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U.S. Senate Advances Trump's \$9 Billion Rescission Plan Targeting Public Broadcasting and Foreign Aid

The Senate has narrowly approved President Trump's \$9 billion rescission plan targeting foreign aid and public broadcasting, with VP JD Vance casting the tie-breaking vote as debates intensify over domestic priorities, diplomacy, and media access.

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A narrow Senate vote on July 15 has moved forward President Donald Trump's effort to rescind \$9 billion in previously authorized federal funds—chiefly affecting foreign aid programs and public broadcasting. The 51-50 vote, split along party lines, required Vice President JD Vance to cast the tie-breaking ballot, signaling both the fragility and resolve behind the administration's push to reallocate funds toward domestic priorities.

The rescission package—one of the most sweeping in recent memory—targets a range of programs, including \$4.2 billion in aid to nations across Africa and Latin America, \$3.1 billion from global health and education efforts, and \$1.7 billion in annual funding for public broadcasters like NPR and PBS. The Corporation for Public Broadcasting, which distributes those funds to hundreds of local stations, faces an uncertain future under the proposal. Local broadcaster WTJX is projected to lose \$1.3 million, or 18 percent of its budget, greatly impacting its operations. “I don’t want to say destroy, but it would have a catastrophic effect on public media nationwide,” WTJX CEO Tanya-Marie Singh told lawmakers on Tuesday, referring to the rescission package.

“This is about putting America first,” President Trump said in a statement after the vote. “For too long, we’ve sent billions overseas while our roads crumble, our borders are porous, and our citizens are left behind. This is a victory for common sense and the American taxpayer.”

Senate approval of the measure followed intense and, at times, heated debate. Democrats and a few moderate Republicans warned of the risks involved in cutting funds for international development and independent media. Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer described the move as “a reckless assault on America’s global leadership and our free press.” He added, “Public broadcasting provides critical, unbiased reporting to millions of Americans, especially in rural areas. And slashing foreign aid at a time of global instability sends a dangerous signal to our allies and adversaries alike.”

Despite those objections, Republicans stood firmly behind the administration. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell praised the measure as a “bold step toward fiscal responsibility,” adding, “Vice President Vance’s vote today shows that this administration is serious about delivering results. We’re not just talking about cutting waste—we’re doing it.”

The rescission package—formally introduced by the White House earlier in July—would claw back funds approved during past administrations. Foreign aid has long been a focal point for budget hawks, even though it accounts for less than 1% of total federal spending. Under the plan, programs administered by USAID, including disaster relief and infectious disease initiatives in developing nations, would see significant reductions.

“This isn’t just about dollars and cents,” said Sarah Thompson, a senior policy analyst at the Center for Global Development. “These cuts could destabilize fragile regions, weaken our soft power, and leave vulnerable populations without critical support.”

Public broadcasting organizations are also expected to be hit hard. The CPB’s potential loss of nearly half its budget could force local stations to scale back or shutter entirely, especially in underserved areas. NPR and PBS have already warned of potential reductions in programming.

“Public media is a lifeline for millions of Americans who rely on it for news, education, and cultural programming,” said Sharon Rockefeller, president of WETA, a major PBS affiliate. “These cuts would leave a void that commercial media cannot fill.”

While Senate approval marks a major milestone for the rescission effort, the proposal still faces hurdles in the House of Representatives. Speaker Mike Johnson has expressed support, but some Republican lawmakers representing districts where public media is prominent may raise concerns. The proposal must pass within 45 days under the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974. Any delay could threaten the package’s progress.

Legal action is also possible. Advocacy groups including the National Association of Broadcasters and several international aid organizations are reportedly exploring lawsuits, claiming the rescission violates existing appropriations laws.

The move is part of a broader realignment of federal spending by the Trump administration. The recently signed “[One Big Beautiful Bill Act](#)” includes substantial tax cuts, heightened defense spending, and expanded immigration enforcement. The White House has touted the legislation as a vehicle for delivering “state-by-state savings,” even launching an interactive map to promote its projected impact.

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