Involves Donald Trump

Ballroom donors with business before the government

C Alleged

The donor list and the EchoStar timeline come from a single outlet, the Washington Post, read here through Raw Story's summary. The Post says its reporting does not show the donations led to government action.

7 sources **1** primary record **7** with an archived copy

REACHED THE FAMILY

Dec 2025 month precision

$25,000,000 exact

Ergen's two $12.5 million gifts (December and February) per the Washington Post's leaked list; the list totals $333 million from 67 donations over $10,000. Ballroom money pays for a government building, not a family business; it is listed because donors had matters before the government. Union Pacific gave $2.5 million per the Post's list (Axios); its gift date is not known. It is not added to the amount.

FROM Charles Ergen (EchoStar co-founder) (individual)

CHANNEL donations to the president's White House ballroom project

OFFICIAL ACTION

May 2026 month precision

The FCC and Justice Department approved EchoStar's sale of spectrum licenses to AT&T, which was pending when Ergen gave; the FCC had ended an investigation of EchoStar in September 2025. Union Pacific's application to acquire Norfolk Southern is pending before the Surface Transportation Board, which accepted it on May 28, 2026 and set a schedule on Aug 18, 2026 (comments due Nov 18, 2026); no decision has been made

AGENCY Federal Communications Commission; Department of Justice

No day count is calculated because at least one of the two dates is known only to the month or year.

WHAT HAPPENED

Trump is building a ballroom at the White House paid for by private donations. A leaked internal list obtained by the Washington Post in October 2026 shows 67 donations over $10,000 totaling $333 million, about half from companies or executives with federal contracts. Apple and Nvidia top the list at $25 million each.

One example: Charles Ergen, co-founder of EchoStar, gave $12.5 million in December 2025 and another $12.5 million in February 2026. The FCC had ended an investigation of EchoStar in September 2025, and the company's sale of spectrum licenses to AT&T was

awaiting federal approval when he gave. The FCC and Justice Department approved the sale in May 2026. The Post also reported Salesforce chief Marc Benioff's pledges around an Army contract worth up to $5.6 billion.

The Post says its reporting does not show the donations led to any government action. The White House calls the conflict claims fake.

POTENTIAL VIOLATION

No specific violation is stated in the source.

STATUTE OR CLAUSE	None cited
RAISED BY	Sen. Richard Blumenthal, ranking member, Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations (letters to 14 undisclosed donors, Oct 20, 2026; answers due Oct 30)

This is a potential violation as described by the party named. No charge has been filed in this entry; the ledger does not call anything a crime below tier D.

THEIR RESPONSE

The White House dismissed "fake conflicts of interests" and said it would pursue those responsible for the leak. EchoStar declined to comment. Union Pacific declined to comment to FreightWaves in October 2025.

SOURCES

The Washington Post Oct 15, 2026 news
Secret documents reveal donors behind $330 million for Trump's ballroom
archived copy Not opened (paywall); read through Raw Story and Inquirer

Raw Story (summarizing the Washington Post) Oct 15, 2026 news
https://rawstory.com/trump-ballroom-2678090489
archived copy

The Philadelphia Inquirer Oct 15, 2026 news
https://www.inquirer.com/politics/comcast-jeff-yass-trump-ballroom-donors-20261015.html
archived copy

Sen. Richard Blumenthal, Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations Oct 20, 2026 congressional
WH Ballroom Letters from Sen. Blumenthal to Undisclosed Donors
archived copy

Axios Oct 15, 2026 news
Merger-hopeful Union Pacific donated $2.5M to White House ballroom: report
archived copy

Surface Transportation Board Aug 18, 2026 primary
STB Adopts Procedural Schedule for Consideration of UP-NS Merger; Removes Proceeding from Abeyance
archived copy

FreightWaves Oct 26, 2025 news
Is Union Pacific Trump ballroom donation Vena's merger knockout punch?
archived copy

Last verified Oct 24, 2026.

REACH CONGRESS

Committees with jurisdiction over this kind of action:

HOUSE House Administration, Oversight and Government Reform, Energy and Commerce

SENATE Rules and Administration, Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, Commerce Science and Transportation

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Both links go to the official finders. This page stores no contact information.