# Politics

WHITE HOUSE

## Trump seeks to exert control over independent agencies

### Critics question legality of move to review FTC, SEC, FCC spending

By Mallory Wilson
ASSOCIATED PRESS

The White House is moving to gain control of independent agencies, like the Federal Trade Commission, Securities and Exchange Commission and Federal Communications Commission, prompting critics to question its legality.

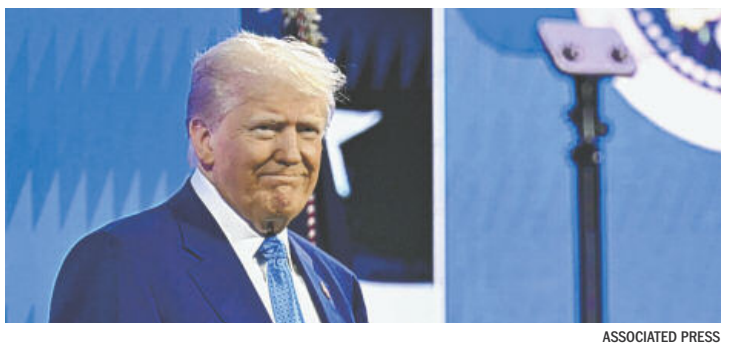
The executive order President Trump signed Tuesday from Mar-a-Lago ensures "all federal agencies are accountable to the American people."

It calls for independent agencies to submit draft regulations to be reviewed by the White House and consult with the White House on their plans. It also calls for the Office of Management and Budget — currently headed by Russell Vought — to review the agencies' spending.

"These regulatory agencies currently exercise substantial executive authority without sufficient accountability to the President, and through him, to the American people," the order says. "Moreover, these regulatory agencies have been permitted to promulgate significant regulations without review by the President."

The fact sheet said the order fulfills Mr. Trump's "promise to restore constitutional governance and accountability to the entire executive branch."

The order says it's not applicable to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System or to the Federal Open Market Committee "in its conduct of monetary policy."


ASSOCIATED PRESS
President Trump's executive order calls for independent agencies to submit draft regulations to be reviewed by the White House.

Doug Holtz-Eakin, president of the American Action Forum, a center-right think tank that focuses on economic policy, said that the decision was made because the economy was "such a hot-button issue" during the election, and so the president can blame someone else if inflation rates don't come down.

"He's insulated from it, and that's the advantage of having an independent agency," Mr. Holtz-Eakin said.

This order is just one move Mr. Trump has made to give more power to the executive branch to make sure his agenda is fulfilled.

Typically, heads of federal agencies are presidential appointees, but most of them include bipartisan membership as well. They make decisions and write and enforce regulations. Congress established the agencies to have a certain level of independence to interpret laws.

"This action will serve only to politicize and corrupt independent agencies, which will now be subject to the political whims of those in power," said Alexandra Reeve Givens, CEO of the nonprofit Center for Democracy & Technology. "For a century, these agencies have been independent for a reason — Congress needs these experts to interpret the laws it passes, and to initiate investigations and enforce those laws without political favoritism."

Mr. Holtz-Eakin said that stance is a "little too strong."

"You're already appointing the heads of them and getting them confirmed by the Senate, so you've got your fingerprints on everything the agency is up to already," he said of the president. "And that's political in the best sense of the word. We want the elected president to reflect the wishes of the voters who elected him, and that's one of the ways you do it."

Walter Olson, a senior fellow at the Cato Institute's Robert A. Levy Center for Constitutional Studies wrote in a post for the institute that if the Trump administration gets this executive order past any legal cases it may be subjected to, "it's momentous."

Other critics, like Free Press Co-CEO Craig Aaron, called the order "an unconstitutional power grab" and "a blatant abuse of executive power and is a slap in the face to Congress and the electorate."

BUREAUCRACY

## Trump says he supports sending DOGE rebate checks to American taxpayers

By Jeff Mordock
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

President Trump on Wednesday endorsed sending Americans rebate checks based on a percentage of the savings achieved by the federal government through the Department of Government Efficiency's cost-cutting measures.

"There's even under consideration a new concept where we give 20% of the DOGE savings to American citizens and 20% goes to paying down debt because the numbers are incredible," Mr. Trump said at the Future Investment Institute's PRIORITY Summit in Miami.

Mr. Trump said by allowing the American people to get in on the action, they will help the federal government identify the fraud, waste and abuse that he was sent to Washington to clean up.

"By doing this Americans will tell us where there's waste. They'll be reporting it themselves. They'll participate in the process of saving money," he said.

Mr. Trump did not offer any details about the plan, including how many Americans would receive checks or how the process would work.

The president's remarks are the first time he's weighed in on a proposal floated Tuesday by billionaire Elon Musk, who is leading the DOGE effort to slash costs.

On Tuesday, Mr. Musk posted on X that he "will check with the president" about the idea of sending out "DOGE dividend" checks. The plan calls for returning part of the savings generated by DOGE back to taxpayers in the form of direct payments.

The idea was first proposed by James Fishback, CEO and cofounder of investment firm Azoria. Mr. Fishback, who recently launched a fund to help companies back out of diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives, said the idea would make DOGE real for millions of Americans.

If Mr. Musk hits his goal of cutting $2 trillion from the federal government, that could return $400 billion to American taxpayers. That would translate to roughly $5,000 per household for the 78 million households that pay federal income tax.

Any payout would depend on Mr. Musk's ability to reach his savings target. The government's annual budget deficit is about $2 trillion.

It's unclear if any rebate program would require congressional approval. House Republicans have called for DOGE sayings to be used to reduce the national debt. They could oppose the rebate idea, but if Mr. Trump uses another 20% in DOGE savings to pay down the debt, it might be enough to appease them.

The Future Investment Institute summit is sponsored by the $925 billion Saudi Public Investment Fund. It bills itself as a way to "pioneer solutions that transcend industries and geographies by convening thought leaders, investors and policymakers" to address challenges such as "rising costs of living, systemic challenges in health care, security and education." Polarized and unequal societies along with climate change will be among the topics being discussed.

A SPECIAL FEATURE by Mercury Global Reports mercuryglobalreports.com

## Power International Holding: Shaping Qatar's Future Across Diverse Sectors


Moutaz Al Khayyat
Chairman

**Power International Holding (PIH)** has evolved into a multifaceted conglomerate with a presence across diverse industries. Under the visionary leadership of **Chairman Moutaz Al Khayyat**, PIH continues to shape industries and communities worldwide. In an exclusive interview with **Marios Tsokkos of Mercury Global Reports**, Al Khayyat shared insights into the company's growth strategy, recent milestones, and future aspirations.

ESTITHMAR HOLDING IS A PUBLICLY LISTED COMPANY WITH A MARKET CAPITALIZATION OF $2.2 BILLION USD, FOCUSING ON HEALTHCARE, SERVICES, AND VENTURES.

POWER INTERNATIONAL HOLDING (PIH) IS ROBUST DIVERSIFIED QATARI GROUP RECOGNIZED BY FORBES AS THE 12TH TOP ARAB FAMILY BUSINESS.

**Diversified Growth Across Key Sectors**
Tracing its origins back to 1983 in Qatar, PIH's foundation was built on contracting. Over the years, the company expanded its portfolio to encompass six key divisions:

UCC Holding – Specializing in large-scale infrastructure and energy projects, including oil and gas, this arm remains central to PIH's growth.

Estithmar Holding – Focused on healthcare, tourism, and contracting services, it has led transformational initiatives like The View Hospital.

Baladna – A leader in agriculture and food industries, Baladna's sustainable practices have achieved self-sufficiency in Qatar's dairy production.

Assets Group – Excelling in real estate, hospitality, and retail, with an emphasis on luxury developments.

Aura Group – A lifestyle brand offering a diverse portfolio of restaurants, entertainment venues, and hospitality services.

TMT Group – Pioneering advancements in telecommunications and digital innovation.

"Our goal is to remain agile and resilient amidst global market changes while delivering exceptional value to the communities we serve," said Al Khayyat. PIH's entrepreneurial spirit and adherence to family values like trustworthiness and hard work have propelled it to the forefront of Arab family businesses, ranking 12th on Forbes' prestigious list.

**Estithmar Holding: Transforming Industries**
Estithmar Holding, with a market capitalization of $2.2 billion, exemplifies PIH's commitment to innovation and value creation. Al Khayyat highlighted several landmark projects:

The View Hospital: Developed in partnership with Cedars-Sinai, this state-of-the-art facility is redefining healthcare in Qatar.

International Healthcare Expansion: The company is building a 300-bed hospital in Algeria with German collaborators and managing two hospitals in Iraq, showcasing its regional impact.

Luxury Tourism Ventures: Iconic projects like the Rixos Baghdad Hotel and the Rosewood Resort in the Maldives are reshaping luxury tourism in their respective regions.
Estithmar's influence extends beyond healthcare and tourism. Its expertise in catering and facilities management, refined during Qatar's FIFA World Cup 2022, is now being applied in Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Iraq. Furthermore, the issuance of Qatar's first Sukuk program, listed on the London Stock Exchange, underscores its leadership in financial innovation. "Our strategic focus ensures robust growth and value creation for stakeholders, positioning Estithmar as a leader in public and private initiatives across the Middle East and North Africa," Al Khayyat noted.




BALADNA WAS ESTABLISHED IN 2014 AND IS QATAR'S LARGEST DAIRY AND BEVERAGE PRODUCER, SUPPLYING OVER 85% OF THE COUNTRY'S FRESH MILK.

**Baladna: Pioneering Food Security and Sustainability**
At the heart of PIH's agricultural ambitions lies Baladna, a brand synonymous with food security and sustainability in Qatar.

"Baladna's 'grass-to-glass' model guarantees quality and sustainability at every production stage," explained Al Khayyat. This comprehensive approach has made Qatar 100% self-sufficient in dairy production, transforming the nation's food security landscape.

Baladna's vision extends far beyond Qatar. The company recently signed a $3.5 billion agreement with Algeria's Ministry of Agriculture to develop the world's largest integrated dairy farming project. With plans to manage 270,000 cattle and produce 1.7 billion liters of milk annually, the initiative will meet over 50% of Algeria's powdered milk demand.

"As we expand, we remain steadfast in supporting the environment and the communities we serve," Al Khayyat emphasized.

**Waldorf Astoria Maldives Ithaafushi: Redefining Luxury**
A jewel in PIH's hospitality portfolio, the Waldorf Astoria Maldives Ithaafushi has set new benchmarks in luxury and exclusivity since its opening in 2019. Spread across three private islands, the resort boasts 119 villas, each with a private infinity pool and stunning ocean views.
"Dining at Waldorf is unparalleled," said Al Khayyat, citing standout venues like Zuma, a Japanese culinary gem, and Terra, which offers fine dining in handcrafted treetop bamboo nests. The resort also features the Maldives' largest spa and the country's first Aqua Wellness Centre.

WALDORF ASTORIA MALDIVES ITHAAFUSHI FEATURES 119 VILLAS ACROSS THREE PRIVATE ISLANDS, OFFERING A WORLD-CLASS EXPERIENCE UNLIKE ANY OTHER.

Looking ahead, PIH is developing the Rosewood Resort in the Maldives and other high-profile projects, including Marriott Antigua and new ventures in South America. "Our aim is to craft destinations that offer not just luxury but deeply personal and unforgettable experiences for each guest," Al Khayyat added.

**US Collaborations and Investments**
PIH's global strategy places significant emphasis on partnerships with US companies. "Our collaboration with Cedars-Sinai for The View Hospital exemplifies how we integrate US expertise into our projects," Al Khayyat stated. Beyond healthcare, PIH's ties with American firms span technology and construction, fostering innovation across sectors.

Qatar's robust economy offers abundant opportunities for US investors, particularly in healthcare, real estate, and technology. PIH's Sukuk programs further demonstrate its commitment to creating innovative, Sharia-compliant financing solutions.

"US investors play a crucial role in our global expansion strategy, and we're excited to deepen these partnerships," Al Khayyat affirmed.

**A Vision for Sustainable Growth**
Concluding the interview, Al Khayyat shared his vision for PIH's future: "Sustainable growth through global partnerships is at the heart of our mission. Collaboration unlocks new opportunities, whether in healthcare, technology, or real estate. We are committed to creating lasting value that benefits our business and the communities we serve."

With its diversified portfolio, innovative projects, and commitment to excellence, PIH is poised to continue its trajectory as a global leader in multiple industries, driving economic growth and societal impact worldwide.

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