

Trump wanted Dulles Airport, Penn Station named after him — in exchange for releasing federal funds

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Trump has named several landmarks and initiatives after himself since he returned to office.



Travelers in Moynihan Train Hall at Penn Station in New York on Jan. 23. Funds for the Gateway project were previously halted when the government shut down last year. Adam Gray / Bloomberg via Getty Images

The Trump administration asked Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., for the Washington region's Dulles International Airport and New York's Penn Station to be named after President Donald Trump in exchange for releasing the federal funds required to build a long-delayed tunnel between New York and New Jersey, multiple sources told NBC News.

The administration [halted funding](#) for the \$16 billion Gateway project at the start of the federal government shutdown last fall. But even though the shutdown ended in November and the full appropriations packages passed this week, the administration has yet to release the money.

The massive \$16.1 billion project includes a new railway tunnel under the Hudson River that would connect New Jersey and New York. The project underwent years of delays and other problems, but it got a boost in 2024 when President Joe Biden's administration agreed to provide an additional \$6.9 billion.

White House budget director Russell Vought said at the time that he was stopping funding for infrastructure projects to "ensure" it wasn't used "on unconstitutional DEI principles."

The states of New York and New Jersey [have sued](#) to force the administration to release the funds, which had already been appropriated.

The Gateway project warned that it will be forced to halt construction soon if the money doesn't start flowing. If that happens, thousands of construction workers would be laid off.

Money for the project will [run out Friday](#).

The White House declined to comment, and Schumer's office did not respond to a request for comment. A source close to Schumer told NBC News that "there is nothing to trade."

"The president stopped the funding, and he can restart the funding with a snap of his fingers," the source said.

Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., who is a member of the Appropriations Committee, said in a statement Thursday that "this is ridiculous."

"These naming rights aren't tradable as part of any negotiations, and neither is the dignity of New Yorkers," Gillibrand said. "At a time when New Yorkers are already being crushed by high costs under the Trump tariffs, the president continues to put his own narcissism over the good-paying union jobs this project provides and the extraordinary economic impact the Gateway tunnel will bring."

"I demand that president put people first and unfreeze this project and all the others his administration has been holding hostage for his personal gain," she said.

Trump has sought to include his name on several landmarks and other initiatives. He launched a website Thursday that offered lower-cost prescription drugs, which is called TrumpRX.

He has also proposed a \$5 million pathway to permanent residence and eventual citizenship that he called the [Trump Gold Cards](#).

In December, Trump slapped his name on the [U.S. Institute of Peace](#), an agency his administration had dismantled. The same month, his handpicked board voted to add his [name to the Kennedy Center](#), prompting pushback from the Kennedy family, a lawsuit from an Ohio Democratic member of Congress and high-profile performance cancellations.

A Republican House member had already introduced a bill to rename Dulles after Trump, though [that bill](#) has been stagnant since last February, when it was referred to a subcommittee on aviation.

Still, it may not be the only attempt to add Trump's name to an airport. A state lawmaker in Florida has [proposed renaming Palm Beach International Airport](#) to include Trump's name, too.