

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

January 23, 2026

Doug Burgum  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Interior  
1849 C. St. NW, MS-4106  
Washington, DC 20240

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

Dear Secretary Burgum and Acting Director Bowron,

We write to express our opposition to the removal of slavery-related exhibits in Philadelphia's historic district, specifically at the President's House Site within Independence National Historical Park (INHP). These exhibits are an essential part of how the National Park Service presents the history of our nation's founding, and the decision to remove them represents a disturbing departure from that mission.

Millions of visitors travel to INHP each year to learn about the origins of American democracy. The park's fifty-five acres encompass landmarks such as Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell, and the interpretive panels at the President's House Site play a critical role in explaining how slavery coexisted with the birth of the Republic. Presenting that history in full deepens public understanding of the long struggle to align our actions with our ideals.

Trying to remove that history just because it makes some people uncomfortable is deeply troubling. When a government starts hiding parts of its past, it begins to look more like a regime that rewrites history rather than one that learns from it.

With the National Park Service facing budget pressures and the nation preparing for its 250th anniversary, federal officials should be strengthening historic sites and expanding educational programming, not diverting staff time and public resources to dismantling established exhibits.

We believe the removal of these panels violates existing agreements between the National Park Service and the City of Philadelphia governing the preservation and interpretation of the President's House Site. As Members of Congress representing Philadelphia, we therefore demand clear and complete answers to the following questions:

1. Why were the exhibits at the President's House Site taken down or dismantled?
2. Who authorized or directed this decision, and at what level within the administration?

3. What role, if any, did senior administration officials play in initiating or approving this action?
4. Where are the removed panels and related materials currently being stored, and what plans exist for their reinstallation?
5. What documents, memoranda, emails, or other internal communications relate to these actions?

Philadelphia residents and visitors from across the country deserve an honest and complete account of our history. We request a written response no later than January 30, 2026.

Sincerely,



Brendan F. Boyle  
Member of Congress



Dwight Evans  
Member of Congress



Mary Gay Scanlon  
Member of Congress