



Congressman Mark DeSaulnier's Town Hall

October 30, 2025

House Ethics: Congressional vs. Campaign Activity

- Members of Congress are governed by the House Code of Official Conduct, which includes standards for whether, how, when, and where Members may engage in campaign activity.
 - This town hall is being hosted in our official capacity as members of the U.S. House of Representatives, not as candidates in a campaign. Therefore, House Rules prevent us from:
 - Solicitating, receiving, and accepting campaign contributions.
 - Making political endorsements.
 - Directing attendees to websites, resources, or events created or operated by a campaign or any campaign-related entity, including political parties and campaign committees.

You can learn more about the House Code of Official Conduct and how it relates to this event here:



Government Shutdown Update

- We are on day 30 of the Republican government shutdown.
- This is the longest government-wide shutdown in history.
- Republicans have been unwilling to negotiate with Democrats to craft a bipartisan spending bill that can pass the House and Senate and that extends Affordable Care Act subsidies that help individuals and families afford health insurance.
 - In order to avoid negotiating with Democrats, House Speaker Mike Johnson has kept the House of Representatives out of session for over a month.
- In addition to the impacts the shutdown has already had on government services, food assistance, Head Start, air travel, and federal civilian pay are on the verge of more harm starting November 1st.

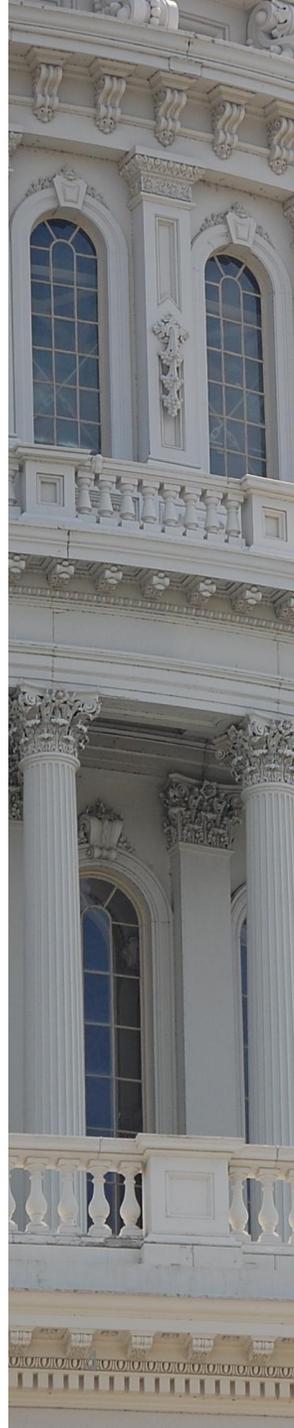


CalFresh/SNAP

- Over 107,000 Contra Costa residents rely on CalFresh (California's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP) to afford healthy, nutritious food.
- The Administration reversed course and now says it will not use authorized emergency funds to pay November benefits.
 - I joined over 200 of my Democratic colleagues in calling on the Administration to stop using hunger as a political tool and use contingency funds to pay November benefits as required by law.
 - CalFresh recipients spend a disproportionate amount of their income on food (over 30% on average), compared with 10% for wealthy families. Children and families will go hungry without their benefits.

Household Size	Thrifty Food Plan
1	\$298
2	\$546
3	\$785
4	\$994
5	\$1,183
6	\$1,421
7	\$1,571
8	\$1,798
Each additional member	+\$218

This chart shows the maximum monthly CalFresh benefit based on household size.

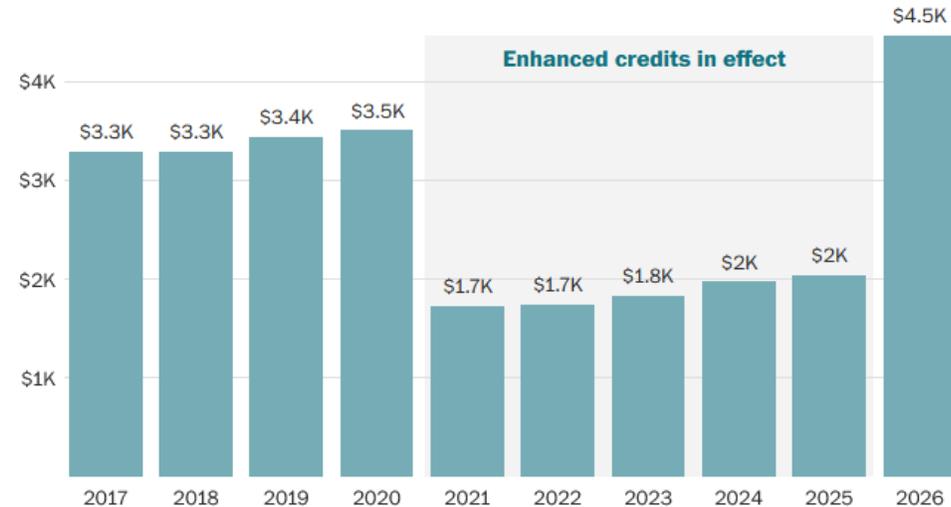


The Need for Action on Health Care

- The Affordable Care Act (2010) created the Premium Tax Credit.
 - This tax credit helps low- and middle-income individuals and families afford health insurance purchased through the exchange (known as Covered California in our state).
 - The PTC was enhanced in President Biden's American Rescue Plan and extended through the Inflation Reduction Act, both of which I voted for.
 - **Without further action by Congress and the President, the enhanced PTC will expire at the end of 2025, making it harder for millions of Americans to afford health care coverage, as shown by the chart to the right.**

Premiums would more than double for a couple making \$53K

Without the enhanced credits, a family at 250% of the poverty level would pay about 8% of their income for a silver plan on the ACA marketplace

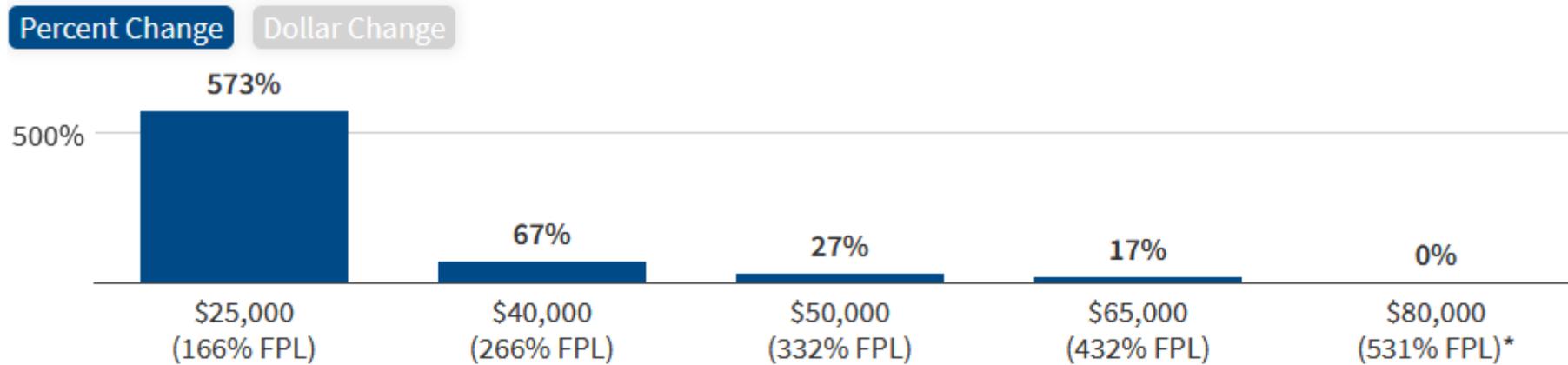


Estimates reflect the cost of a silver plan for a family of 2 with an income at 250% of the federal poverty level, which was \$40,600 in 2017 and \$52,875 in 2025.

Rising Health Insurance Premiums

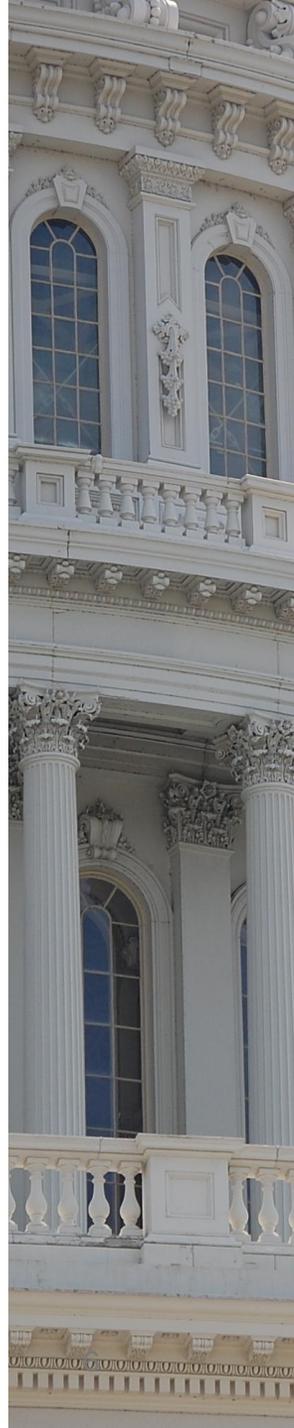
Lower-Income Enrollees Would Experience the Steepest Premium Increases if Enhanced Subsidies Expire

Average Percent Change in Premium Payment for Benchmark Silver Plan if Enhanced Subsidies Expire, 45 Year Old



This chart shows the percentage increase a single 45-year-old at five different income levels might expect next year in their health insurance premiums if Congress fails to extend the enhanced PTC.

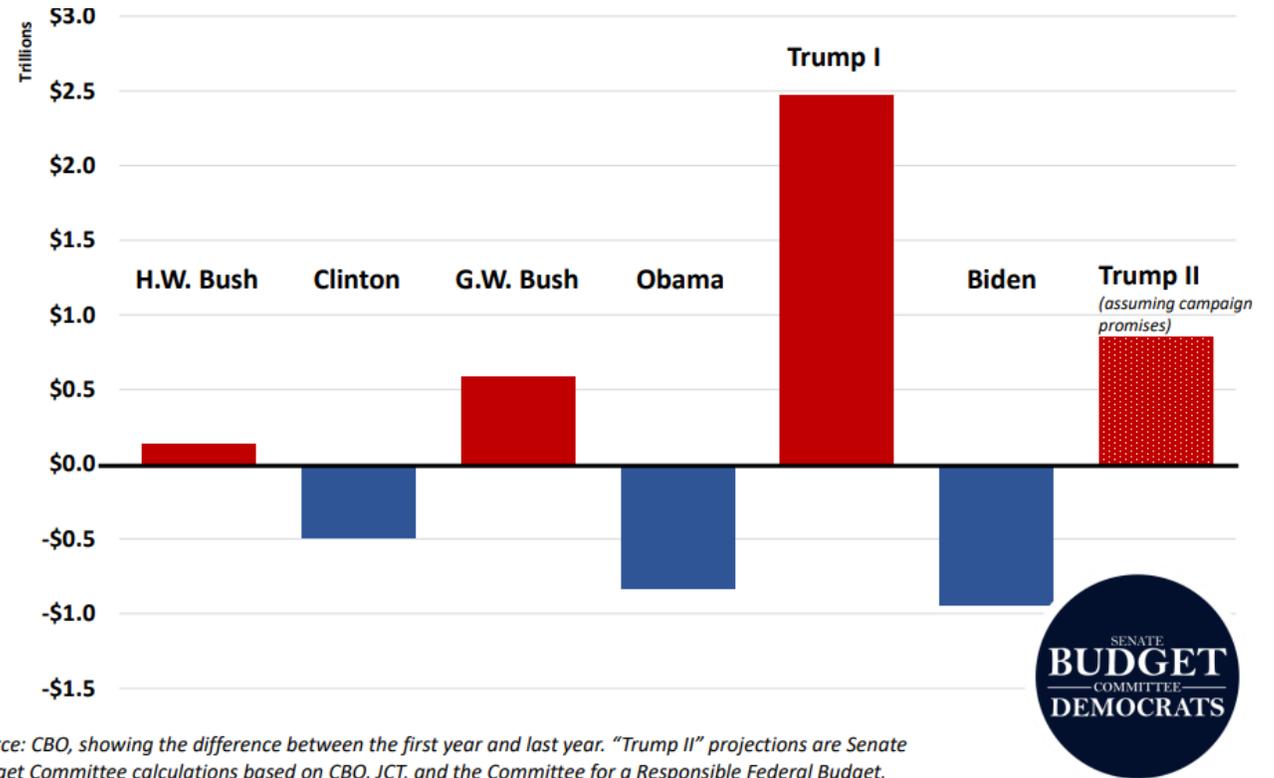
A failure to act would disproportionately harm low- and middle-income Americans.



Deficit Change by Presidential Administration

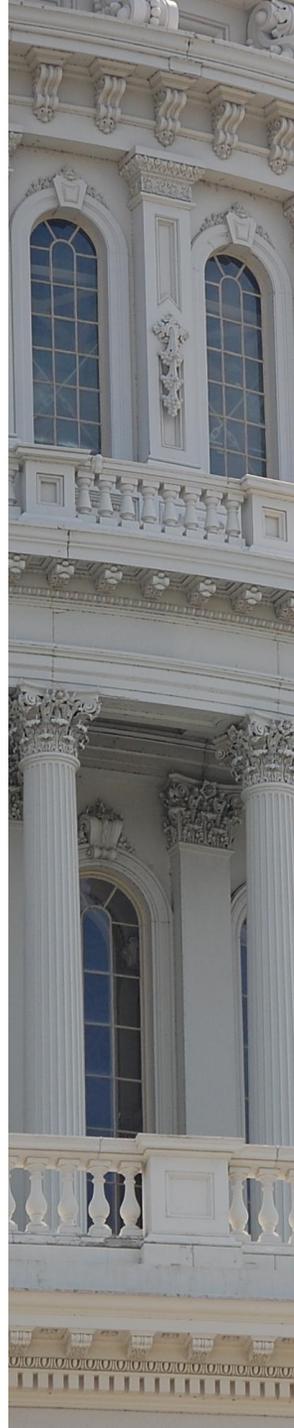
The past 3 Democratic presidents have all cut the federal budget deficit during their terms, while the past 3 Republican presidents have added to the deficit.

Instead of investing in health care for ordinary Americans, President Trump and congressional Republicans gave away trillions of dollars in tax cuts to the ultrawealthy and large corporations who don't need them.



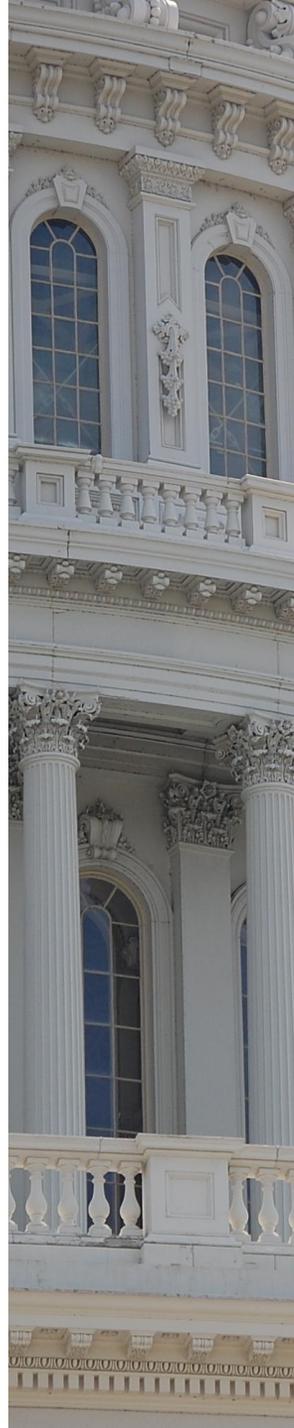
Epstein Files Update

- In July, media reporting indicated that President Trump had been briefed that his name appeared multiple times in the Epstein files.
- That same month, a bipartisan group of Members of Congress started a process, known as a discharge petition, that would force House Republican leadership to hold a vote on a bill to release the Epstein files. A discharge petition must receive 218 signatures, a majority of the House of Representatives, to take effect.
- The discharge petition on the bill currently has 217 signatures, one short of the required number of signatures.



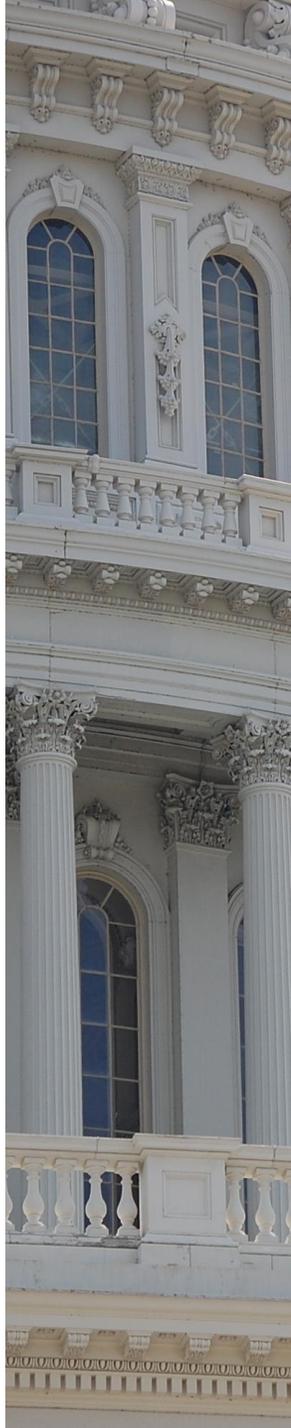
Swearing in Rep.-Elect Grijalva and the Epstein Files

- Adelita Grijalva, an Arizona Democrat, won a special election on September 24th to fill a vacancy in Arizona's 7th Congressional District.
- House Speaker Mike Johnson has refused to swear her in as a Member of Congress, denying her constituents representation, at least in part due to her pledge to be the 218th and final signature on the discharge petition to force a vote on releasing the Epstein files.
- I joined my Democratic colleagues in a letter to Speaker Johnson urging him to swear in Congresswoman-elect Grijalva and the Arizona Attorney General has filed a lawsuit against Speaker Johnson.



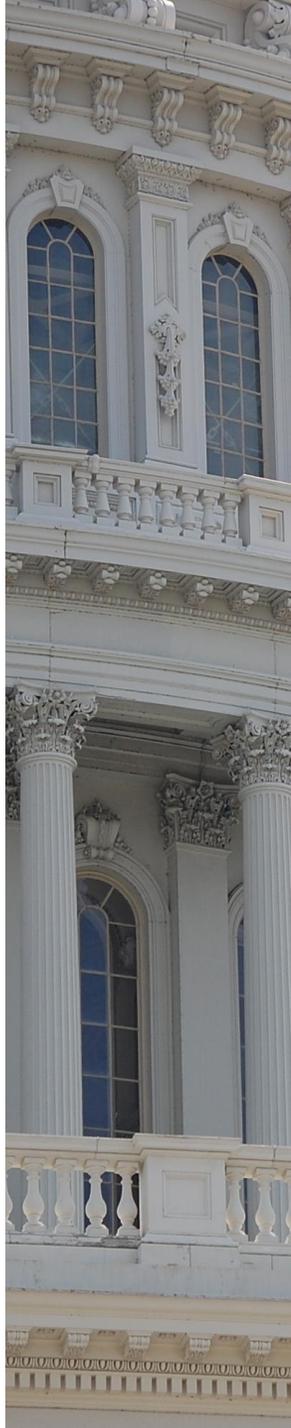
ICE Activity

- The Trump Administration has surged ICE activity across the country since January.
- Arrests made by ICE are up 50% this year and there have been at least 20 deaths in ICE custody—the deadliest year since 2004.
- Media reports have shown agents engaging in brutality.
- At least 170 U.S. citizens have been wrongfully detained by ICE.
- I have sent multiple letters to the Administration to protest wrongdoing by the agency.
- Meanwhile, the Big Ugly Bill skyrocketed ICE's annual budget from \$9.6 billion annually to \$28.7 billion a year—almost a 300% increase.



Deployment of the National Guard

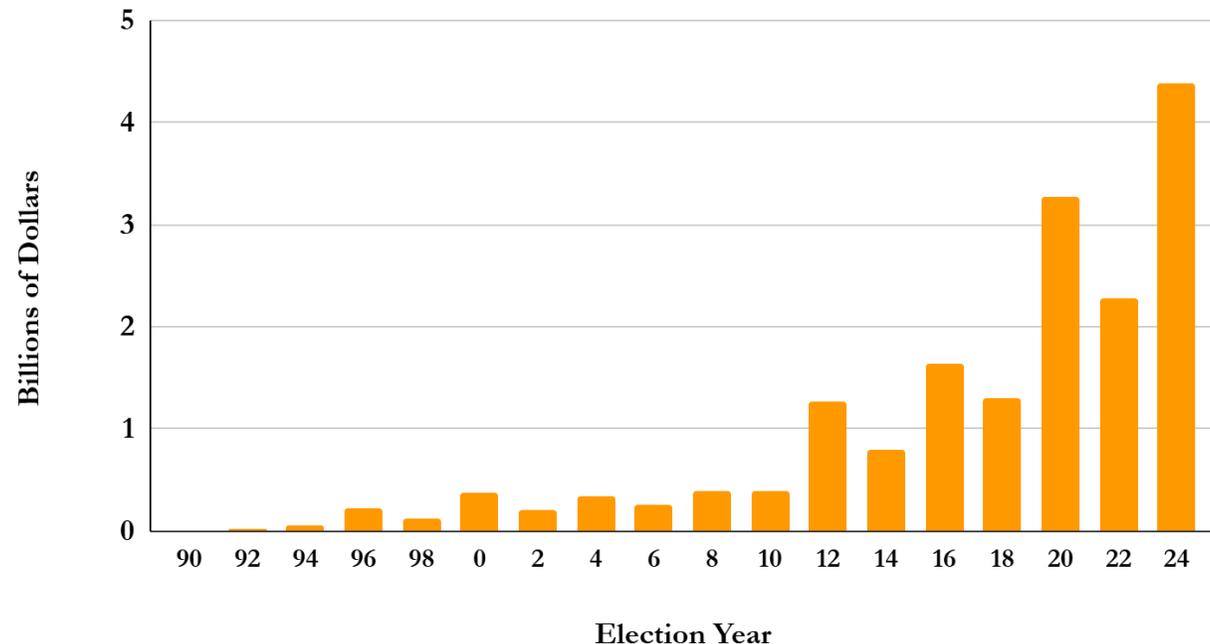
- In June, President Trump deployed the National Guard in Los Angeles. Since then, he has deployed the National Guard in DC, Chicago, and has prepared to deploy troops to Portland, Oregon.
- The President threatened to send the National Guard to the Bay Area, but on October 23rd, he announced he no longer planned on sending troops.
- I joined my Democratic colleagues in sending a letter to President Trump opposing the use of the Insurrection Act to deploy the National Guard in cities across America.



Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission

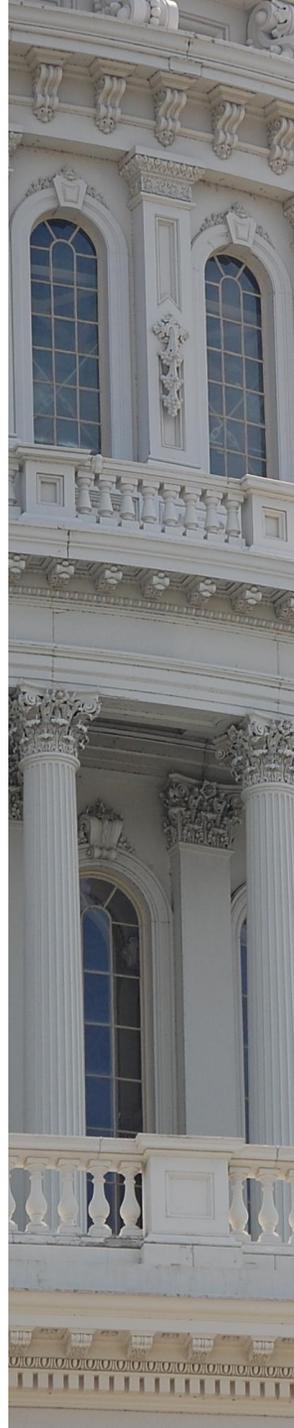
- In 2010, the U.S. Supreme Court open the floodgates for wealthy donors, corporations, and other outside groups to spend unlimited amounts of money in elections.
- Since then, election spending by the ultra-wealthy has skyrocketed.

Independent Expenditures vs. Election Year



The Corrupting Influence of Money in Politics

- Billionaires and corporations spent hundreds of millions of dollars to elect President Trump, and have since been shaping the policies of his administration.
- Since Inauguration Day, they have benefitted from tax cuts for the wealthy, lucrative government contracts, weakening environmental and labor protections, and more.



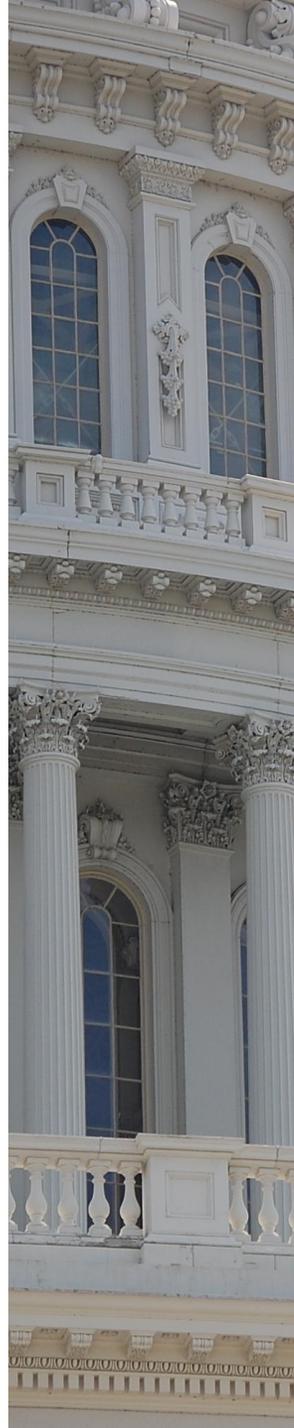
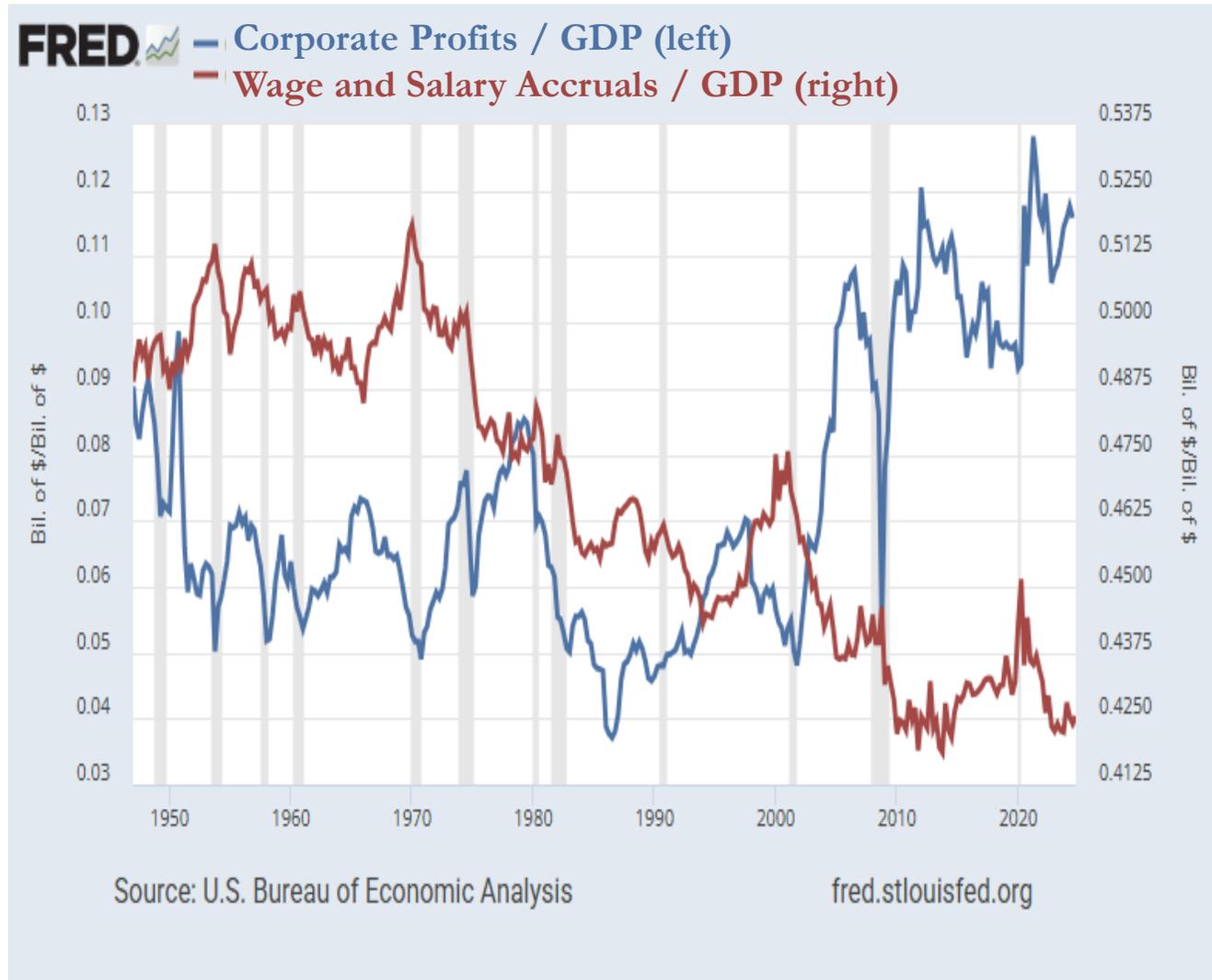
White House “Renovation”



Last Week, President Trump demolished the White House East Wing to make space for a \$300 million gilded ballroom funded by millionaires and billionaires seeking to curry favor with Trump. At the same time, ordinary Americans are struggling with the rising cost of living.

Rising Income Inequality

- While the White House continues to serve the ultra-wealthy, low-income and middle-class Americans are falling further and further behind.
- The richest 1% make nearly 139 times as much as the bottom 20%.
- I support legislation to reverse wealth concentration, including the **CEO Accountability and Responsibility Act**, which I authored.



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