

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5051

MINORITY (202) 225-5074

<http://oversight.house.gov>

July 12, 2019

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write to express our concern about the financial impact that your hastily-produced expansion of recent July 4 celebrations had on the budgetary resources for key security measures in the District of Columbia. We also write to express our support for a request from D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser that you commit to reimbursing the District's Emergency Planning and Security Fund (EPSF) for its support of federal activities, including your inauguration in 2017 and your recent July 4 activities.

The EPSF is a vital resource that helps cover the costs of providing public safety for events related to the presence of the U.S. Capital in the District, responses to immediate and specific terrorist threats, and requests from the U.S. Secret Service. According to Mayor Bowser, the District's Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency predicts the EPSF will be significantly in the red before the end of the current fiscal year due to "increased demand for heightened security" for federal activities. This includes a "one-time draw down of \$7.3 million to cover security costs associated with the 2017 Presidential Inauguration" and \$1.7 million for security support for your July 4 events and related demonstrations. The letter states:

It is critical that the EPSF is fully reimbursed for these funds to ensure the District can uphold proper security and support during the remainder of the fiscal year without incurring a deficit for federal activities.¹

On July 10, 2019, Dr. Christopher Rodriguez, the Director of Homeland Security and Emergency Management for the District of Columbia, estimated the city's costs for July 4th celebrations were six times more than they were in prior years.²

¹ Letter from Muriel Bowser, Mayor, District of Columbia, to President Donald J. Trump (July 9, 2019) (online at www.washingtonpost.com/context/letter-from-d-c-mayor-bowser-to-trump/1c0d3409-0400-46bb-9aba-8d3473a356e9/?utm_term=.92f3c7ffb9ac).

² *Trump's July Fourth Event and Weekend Protests Bankrupted D.C. Security Fund, Mayor Says*, Washington Post (July 10, 2019) (online at www.washingtonpost.com/local/dc-politics/trumps-july-fourth-event-and-weekend-protests-bankrupted-dc-security-fund-mayor-says/2019/07/10/fb0d1de4-a316-11e9-b732-

These costs are in addition to the excessive and unplanned expenditure of federal funds by the Department of Defense (DOD) and the Department of the Interior to support your expanded July 4 events. On July 9, 2019, DOD's comptroller reported costs of \$1.2 million to support your "Salute to America" event, which included using funds from military training budgets to transport, display, and conduct flyovers by two dozen military aircraft.³ In addition, the National Park Service reportedly had to transfer approximately \$2.5 million from its existing park improvement budget to help pay for these events.⁴

As Members of Congress committed to reducing the unnecessary expenditure of federal funds, upholding national security, and conducting oversight of government operations, we already had concerns about the cost and purpose of your "Salute to America" event. The depletion of the EPSF, the costs of the July 4 events, and your comments on July 8, 2019, that you plan to repeat this event next year and "for the foreseeable future" only reinforce the necessity of ensuring that federal funds are spent wisely and with proper oversight.⁵

For these reasons, we respectfully request that you commit to reimbursing the EPSF for the costs of your 2017 inauguration, the July 4 "Salute to America," and other federal activities for which D.C. has provided security support.

The security of Congress, the White House, and federal agencies in the D.C. area requires a partnership between the federal government and the government of the District of Columbia. We ask that you stand by this partnership to ensure the District, its citizens, visitors, and the federal officials who work here are provided the proper and adequate protection.

The Committee on Oversight and Reform is the principal oversight committee of the House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate "any matter" at "any time" under House Rule X.

41a79c2551bf_story.html?fbclid=IwAR25nLxQkkDHZS97kX4PZPpchkF4a34s0lDT5lvAmOtERtqkdh_E8wA_K1k&utm_term=.a0b68461498a).

³ *Pentagon: July 4 Flyovers, Tank Displays and Performances Cost \$1.2 Million*, National Public Radio (July 9, 2019) (online at www.npr.org/2019/07/09/740019333/pentagon-july-4th-flyovers-tank-displays-and-performances-cost-1-2-million).

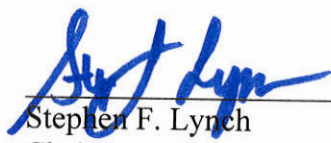
⁴ *Park Service Diverts \$2.5 Million in Fees for Trump's Fourth of July Extravaganza*, Washington Post (July 2, 2019) (online at www.washingtonpost.com/politics/white-house-gives-tickets-to-trumps-july-fourth-extravaganza-to-gop-donors/2019/07/02/9109a566-9ce0-11e9-b27f-ed2942f73d70_story.html?utm_term=.d19cf62fbf9f).

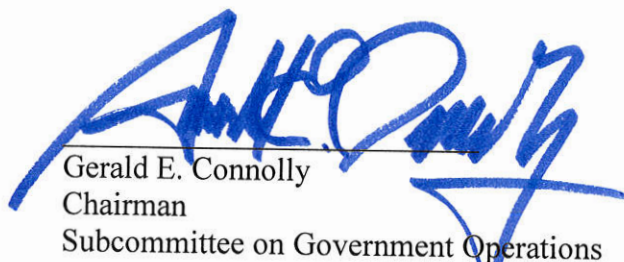
⁵ *Trump Announces 4th Of July Salute Again as Democrats Press for Costs Probe*, National Public Radio (July 8, 2019) (online at www.npr.org/2019/07/08/739552264/trump-announces-4th-of-july-salute-again-as-democrats-press-for-costs-robe).


Thank you for your urgent attention to this matter. If you have any questions regarding this request, please contact Committee staff at (202) 225-5051.

Sincerely,


Elijah E. Cummings
Chairman


Stephen F. Lynch
Chairman
Subcommittee on National Security


Gerald E. Connolly
Chairman
Subcommittee on Government Operations


Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member

cc: The Honorable Jim Jordan, Ranking Member

The Honorable Jody B. Hice, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on National Security

The Honorable Mark Meadows, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Government Operations