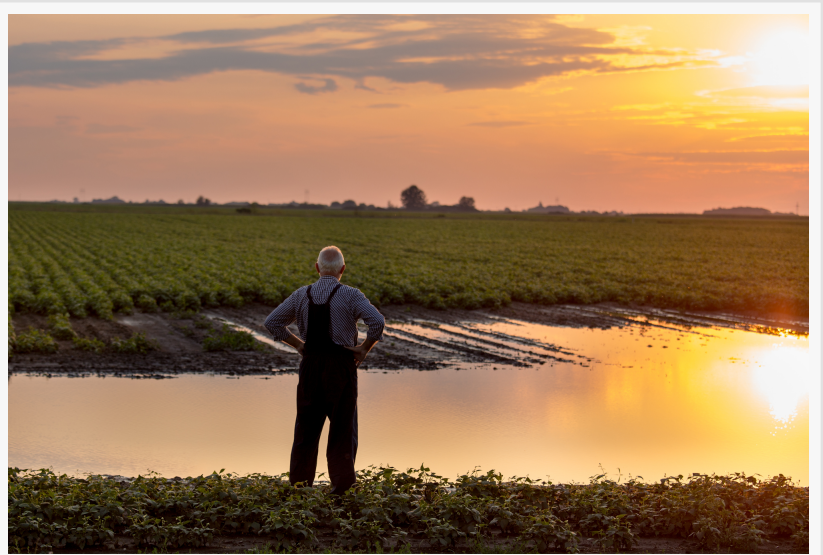


The Current Grant Freeze Inadvertently Betrays Rural America – Farmers and Small Businesses Left in the Cold

Farmers and small businesses await funding as the REAP grant freeze stalls rural energy projects. Will the government take action?

OTTAWA, OH, UNITED STATES, February 3, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- While much of the federal grant freeze has been lifted, rural businesses and farmers—many of whom are Trump supporters—remain caught in the crossfire, waiting for the funding they were promised.



Farmers Betrayed By Grant Freeze

The [Rural Energy for America Program](#)

[\(REAP Grant\)](#), a bipartisan initiative designed to help rural small businesses and agricultural producers invest in renewable energy and energy efficiency, remains frozen under the Trump administration's grant suspension. Established in the early 2000s and strengthened in the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act, REAP provides funding for solar installations, grain dryers, and energy-saving equipment—critical investments in rural economies. The program covers 25% or 50% of the cost of renewable energy systems and energy efficiency projects, with small business solar projects and grain dryers for rural farmers being the most common beneficiaries.

For Justin Barnhart, founder of [All State Strategies LLC](#), an Ohio-based Republican consulting firm, the freeze has placed hundreds of businesses in financial jeopardy. Barnhart, a trusted GOP strategist and Trump's 2016 County Chairman, shifted part of his business to writing REAP grant applications in 2023. Since then, his firm has prepared 180 successful grants—but most have not been reimbursed by the government due to the ongoing freeze.

"When we talk to our clients, we have a unique perspective because half of our business is [Republican campaigns](#)," Barnhart said. "I'd estimate 98% of our clients voted for Trump. Now, they're being left behind by their own movement, and they are demanding answers."

The economic ripple effects are devastating. Grant recipients have already signed contracts with suppliers, who in turn have purchased solar panels and grain dryers from manufacturers. Some installers, anticipating price hikes from new tariffs, made advance purchases—only to find themselves stuck in an economic crisis.

“This is a gut punch to many hardworking business owners,” Barnhart explained. “Our clients believe in a right-sizing government, but they never expected their own businesses to be collateral damage.”

Frustration is boiling over, and Trump’s rural base is questioning why their funding is being blocked while other programs move forward. Barnhart remains hopeful that new Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins will complete her assessment of REAP and pressure Trump to release the funds. But for many business owners, time is running out.

“This isn’t the Green New Deal—this is about conservative rural business owners investing in their operations as promised,” Barnhart said. “We’re telling our clients this is temporary, but they are growing angry waiting for Trump to act.”

The big question: Will Trump stand by the rural Americans who stood by him?

With hundreds of rural businesses in limbo, farmers, business owners, and GOP leaders are calling for action. Trump supporters deserve answers—and they deserve their funding.

Julio Ramirez
AltShift WP
[email us here](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/782822574>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2025 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.