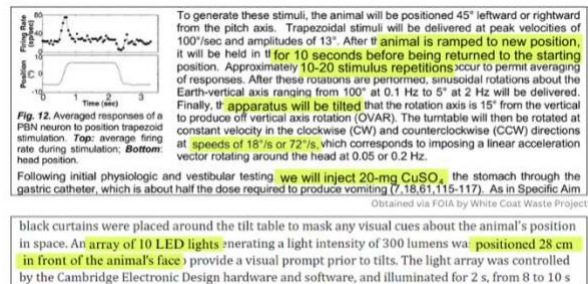
ccxi

In these nightmarish experiments, female kittens are the preferred victims, selected because they are supposedly more “amenable” to the relentless, inhumane treatment they’re subjected to. These kittens, often just four to six months old, are first trained to endure long periods of restraint. They’re kept tied down for hours at a time and for weeks on end. The goal? To force them into submission so that they no longer resist the torture that awaits them.

Once sufficiently “trained,” these kittens are strapped to a hydraulic table that tilts and spins them in all directions—side to side, up and down, and a full 360 degrees, sometimes completing an entire rotation in just five seconds, all in a gruesome effort to induce severe motion sickness. As if that wasn’t enough, their eyes are subjected to bright,

flashing lights. And if the spinning and lights don’t do the trick, researchers inject copper sulfate directly into their stomachs to guarantee that the kittens will vomit. ccxii

In an experiment that can only be described as medieval, some of these kittens have holes drilled into their skulls, allowing the researchers to lock their heads into place during the spinning and shocking. But these aren’t just ordinary cats—they’re “zombified” before the real torment begins. Through a process known as “decerebration,” the researchers sever or completely remove parts of the kittens’ brains while they’re still alive. This leaves the kittens alive but devoid of any cognitive function, turning them into unresponsive shells that can be spun, shocked, and abused without resistance.



Source: White Coat Waste

Imagine the suffering, the disorientation, the utter helplessness these animals must feel. And it’s all being done with your money—more than one and a half million dollars of it.

So, what’s the scientific goal here? According to the NIH, the purpose of these experiments is to study how different species, such as cats and monkeys, respond to motion sickness. The researchers claim that understanding these responses could have implications for human health, potentially aiding in the treatment of conditions like vertigo or helping us understand the effects of space travel on the human body. ccxiii But let’s be honest. Does any of this justify the sheer cruelty these animals are subjected to? I’m guessing the American people would say no.

## Cat-Stipated?

*The Department of Defense (DOD) spent \$10,851,439 on Orwellian Cat Experiment*

When George Orwell wrote 1984, he couldn't have imagined the bizarre, dystopian reality we find ourselves in today where tax dollars are being spent to shock cats into having erections and defecating marbles. Yes, you read that correctly.

In a scene that seems more fitting for a horror movie than for the real world, **the DOD, under the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), funneled \$10,851.439 of taxpayer dollars** <sup>xxiv</sup> into grotesque and extremely invasive experiments on cats at the University of Pittsburgh.

**Researchers at University of Pittsburgh sliced open the backs of male cats to expose their spinal cords then inserted electrodes which fired off electric shocks while the incision was still open to make cats have an erection.**

<sup>xxv</sup>

**Objective:** This study aimed at determining whether stimulation of sacral spinal roots can induce penile erection in cats.

**Materials and Methods:** In anesthetized cats, a 20-gauge catheter was inserted into the corpus cavernosum to measure the penile pressure. Stimulus pulses (5–80 Hz, 0.2 ms) were applied through bipolar hook electrodes to sacral ventral roots alone or to combined ventral and dorsal roots of a single S1–S3 segment to induce penile pressure increases and penile erection.

**Results:** Stimulation of the S1 or S2 ventral root at 30 to 40 Hz induced observable penile erection with rigidity and the largest increase ( $169 \pm 11$  cmH<sub>2</sub>O) in penile pressure. Continuous stimulation (10 minutes) of afferent and efferent axons by simultaneous stimulation of the S1 or S2 dorsal and ventral roots at 30 Hz also produced a large increase ( $190 \pm 8$  cmH<sub>2</sub>O) in penile

In this study using anesthetized cats, we investigated the penile response to electrical stimulation of an individual S1–S3 ventral root to determine the optimal stimulation frequency and the most effective spinal root in inducing penile erection. Next, combined

Obtained via Investigation by White Coat Waste Project

Source: White Coat Waste

But the horror doesn't end there. These cats were then subjected to even more electric shocks, sometimes for up to 10 minutes at a time, before having their spinal cords severed to paralyze their lower bodies. And just for good measure, the shocks continued for another 10 minutes. All this, in the name of "science."

If you thought that was bad, brace yourself. In another DARPA-funded experiment, researchers

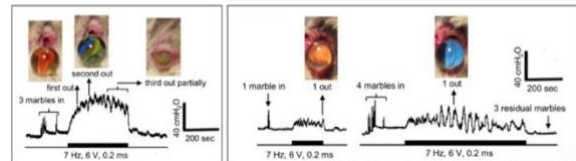
at Pitt attached electrodes to cats' spinal cords and inserted condom- balloons into their colons and marbles into their rectums. The objective? To force these poor animals to defecate the marbles via electric shock. <sup>xxvi</sup>

One particularly unfortunate cat had to endure 11 minutes of relentless shocks just to expel four marbles. Apparently, nothing says "national defense" quite like torturing cats to poop marbles.

second group of two cats, a large balloon catheter made of a condom (3.5 cm in diameter and 15 cm in length) was inserted via the small incision at the proximal end of the colon to occupy the entire colon so that both proximal and distal colon contractions were recorded.

The condom was filled with water (60–70 mL) to a resting pressure of 10–15 cmH<sub>2</sub>O. In these two cats, 1–4 glass marbles (diameter 1.5 cm) were also inserted into the rectum via the anus so that evacuation of these marbles could be videotaped simultaneously with the colon pressure recording.

However, after four marbles were inserted into the rectum, the stimulation eliminated only one of the four marbles after 4.5 min of stimulation with three marbles in the rectum at the end of 11 min of stimulation (Fig. 5B). Although stimulation of S2 ventral and dorsal roots together only



Obtained via Investigation by White Coat Waste Project

Source: White Coat Waste

**Your hard-earned money, nearly \$11 million of it, was spent on experiments that would be more at home in a dystopian novel than the real world.** It's a grim reminder that, when left unchecked, government spending can drift into realms that defy common sense.

Here's to hoping that exposing these experiments brings fewer horrors and more accountability in the future. If we can't stop the government from shocking cats into defecating marbles, then what can we stop?

## More Ducking Waste in Mexico

*The Department of the Interior (DOI) spent **\$720,479** on wetland conservation projects for ducks in Mexico*

Have you ever looked at how wildly wasteful our government is and thought, “Hmmm, I’m being taken for a ride!” Well, it turns out, the government is also taking you for a swim.

**While the country is \$36 trillion underwater and Americans are drowning in price increases, the government is doing its best to continue their foolish financial decisions by ensuring ducks in Mexico are nice and comfy.** The U.S. Department of the Interior is sending **more than half a million dollars to *Ducks Unlimited De Mexico*** for wetland conservation projects. <sup>cxvii</sup>

The Department of the Interior (DOI) – a government agency that’s supposed to be concerned with natural resources and federal lands within the United States - has thrown a **shocking \$18.67 million** at this organization since 2012. <sup>cxviii</sup>

At this point, you may be wondering if this waste item is real. **Surely, with all the financial issues facing our country and with working Americans struggling to make ends meet, our tax dollars aren’t going to ducks in Mexico.**

Unfortunately, this is very real.

*Ducks Unlimited de Mexico* is an organization that has operated for decades. Its vision is “Wetlands sufficient to fill the skies with waterfowl today, tomorrow and forever.” <sup>cxix</sup> **It even holds fishing tournaments and hosted a sunset cruise to celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.** <sup>cxx</sup>



Source: Ducks Unlimited De México

That all sounds nice. After all, who wouldn’t want ducks to have a nice place to swim and sleep? Well, not if **our country is having taxpayers foot the \$720,479 bill.**

If some duck-loving philanthropists want to donate their money to *Ducks Unlimited de Mexico*, go right ahead, but **the money of hard-working taxpayers should not be going towards it.**



## Big Bird Goes to Baghdad

*The Agency for International Development (USAID) is spending \$20 million on "Ahlan Simsim" a new Sesame Street show in Iraq*



Source: Sesame Workshop

After decades of costly wars in the Middle East, we hoped to see a sober approach to "assisting" the region. But no, here we are. **The Agency for International Development (USAID) is spending \$20 million in taxpayer money on a Sesame Street show in Iraq to promote "inclusion" and "mutual respect."** <sup>xxxxi</sup> Because when tanks and missiles fail, our best backup plan is to send in the Muppets.

Before we explore the absurdity of using federal tax dollars for puppets to heal the Middle East, we must recognize some of the causes of Iraq and Syria's refugee crisis, youth unemployment, and deep social trauma. **The U.S. involvement in Iraq and Syria didn't just "fail to stabilize" these regions. It actively destabilized them, fueling conflict and displacement.** <sup>xxxxii</sup>

After the 2003 invasion and years of occupation, Iraq saw a rise in violence and a collapse of infrastructure. The rise of ISIS caused new waves of terror and displacement. **In Syria, U.S. interventions to combat ISIS and others complicated a brutal civil war.** <sup>xxxxiii</sup> They displaced millions.

As if war and displacement weren't enough, Iraq's economy continues to suffer. Corruption and political instability are to blame. **U.S. interventionist policy**

**of throwing unregulated and unmonitored money at every project made a cesspool of grifters who lined their pockets instead of reconstructing their country.** <sup>xxxxiv</sup>

Youth, who make up over half of Iraq's population, face high unemployment. **Many educated young Iraqis face a broken economy with few jobs.** This has created a cycle of poverty, frustration, and a risk of radicalization.

**Having shown how U.S. policies fueled Iraq's crises, let's now examine the idea that a \$20 million Sesame Street show can fix the damage.**

Will airing "Ahlan Simsim," a Sesame Street spin-off, bridge divides <sup>xxxxv</sup> that have worsened due to decades of conflict? Writing about "mutual respect" seems nice, **but it ignores the structural and economic barriers that fuel social divisions.** If puppet-powered "inclusion" funded with our hard-earned money is the solution, we've truly lowered our standards.

The decision to spend \$20 million on a Sesame Street show for Iraq is misguided. **This project shows the U.S.'s shallow attempts to fix problems it created in the Middle East at the expense of U.S. taxpayers.** Iraq can recover only with real economic and social reforms. Puppet-driven "inclusion" campaigns won't work.

## News We Wish Was Fake

*The Department of State (DOS) sent \$253,653 to Bosnia to fight “misinformation” and more*



Source: state.gov

Over the last several years, we've seen the Left spread disinformation in ways that have harmed the vulnerable and eroded confidence in our institutions. **To name one example, during the Covid pandemic, the Biden-Harris administration misled the public about the origins of the virus and the efficacy of the Covid vaccines.** <sup>cxvvi</sup>

Ironically, they then turned around and branded the truth about these issues as “misinformation!”

**We should roll our eyes when this year alone the Department of State is sending \$66,830 to Bosnia to, “Develop online resources such as videos, interactive games, and quizzes to engage young people in detecting and countering misinformation.”** <sup>cxvii</sup>

**Worse: we've funneled \$253,363 to this group since 2010.** <sup>cxviii</sup>

Sending money to fight disinformation in a country with a GDP per capita almost 90% lower than the U.S. is laughable given the circumstances. **Bosnia has an unemployment rate of almost 13.30%,** <sup>cxix</sup> **and 18% of people live below the poverty line.** <sup>cx</sup> Aren't there more urgent priorities for the Bosnian people than “misinformation”?

The more than quarter of a million dollars shipped to Center Za Odrzivi Razvoj sounds even more ridiculous when our country is over \$36 trillion in debt. **We accumulate \$8.5 billion in debt per day – yet our leaders are still shipping money overseas to useless projects.** <sup>v</sup> Ending our country's debt crisis requires drastically curtailing government waste, throwing money at so-called “disinformation” efforts in Bosnia shows that your government is just not serious about tackling our financial problems.

Even if things in Bosnia were going better than they are, and even if our country wasn't trillions in debt, **it's laughable the same people that pushed the Trump-Russia collusion hoax think they have something to teach Bosnians about misinformation.**

The Left has spread misinformation far and wide, yet they still believe they can teach others to be fair and perceptive arbiters of truth. **It's chilling to think what innocent Bosnians might be taught by the Biden-Harris administration under the pretext of “fighting misinformation.”**

## Abandon Ship: The Navy Sinks Billions on LCS Vessels

*The U.S. Navy to waste almost **\$90 billion** on ineffective Navy vessels*

There's a ship sinking – or perhaps a whole program of ships. Batten down the hatches and prepare for a wild ride because the wastefulness of this spending bonanza is enough to make anyone seasick.

Back in the early 2000s, the Navy began planning for a new warship that would allow for better operating in shallow waters close to shore and accomplish assignments needed for the war in Iraq and Afghanistan – like intercepting small terrorist vessels or locating underwater mines.<sup>cxli</sup>

**The Navy requested proposals from two shipyards to decide between them and get the best ship for their money.** Smooth sailing so far, right?

Unfortunately, this is where the Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) program becomes a tale of wastefulness that could happen only in Washington. At first, Congress and the Navy wanted the shipyards to design, build, and test their respective prototypes in order to decide.

Yet in 2010, when the designs were finally completed – already over budget and behind schedule – **Congress authorized 10 ships for both designs, despite neither design's prototype having been tested or evaluated to even a minimal standard.**<sup>cxliii</sup>



Source: USNI News<sup>iii</sup>

**Conveniently, the ships would be built in two different shipyards – one in Alabama and one in Wisconsin – spreading out the billions of dollars that Congress and the Navy must have known the LCS program would generate for the military-industrial complex.**<sup>cxliiii</sup> After the program finally got under sail, the delivered ships proved to be a tremendous waste of taxpayer dollars.

**The LCS vessels have demonstrated an astonishing number of failures.** From the start, the ships couldn't fulfill the missions they were designed for.<sup>cxliiv</sup> The ships were undermanned, causing the crew to get 25% less sleep than the Navy's standard.<sup>cxliv</sup> The ships had cracks in their hulls,<sup>cxlvi</sup> and transmissions that ground themselves apart.

Maintenance manuals for the ships were written in foreign languages, leaving crews unable to make basic repairs.<sup>cxlvii</sup> Despite being planned more than two decades prior, the mission modules for the ships, the reason they existed, weren't tested before the ships were built and didn't even work.<sup>cxlviii</sup>

The ships' classified, encrypted communication systems repeatedly failed.<sup>cxlix</sup> A seal on one ship malfunctioned, letting in seawater and ruining the engines.<sup>d</sup> **The ship is so flawed that it**

probably couldn't survive a direct hit, and its best hope in combat is "the avoidance of detection," yet the Department of Defense didn't commit to fundamental design changes until after more than 20 ships had been ordered. <sup>ci</sup> And just a year or two after commissioning, one of the ships was literally "disintegrating" due to corrosion. <sup>clii</sup>



Source: AFR<sup>xv</sup>

The LCS vessels are so bad that several of them have already been taken out of the active Naval fleet. One of these **Leaking, Cracked Ships** was barely two years old when the Navy proposed decommissioning it! <sup>cliii</sup>

The failures and flaws of the LCS vessels cost billions to fix, and most of the ships were over budget from the start. **By FY 2019, more than \$28 billion had been spent on the development and construction of 32 Little Crappy Ships,** and the Navy now says it will spend at least \$60 billion over the lifecycle of the ships on their operation and support. <sup>cliv clv</sup>



Source: Forbes

**This gigantic waste far exceeds the definition of egregious when our nation is more than \$36 trillion in debt.** <sup>clvi</sup> We are drowning in debt, but the only thing we're throwing overboard is fiscal sanity.

## Dragging Tax Dollars onto Thin Ice

*The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) awarded the Bearded Ladies Cabaret a \$10,000 grant to support a cabaret show on ice skates focused on climate change*



Source: whyy.org

The Bearded Ladies Cabaret a self-described “queer cabaret arts organization,”<sup>clvii</sup> is gearing up for a climate change-themed ice-skating performance titled *Beards on Ice*. **This quirky production features polar bears, drag queens, and a character dubbed "Nonbinary Parental Guardian Nature."**

What’s the impetus for the show, you ask? The founding artistic director describes it: “**It’s so impossible, the issue of climate change and climate anxiety right now** — almost as impossible as drag queens learning how to ice skate. So if we can get these drag queens to ice skate, maybe, just maybe, we can solve the climate crisis.”<sup>clviii</sup>

The NEA, the federal agency tasked with supporting “artistic excellence,” apparently decided this was the pinnacle of cultural innovation. **Their choice to tackle climate change with a double axel, a dash of drag,** and \$10,000 of taxpayer funds is questionable at best. <sup>clix</sup>

While the Bearded Ladies Cabaret has found a

niche audience for its creative approach, the question remains whether this niche justifies a public investment. **Spending \$10k on drag ice skating may feel like a drop in the bucket, but every dollar counts when our country is facing serious issues and massive debt.**

Supporters will argue it brings climate awareness to the masses, but detractors will see it as an over-the-top vanity project funded by federal dollars.

The NEA’s \$10,000 grant to *Beards on Ice* raises questions about the agency’s priorities. **While artistic expression is vital, this funding decision may leave taxpayers wondering if the NEA’s mission has skated a little too far off course—on thin ice, no less.**

## Taxpayers Get Spun

*The Department of State (DOS) allocated \$32,596.12 for breakdancing*

Australian breakdancer Raygun's debut at the 2024 Olympics was a spectacle—just not the kind she intended. **Her routine was somewhere between a pouncing kangaroo and an accidental cartwheel which spiraled into what can only be described as "interpretive flailing."**<sup>clx</sup>



Source: Raygun (Photo by Ezra Shaw/Getty Images)

This prompted us to ask, “how much did the **U.S. government spend on breakdancing in 2023 and 2024?**”

Notably, three grants have been awarded. **These grants total \$32,596.12 in U.S. taxpayer money directed towards enhancing Olympic breakdancing endeavors and Nigerian breakdancing workshops and performances.**<sup>clxi</sup>

Allocating U.S. taxpayer dollars to support a foreign nation's Olympic breakdancing efforts is a misallocation of resources, particularly when the return on investment is questionable. **The funds could arguably have been better utilized to support domestic athletic programs or other pressing national needs.**

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