

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3203

May 11, 2026

Dear Colleague:

Families across the country are looking to Congress for relief — from rising costs, from chaos, and from an illegal war the President has no authorization to continue. Yet as we return to session, the Republican-controlled Congress is preparing to answer this moment with a deficit-busting, party-line bill that pours billions more taxpayer dollars into a rogue ICE operation and a billion-dollar ballroom, while doing nothing to end the illegal war in Iran or ease the Republican affordability crisis bearing down on working families.

This past week, Republicans unveiled legislative text for their new \$72 billion budget reconciliation bill. The legislation would shovel tens of billions more into these agencies without a single reform to rein in the violence or without a single guardrail to ensure basic law enforcement standards.

What's worse is what this bill does *not* fund: a single measure to lower costs for working people. No relief on groceries. No relief at the pump. No relief on health care, housing, or electricity bills. Republicans, of course, did try to hide a new earmark of \$1,000,000,000 to fund the President's vanity ballroom. At a time when Americans can't make ends meet, Republicans say 'Let them eat cake' — and then hand Trump a billion dollars to build a ballroom to serve it in.

Americans do not need a ballroom. They need relief. They want their Congress and their President to address the growing cost crisis bearing down on families across the country. Everywhere you look, Americans are paying more to make ends meet — more for gasoline, more for health care, more for electricity and more for housing — because Republicans keep putting Trump's priorities ahead of working people. That is what today's Republicans have become: Ballroom Republicans — asking working families to pay the price while Donald Trump pockets the perks. Let me make one thing very clear: Senate Democrats will not let them jam through this bill without making them answer for their endless cost hikes, health care cuts, and every dollar diverted from American families to Trump's priorities. Democrats will fight the Republicans' reconciliation bill with every tool we have. We will bring Byrd Rule challenges. We will offer floor amendments. And we will force vote after vote to make the choice unmistakable: will Republicans vote to help American families — to lower costs, to restore savage health care cuts, to roll back cost-spiking tariffs — or will they vote to fund Trump's gaudy ballroom?

Democrats will also fight to end the President's illegal war in Iran. Since this conflict began, Senate Democrats have forced six separate war powers votes to make clear that Congress — not any president acting alone — has the constitutional authority to decide whether our nation remains at war. Each time, Republicans have voted to hand the President a blank check for endless war. Each time, they have chosen to be complicit. The sixty-day deadline under the War Powers Resolution has now gone and went. The law is clear: without congressional authorization, the President must immediately end hostilities.

With six months until the mid-term elections, vulnerable Republicans are getting nervous—and they should be. The good news for them: They still have a chance to break rank with the President and work with Democrats to actually help the American people. But if they don't, Democrats will make the contrast clear to the American people: Ballroom Republicans are fighting for Trump. Democrats are fighting for you.

The American people are watching. And in November, they will be voting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Charles E. Schumer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator