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Is It Time to Adopt a Less-Is-More Approach to Community Development Block Grants?

Trump wants to eliminate the program. But advocates argue it just needs to be reformed.

Local officials describe the 43-year-old federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program as “the heart, lungs and backbone of cities and counties.” It provides municipalities all around the country with money for projects that help the economy and lower-income residents.

Over the years, however, CDBG funding has sharply declined and the number of places taking from the shrinking pot has risen. The result, critics say, is a weakened program that makes little impact and sometimes aids wealthier communities that don’t need the help. President Obama tried to shrink and redesign the program. Now President Trump wants to eliminate it altogether.

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