

Like Most Tech-Bro Schemes, DOGE Is a Rip-Off of Something Older and Better

One saves us hundreds of billions already. The other brings a chainsaw to heart surgery.



- [SAM VAN PYKEREN](#)

Like most things Elon Musk brags are new and revolutionary, DOGE is neither new nor revolutionary—in fact, a similar agency has existed for more than 100 years.

“All of these people acting like, ‘Oh, we’re going to set up an agency to identify waste,’” highlighted Rep. Alexandria Ocasio Cortez (D-N.Y.) on a recent Instagram livestream. “As though that’s never been an idea before.” Like, you know, take a number, people.”

This is precisely what stuck out to me: We live in a world where billionaires like Elon Musk slap a new name like “DOGE” on an old idea and then go on and on, bragging about changing the status quo. So, inspired by AOC’s stream, I wanted to demystify, and try my best to cut through, a narrative that is quite actively harming the American people.

Some of you may already be familiar with this, but if not, let me introduce you to the US Government Accountability Office or the GAO.

The GAO is an independent, nonpartisan federal watchdog that provides Congress with thorough, fact-based reports on how taxpayer dollars are spent. It has thousands of career civil servants—experts in everything from health care, computer science, auditing, public policy, AI, and infectious disease—working to, yes, improve government efficiency.

Their results? According to the GAO, over the last six years, they averaged a staggering return on investment of \$123 in savings for every \$1 in their budget. Now, I’m no businessman, but that sounds like some excellent business.

But then there’s DOGE. While the GAO operates with institutional expertise, transparency, and nonpartisan directives, Musk’s nongovernmental organization brings a chainsaw to heart surgery. It then gives teenage to young 20-something engineers the authority to do that surgery. Unlike the GAO,

which audits everything from pandemic relief fraud to Ukraine aid spending, DOGE seems to be more about controlling a narrative than actual oversight.

That narrative? That only Musk alone can save the government from inefficiency, that all we need is his magic touch. It all conveniently ignores that real, nonpartisan watchdog agencies already exist—and do their jobs quite well.