

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 7, 2013

The Honorable Barack Obama
The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500-0005

Dear Mr. President:

We are disappointed and concerned about your decision to suspend public tours due to sequestration. Every spring, thousands of students, families, and tour groups flock to Washington, D.C. to experience all of the history and sights our nation's capital city has to offer. To arbitrarily shut off access to a taxpayer funded, historical building, such as the White House, is disappointing.

All branches of government are impacted by sequestration. Like the White House, Congress is also facing cuts to our operating budgets. Yet to take a measure such as shutting down public access to a national treasure must be done with careful consideration.

According to the White House Visitors Office, White House tours will be suspended as early as March 9, 2013. We are requesting additional information on the anticipated cost savings of suspending self-guided tours of the White House as of March 9, 2013. While we have seen reports that the Secret Service believes this will help prevent furloughs for agents, we would like information on the number of White House personnel who are assigned to the Visitors Office and whether or not this policy will result in lay-offs, furloughs, and/or pay cuts. We would also like to know what additional cost-saving measures the White House has planned to mitigate its budget cut under the sequester.

We all need to work together to improve this country's fiscal outlook. However, the White House's decision to close public access to the residence of the United States President is not the solution. We look forward to your expedient response to our concerns.

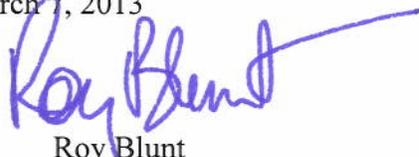
Sincerely,



John Thune
United States Senator



John Barrasso
United States Senator



Roy Blunt
United States Senator



Susan Collins
United States Senator



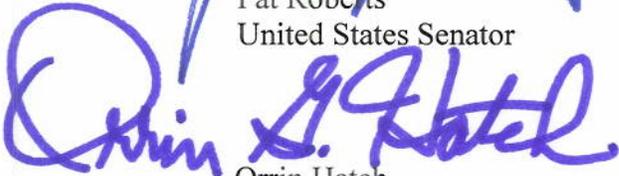
Deb Fischer
United States Senator



John Hoeven
United States Senator



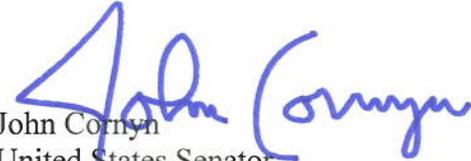
Pat Roberts
United States Senator



Orrin Hatch
United States Senator



Dan Coats
United States Senator



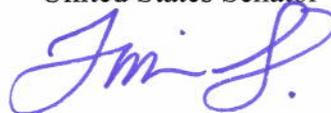
John Cornyn
United States Senator



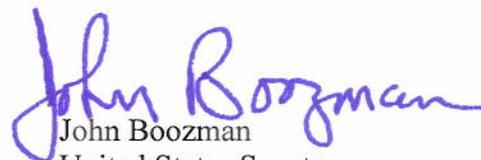
Chuck Grassley
United States Senator



Jerry Moran
United States Senator



Tim Scott
United States Senator



John Boozman
United States Senator