

"Project 2025: A Looming Threat to Rural Arkansans (Part 2)," by Dr. Chris Jones

I said it before, and I'll say it again...An extremist plan has been released and it is catching a lot of attention: Project 2025. Rural Arkansans' rights are certainly on the chopping block with Project 2025.

As a reminder, The Heritage Foundation, a conservative Washington D.C.-based think tank is leading the effort to implement Project 2025, which is really a roadmap to enact an extremist policy agenda for an authoritarian U.S. president. The document outlines how they will take over various sectors including healthcare, environmental regulations, economic policies, and labor laws. This plan is the Trump/Vance + extremist GOP plan. Even if they try to deny it.

Recently, the head of the Heritage Foundation resigned. Many in the GOP are using this resignation as evidence that Project 2025 is not relevant anymore. But it is!

I think about it like this: Let's say I'm a general contractor and I am building a house for your neighbors. And let's say that I have designed their house, hired contractors to build their house, made sure that the house met all design specifications, and given your neighbors keys to their newly built house. Let's also say that you know your neighbors have stayed in the house for weeks. After all this, I decide to resign as your neighbor's general contractor. Can I honestly say, with a straight face, that their house is no longer useful? That they are no longer living in it? NO. The house is built and serving its purpose, so the general contractor is no longer needed. It's the same with the Heritage Foundation. The designer has finished the work on Project 2025 so resigning at this point is meaningless.

Limiting Food Assistance (Found on Page 305-310)

Arkansas has the nation's second-highest child food insecurity rate at over 32 percent, and the Trump/Vance Project 2025 plan would usher in increased food insecurity. The plan proposes to cut funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). In Arkansas, over 280,000 of our residents (9% of the state's population) receive SNAP assistance. Many families and children in rural areas, already struggling with poverty, depend on SNAP to meet their nutritional needs. Such cuts would exacerbate hunger and malnutrition in our state.

Hurting Children in Foster Care (Found on Page 455-460)

Arkansas's foster care system, which serves over 4,500 children, relies heavily on federal funds to provide essential services. Project 2025 aims to reduce federal oversight and support for foster care programs. Decreased support will lead to a shortage of resources, making it harder for our vulnerable children to find safe, stable homes and receive the care they need.

Endangering Civil Rights (Found on Page 535-540)

Project 2025 aims to roll back Americans' civil rights protections, including those that prevent discrimination in vital areas of housing, employment, and education. Such changes will disproportionately impact minority communities in Arkansas, leading to increased inequality and fewer opportunities for marginalized groups. Our state's progress in promoting equality and justice will be severely hurt.

A Felon's Right to Vote

Also, regarding civil rights: In case you didn't know...Arkansas law affords convicted felons the unique opportunity to have their voting rights restored under certain conditions. The felon must provide proof to the county clerk that he or she (1) has been discharged from probation or parole, (2) has paid all probation or parole fees, (3) satisfied all terms of imprisonment, and (4) paid all applicable court costs, fines, or restitution (Ark. Code Ann. Amend. 51 §11(d)(2)(A-D)). Reach out to the Secretary of State's office to find out more information.

What Can We Do?

Arkansans must act to protect their communities. Ask your elected officials to explain Project 2025. Ask them if they support the plan. Tell them you **do not!** Engage with local representatives, participate in town hall meetings, and support organizations advocating for rural interests. And **vote** for candidates who prioritize rural health, environmental protection, and economic fairness. This is crucial. Let's make sure our voices are heard, and our needs met.

Project 2025 is a looming threat to rural Arkansans, but we can still stop this threat---IF we vote in November and vote for candidates who will defend against the extremist takeover.

For more information on Project 2025, visit: [2025_MandateForLeadership_FULLL.pdf \(project2025.org\)](#).

Share your thoughts and comments at chrisjoneslistens@gmail.com.