

**U.S. News**

## Obama tries to cut federal rule book

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WASHINGTON, Jan. 21 (UPI) -- President [Barack Obama](#), like his predecessors going back to [Jimmy Carter](#), has launched a search for outdated and so-called just plain dumb U.S. regulations.

Experts say the effort, like the others, is unlikely to achieve much, The New York Times reports. While Obama used the phrase "just plain dumb," there are few regulations so dumb that no one supports them, the newspaper said.

"The history of these kinds of efforts is that they don't matter very much," Peter Van Doren, editor of Regulation magazine, told the Times.

Regulation, published by the Cato Institute, advocates for less regulation. But Van Doren and others who study federal rule-making say getting rid of regulations is a political process and not a matter of going through the books looking for low-hanging fruit.

Rules that seem silly may also have a point. While a federal rule that highway signs cannot be all upper-case might seem like nitpicking, senior citizens groups say "Phoenix" on a sign is easier to read and grasp than "PHOENIX."