

The Safeguarding Taxpayer Investment for Executive Airlift Act

The Safeguarding Taxpayer Investment for Executive Airlift Act would prohibit the use of authorized or appropriated FY27 funding to transfer any VC-25B Bridge Aircraft from the possession of the U.S. Air Force, including the renovated Qatari-gifted aircraft.

TIMELINE FOR THE QATARI-GIFTED VC-25B BRIDGE AIRCRAFT

- **2012:** The Boeing Business Jet version of the 747-8 was delivered to the Qatar Amiri Flight and used as a VIP transport by the Qatari ruling family.
- **2023:** The aircraft was withdrawn from use and passed through offshore ownership
- **February 15, 2025:** Special envoy Steven Witkoff arranged for President Trump to tour the aircraft at Palm Beach International Airport.
- **May 11, 2025:** Following media reports, President Trump confirmed that his Administration was poised to accept the aircraft from Qatar. At the time, the plane's value was widely reported at around \$400 million, which would make it among the most valuable gifts ever accepted by the US government from a foreign state. This raises significant ethics questions and the specter of a violation of the Foreign Emoluments Clause of the U.S. Constitution which forbids such gifts without approval from Congress.
- **May 21, 2025:** Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth formally accepted the aircraft on behalf of the US Air Force.
- **June 5, 2025:** In an exchange with Rep. Courtney at the House Armed Services Committee, Secretary of the Air Force Troy Meink testifies that "it's probably less than \$400 million to retrofit" the Qatari aircraft.
- **September 15, 2025:** The retrofit process for the Qatari aircraft to be used for executive airlift has begun in Texas. While not immediately public, L3Harris is the contractor for the work.
- **May 1, 2026:** Flight testing for the aircraft was "completed."
- **May 13, 2026:** In testimony to the Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee, Acting Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics Department of the Air Force William Bailey stated that the cost to retrofit the Qatari jet would be "under \$400 million."

- **June 19, 2026:** The aircraft was unveiled at Joint Base Andrews in a new red, white and blue livery chosen by the President, replacing the pale blue and white scheme that Presidential aircraft has maintained since 1962.
- **June 23, 2026:** The Palm Beach Post, among other media outlets, reported that the aircraft plane “isn’t expected to operate as Air Force One beyond 2028” and “will then go to Trump’s future presidential library.”
- **June 25, 2026:** Rep. Courtney files an amendment to the FY27 National Defense Authorization Act to prohibit the Qatari-gifted Boeing 747-8i, now the VC-25B Bridge aircraft, from being transferred to any individual or entity outside of the Department of the Air Force.
- **July 1, 2026:** The VC-25B Bridge’s first operational flight as Air Force One, carrying the President to North Dakota.
- **July 8, 2026:** According to New York Times reporting, an Iranian assassination threat against the President prompted him to fly secretly from Turkey on an alternate military aircraft. This maneuver raised questions about the security and countermeasures installed on the VC-25B Bridge aircraft.
- **September 4, 2026:** The President reiterated his intent to move the VC-25B Bridge to the museum on September 4, 2026, to reporters in the Oval Office, reported by NYT:

On Friday, Mr. Trump said, “I haven’t made a decision, but it will probably go to the museum. It’s scheduled to go to the museum.”

If it doesn’t go to the museum, a reporter asked, what would you do with it?

Mr. Trump replied after a brief pause, “I think it’s going to the museum.”

PRESIDENTIAL AIRLIFT BREAKDOWN

- **VC-25A:** The VC-25A entered commission as the presidential aircraft in 1990. There are two VC-25As, based off Boeing 747-200Bs.
- **VC-25B:** The VC-25B is the official successor program to the VC-25A.
- **VC-25B Bridge:** The VC-25B Bridge aircraft is the modified Qatari-gifted Boeing 747-8i, which the Administration intends to “bridge” the transition from VC-25A to VC-25B.



VC-25A



Rendering of the future VC-25B



VC-25B Bridge