

Afternoon of Day Six of the Trump-Musk Treasury Payments Crisis of 2025: Changing the Treasury Payments Source Code & the Treasury's "DOGE" gag order

Notes on the Crises

www.crisisnotes.com/changing-the-treasury-payments-source-code-the-treasurys-doge-gag-order/

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By Nathan Tankus



*If you are a **current or former career Bureau of the Fiscal Service Employee**, especially if you're a legacy IT programmer with years of experience **and especially if you are a COBOL programmer currently working on the PAM, SPS or any other adjacent team**, contact me [over email](#) or over signal — [linked here](#). My Signal username is "NathanTankus.01". Legal counsel sources and payments level sources at the Federal Reserve are also helpful. I am also looking for [sources at FINCEN](#)*

This is a free piece of Notes on the Crises. I will not be paywalling any coverage of this crisis for as long as it persists, so please [take out a paid subscription](#) to facilitate performing that public service. If you're rich, take out the [Trump-Musk Treasury Payments Crisis of 2025 Platinum Tier](#) subscription. The additional thing you get is me trying to stop the Treasury's internal payment system from melting down or Musk taking your confidential information, along with everyone else's. So far, nowhere near enough rich people are paying their fair share.

Note to Readers: I am on [bluesky, an alternative to twitter](#). It's been hard to let go of twitter since that is where I built my following, but clearly it's becoming less usable and there are obvious concerns about getting traction [about a Musk story on the Everything Musk app](#). I have also started an instagram for Notes on the Crises [which will be populated soon](#).

In a *Notes on the Crises* first, I have a second piece on the same day. This story is developing so rapidly, that I think it's important to try to get stuff out there as quickly as I possibly can. First, I'm going to mention the Odd Lots interview again because email readers wouldn't have gotten that (I updated the article at 9 AM). Thanks to Tracy Alloway and Joe Weisenthal for having me on: this is my one interview this week which was pre-scheduled as I was originally going to talk about all things Federal Reserve and FOIA.

[The Treasury Payment System Elon Musk Now Has Access To: What is the Bureau of the Fiscal Service?](#):

Elon Musk and his Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) have gained access to a unit within the Treasury Department called the Bureau of Fiscal Service. But what does this unit actually do? How critical of a role does it play in the operations of government, and potentially, financial markets? On this episode, we speak with Nathan Tankus, the author of the Notes On The Crises newsletter. He explains both the technical aspect of this office, as well as the legal questions surrounding impoundment and the ability of the executive branch to cut off payments that have been previously authorized by Congress. We also talk about the operational risks and the potential disaster scenario should this system — which has been built in COBOL over decades — go down.

Now onto my reporting. A source with direct knowledge of the situation informs me:

Senior IT staff **confirmed that Marko has read and write access**. This is no longer a point of doubt.

The white house continues to dispute this and the mainstream press continues to largely report the “read only” factoid, which as I pointed out in my piece this morning is somewhat of a red-herring. However, I have reason to believe the tide will turn (at least somewhat) on this soon.

It is also interesting that they won't comment or name Marko Elez, only Tom Krause. The Treasury letter from yesterday [describes him as](#):

Mr. Krause is a longtime technology executive. His decades of experience in building companies and managing balance sheets as a chief financial officer are of great benefit to this review. In order to allow him to perform this function, he has been hired as an expert/consultant by the federal government and designated in a role commonly used across Administrations—a “special government employee” —pursuant to applicable law.

A source familiar with the situation reports to me that:

The fact that Treasury only talked about Krause shows they're trying to protect Marko. They are also doing a lot more to protect Marko. As an example: there is a gag order on BFS IT personnel right now. They are **not permitted to discuss "DOGE", even in discussions internal to the Bureau. I have never seen anything like this before.**

Marko Elez's unchecked behavior throughout the most sensitive payments infrastructure in the United States is something they are working very hard to protect.

It has been reported by Josh Marshall at [Turning Points Memo that source code](#) is already being changed. I can't confirm that reporting from my sources but I can confirm source code changes are being actively pursued. A source informs me:

Thomas Krause and Marko Elez are **having discussions about PAM source code changes.** Other people are in the conversation as well. I have no other details about this. Source code changes are of course an extremely dangerous scenario and if they are actively happening we are already beyond the "critical danger of catastrophe" point and into something else. This process must be aborted as soon as possible.

Regarding the attitude and mood of the Bureau of the Fiscal Service's IT staff, a source familiar with the situation states:

the BFS IT staff hate this. And I mean hate it. All of the "DOGE" stuff. I have never seen them more quietly pissed off, but they largely seem like they're keeping their heads down. This is all I have to report now, I will keep readers updated. For why this is a disaster in a myriad ways, check out my [morning piece](#).

Please take out a paid subscription, and I would especially like to speak to financial professionals, even CEOs and high level extremely wealthy figures in our society of all kinds. What I am doing is an attempt which if successful also protects you from Trump and Musk's unchecked power. Some of you have started to step in a little, but not nearly enough. I do not have a [single "Platinum level subscriber" from the onset](#) of the current crisis. You have the most to lose in this situation, whether you realize it or not. If one of you were smart, you could get in contact with me and offer me 100,000 dollars or more with no strings attached so I could hire people and expand my reporting capacity. In comparison, 5000 grand is a small amount.