

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 7, 2026

The Honorable Troy Meink
Secretary of the Air Force
Office of the Secretary of the Air Force
1670 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, DC 20330

Mr. Christopher Kubasik
Chairman & CEO
L3Harris
1025 W Nasa Blvd
Melbourne, FL 32919

Dear Secretary Meink and Mr. Kubasik:

We call on the U.S. Air Force and L3Harris to deliver Congress full information on the modification work recently completed on the \$400-million Boeing 747-8 luxury jumbo jet gifted from the Government of Qatar to President Donald Trump. Americans deserve answers on how the administration has decided to spend their taxpayer dollars, and ignore real national security concerns, in the rushed VC-25B Bridge aircraft retrofit program contracted to L3Harris – all in service of delivering President Trump a pretty, fancy plane for his personal enjoyment.

For over a year, the administration has stonewalled congressional requests for information about Qatar's luxury jet gift to President Trump. Congress and the American public have expressed due outrage about this corrupt, illegal exchange, but Pentagon officials have mostly deflected questions or claimed inability to share classified details about the luxury jet, the memorandum of understanding with Qatar, and the program to modify it for use by the President. The Trump administration has refused to share the information Congress needs to conduct oversight of this foreign gift and the estimated \$1 billion in taxpayer dollars spent to upgrade and outfit the luxury jet for President Trump's use during – and reportedly after – his term in office.¹

After months of limited public information about the jet, new reporting has deepened concerns about the administration's irresponsible management of U.S. national security funds to prioritize President Trump's personal interest in having a new luxury jet. In a *Breaking Defense* interview on June 23, L3Harris executive Jason Lambert reported that the company was contracted by the Air Force to oversee the jet's modifications with a Trump-delivered deadline of July 4, 2026. This timeline drove L3Harris to scale back the usual Air Force One upgrade package while committing 400 employees to working around the clock to complete in ten months a process that would normally take years. This accelerated luxury jet upgrade required the Pentagon to move around funds to cover the L3Harris contact and related expenses, including purchasing a 3D mockup of the plane's interior and additional 747 aircraft for pilot and crew training.²

The Air Force seems to have committed to a rushed, expensive aircraft modification program for the purpose of meeting President Trump's demand to fly on "the world's most luxurious plane," with his favored paint job, during Independence Day festivities.³ Trump's own statements – including his celebration of "a level of luxury that nobody's ever seen before" – make it clear that these decisions prioritized Trump's personal comfort and tastes over U.S. national security.⁴

Congress needs full information about program costs, the diversion of resources away from other Pentagon priorities, and the national security and funding implications of upgrades skipped during the rush. The American public deserves transparency into this costly and questionable modification work – conducted with their taxpayer dollars on a jumbo luxury jet that President Trump reportedly plans to take with him after he leaves office.⁵

To this end, we request that the Air Force and L3Harris coordinate to provide written answers to the questions below no later than July 27, 2026. Recognizing that some of this information is sensitive, we also request a joint classified briefing for all U.S. Senators no later than August 6, 2026, to discuss your answers and the upgrade program in greater detail.

1. What was the total cost of preparing the VC-25B Bridge aircraft for delivery? Provide a comprehensive breakout of costs of L3Harris's upgrade work, as well as associated expenses by the Air Force (including new equipment, mockups, and training).
2. How were the work schedule and timeframe for this aircraft modification program developed? What were the Air Force's stated priorities for this program? Who, formally or informally, played a role in setting requirements and finalizing the contract? Describe the contract negotiations in detail and release the contract text for review.
3. How did the surge of Air Force and L3Harris personnel and resources to support the program's accelerated schedule impact overall cost?
4. How did the surge of Air Force and L3Harris personnel and resources to support the program's accelerated schedule impact other Air Force efforts or other Pentagon work being conducted at L3Harris? How were resources diverted from other programs?
5. How would the Air Force and L3Harris have ideally structured the program's schedule and altered program costs, if not for the July 4, 2026, deadline?
6. How did the program's accelerated schedule impact the scope of the Air Force One upgrade package? Detail capabilities that were not added to the VC-25B Bridge aircraft and describe the national security implications.
7. What additional resources, personnel, and equipment will be necessary to make up for the neglected upgrades when operating the aircraft as Air Force One? What will that cost?
8. How did the aircraft modification program account for President Trump's stated plan to transfer the VC-25B Bridge aircraft to his Presidential library upon leaving office?

We urge you to answer these questions and arrange the briefing as soon as possible to shed much-needed light on this expensive luxury jet upgrade. We look forward to the opportunity to finally deliver answers to the American people about the clear corruption in Trump's decisions to accept the "palace in the sky" as a personal gift and to pour extensive federal resources into upgrading his new luxury jet in time for him to use during July 4 celebrations.

Sincerely,



Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Angela D. Alsobrooks
United States Senator



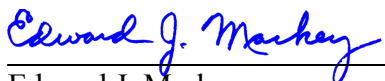
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



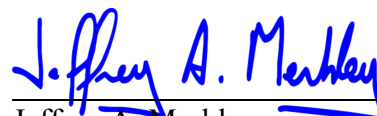
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United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator

¹ Stephen Losey, “US Air Force uses leftover ICBM funds to revamp Qatar plane,” *Defense News*, June 30, 2025, <<https://www.defensenews.com/pentagon/2025/06/30/us-air-force-uses-leftover-icbm-funds-to-revamp-qatar-plane/>>.

² Valerie Insinna, “How L3Harris transformed a Qatari 747 into a new Air Force One plane before July 4,” *Breaking Defense*, June 23, 2026, <<https://breakingdefense.com/2026/06/how-l3harris-transformed-a-qatari-747-into-a-new-air-force-one-plane-before-july-4/>>.

³ Arden Farhi and Eleanor Watson, “Trump unveils new Air Force One, a \$400 million plane gifted by Qatar,” *CBS News*, June 19, 2026, <<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/air-force-one-new-plane-trump-qatar/>>.

⁴ Grace Eliza Goodwin, “Trump unveils Qatari luxury jet for Air Force One fleet,” *BBC*, June 19, 2026, <<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cn8kz80n157o>>.

⁵ “President Donald Trump defended the possibility of Qatar gifting his administration a plane...,” *PBS NewsHour*, May 12, 2025, <<https://www.facebook.com/newshour/videos/president-donald-trump-defended-the-possibility-of-qatar-gifting-his-administrat/1247082586846013/>>.