

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 26, 2026

The Honorable Doug Burgum
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Burgum:

We demand that you immediately and safely remove over 35,000 cubic yards of toxic debris left over from the demolition of the former East Wing of the White House that you deposited on the East Potomac Golf Course. For nearly eight months, golfers, cyclists, runners, fishermen and members of the public have been exposed to such debris, which contains dangerous levels of arsenic, lead and mercury. Even more troubling is your failure to release reliable test results on the potential asbestos content that may be mixed in with the demolition materials of the East Wing. These contaminants are embedded in debris piles just feet away from the banks of the Potomac River, an important tributary of the Chesapeake Bay where people fish and row.¹

In October 2025, President Trump's illegal and unannounced demolition of the East Wing of the White House presented a novel and dangerous challenge. You proposed dumping the debris on East Potomac Golf Course; the plans were quickly approved and set in motion by the President.² Days after President Trump started to demolish the East Wing of the White House on October 20, 2025, contractors hired by the National Park Service (NPS) began carting away the massive debris—including pipes, wires and rebar—to East Potomac National Park. All told, NPS transported over 35,000 cubic yards of debris.³

More than six months later, NPS has finally released test results on the East Wing debris. The results show elevated levels of heavy metals including arsenic, lead, and mercury.⁴ One sample even contained *twice* the maximum acceptable exposure level in soil set by the EPA for children,⁵

¹ Potomac Conservancy, *2025 Potomac River Report Card*, <https://potomacreportcard.org/>.

² Meredith McGraw, *Trump's Next Renovation Target: D.C.'s Golf Courses*, Wall Street Journal (Dec. 12, 2025), <https://www.wsj.com/politics/policy/trump-golf-dc-renovation-0536865a>.

³ National Park Service, *Soil Testing Data - Interim Sampling Report* (April 30, 2026), <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/document.cfm?parkID=463&projectID=133318&documentID=150924>.

⁴ National Park Service, *Table 5 NPS_EWE_ALEII (8AL) NPS_SP_04292026v2.xlsx* (April 30, 2026), <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/document.cfm?parkID=463&projectID=133318&documentID=150924>.

⁵ EPA, *Regional Screening Levels (RSLs) - User's Guide* (March 13 2026), <https://www.epa.gov/risk/regional-screening-levels-rsls-users-guide>.

though experts say no level of exposure is safe.⁶ Lead and mercury are severe neurotoxins that can disrupt brain development, damage nerve cells and impair cognitive function, while sustained arsenic exposure is strongly linked to skin, lung, and bladder cancers.⁷ Results for asbestos content have been inconclusive due to limited and compromised sample vials.³ The contamination results are unsurprising, as the East Wing of the White House was first built in 1902, when lead paint was a ubiquitous paint material. The East Wing was later significantly renovated in 1945. According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), any building built or remodeled before 1980 likely contains asbestos.⁸ The White House therefore knew there would be a high likelihood of toxins in the East Wing debris and still chose to dump them in a public place, creating massive exposure for both adults and children.⁹ In fact, in sworn declarations before a Federal District Court, Director of White House Management and Administration Joshua Fisher attested that the demolished East Wing included “toxic substances spread throughout the structure, including asbestos and lead based paint.”¹⁰ Moreover, NPS leadership allegedly knew of the pollution as early as October 2025, but continued to freely dump anyway.¹¹

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to assess the effects of any proposed project on “the quality of the human environment” and produce an Environmental Impact Statement—or at the very least an Environmental Assessment—for a project of this significance.¹² You have not complied with this law. Instead, you have attempted an end-run around NEPA by claiming that the debris meets the criteria for a “Categorical Exclusion,” a procedure that is only used for actions which “do not significantly affect the human environment.”¹³ In your Categorical Exclusion document, you attested that the East Wing debris would be “clean fill” to fulfill “existing maintenance” needs.¹⁴ As the test results demonstrate, these debris piles are anything but “clean fill” but rather more than likely pose a threat to human health and the environment.

To immediately address the threats to human health and the environment presented by the East Wing debris, we request written answers to the following questions by no later than July 10, 2026:

⁶ Maxine Joselow, *Soil at D.C. Golf Course Where East Wing Debris Was Dumped Contains Toxic Metals*, New York Times (May 4, 2026), <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/05/04/climate/east-potomac-golf-debris-toxic.html>.

⁷ Jomova, K., Alomar, S.Y., Nepovimova, E. *et al.* Heavy metals: toxicity and human health effects. *Arch Toxicol* **99**, 153–209 (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00204-024-03903-2>.

⁸ OSHA, *29 CFR 1910.12(b)*, <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1926/1926.1101>.

⁹ Pl.’s Mot. For Emergency Status Conference, *DC Preservation League v. Nat’l Park Serv.*, No. 47-1, May 3, 2026, ECF 1:26-cv-00477-ACR. <https://democracyforward.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Golf-045112070569.pdf>.

¹⁰ Ex. A to Suppl. Mem. (Dkt. 30-1), *Nat’l Trust for Historic Pres. v. Nat’l Park Serv.*, No. 25-cv-4316 (D.D.C. Mar. 31, 2026), <https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.dcd.287645/gov.uscourts.dcd.287645.30.1.pdf>.

¹¹ Pl.’s Mot. For Emergency Status Conference, *supra* note 9, at 2.

¹² 42 U.S.C. § 4336(b)(1) and 42 U.S.C. § 4336(b)(2).

¹³ 42 U.S.C. § 4336(e)(1).

¹⁴ NPS, *Categorical Exclusion Documentation - East Potomac Park Temporary Fill Storage* (Oct. 16, 2025), <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/showFile.cfm?sfid=823899&projectID=133318>.

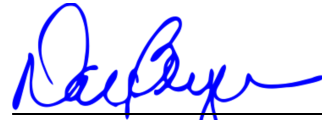
1. What is your Department's plan to remove the debris, monitor and remediate the contamination on East Potomac National Park caused by the more than 35,000 cubic yards of toxic debris from the East Wing? When will your Department execute this plan? Has the Department warned the public in the meantime of the risks to public health?
2. Please share all documentation and communication between agency officials in connection with the transportation of East Wing debris to East Potomac Golf Course.
3. Why did the Department fail to test the East Wing debris dumped prior to October 28, 2025 on East Potomac Golf Course?
4. Why did the Department proceed with dumping the debris after knowing it was likely to be contaminated and without knowing the test results? Please share all documents related to this decision.

We appreciate your consideration and look forward to your prompt response.

Very truly yours,



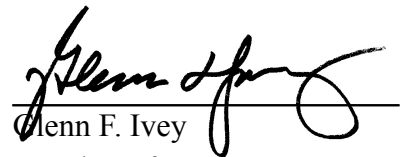
Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress




Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress




Glenn F. Ivey
Member of Congress



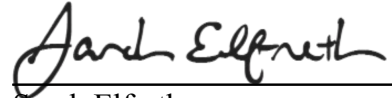
Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress



Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress



Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress



Sarah Elfreth
Member of Congress



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



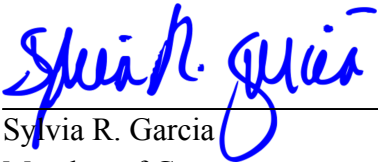
Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress



Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



Adelta S. Grijalva
Member of Congress



Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress



Robert Garcia
Member of Congress



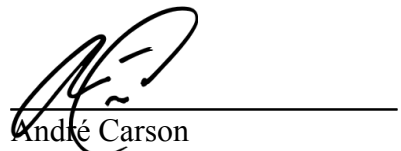
Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress



Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



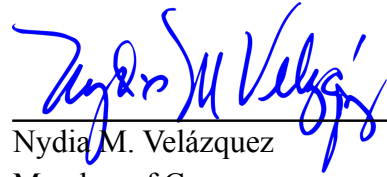
Shri Thanedar
Member of Congress



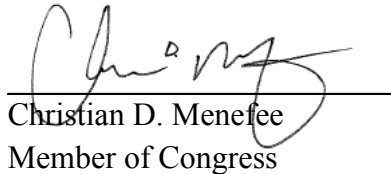
André Carson
Member of Congress



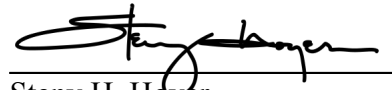
Madeleine Dean
Member of Congress



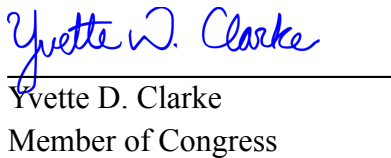
Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



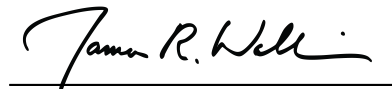
Christian D. Menefee
Member of Congress



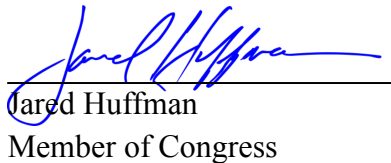
Steny H. Hoyer
Member of Congress



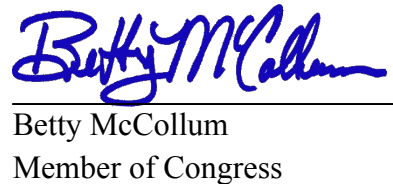
Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



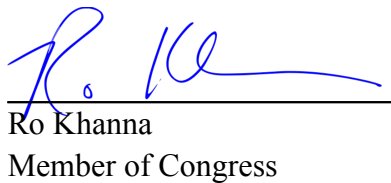
James R. Walkinshaw
Member of Congress



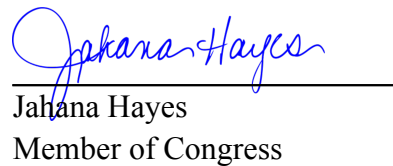
Jared Huffman
Member of Congress



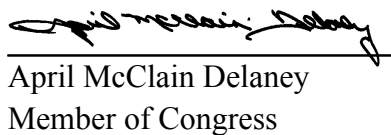
Betty McCollum
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Ro Khanna
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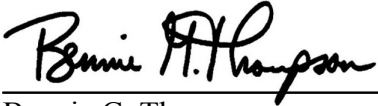
Jahana Hayes
Member of Congress



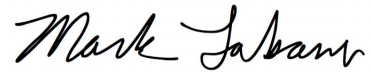
April McClain Delaney
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Seth Moulton
Member of Congress



Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress



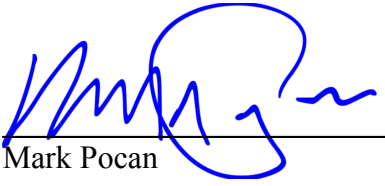
MARK TAKANO
Member of Congress



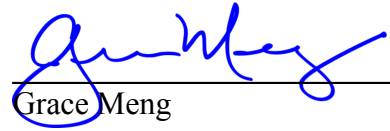
Steve Cohen
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Raja Krishnamoorthi
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Mark Pocan
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Grace Meng
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Summer L. Lee
Member of Congress



Joyce Beatty
Member of Congress



Jasmine Crockett
Member of Congress



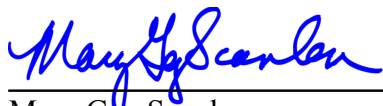
Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress



Paul D. Tonko
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Emily Randall
Member of Congress



Mary Gay Scanlon
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Dave Min
Member of Congress



Darren Soto
Member of Congress



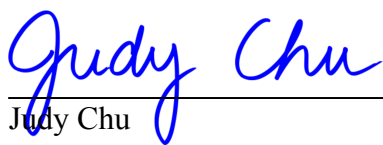
Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress



Julie Johnson
Member of Congress



Analilia Mejia
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Judy Chu
Member of Congress



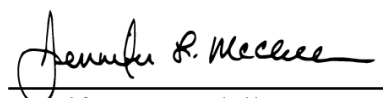
Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress



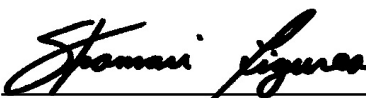
Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
Member of Congress



John Garamendi
Member of Congress



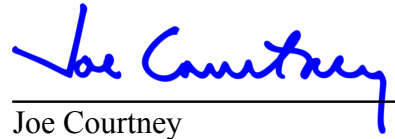
Jennifer L. McClellan
Member of Congress



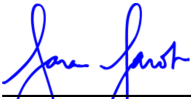
Shomari Figures
Member of Congress



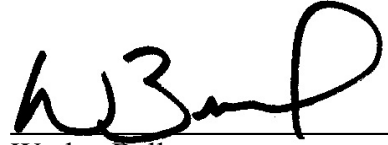
Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



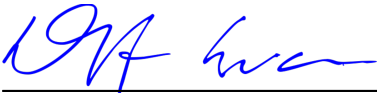
Joe Courtney
Member of Congress



Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress



Wesley Bell
Member of Congress



Dwight Evans
Member of Congress



Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Member of Congress



Seth Magaziner
Member of Congress

Cc: The Honorable Jessica Bowron
Acting Director
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