

May 20, 2025

The Honorable Mike Rogers  
Chair, House Armed Services Committee

The Honorable Adam Smith  
Ranking Member, House Armed Services Committee

The Honorable Brian Mast  
Chair, House Foreign Affairs Committee

The Honorable Gregory Meeks  
Ranking Member, House Foreign Affairs Committee

The Honorable James Risch  
Chair, Senate Foreign Relations Committee

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen  
Ranking Member, Senate Foreign Relations Committee

The Honorable Rand Paul  
Chair, Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee

The Honorable Gary Peters  
Ranking Member, Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee

Re: Holding a hearing on the President's plan to accept a Qatari luxury jet

Dear Chairs Rogers, Mast, Risch, Paul and Ranking Members Smith, Meeks, Shaheen and Peters,

President Trump's announcement that he intends to accept a \$400 million luxury jet from Qatar—to be used first as Air Force One then given to Trump's presidential library foundation—is cause for bipartisan concern and the immediate attention of your congressional committees. We write to you on behalf of Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW) and the Society for the Rule of Law Institute to strongly urge you to hold a public hearing as soon as possible assessing the consequences of accepting this so-called gift, particularly in relation to corruption concerns, national security risks, government waste and the cost to the American taxpayer.

As former Senate committee counsels, one who worked for Republicans and one who worked for Democrats, we believe strongly in Congress's critical oversight role and the duty of its committees to "exercise continuous watchfulness" over the administration's execution of the laws within their jurisdiction.<sup>1</sup> Oversight should neither be dismissed nor pursued for mere partisan motivations. Congress has a constitutional obligation to conduct bipartisan

---

<sup>1</sup> P.L. 79-601, 60 [Stat.](#) 812 (1946).

investigations that strengthen our government and serve the interests of the American people. An investigation into this matter squarely fits that description.

As you are aware, all government officials are bound by ethical obligations laid out by the U.S. Constitution, statutes, and regulations. The president is no exception. The framers of the Constitution sought to prevent corruption and reduce even the appearance of impropriety in designing the Foreign Emoluments Clause,<sup>2</sup> which prohibits the president from receiving, among other things, any profit, gain or advantage from foreign governments without the consent of Congress. They also invested Congress with the powers necessary to ensure the Executive Branch discharges its duties and utilizes public funds in the interest of the American public.<sup>3</sup>

President Trump is reportedly poised to accept a Boeing 747-8 from the Qatari government and has made no indication that he will seek congressional approval, which would be required by the U.S. Constitution if the gift falls under the Foreign Emoluments Clause.<sup>4</sup> He has further stated that the jet would not remain the property of the U.S. government, but would rather be transferred to President Trump's presidential library after his term.<sup>5</sup> This arrangement raises the specter that the Qatari government could receive potential favorable treatment as a result of this gift and sends a troubling message to other foreign governments who, like Qatar, may be seeking to curry favor with the administration.

Congress needs to investigate and exercise its oversight authority. Congressional hearings should focus both on corruption concerns—including whether Trump's acceptance of the Qatari jet violates the Foreign Emoluments Clause—and the significant national security risks already raised by both Democrats and Republicans.<sup>6</sup> Holding a hearing to gather information will help ascertain the facts and implications of this gift, evaluate if this luxury jet could possibly contain bugs or other technology designed to undermine U.S. security and determine next steps for congressional action. Such a hearing should also investigate Attorney General Pam Bondi's assessment that the acceptance of the aircraft would be "legally permissible," as well as her potential conflicts of interest as a former lobbyist for Qatar.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Const. art. I, § 9, cl 8.

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g., *McGrain v. Dougherty*, 273 U.S. 135, 174, ("the power of inquiry—with process to enforce it—is an essential and appropriate auxiliary to the legislative function.")

<sup>4</sup> Alex Gangitano, *Trump: I'd be a 'stupid person' saying no to Qatari plane*, The Hill (May 12, 2025), <https://thehill.com/homenews/administration/5295507-trump-qatar-air-force-one/>.

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

<sup>6</sup> Lindsay Wise and Annie Linskey, *Republicans Raise Concerns Over Trump's Plane Gift as He Heads to Qatar*, Wall Street Journal (May 14, 2025), <https://www.wsj.com/politics/policy/republicans-raise-concerns-over-trumps-plane-gift-as-he-heads-to-qatar-0060bdec>; @NikkiHaley X (May 13, 2025, 8:21 AM), <https://x.com/NikkiHaley/status/1922266032976363701>; Sophia Vento, *Democrats question Hegseth on Trump's Qatar jet security risks*, The Hill (May 15, 2025), <https://thehill.com/policy/defense/5302066-trump-accepts-jet-qatar-democrats-concern/>.

<sup>7</sup> Jonathan Karl and Katherine Faulders, *Trump administration poised to accept 'palace in the sky' as a gift for Trump from Qatar: Sources*, ABC News (May 11, 2025), <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/trump-administration-poised-accept-palace-sky-gift-trump/story?id=121680511>; See Pam Bondi [FARA disclosure](#).

In addition to the serious national security and corruption concerns, experts note that adapting the Qatari jet to ensure it meets the necessary security requirements would be a costly and time-consuming endeavor, as the plane would need to be dismantled and then reassembled.<sup>8</sup> According to aviation experts, it could take nearly \$1 billion and potentially would not be completed before 2029, at which time the plane is expected to be turned over to the Trump library.<sup>9</sup> Congressional oversight should include evaluating these costs and ensuring that government funds will not be wasted on a plane that might never be used by a sitting U.S. president.

The President's plan to accept this luxury jet is unprecedented and raises a multitude of legal, ethical, and national security concerns. Congress must not sit on the sidelines while the American public is left to wonder about the possibility of corruption, national security risks and government waste. Instead, we strongly urge you to hold a hearing on this matter as soon as possible to ensure that proper oversight is conducted and the public is not left in the dark.

Sincerely,



**Noah Bookbinder**

*President and Chief Executive Officer*

Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington



**Gregg Nunziata**

*Executive Director*

Society for the Rule of Law Institute

---

<sup>8</sup> Dan De Luce, Tom Winter, Laura Strickler, Courtney Kube and Gordon Lubold, *Turning Qatari 747 into Air Force One could cost \$1 billion and take years, experts say*, NBC News (May 13, 2025), <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/national-security/turning-qatari-747-air-force-one-cost-1-billion-take-years-experts-say-rcna206582>.

<sup>9</sup> *Id.*