



Has Trump Been a Net Deregulator?

Ryan Young

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Pierre Lemieux, in the cover story of the new Summer 2020 issue of the Cato Institute's *Regulation magazine*, draws from the new 2020 edition of *Ten Thousand Commandments* to estimate the Trump administration's net impact on regulation:

Trump's Executive Order 13771, signed January 30, 2017, mandated the elimination of two existing rules (or formal regulations) for any new one implemented. The latest edition of regulatory analyst Clyde Wayne Crews's annual report *Ten Thousand Commandments* notes that this goal was more than achieved over the first three years of the Trump administration. However, Crews adds, last year showed a notable loss of momentum as there were more regulatory actions than deregulatory actions in the pipeline at the end of 2019.

And:

Figure 5, which gives the number of pages in the CFR [Code of Federal Regulations] over time, suggests that the Trump administration has roughly capped the total volume of federal regulations at, or slightly over, the 185,000 pages they comprised at the end of the Obama presidency. According to this measure, the Trump administration stopped the growth of regulation, but it did not deregulate. Ryan Young, a senior fellow at the Competitive Enterprise Institute and colleague of Crews, summarizes the situation:

President Trump's first three years of regulation are mixed. He deregulated in some areas and added new burdens in others. Transparency problems and poor data quality from agencies make it impossible to tell for certain if Trump has been a net deregulator. The most likely verdict is that he has slowed regulatory growth but has not cut regulation on net.

The whole article is excellent. Pierre gives a superb summary of the last three years of economic policy. Wayne Crews's *Ten Thousand Commandments* study is [here](#). Wayne and I offer an op-ed length summary of the report [here](#).