

HARDENING THE PEOPLE'S HOUSE: THE NATIONAL SECURITY CASE FOR WHITE HOUSE MODERNIZATION

SUMMARY

The White House is the People's House. This facility, especially the Presidential Emergency Operations Center (PEOC) should be upgraded with the latest technology and infrastructure, so that the Commander in Chief can securely and reliably lead the nation during national emergencies. The White House infrastructure is outdated, and it does not reflect the current threat environment. Leaving the White House vulnerable to attack presents an unacceptable risk, and policymakers should pursue this critical security concern without delay.

THE PEOC IS OUTDATED

- ★ The Presidential Emergency Operations Center (PEOC) is a classified command post beneath the White House, originally built in 1942, during WWII.
- ★ The communications infrastructure **fell short on September 11, 2001**.
 - **Dick Cheney**, Vice President, called the comms "[terrible](#)."
 - **Richard Clarke**, National Security Council member, requested money for a "[new bunker](#)" just months before and was denied.
- ★ The **structure remains the same** as it was nearly two decades later, **despite failing** during a true national emergency two decades ago.

WHY IMPROVEMENTS ARE NEEDED

- ★ The PEOC, intended to serve as the nerve center where the President leads the nation during times of crisis, failed during the most devastating attack on our soil in modern history.
- ★ A Presidential Ballroom facility would allow Secret Service to better **prevent foreign intelligence agents from collecting data and threatening national security**.
- ★ **The Department of Homeland Security (DHS)** and **United States Secret Service (USSS)** have publicly called for increased security funding:
 - **DHS & USSS** – Support the proposed **\$1B budget** to improve security in 2026, including bullet proof glass, drone detection systems, chemical and biological threat filtration systems, and more.
 - The **Ballroom** will **cover the new military complex** beneath and will **cost taxpayers nothing**.
- ★ Some of the issues identified:
 - **Asbestos** was a standard building material during the era of PEOC construction.
 - **Lead-based paint** was used during this era.
 - **Electrical** infrastructure is outdated.
 - **Mold** has been found.
 - The roof **leaks**.
 - Currently **not Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant**.
- ★ [Assassination attempts](#) against President Trump:
 - **White House Correspondent's Dinner (April 2026)** – 31-year-old **Cole Tomas Allen** attempted to enter venue with a gun. Suspect arrested, **Secret Service agent wounded**.
 - **Mar-a-Lago (February 2026)** – 21-year-old **Austin Tucker Martin** attempted to breach President Trump's private club and shoot as Secret Service. **Suspect shot and killed**.

- **Trump International Golf Club (September 2024)** – 59-year-old **Ryan Wesley Routh** attempted to shoot then-presidential candidate Trump while on a golf course. Suspect arrested, has been **sentenced to life in prison**.
- **Butler, Pennsylvania Rally (July 2024)** – 20-year-old **Thomas Matthew Crooks** attempted to assassinate then-presidential candidate Trump. **President was injured, attendee was murdered, suspect killed**.

A HISTORY OF WHITE HOUSE MODERNIZATION

★ Abbreviated Timeline:

- **1814** – New White House was completed after the original was [burned down](#) by the British. (Andrew Jackson)
- **1829** – North Portico was built. (Andrew Jackson)
- **1902** – West Wing and Eastern Terrace were built. (Theodore Roosevelt)
- **1909** – Oval Office was built. (William Taft)
- **1942** – East Terrace renovated to become the East Wing, bomb shelter built. (Franklin Roosevelt)
- **1973** – Press Briefing room added. (Richard Nixon)
- **2010** – Electrical, heating and fire alarm system updates began. (Barack Obama)
- **2023** – Situation Room renovated. (Joe Biden)
- **2025** – East Wing renovations, Ballroom construction began. (Donald Trump)

