

# Unified Agenda of regulatory actions

Along with the *Report to Congress*, the *Federal Register*, and the *Code of Federal Regulations*, another vehicle for regulatory disclosure is the spring and fall editions of the *Regulatory Plan* and *Unified Agenda of Federal Regulatory and Deregulatory Actions*. Agencies outline regulatory goals and intentions in the *Unified Agenda*, particularly in the fall *Regulatory Plan* component.

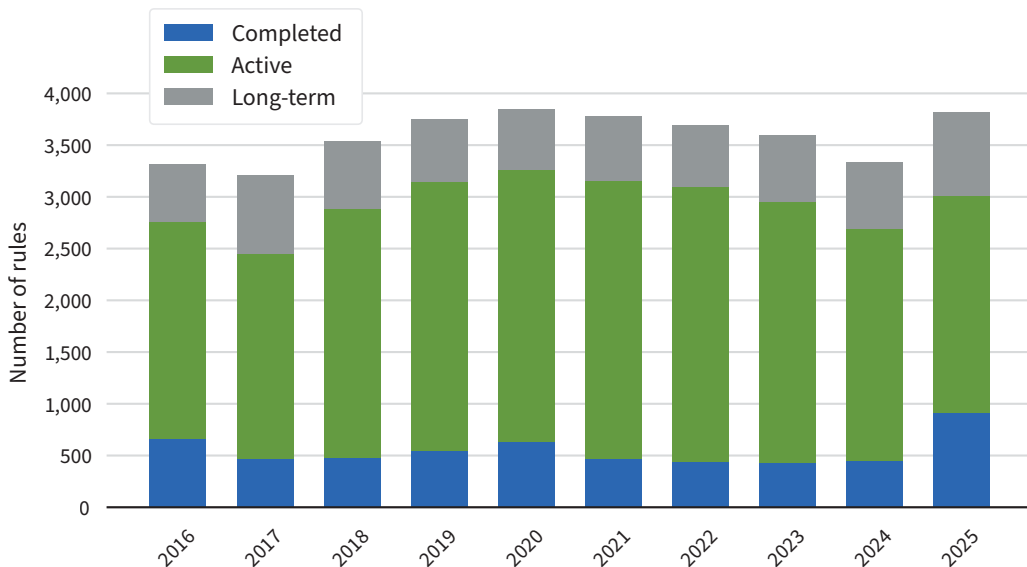
As of this writing, the Trump administration has not published a fall *Agenda*, marking the latest failure to publish the document since the Obama administration skipped the spring 2012 edition altogether. Accordingly, the analysis that follows treats the late-year spring *Agenda* as definitive for year-end purposes—much as this report substitutes analysis of the one-in, ten-out program’s *Final Accounting* for what would ordinarily be a review

of an updated OMB *Report to Congress* on regulatory costs and benefits.

The *Unified Agenda* is not a comprehensive compendium of all rules like the *Federal Register*. Instead, it presents a cross-section of regulatory priorities from more than 60 federal departments, agencies, and commissions across three categories:

- ▶ Active actions: prerule measures and proposed or final rules in development.
- ▶ Completed actions: rules finalized (or withdrawn) during the (roughly) six months since the prior *Unified Agenda*.
- ▶ Long-term actions: rulemakings anticipated to take place beyond a 12-month horizon.

**Figure 18. Agency Rules in the Fall Unified Agenda Pipeline**



Source: Compiled by the author from “The Regulatory Plan and Unified Agenda of Federal Regulatory and Deregulatory Actions” database at [reginfo.gov](http://reginfo.gov). “Active” rules consist of rules at the prerule, proposed, and final stages.

The *Unified Agenda* reflects administrations’ differing priorities and surrounding political realities, such as a dramatic and incongruent rulemaking pause under Obama during the 2012 election season<sup>78</sup> (the same timeframe during which the spring 2012 *Agenda* was allowed to lapse). The Biden administration’s pursuit of regulatory net benefits contrasted sharply with the one-in, two-out streamlining mindset reflected in the semiannual *Unified Agendas* between 2017 and 2020, when hundreds of entries were explicitly labeled deregulatory. It is important to note that agencies are not required to limit their regulatory activity to the material published in the *Unified Agenda* unless an administration directs otherwise.<sup>79</sup>

Rather, the *Unified Agenda* “reflect[s] what the agency wants to make public, not necessarily all activity under consideration, and some highly controversial issues may be withheld.”<sup>80</sup>

The spring *Agenda* appeared late, in September 2025.<sup>81</sup> That snapshot showed 69 departments, agencies, and commissions listing 3,816 rules in the active (prerule, proposed, and final), recently completed, and long-term stages. Figure 18 breaks these down alongside prior years’ fall *Agendas*. Note the increase over the 3,331 rules in the fall 2024 *Agenda* under Biden, in part attributable to a number of Trump’s aforementioned “unrules” in the form of removals, extensions,

**Table 6. Unified Agenda Entries by Department, Agency, and Commission, Spring 2025 (page 1 of 3)**

	#Rules	Active	Completed	Long-term
Dept. of Agriculture	177	93	58	26
Dept. of Commerce	292	184	80	28
Dept. of Defense	130	108	11	11
Dept. of Education	10	10		
Dept. of Energy	111	75	23	13
Dept. of Health & Human Services	190	133	35	22
Dept. of Homeland Security	117	45	44	28
Dept. of Housing & Urban Development	61	37	23	1
Dept. of the Interior	402	193	37	172
Dept. of Justice	129	22	60	47
Dept. of Labor	152	103	21	28
Dept. of State	52	30	17	5
Dept. of Transportation	472	291	128	53
Dept. of Treasury	363	248	71	44
Dept. of Veterans' Affairs	69	28	22	19
Environmental Protection Agency	233	107	50	76
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation	2	2		
Agency for International Development	13		2	11
Compliance Board	3	3		
CPBSD*	6	6		
Commodity Futures Trading Commission	35	26	9	
Consumer Financial Protection Bureau	39	24	14	1
Corp. for National & Community Service	8		8	
Council on Environmental Quality	3	1	2	
Court Services/Offender Supervision, D.C.	4	4		
Federal Acquisition Regulation	41	17	24	
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board	1	1		
Farm Credit Administration	13	8	2	3
Farm Credit System Insurance Corporation	1		1	
Federal Communications Commission	134	1	18	115

**Table 6. Unified Agenda Entries by Department, Agency, and Commission, Spring 2025 (page 2 of 3)**

	#Rules	Active	Completed	Long-term
Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation	24	7	5	12
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission	29	26	3	
FFIEC^ Appraisal Subcommittee	5	5		
Federal Election Commission	4			4
Federal Housing Finance Agency	33	14	18	1
Federal Maritime Commission	8	6	1	1
Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service	2	2		
Federal Mine Safety & Health Rev Comm	1		1	
Federal Permitting Imprmt Steering Council	2	2		
Federal Reserve System	29	5	12	12
Federal Trade Commission	22	17	4	1
General Services Administration	25	4	18	3
Merit Systems Protection Board	2			2
National Aeronautics & Space Administration	4	2	2	
National Archives & Records Administration	16	14	1	1
National Credit Union Administration	24	3	21	
National Endowment for the Arts	2	2		
National Indian Gaming Commission	10	8		2
National Labor Relations Board	2	2		
National Mediation Board	1		1	
National Science Foundation	7	4	1	2
National Transportation Safety Board	4	1	3	
Nuclear Regulatory Commission	60	34	8	18
Office of Government Ethics	8	6	2	
Office of Management & Budget	6	6		
Office of the National Cyber Director	1	1		
Office of Personnel Management	46	35	8	3
Peace Corps	4	4		
Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation	10	9	1	
Postal Regulatory Commission	5		1	4

**Table 6. Unified Agenda Entries by Department, Agency, and Commission, Spring 2025 (page 3 of 3)**

	#Rules	Active	Completed	Long-term
Presidio Trust	3	3		
Railroad Retirement Board	13	8	2	3
Securities and Exchange Commission	54	23	29	2
Selective Service System	2	2		
Small Business Administration	60	24	4	32
Social Security Administration	17	13	3	1
Surface Transportation Board	5	4	1	
Tennessee Valley Authority	2	1	1	
U.S Agency for Global Media	1	1		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,816</b>	<b>2098</b>	<b>911</b>	<b>807</b>

\*Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled  
 ^Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council

administrative updates and enforcement relaxations that nonetheless require rule-writing that populates the *Agenda* and *Federal Register*. Here’s a breakdown of the *Agenda*’s 3,816 entries:

- ▶ 2,098 entries are active (prerule, proposed, or final).
- ▶ 911 entries are completed actions. These are up sharply from Biden’s last *Agenda*, but many are removals, compliance date extensions, and administrative updates, and not new rules.
- ▶ 807 entries are long-term items, also up sharply over prior years; many deregulatory in scope.

Table 6 breaks out by department, agency, and commission the spring 2025 *Agenda*’s

3,816 rules in the active, completed, and long-term stages.

The Active stage typically features well over 2,000 rules annually. Most Active rules in any given edition of the *Unified Agenda* are carryovers from prior editions as they advance through stages. Many have been in the pipeline for some time.<sup>82</sup> In the spring 2025 edition however, 868 active rulemakings appear for the first time, compared to 275 in the final Biden *Agenda* of fall 2024. In both Biden’s first year and Trump’s first-term final year, there were fewer than 500 first-time active rules.

Historically, through 2013, the *Unified Agenda* often exceeded 4,000 active, completed, and long-term rules. *Unified*

## Table 7. Top Rule-Producing Executive and Independent Agencies

From Spring 2025 Unified Agenda;  
Active, Completed & Long-term rules

Executive Agency	Number of Rules
1. Dept. of Transportation	472
2. Dept. of the Interior	402
3. Dept. of the Treasury	363
4. Dept. of Commerce	292
5. Environmental Protection Agency	233
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,762</b>
<b>% of Total Agenda Pipeline of 3,816</b>	<b>46%</b>

Independent Agency	Number of Rules
1. Federal Communications Commission	133
2. Nuclear Regulatory Commission	60
3. Small Business Administration	60
4. Securities and Exchange Commission	54
5. Consumer Financial Protection Bureau	39
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>346</b>
<b>% of Total Agenda Pipeline of 3,816</b>	<b>9%</b>

<b>Top 5 Executives plus Top 5 Independents</b>	<b>2,108</b>
<b>% of Total Agenda Pipeline</b>	<b>55%</b>

Source: Compiled by the author from “The Regulatory Plan and Unified Agenda of Federal Regulatory and Deregulatory Actions,” Spring 2025 edition

*Agenda* counts were highest in the 1990s, peaking at 5,119 rules in fall 1994 before a series of mid-1990s regulatory reforms were enacted by Congress. The fall 2017 *Unified Agenda* pipeline of 3,209 contained the fewest rules since 1983, even without counting that Trump edition’s 540 deregulatory entries. (For a history of the total numbers of rules in the *Unified Agenda* from 1983 to the present, see Appendix I.)

A relative handful of executive branch agencies each year account for the greatest number of rules in the pipeline. In the spring 2025 *Unified Agenda*, the Departments of Transportation, Interior, Treasury, Commerce, and the Environmental Protection Agency are the most active (see Table 7). These top five, with 1,762 rules among them, account for 46 percent of the 3,816 rules in the pipeline. The Department of Health and Human Services, with 190 rules, takes sixth place.

The top five independent agencies in the *Unified Agenda* pipeline by rule count (excluding the multiagency Federal Acquisition Regulations System’s 41 rules) are the Federal Communications Commission, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Small Business Administration, Securities and Exchange Commission, and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. Their total of 346 rules accounts for nine percent of the 3,816 rules in the spring *Unified Agenda*. Combined, the top five executive and independent agencies account for 2,108 rules, or 55 percent of the total.