

March 16, 2025

To the concerned citizens of Rockingham County,

In recent days, many of us have heard of the cuts by the Department of Government Efficiency led by Elon Musk. Many Federal agencies have been hit hard by these cuts. Many have applauded this, but after taking a closer look you can see that it may be very harmful to many government services that are needed by citizens in Rockingham County. This certainly doesn't tell it all, but it gives an idea of several of cuts and the direct impact on our residents.

The Federal Department of Education - President Trump has mentioned that he would like to completely eliminate the department. Saying it would cut a level of bureaucracy and the funds would go directly to the states. If you've noticed in the last few years our Schools have been woefully underfunded and funds from the public school coffers have been instead earmarked for Private school vouchers so thinking that if additional funds were left up to the states discretion, even more would be given for Private school vouchers. There are already talks of head start and preschool classes are in danger of being eliminated, many are supported by Federal grants that would be up to the discretion of the state, and if recent history holds true, the Public Schools would never see these funds. Many of the services for exceptional children would also be at risk as they are federally funded. The whole purpose of the Federal Department of Education was to insure that all children would have equal opportunities in education no matter what part of the country they reside, whether it be wealthy or impoverished, all would get a fair opportunity.

Medicaid - On a proposed budget authored by Republicans as much as 800 Billion dollars could be cut from the program which would directly cut medical and mental healthcare to millions of Seniors and disabled citizens. Also it could force the closing of many medical facilities and hospitals as a large part of the revenue that keeps them running comes from Medicaid. The rural areas would be the hardest hit as we've already had eleven hospitals close in North Carolina in recent years.

Social security - Just this week Musk recommended abolishing the SSI phone system that received over 73 million calls in 2024. Musk says it can be done easily online, however over one fourth of residences in the USA still have landline phones, so not all possess smartphones or have internet access. It would make it more difficult for many and also with the announcements of many SSI offices closing it would make it nearly impossible for some to speak with a representative.

Veterans administration – Many have already experienced long waits at VA medical facilities, with cuts occurring the wait time will certainly increase . Also 30 percent of The abolished positions are actually held by Veterans. This certainly isn't the way to treat those who gave of themselves to serve our country.

These are just a few examples and it's just scratching the surface of the long term effects these cuts could have on the economy as well. More unemployed people so not as much money to fuel the economy which starts hitting privately owned businesses As well, forcing more job losses. It's a dangerous endless cycle and it needs to be stopped.

Departments can't be abolished without House and Senate approval so please, contact your house representative, Virginia Foxx and your Senators, Thom Tillis and Ted Budd. Let them know that it will negatively affect you, your family, and friends. We all deserve for these elected officials to listen to their constituents.

Jeff Webster, Chair
Rockingham County Democratic Party