Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 23, 2025

The Honorable Russell Vought
Director, Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20503

Will Scharf
National Capital Planning Commission
401 Ninth Street NW, Suite 500N
Washington, DC 20004

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

Dear Director Vought, Mr. Scharf, and Acting Director Bowron:

As the Members of the Appropriations Financial Services and General Government Subcommittee, we write to express concern regarding the imminent destruction of the East Wing of the White House and the construction of a privately funded ballroom on White House grounds. We are alarmed that the White House is proceeding without the requisite, legally required public review processes, including consultation and review by the National Capital Planning Commission and the Commission of Fine Arts. Enclosed are questions that we demand answers to immediately, consistent with Congress' oversight responsibilities. Further, we request that you or a designated representative appear before the Subcommittee to provide testimony and information regarding this project.

Recent reporting and photographs suggest that demolition of the façade of the East Wing has begun, funded by the President and private donors. That has precluded the public's ability to visit their seat of government. Officials have indicated that the demolition of East Wing may be completed as soon as this upcoming weekend. Further, President Trump has indicated that in addition to his personal contributions, private contributions, through settlements and other types of donations, have been solicited and received to fund this construction project. We continue to have concerns regarding conflicts of interest, including expectations of pay for play, for entities regulated by the administration.

Commencing demolition in this manner has come without the transparency legally owed to Congress and the public. All presidents, including President Trump, are tenants by virtue of the votes of the American people. Changes to the People's House should thus be transparent, publicly funded, and done with the consent of the Congress. There is strong historical precedent of Congress providing funding for general upkeep and maintenance of the White House, as the White House is a reverent symbol of national significance that obligates us to consider historical preservation and the role of public engagement and transparency in making changes. These values have guided all administrations, going back to the public competition in 1792 that produced the building's original design.

In addition to appearing before the subcommittee to testify, we demand that you provide the following information and documents no later than October 29, 2025:

1. President Trump promised that the East Wing's structure would not be changed to build the ballroom, however current reporting suggests that the entire East Wing will be demolished as part of this project. What is being done to preserve the historic artifacts and nature of the building? What changed in the scope or nature of the plan to justify such a drastic change regarding impacts to the East Wing?

2. Please enumerate the donors who have contributed to any part of this construction project.
3. How much has each donor contributed and what is the method by which they have provided such contribution?
4. Are there any foreign entities or individuals contributing to the construction of the White House State Ballroom?
5. Announcements indicated that McCrery Architects designed the ballroom, Clark Construction is leading construction, and engineering is headed by AECOM.
    a. Given we are currently in a lapse of appropriations, please enumerate whether the individuals conducting this work are being paid and under what authority such payment is being rendered.
    b. Please enumerate whether the contract was competed? If it was not competed, please enumerate why not.
6. Initial White House statements suggested the State Ballroom will be 90,000 total square feet with a seated capacity of 650 people. However, recent statements suggest it is now expected to hold 999 people. Please provide the plans, including the design, budget, and contracts.
    a. What contingencies has the Administration put in place to prevent cost overruns?
7. Has the White House submitted ballroom plans for review and permitting by the National Capital Planning Commission? When will the White House do so and why did demolition commence in advance of such submission?
8. Will the "security enhancements and modifications" referenced in the July White House announcement to be provided by the United States Secret Service be paid for solely by personal and private donations or require appropriated funds from Congress?
9. The White House's East Wing sits on top of the Presidential Emergency Operations Center. How is the facility being impacted?
10. The White House's website continues to encourage outreach to Members of Congress in order to request a tour. However, tours have been cancelled since September 2025 for this renovation. When should constituents expect tours of the White House to resume?

Anyone who has done home renovations knows that demolition cannot be separated from construction. At a time in which our country is concerned with affordability and getting our federal government back up and running, we remain concerned that the Administration is courting public donors to stroke the President's ego at the expense of American historical preservation and democratic values.

Sincerely,

Steny H. Hoyer
Member of Congress

Mark Pocan
Member of Congress

Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
Member of Congress

Glenn Ivey
Member of Congress

CC: The Honorable David Joyce, Chairman, Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government, Committee on Appropriations, U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Tom Cole, Chairman, Committee on Appropriations, U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member, Committee on Appropriations, U.S. House of Representatives