

ELITE DAILY

Trump's Attorney General Just Made It Easier For Cops To Take People's Stuff

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July 19, 2017

As part of what seems to be a pattern in the Trump administration, Attorney General Jeff Sessions seems determined to reverse changes former President Barack Obama made.

On Wednesday, July 19, he continued this trend by reinstating civil-asset forfeiture, the controversial practice the Obama administration curbed back in 2015, CBS News reports. Asset forfeiture basically means that police can take cash and property from people suspected for crimes. So Sessions' actions make it easier for them to do this.

Back in February, President Donald Trump expressed his support for the policy, so this seems to be something the Trump administration has been considering for awhile.

While announcing the revival of this practice, Sessions said,

Civil asset forfeiture is a key tool that helps law enforcement help defund organized crime, prevents new crime from committed and weakens the criminals and cartels.

Funds being used to take lives are now being used to save lives.

This decision prompted immediate condemnation from a wide array of politicians and activists, including Republicans.

Civil-asset forfeiture allows state and local police to seize money and property from people, even if they haven't committed a crime — they just have to be suspected of committing a crime.

After police take the things, they are then “adopted” by federal agencies, *The Washington Post* explains, and they share in the proceeds.

According to *The Post*, 80 percent of the funds gained from the seized assets go back to the police departments. Through this program, law enforcement reportedly took more from Americans than burglars did in 2014.

According to the Institute for Justice, in 2014 the U.S. Treasury and Justice departments deposited a combined total of over \$5 billion in their asset forfeiture funds. Meanwhile, the FBI

found victims of burglary offenses suffered an estimated \$3.9 billion in property losses that same year.

So, yeah, it seems the government made more from taking people's property than burglars did that year.

Republican members of Congress spoke out against the attorney general's decision to bring back civil-asset forfeiture.

Republican Rep. Darrell Issa described this move as a “troubling decision for the due process protections afforded to us under the Fourth Amendment.”

Responding to Sessions' decision, Kanya Bennett, a legislative counsel for the ACLU, described civil-asset forfeiture as “un-American” to *The Atlantic*.

Bennet added, “This is part of Sessions' agenda to bring back the failed and racist War on Drugs.”

The public also seems to be strongly against this policy — a Cato Institute/YouGov survey released in December 2016 showed 84 percent of Americans oppose civil-asset forfeiture.

But, in spite of objections from lawmakers and the American people, Sessions seems to believe it's a necessary measure to take to reduce crime.