

Oregon congresswoman introduces ‘Stop Musk Act’ as state responds to federal chaos

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New Oregon U.S. Rep. Maxine Dexter didn’t anticipate that the first bill she introduced in Congress would be to prohibit unelected billionaire Elon Musk from retaliating against federal employees.

The pulmonary and critical care doctor ran for Congress to work on lowering prescription drug prices and expand access to behavioral health treatment, as well as addressing other issues she sees working with patients. But constituents in her east Portland district demanded action after Musk and people working for him seized control of federal administrative offices, gained access to the U.S. Treasury Department’s records of Americans’ personal financial information and dismantled the federal agency that distributes aid overseas.

In response, Dexter introduced the “Stop Musk Act,” her first bill. It’s just 43 words, spelling out that no federal employee can face retaliation for “resisting, circumventing or preventing Elon Musk or individuals he oversees from taking unlawful or unconstitutional actions relating to federal agencies.”

“It’s not what I had on my bingo card, but it’s definitely what is needed right now,” Dexter said. “And it’s absolutely in response to my constituents. Over 1,000 of them have called and specifically talked about Elon Musk needing to be stopped this week.”

Dexter’s proposal, which she acknowledged has next to no chance of passing in the Republican-controlled House, is among several actions Oregon’s Democratic congressional delegation have taken to oppose the Trump administration and Musk’s unprecedented power over federal agencies.

U.S. Rep. Janelle Bynum, a swing-district Democrat who like Dexter is in her first term, joined Oregon’s Sens. Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley at a rally outside the U.S. Treasury on Tuesday. She directed most of her comments toward Musk.

“Get your hands out my pockets!” she said. “Get your foot off the Constitution. Take your foot off my neck.”

Over the weekend, U.S. Reps. Val Hoyle and Andrea Salinas joined Merkley for town hall events in Newport, Philomath and Salem where they told crowds of hundreds that they were ready to fight.

Dexter is planning more town halls and hopes to have Attorney General Dan Rayfield join her at one. Rayfield, who served with Dexter in the state House, is leading Oregon’s legal response to the Trump administration, including securing an indefinite block Thursday to a Trump executive order that attempted to repeal a constitutional guarantee that babies born in the U.S. to immigrant parents are automatically citizens, even if their parents are not.

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Rep. Maxine Dexter’s bill would ban retaliation against federal employees who stand up to Elon Musk.