

Musk rails against Trump tax bill, calling it ‘a disgusting abomination’

Trump’s One Big Beautiful Bill would add \$2.4 trillion to the national debt over 10 years, according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office.

**By Jacob Bogage and Theodoric Meyer
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Billionaire Elon Musk blasted the massive tax and immigration bill at the heart of President Donald Trump’s agenda on Tuesday, calling the measure “a disgusting abomination” that would burden the country with “crushingly unsustainable debt.”

Though Musk — who on Friday left his post as head of the U.S. DOGE Service, Trump’s cost-cutting effort — had previously criticized the bill in gentler terms, his posts on X, the social media platform he owns, represented his sharpest attack yet on the Trump White House. For months, Musk had played the role of the president’s “first buddy,” joining Trump frequently in the Oval Office and exhorting the administration to cut government spending.

The posts appeared to complicate the path to passage for the legislation, which barely passed the House late last month after conservatives revolted over its enormous price tag. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office says the bill would increase the national debt by \$2.4 trillion over the next decade. The Senate began consideration of the measure this week, and GOP leaders hope to have it to Trump’s desk by July 4. Trump has encouraged lawmakers to pass the measure, but some Republican Senate budget hawks applauded Musk’s attack Tuesday, a potential sign of trouble.

“This massive, outrageous, pork-filled Congressional spending bill is a disgusting abomination,” Musk posted on X. “Shame on those who voted for it: you know you did wrong. You know it.”

He wrote minutes later: “It will massively increase the already gigantic budget deficit to \$2.5 trillion (!!!) and burden America citizens with crushingly unsustainable debt.” That post appeared to confuse the annual deficit with the overall increase to the debt over 10 years.

Shortly after that, he wrote, “In November next year, we fire all politicians who betrayed the American people.”

The bill would extend tax cuts enacted during Trump’s first term and make good on new campaign promises — including no taxes on tips or overtime wages — while devoting hundreds of billions of dollars in new spending to defense and immigration enforcement.

Musk’s attack landed while Senate Republicans huddled for a lunch with National Economic Council Director Kevin Hassett, who predicted robust economic growth if the legislation passes, lawmakers said. Many economists outside the White House disagree with that projection, arguing that rising national debt will crowd out private-sector investment.

In the Senate, lawmakers are haggling over whether to make additional budget cuts in the legislation — which would already slice more than \$1 trillion from social safety net and anti-poverty programs — and to preserve some Biden-era clean energy initiatives, which would add to the bill’s cost.

Mainstream Republicans in the lunch meeting with Hassett greeted Musk’s posts with “an eyeball roll,” Sen. Kevin Cramer (R-North Dakota) said.

“We have a difference of opinion. He’s entitled to that opinion. We’re going to proceed full speed ahead,” Senate Majority Leader John Thune (R-South Dakota) told reporters.

But for budget hawks — and Democrats — Musk provided a shot in the arm. Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wisconsin) called for splitting up Trump’s legislation into multiple smaller bills, saying one sweeping measure with such a large deficit hit couldn’t get the votes to pass the upper chamber.

“I think Elon is exactly right that we need to cut more spending, and I hope and believe that the Senate will make the bill substantially better,” said Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas), who interviewed Musk on his podcast in March and has described him as a friend.

Asked how much more spending he would like to cut from the bill, Cruz said, “As much as humanly possible.”

Democrats enjoyed watching the GOP infighting.

“I hear something happened while we were at lunch,” Senate Minority Leader Charles E. Schumer (D-New York) joked while holding up a poster board of Musk’s tweets, “which led me to make some news here today and say something I didn’t think was imaginable: I agree with Elon Musk.”

White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt brushed off Musk’s posts.

“The president already knows where Elon Musk stood on this bill,” she said. “It doesn’t change the president’s opinion. This is one big, beautiful bill, and he’s sticking to it.”

The legislation would undo most of the Biden-era Inflation Reduction Act, which poured federal tax incentives into production of electric vehicles, batteries and solar energy — cornerstones of Musk’s businesses. Tesla, in particular, suffered as Musk’s DOGE efforts became less popular: The EV maker reported a 71 percent plunge in profits in the first quarter. One person who has interacted with Musk over the years and closely followed his journey from Tesla to the White House said the bill could prompt frustrations with Republicans similar to Musk’s irritation with Democrats under the Biden administration.

“It increases the deficit by trillions of dollars, kills solar and battery credits, sunsets battery production credits in 2028, kills the EV tax credit,” the person said, speaking on the condition of anonymity to discuss a sensitive subject. “Elon and the Republicans were united in not liking the previous administration. As they get into governance, they are finding that is where the similarities end.”

House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-Louisiana) pushed back on Musk’s criticism. “With all due respect, my friend Elon is terribly wrong about the One Big Beautiful Bill,” Johnson told reporters.

The speaker said that he and Musk talked about the legislation and other topics for 20 minutes Monday and that the two appeared to end the phone conversation on common ground.

“Elon is missing it, okay?” Johnson added. “And it’s not personal. I know that the EV mandate [is] very important to him; that is going away because the government should not be subsidizing these things as part of the Green New Deal. And I know that has an effect on his business, and I lament that. ... But for him to come out and pan the whole bill is, to me, just very disappointing, very surprising, in light of the conversation I had with him yesterday.”

The main focus of the legislation is extending parts of the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which Trump signed into law in his first term, that are set to expire at the end of the year. Virtually every tax filer would pay more if the bill doesn't pass. It would also devote \$150 billion for immigration enforcement, another Trump administration priority.

To pay for the tax cut extensions, the bill would tighten eligibility for Medicaid, which the Congressional Budget Office says would leave millions of people uninsured. The bill would also pass on to states billions of dollars of expenses for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly known as food stamps. That could lead local officials to sharply raise taxes or enact policies that kick families off SNAP.

Republicans also want to use some of the unilateral spending cuts made by Musk's DOGE — which stands for Department of Government Efficiency, though it is not a Cabinet-level agency — to balance out the costs of the tax cuts. Many of those cuts are being challenged in court.

Musk on May 20 said he would stop spending on political causes and leave the White House to return to his companies, including SpaceX and Tesla. He spent nearly \$300 million, almost entirely on Republican candidates and causes, in the 2024 election cycle.

Friday was his last day in the White House, and he and Trump spoke to reporters in the Oval Office.

Faiz Siddiqui, Mariana Alfaro, Liz Goodwin and Abigail Hauslohner contributed to this report.