

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Natural Resources
Washington, DC 20515

March 4, 2026

Jessica Bowron
Acting Director
U.S. National Park Service
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Ms. Bowron:

I am writing to express opposition to the destruction of the East Wing of the White House, the proposed construction of a new White House Ballroom, and any further modifications to President's Park without congressional consent. The secrecy around the project adds to concerns that this administration may be violating federal law, disregarding statutory planning and environmental review processes, bypassing congressional authorization, and flouting transparency and ethical guidance by courting billionaire interests in exchange for special access and favors. Pursuant to Rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Natural Resources has broad jurisdiction over public lands, the National Park Service (NPS), parks within the District of Columbia, and monuments erected therein, including President's Park and the White House.

The White House and President's Park are among the most historically significant and nationally treasured public spaces in the United States. As the steward of the site, NPS is responsible for protecting both, which includes a responsibility to conduct rigorous reviews for any substantial alterations. The recent steps taken by the Trump administration to demolish the East Wing and build a 90,000 square-foot ballroom in its stead represent some of the most significant alterations to the White House in our 250-year history. Such actions, particularly if undertaken prior to full planning and environmental review, raise questions about whether the NPS has fulfilled its statutory obligations. Without public transparency and congressional authorization, the NPS risks eroding public trust and the rule of law.

To date, Congress and the public have received limited information about the planning, cost, donor involvement, environmental review, and long-term operational implications of the proposed White House Ballroom project. This administration has subverted transparent and statutory review processes, inappropriately engaged billionaire donors, imperiled NPS's integrity, and dramatically and repeatedly expanded the project budget and scope. It remains to be seen whether this administration has violated the following statutes: 1) the National Environmental Policy Act by conducting a rushed and inadequate environmental review; 2) the National Capital Planning Act by circumventing the required planning process; and 3) 40 U.S.C § 8106 which requires congressional authorization for buildings on federal land in the District of Columbia.

Requirement for Congressional Authorization

Amid bipartisan concerns, Congress has sought more information about the plans,¹ which up to this point have been made secret and undertaken without proper congressional consultation. Congress must give express authorization for the erection of buildings and structures on any reservation, park,

¹ Edwards, Jonathan and Diamond, Dan. The Washington Post. *GOP lawmaker quietly questioned 'disturbing' East Wing demolition*. February 24, 2026. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2026/02/24/trump-ballroom-gop-concerns/>

or public grounds of the Federal Government in the District of Columbia.² NPS should have provided to the relevant congressional committees, information and documents that articulated the project scope, funding source, cost to federal agencies, and compliance with federal law. Despite multiple congressional inquiries, including my October 23, 2025, letter,³ key details remain undisclosed. The President’s allegations that “Congress never tried, or wanted to stop the Ballroom Project,”⁴ are clearly false.

To date, activities associated with the White House Ballroom have occurred without advance notice to Congress or the American public. Efforts to evade congressional oversight regarding the demolition of the East Wing and the proposed Ballroom project raise serious concerns. Congress has the authority to authorize all federal spending and has previously authorized appropriations for routine White House maintenance and other projects. In litigation brought by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, White House lawyers have weaponized previous appropriations, claiming *carte blanche* to make any changes to the building and surrounding grounds⁵ because Congress previously authorized funding for smaller-scale maintenance projects.⁶ Those funds were only authorized to be used for their appropriated purpose.⁷ Since the Ballroom project is well outside the scope of what was previously authorized by Congress, the Trump administration should have gotten congressional authorization before moving forward. Without express congressional authorization, the President appears to have acted illegally in taking actions to modify the White House. This project never received proper authorization and is not aligned with congressional intent.

Expanding Project Scope

The President’s plans for the proposed Ballroom project have repeatedly expanded in scale and cost. In July 2025, President Trump stated that this project “won’t interfere with the current building”⁸ and “is totally in keeping with our historic White House”⁹ as is required by NPS guidance that instructs any additions to the White House and President’s Park be compatible with historic elements.¹⁰ The President said that the project will “be near [the East Wing], but not touching it, and pays total respect to the existing building, which I’m the biggest fan of.”¹¹ But his plans for the project soon evolved; more recent plans submitted to the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) estimate the ballroom to be 90,000 square feet, nearly twice the footprint of the main section of the White House residence.¹² Public reporting suggests that as the project has expanded, the estimated cost of the White House Ballroom project has ballooned from \$200 to \$400 million.^{13,14} In an interview with the New York Times, President Trump indicated larger plans to rework the entire campus.¹⁵ At the January 8, 2025, NCPC meeting, White House officials previewed plans “for beautifying visitors’ experience in the area, such as Lafayette Park, and

² Title 40, United States Code – Public Buildings, Property, and Works. <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/USCODE-2022-title40/html/USCODE-2022-title40-subtitleII-partD-chap81.htm>

³ Letter from Ranking Members Huffman, Garcia, and Ansari to President Donald J. Trump. October 23, 2025. https://democrats-naturalresources.house.gov/imo/media/doc/ballroom_construction_letter_to_white_house.pdf

⁴ Fields, Ashleigh. The Hill. *Axelrod: Trump offered new ballroom during Obama era*. February 17, 2026. <https://thehill.com/homenews/administration/5741206-axelrod-trump-ballroom-obama-admin/>

⁵ Cole, Devan and Klein, Betsy. CNN. *Federal judge appears skeptical that Trump has legal authority to proceed with White House ballroom*. January 22, 2026.

⁶ <https://www.cnn.com/2026/01/22/politics/judge-skeptical-white-house-ballroom-trump>

⁷ Diamond, Dan and Edwards, Jonathan. The Washington Post. *Federal judge questions Trump’s authority to build White House ballroom*. January 22, 2026.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2026/01/22/trump-ballroom-approval-lawsuit/>

⁸ Title 31, Subtitle II, Chapter 13 United States Code – Appropriations. <https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=granuleid:USC-prelim-title31-section1301&num=0&edition=prelim>

⁹ Esposito, Joey. Snopes. *Fact Check: Trump said new White House ballroom construction wouldn’t ‘interfere with the current building.’* October 21, 2025. <https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/trump-white-house-ballroom-construction/>

¹⁰ Edwards, Jonathan and Diamond, Dan. The Washington Post. *Trump digs in on ballroom size, saying height will match that of White House*. February 4, 2026.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2026/02/04/trump-white-house-ballroom/>

¹¹ National Park Service. *The White House & President’s Park, Design Guidelines (1997)*. <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/document.cfm?documentID=40347>

¹² Alba, Monica and Terkel, Amanda. NBC News. *Here’s the list of donors paying for Trump’s new White House ballroom*. October 23, 2025. <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/white-house/list-donors-trump-new-white-house-ballroom-east-wing-rcna239481>

¹³ Diamond, Dan; Schwartzman, Paul; Edwards, Jonathan. The Washington Post. *Can anyone stop Trump’s teardown of the East Wing?* October 22, 2025.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2025/10/22/white-house-east-wing-ballroom-demolition/>

¹⁴ Diamond, Dan and Bisset, Victoria. *With East Wing gone, questions now turn to Trump’s ballroom donors*. The Washington Post. October 24, 2025.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2025/10/24/trump-white-house-ballroom-donors-list/>

¹⁵ Jansen, Bart. *Trump says projected White House ballroom cost doubled to \$400 million*. USA Today. December 17, 2025. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2025/12/17/trump-white-house-ballroom-400-million/87808741007/>

¹⁶ Rogers, Katie; Broadwater, Luke; Kanno-Youngs, Zolan; and Pager, Tyler. The New York Times. *The Next Phase of Trump’s Renovations: A New ‘Upper West Wing’*. January 8, 2026. <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/01/08/us/politics/trump-white-house-west-wing-renovation.html>

creating a superior, more efficient visitor security screening center. In the coming weeks and months, both NPS and Secret Service will be submitting their plans on those two topics.”¹⁶ Changes to Lafayette Square have already begun.¹⁷

The White House has invoked national security concerns to conceal the true nature of the project.¹⁸ In a Truth Social post, the President said that the project “is being done with the design, consent, and approval of the highest levels of the United States Military and Secret Service.”¹⁹ The Justice Department has argued that the project must move forward to ensure protection of the President now that security infrastructure had been demolished.²⁰ At the NCPC’s January 8, 2026, meeting, Commissioners asked questions about why the project proposal had not been prepared and presented to NCPC prior to demolition. Josh Fisher, presenting on behalf of the White House, stated that “there are some things regarding this project that are, frankly, of Top-Secret nature that we are currently working on... which was not part of the NCPC process.”²¹ No additional details regarding national security implications have been shared publicly. While legitimate security concerns may justify certain confidentiality measures, such claims do not relieve this administration from compliance with federal law.

Billionaire Donations

In October, 2025, the President hosted corporate executives at an extravagant White House dinner, courting them for donations to the Ballroom project.^{22,23} There has been speculation that the President solicited private donations in order to exploit gaps in federal disclosure rules and evade congressional oversight.²⁴ An incomplete list of donors released by the White House lacks relevant details about the donations, the identities of anonymous donors, the amount received from each, and any agreements between the donor and the White House, the Trust, or any other third party. Donors have not been transparent about the amount they donated to the project or if they expect to receive anything in exchange.²⁵ As of a February 4, 2026, analysis, only one of the listed donors disclosed their donations to the White House Ballroom through regular lobbying disclosure filings.²⁶ Many of the publicly listed donors have financial or business interests before the federal government; some are involved in active litigation against the federal government.²⁷

Because the project is being funded by major donations from billionaires and corporations, government ethics experts have expressed concerns that donors may expect favorable treatment from the federal government in return for their donations.^{28,29} It has been reported that NPS asked

¹⁶ Transcript of the National Capital Planning Commission Meeting, January 8, 2026. https://www.ncpc.gov/docs/open_gov_files/transcripts/2026/2026_01_08_NCPC.pdf

¹⁷ Diamond, Dan and George, Olivia. The Washington Post. *White House fences off park as Trump begins new building project*. January 22, 2026. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2026/01/22/trump-lafayette-square-changes/>

¹⁸ Diamond, Dan and Edwards, Jonathan. The Washington Post. *Federal judge suggests White House ballroom construction may continue*. December 16, 2025. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2025/12/16/trump-ballroom-lawsuit-national-security/>

¹⁹ @realDonaldTrump. Truth Social. January 25, 2026. <https://truthsocial.com/@realDonaldTrump/posts/115956692372915783>

²⁰ Diamond, Dan and Edwards, Jonathan. The Washington Post. *Federal judge suggests White House ballroom construction may continue*. December 16, 2025. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2025/12/16/trump-ballroom-lawsuit-national-security/>

²¹ Transcript of the National Capital Planning Commission Meeting, January 8, 2026. https://www.ncpc.gov/docs/open_gov_files/transcripts/2026/2026_01_08_NCPC.pdf

²² Farhi, Arden and Jacobs, Jennifer. *Trump looks to cement his architectural legacy as Democrats bristle*. CBS News. October 17, 2025. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/trump-looks-to-cement-his-architectural-legacy-as-democrats-bristle/>

²³ McGraw, Meredith. *Trump Hosts Corporate Ballroom Donors at Glitzy White House Dinner*. The Wall Street Journal. October 16, 2025. https://www.wsj.com/politics/policy/trump-ballroom-donors-white-house-dinner-cba9448?gaa_at=eaifs&gaa_n=AWFtsqeUyW8Kkz_V9DvVHscU9AmRsN079oaElhtX70fpxz68aNIKTbjO9sKm&gaa_ts=6966d408&gaa_sig=A26EnX5Oqad6LPf3OHYc4kplwebT_Q5QaaxUhg9f9XXX76mmoz5X0NGYDfs6pZMq3_K6agb750_kHcoMigoj8mQ%3D%3D

²⁴ Portnoy, Steven. ABC News. *White House ballroom: Judge signals skepticism of Trump administration arguments*. January 23, 2026. <https://abcnews.com/Politics/white-house-ballroom-judge-signals-skepticism-trump-administration/story?id=129471562>

²⁵ Diamond, Dan; Schaffer, Aaron; and Edwards, Jonathan. The Washington Post. *Legality of Trump’s \$400M in private funding for White House ballroom at issue*. February 9, 2026. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2026/02/09/trump-ballroom-judge-ruling/>

²⁶ Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington. *White House ballroom donations should be disclosed on lobbying disclosure reports*. February 4, 2026. <https://www.citizensforethics.org/reports-investigations/crew-investigations/white-house-ballroom-donations-should-be-disclosed-on-lobbying-disclosure-reports/>

²⁷ Public Citizen. *Banquet of Greed: Trump Ballroom Donors Feast on Federal Funds and Favors*. November 3, 2025. <https://www.citizen.org/article/banquet-of-greed-trump-ballroom-donors-feast-on-federal-funds-and-favors/>

²⁸ Kanno-Youngs, Zolan. The New York Times. *Trump Hosts Dinner for Wealthy Donors to White House Ballroom*. October 15, 2025. <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/10/15/us/politics/trump-white-house-dinner-ballroom-donors.html>

²⁹ Lotz, Avery. Axios. *Ethics experts cringe as wealthy woo Trump with ballroom funds*. October 16, 2025. <https://www.axios.com/2025/10/16/trump-white-house-ballroom-ethics-donors>

the Trust for the National Mall to manage donations for the Ballroom project³⁰ but it is unclear which type of agreement governs the partnership relationship for this project.³¹ NPS policy requires written philanthropic agreements for third party fundraising over \$25,000, compliance with Director’s Order 21, and agency review for donations exceeding \$500,000.³² These policies exist to protect the agency’s reputation against allegations of conflicts of interest.³³

NPS Reference Manual 21 Chapter 5.5 notes that donations from entities involved in federal litigation “may be seen as an attempt to influence the handling or outcome of legal disputes or litigation. Therefore, the NPS will decline any gifts or donations that appear to do so.”³⁴ There are specific guidelines for donor recognition; certain sponsor recognition, endorsement, and naming rights are barred by Public Law 113-291.^{35,36} In light of the potential donor conflicts and the accelerated timeline, there is reason to question whether the Trust and NPS conducted a thorough donor review process to vet private donations for the White House Ballroom project in accordance with the relevant NPS agreements. NPS and its partner organizations should conduct a fulsome review of donations if they have not already done so.

Review by the National Park Service, National Capital Planning Commission, and Commission of Fine Arts

As the Trump administration has barreled ahead on the Ballroom, a federal judge instructed the White House to undergo review by the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) and the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) before moving forward with construction.³⁷ Under the National Capital Planning Act, modifications to federal public buildings in the District of Columbia and open spaces around such buildings require approval from NCPC, which preserves important historic and natural features of the nation’s capital.³⁸ Similarly, 40 U.S.C. § 8722 requires federal agencies to seek NCPC approval,³⁹ with exceptions for projects within the Capitol grounds or those undertaken by the Department of Defense during a national emergency.⁴⁰

Federal agencies are also required to seek the advice of the CFA when proposed developments concern fine arts, except for those concerning the U.S. Capitol and the Library of Congress.⁴¹ The CFA was established by Congress in 1910 to advise the federal government on matters of design and aesthetics for art and architectural development in the nation’s capital. It is generally made up of “experts in relevant disciplines including art, architecture, landscape architecture, and urban design.”⁴² Notably, President Trump fired all of the CFA commissioners in October 2025 before appointing 7 new commissioners in January 2026.^{43,44} According to a White House official, new appointees were chosen to be “more aligned with President Trump’s ‘America First’ policies.”⁴⁵

³⁰ Nicholas, Peter and Lebowitz, Megan. *How a nonprofit went from cherry trees and pickleball to handling the money for Trump’s ballroom*. NBC News. October 31, 2025. <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/white-house/nonprofit-trust-national-mall-trump-ballroom-white-house-rcna240543>

³¹ National Park Service. *Reference Manual 21 – Chapter 6*. Updated October 31, 2019. <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/partnerships/rm-21-chapter-6.htm>

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ Public Law 113-291. <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/PLAW-113publ291/pdf/PLAW-113publ291.pdf>

³⁶ U.S. Department of the Interior. *Director’s Order #21: Donations and Philanthropic Partnerships*. Effective December 28, 2016. https://www.nps.gov/subjects/policy/upload/DO_21_12-28-2016.pdf

³⁷ Diamond, Dan and Edwards, Jonathan. *Federal judge suggests White House ballroom construction may continue*. December 16, 2025.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2025/12/16/trump-ballroom-lawsuit-national-security/>

³⁸ Public Law 82-592. [https://www.congress.gov/bills/82nd-congress-house-bill/7502/text](https://www.congress.gov/bills/82nd/congress-house-bill/7502/text)

³⁹ 40 U.S.C. § 8722 <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/40/8722>

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ 40 U.S.C. § 9102 [https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=\(title:40%20section:9102%20edition:prelim\)%20OR%20\(granuleid:USC-prelim-title40-section9102\)&f=treesort&edition=prelim&num=0&jumpTo=true](https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=(title:40%20section:9102%20edition:prelim)%20OR%20(granuleid:USC-prelim-title40-section9102)&f=treesort&edition=prelim&num=0&jumpTo=true)

⁴² U.S. Commission of Fine Arts. *About CFA*. <https://www.cfa.gov/about-cfa>

⁴³ Diamond, Dan. *The Washington Post*. *White House fires arts commission expected to review Trump construction projects*. October 28, 2025. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2025/10/28/trump-arts-commission-firings-ballroom-arch/>

⁴⁴ Diamond, Dan and Edwards, Jonathan. *The Washington Post*. *Trump picks his White House assistant for panel reviewing ballroom*. February 17, 2026.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2026/02/17/trump-ballroom-fine-arts-panel/>

⁴⁵ Diamond, Dan. *The Washington Post*. *White House fires arts commission expected to review Trump construction projects*. October 28, 2025. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2025/10/28/trump-arts-commission-firings-ballroom-arch/>

Loyalty to the President is now being prioritized over “qualifications to evaluate matters of design, architecture, or urban planning.”^{46,47}

Both Commissions have now been involved in the review process. CFA received more than 2,000 online public comments, 99% of which were negative.^{48,49} However, the public comment period did not lead them to challenge any aspect of the project. Instead, on February 19, 2026, the CFA unanimously approved the Ballroom project design.⁵⁰

NCPC review processes are ongoing, though NCPC guidance for a methodical review has been undercut by the White House’s rushed approach. Though the NCPC has an obligation to conduct National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) reviews for federal projects within the District of Columbia,⁵¹ it is unclear whether a review process separate to that of the NPS has taken place under the expedited review process. Though the White House and its grounds are exempt from Section 106 reviews under the National Historic Preservation Act,⁵² projects undertaken in President’s Park must undergo thorough environmental review. NEPA requires agencies to assess environmental consequences of major federal actions, provide alternatives, and make environmental analysis available to the public. The White House’s proposed expedited 9-week process for approval for the project raises significant concerns that important steps in the process are being circumvented. The review process has been starkly different from past practice, which has involved rigorous design and environmental reviews by the Commissions prior to any demolition.⁵³

Common practice dictates that Commission approval precede project initiation.⁵⁴ Without unbiased review and adherence to proper protocols, the development could conflict with the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital, which is intended to promote developments that are respectful of the symbolic character of the capital’s setting.⁵⁵ According to a July 2025 press release, the White House has been in meetings with NPS to “discuss design features and planning.”⁵⁶ However, according to a commissioner on the NCPC, NPS has not been involved in “important planning decisions.”⁵⁷ It is unclear what formal proposals have been submitted to NPS, whether interagency review has occurred, or whether the White House illegally bypassed public notice and comment opportunities.

NPS declined to conduct a more detailed analysis of the project, sidestepping rigorous review of the project to meet the President’s expedited timeline. An NPS memo dated August 28, 2025 states that “the National Park Service has determined that this undertaking has no potential to cause effects on historic properties” since the use of the grounds will be temporary.⁵⁸ The agency determined that the East Wing Modernization and Ballroom Project did not constitute a major federal action requiring a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and instead proceeded with a more limited

⁴⁶ Diamond, Dan and Edwards, Jonathan. The Washington Post. *Trump picks his White House assistant for panel reviewing ballroom*. February 17, 2026. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2026/02/17/trump-ballroom-fine-arts-panel/>

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ Barrow, Bill. PBS News. *Trump appointees question White House ballroom’s design and scale, ask to see 3D models*. January 22, 2026. <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/trump-appointees-question-white-house-ballrooms-design-and-scale-ask-to-see-3d-models>

⁴⁹ Edwards, Jonathan and Diamond, Dan. The Washington Post. *Commission, packed with Trump allies, approves White House ballroom project*. February 19, 2026. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2026/02/19/trump-white-house-ballroom-fine-arts/>

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ National Capital Planning Commission. *East Wing Modernization Project Frequently Asked Questions*.

https://www.ncpc.gov/files/projects/2025/8733_East_Wing_Modernization_Project_Project_FAOs_Jan2026.pdf

⁵² 54 U.S.C. § 307104. <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/54/307104>

⁵³ Edwards, Jonathan and Diamond, Dan. The Washington Post. *White House lays out nine-week timeline to win approval for Trump’s ballroom*. January 1, 2026. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2025/12/31/trump-ballroom-timeline-reviews/>

⁵⁴ Edwards, Jonathan and Diamond, Dan. The Washington Post. *Trump put allies on obscure board set to decide White House ballroom’s fate*. October 28, 2026. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2025/10/28/trump-ballroom-planning-commission/>

⁵⁵ National Capital Planning Commission. *Comprehensive Plan*. <https://www.ncpc.gov/plans/compplan/>

⁵⁶ The White House. *The White House Announces White House Ballroom Construction to Begin*. July 31, 2025. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/2025/07/the-white-house-announces-white-house-ballroom-construction-to-begin/>

⁵⁷ Edwards, Jonathan and Diamond, Dan. The Washington Post. *Trump put allies on obscure board set to decide White House ballroom’s fate*. October 28, 2025. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2025/10/28/trump-ballroom-planning-commission/>

⁵⁸ National Park Service. *East Wing Modernization Project – Finding of No Potential Cause (36 CFR 800.3(a)(1))*. August 28, 2025. <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/document.cfm?parkID=463&projectID=133780&documentID=148193>

Environmental Assessment (EA).⁵⁹ The EA acknowledged that the proposed Ballroom Project would have “permanent adverse impacts on the cultural landscape” within President’s Park, but the agency ultimately released a finding of no significant impact despite acknowledged concerns about historic continuity and visual imbalances.⁶⁰ NPS declined to conduct a detailed analysis of other renovation alternatives “because they did not adequately support the functional goals identified by the Executive Office of the President.”⁶¹ The streamlined environmental review by NPS gave the White House a green light to move forward with the Ballroom. Experts describe the review as “woefully inadequate”⁶² and state that the scope and impact to the grounds merited a comprehensive EIS.⁶³ The White House and President’s Park are part of a carefully preserved and nationally treasured historic landscape. Construction of a new ballroom will alter sightlines, landscape features, and design elements. These major modifications to one of our most iconic national landmarks must go through a thorough environmental review and involve an open and transparent public comment period.

The White House and its surrounding grounds are not private property subject to the whims of the President. They are not Donald Trump’s billionaire playground; they belong to the American people. Any substantial modification to this iconic historic site must be handled with transparency, ethical integrity, congressional authorization, and full compliance with the law.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Jared Huffman
Ranking Member
U.S. House Committee on Natural Resources

Cc:

William Scharf
Chair
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⁵⁹ National Park Service. *Finding of No Significant Impact – White House East Wing Modernization and State Ballroom Environmental Assessment*. August 28, 2025. <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/document.cfm?parkID=463&projectID=133780&documentID=148193>

⁶⁰ National Park Service. *White House East Wing Modernization and State Ballroom Environmental Assessment*. August 28, 2025. <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/document.cfm?parkID=463&projectID=133780&documentID=148193>

⁶¹ National Park Service. *Finding of No Significant Impact – White House East Wing Modernization and State Ballroom Environmental Assessment*. August 28, 2025. <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/document.cfm?parkID=463&projectID=133780&documentID=148193>

⁶² Diamond, Dan and Edwards, Jonathan. The Washington Post. *Federal judge suggests White House ballroom construction may continue*. December 16, 2025.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2025/12/16/trump-ballroom-lawsuit-national-security/>

⁶³ Richards, Heather; Doyle, Michael; and Borst, Ellie. Politico. *‘No significant impact’: Inside the secret NPS review of Trump’s ballroom plans*. December 16, 2025. <https://subscriber.politicopro.com/article/eenews/2025/12/16/no-significant-impact-inside-the-secret-nps-review-of-trumps-ballroom-plans-00692838>