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Whistleblower accounts and internal documents reveal how the White House captured a beloved national charity, deceived donors out of their money, and sold access to the President

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Washington, D.C. - Today, House Natural Resources Committee Ranking Member Jared Huffman (D-Calif.) released a new 55-page report following months of investigative work by Committee Democrats exposing how Donald Trump hijacked what was supposed to be a unifying, non-political celebration of our country's 250th birthday and made it all about him - his vanity projects, his political and religious agenda, his business ventures, and his cronies who gorged on public funds under cover of a shadow corporation shielded from public scrutiny.

The report, "[*From Vanity to Insanity: How the White House Cheated the American People Out of Their 250th Birthday*](#)," traces how the machinery Congress built for a national commemoration that would be above politics was commandeered, over a period of months, into an apparatus for raising and spending money in service of the President's ego, political agenda, and personal financial interests.

[Watch Ranking Member Huffman discuss the report's findings.](#)

"Donald Trump's hijacking of America's 250th birthday will go down as one of the most corrupt, brazen abuses of public trust in presidential history, even by the dubious standards of this administration. As our country prepared to celebrate a milestone that belongs to every American, Trump and his operatives launched a hostile takeover of the bipartisan commission established by Congress to lead the celebration. When that failed, they sidelined the commission, siphoned its resources, and infiltrated a beloved national charity under cover of a shadow corporation that shielded them from public scrutiny. Then they proceeded to deceive donors, solicit foreign money, sell access to the President, award no-bid contracts to Trump loyalists, harvest Americans' personal data, and push a white-washed, Christian nationalist version of history," said Ranking Member Jared Huffman (D-Calif).

"But they didn't account for us. Over the past year, our investigation has pursued the truth

about the machinations, schemes and abuses of trust they've tried to hide. We've uncovered extensive evidence of corruption, self-enrichment and potential crimes. The Republican majority in Congress, which has far more investigative tools and power than we do, could have joined us in conducting serious oversight and demanding answers. Instead, they've used their power to shield the individuals and entities involved.

"The American people deserve to know the truth about how the official national celebration of our country's 250th anniversary was stolen, along with a large - and so far unaccounted for - sum of their taxpayer dollars. So, today - against the obstruction and resistance of our Republican colleagues - we are dragging this fiasco out of the shadows and shining a bright light on the corruption and fraud surrounding Freedom 250. We can't stop from tarnishing the country's July 4th celebration, but we can stop it from ever happening again - we can protect the next government program, the next fund, the next thing that's supposed to work for all of us, from being exploited and misused this way. That's why we must confront this grift and corruption now. From our earliest days, America has stood for government by the people, not powerful tyrants. We will fight to keep it that way."

When the nonpartisan, congressionally chartered America250 Commission refused to bend to the President's demands, the White House built a replacement - Freedom 250 LLC - and declared it the central platform for the national celebration. The White House lodged this shadow organization inside the National Park Foundation so it could exploit the credibility and donor relationships of a beloved public charity while operating outside the transparency rules Congress wrote into law for the commission.

Key Findings

- **The President put himself at the center of the nation's birthday.** Trump issued an executive order making himself and the Vice President Chair and Vice Chair of a White House task force, then staged his own birthday as a national event twice: the Army's 250th military parade on June 14, 2025, and a UFC fight on the White House South Lawn on June 14, 2026, run under the Freedom 250 banner.
- **The White House built Freedom 250 on deceit.** Musical performers, among others, were misled about programming and connections to Trump's political machine. Fundraisers may have misled donors who intended to support America250 and handed them Freedom 250's banking information, routing contributions meant for the nonpartisan foundation to the President's substitute entity instead. The report finds that, if true, this could constitute wire fraud and charitable solicitation fraud under federal and District of Columbia law.
- **Freedom 250 sold access to the President and courted foreign money in America's name.** The organization circulated sponsorship packages starting at \$500,000 and climbing above \$10 million, backed by a "historic photo opportunity" with President Trump. Its CEO solicited foreign governments, corporations, and individuals at the World Economic Forum in Davos to fund the President's priorities. If foreign funds reach the President's vanity projects, the report finds the conduct would clearly violate the Constitution's Foreign Emoluments Clause.

- **Trump and his operatives cashed in.** Event Strategies, Inc., the firm that helped plan the January 6th rally, has collected tens of millions in federal contracts connected to the anniversary, including a master contract worth up to \$100 million. Trump traded in the stock of companies that donated to Freedom 250 and staged a White House UFC fight that shamelessly promoted his own investments and business ventures. Freedom 250's event registration process was run through Campaign Nucleus, the firm founded by Trump campaign operative Brad Parscale, which uses artificial intelligence to score visitors and target "persuadable" voters. Thousands of unwitting fans handed over their personal information at a free FIFA World Cup Fan Zone on the National Mall. Freedom 250's official merchandise is sold by the Trump campaign's official merchandise vendor, Ace Specialties, and agencies have purchased the merchandise and required employees to wear it.
- **The White House imposed a false, Christian nationalist history.** Federally funded "Freedom Trucks" carried revisionism and outright falsehoods to schoolchildren, including an AI rendering of George Washington claiming, "our rights are a gift from God," a statement Washington is not documented to have made. The Interior Department also urged employees to wear Freedom 250 pins and threatened discipline against those who refused the pin, which anonymous employees took to calling their "Vichy pin," a reference to World War II-era lapel pins that served as loyalty and propaganda badges.
- **Freedom 250 created a blueprint for corruption.** The report concludes Freedom 250 is "a blueprint, not a one-time abuse," already test-driven at the Department of Agriculture, where the administration steered companies with business before the government to donate through a conservation charity into a fund the Secretary controls.

The investigation drew on confidential disclosures from sources interviewed by Committee Democrats, internal Freedom 250 documents and talking points obtained by the Committee, sworn testimony from two Committee hearings, and written responses from the National Park Foundation and the National Forest Foundation.

Republicans on the Committee refused to conduct any oversight to hold the administration accountable, even when Democrats repeatedly raised evidence of wrongdoing at Republicans' own hearing entitled, "All in for America250: Public-Private Partnerships Supporting America's Semiquincentennial on our Public Lands." Interior Secretary Doug Burgum testified he was "not aware of the final decisionmaker" behind Freedom 250, and the Department has refused to provide that information since.