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## **The States' Perilous Addiction to Money From Washington.**

**Federal funding is a bigger share of state budgets than ever. It comes with too many strings and strictures that choke off efficiency and innovation, and it threatens democratic self-governance.**

In 1998, Louisiana's legislature added a sovereignty clause to the state's constitution that promises its citizens "the sole and exclusive right of governing themselves as a free and sovereign state." The constitutions of New Hampshire and Montana, among others, have long contained the same phrasing. Mississippi's constitution similarly asserts that "the people of this state have the inherent, sole, and exclusive right to regulate the internal government and police thereof." Rhode Island's constitution boasts a localist variant, confirming "to the people of every city and town in this state the right of self-government in all local matters."

Such claims of autonomy notwithstanding, each of these states depends on federal agencies for over 40 percent of its annual revenue. Louisiana, so freshly drawn to the sovereignty clause, leads the pack at a whopping 52 percent dependency on federal funds. According to the latest Census Bureau data, Louisiana, along with 22 other states, is more reliant on federal dollars now than during the height of COVID-19 lockdowns.

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