

# Let no one mourn the passing of DOGE

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[Opinion//](#)  
Editorial

## Let no one mourn DOGE, Donald Trump and Elon Musk's catastrophic creation

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DOGE was preceded in death by 600,000 people left vulnerable from the dismantling of USAID. While no one mourns its passing, millions mourn its existence.

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Elon Musk brandishes a chainsaw on Feb. 20 — symbolic of his cruel and arbitrary quest to slash federal workers' jobs — during the annual Conservative Political Action Conference in Oxon Hill, Maryland.

Saul Loeb/TNS

The Department of Government Efficiency, also known as DOGE, has died at the age of 10 months.

Its unexpected death was announced last week by Office of Personnel Management Director Scott Kapor, who told Reuters that DOGE “doesn’t exist” anymore and that the government-wide hiring freeze it initiated has ended.

DOGE’s life was short and brutal, not for itself but the long-lasting and catastrophic harm it inflicted during its brief existence. In American history, no government agency has been as responsible — through sheer cruelty and incompetence — for the scale of disruption and pain as DOGE.

While no cause of death was given, DOGE was known to be suffering for the past few months from a massive public recoil of anger and disgust as more people either became victims of its policies or aware of the great numbers of others victimized by this agent of intentional mayhem.

DOGE was born with great fanfare on Jan. 20. Its parents were President Donald Trump, who signed an executive order creating it, and Elon Musk, the world’s richest man, who had suggested to Trump the need for such a government efficiency commission and then eagerly, with chain saw in hand, took charge of it.

DOGE’s objective was to modernize information technology, maximize productivity, and cut excess regulations and spending within federal government.

Given that neither of its parents cared about or understood policy and were ignorant of the work done by hundreds of vital government agencies, DOGE’s childhood was understandably undisciplined, chaotic, dishonest and destructive.

One example was the firing in February of some of the nation’s top nuclear specialists from the National Nuclear Safety Administration.

Despite the words “Nuclear Safety” being in its name, DOGE staff were ignorant to the fact that the agency oversees the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile. Informed of this, they [rushed to rescind the firings](#).

That same month DOGE reported that by canceling a contract with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, it saved \$8 billion when the reality was a clerical error; the contract was only for \$8 million.



Elon Musk flashes his DOGE T-shirt to the media on March 9 as he walks on the South Lawn of the White House.

Jose Luis Magana/Associated Press

Musk and DOGE also took credit for terminating contracts that had ended years earlier and, at one point, boasted it had saved \$55 billion. An [NPR review found a savings of only \\$2 billion](#).

Musk and DOGE were reckless and indiscriminate in their slashing of nearly 300,000 federal jobs, including at the Food and Drug Administration, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the U.S. Postal Service. That total could reach 400,000 by year's end.

Usha Haley, a professor at the Barton School of Business at Wichita State University, [warned Fortune magazine](#) of the long-term repercussions of DOGE's slashes: "These layoffs, along with cutting federal grants, will have ripple economic effects affecting federal contractors, universities, hospitals, research institutes and nonprofits, which, in turn, will reduce available jobs, consumer purchases, and detrimentally affect local economies."

DOGE was also granted access to government databases and computer systems, including those of the Internal Revenue Service, Social Security Administration and Treasury Department.

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But it's the toll on human lives resulting from dismantling the U.S. Agency for International Development that history will most remember and harshly judge. This was the agency responsible for administering foreign aid.

Atul Gawande, a professor at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and former assistant administrator for global health at USAID, said this dismantling has [resulted in the deaths of 600,000 people](#) from infectious diseases and malnutrition, two-thirds of them children.

Another study, which was conducted by researchers from multiple countries, found that the cuts [could lead to more than 14 million additional deaths](#) by 2030, including more than 4.5 million children younger than 5.

DOGE was abandoned by both its parents, who broke up. [Musk left the government in May](#), and Trump no longer talks about it.

DOGE was preceded in death by the 600,000 people whom USAID could have saved.

It leaves no one to mourn its passing but millions to mourn that it existed.

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