

Elon Musk calls for the U.S. government to delete entire agencies: 'Remove the roots of the weed'

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DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — The U.S. government needs to "delete entire agencies" in a cost and efficiency drive, tech billionaire and [Tesla](#) co-founder and CEO [Elon Musk](#) said Thursday when asked about whether the changes he is implementing as part of President [Donald Trump](#)'s administration will last beyond Trump's term.

"I think we do need to delete entire agencies, as opposed to leave part of them behind. ... It's kind of like leaving a weed," Musk said. "If you don't remove the roots of the weed, then it's easy for the weed to grow back. But if you remove the roots of the weed — it doesn't stop weeds from ever going back, but it makes it harder."

Musk, who also founded SpaceX and owns social media platform X, made the comments while speaking via video link to an audience at Dubai's annual World Governments Summit, as part of a conversation hosted by the UAE's artificial intelligence minister, Omar Sultan Al Olama.

“So we have to really delete entire agencies, many of them,” Musk said. “And that’s not to say there won’t be an increase over time of bureaucracy in some new administration, but it will be from a much lower baseline. So certainly it’s a step in the right direction.”

“Nothing’s forever,” he added, “but I think we can strengthen the foundations of the United States substantially.”

Trump appointed the South African-born engineer and tech entrepreneur as a “special government employee” and the head of a new advisory body called the Department of Government Efficiency, or DOGE, under the administration. Musk has been vocal about his aims to improve government efficiency and reduce bureaucracy and regulations, and on Thursday said that such efforts could amount to a \$1 trillion reduction in the federal deficit by 2026.

Musk has already [taken an axe to U.S. Agency for International Development](#), the international humanitarian and development arm of the U.S. government, by essentially furloughing the majority of its staff and freezing its funding. The sudden change is affecting millions of people around the world, particularly in poorer countries.

The Trump administration in early February said that USAID would shut down as an independent agency and be moved under the State Department, a change that would require congressional approval.