United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 1, 2025

The Honorable Scott Bessent
Secretary
Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20220

Dear Secretary Bessent,

American lawmakers throughout history have reaffirmed the time-honored tradition of not circulating U.S. currency with images of currently elected officials. For centuries, minting sitting presidents on U.S. currency has been avoided to prevent the appearance that the U.S. is a monarchy or subject to a cult of personality. While the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia have featured images of former Queen Elizabeth II for decades, and now also feature King Charles III on their banknotes, the United States has never, and we should not now, mint circulating currency with images of currently elected officials.

Unfortunately, on November 18, 2025, the Citizens Coinage Advisory Committee (CCAC) published the semiquincentennial $1 coin design proposals, which includes three different portrait options of President Trump on the obverse design. [1] A portrait of President Trump is the only CCAC proposed design option for the semiquincentennial $1 coin, all but confirming the U.S. Mint intends to mint a circulating coin with a portrait of President Trump while he is in office. Putting an image of President Trump on a circulating coin is not only inconsistent with congressional intent to honor 250 years of United States' history, but also un-American. We should not depict a living, current president on U.S. currency.

Furthermore, historically, federal law forbids the inclusion of living people on U.S. currency. The *Contraction Act of 1866* (31 U.S.C. § 5114(b)) specifically states that "[o]nly the portrait of a deceased individual may appear on United States currency and securities."[2]The potential inclusion of President Trump's image on a semiquincentennial coin would violate 31 U.S.C. § 5114(b).

When Congress passed the *Circulating Collectible Coin Redesign Act* of 2020 (P.L. 116-330)[3], it was seen as an opportunity for the U.S. Mint to honor our Nation's Semiquincentennial by providing unique quarters and dollars related to our long history. The law clearly requires that the designs selected by you following your consultation with the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts

[1] "Semiquincentennial $1 Coin Design Descriptions," U.S. Mint, Citizens Coinage Advisory Committee (CCAC), November 18, 2025. https://www.ccac.gov/system/files/2025-11/SemiQ-1-Design-Descriptions.pdf
[2] 31 U.S.C. § 5114(Bb) (1982).
[3] Circulating Collectible Coin Redesign Act of 2020, Pub. Law No. 116-330, 134 Stat. 5101, 5112(y) (2021), https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/1923/text.

and the CCAC be "emblematic of the United States semiquincentennial, including at least one quarter dollar design emblematic of a woman's or women's contribution to the birth of the Nation or the Declaration of Independence or any other monumental moments in American History." It also requires that your design selections be made "in consultation with the United States Semiquincentennial Commission and with recommendations from the general public."[4] As the coin design featuring President Trump does not satisfy those requirements, you must reject it.

There is a time and place for Presidents to be honored with circulating currency. The *Presidential $1 Coin Act* (PL: 109-145)[5] would provide that honor upon the death of the President. That authority has expired. The *Presidential and First Spouse Coin Act of 2025* (S. 633) would automatically mint $1 coins for all presidents posthumously. All Presidents who have died, with the exception of the recently deceased President Jimmy Carter, have been honored with a $1 circulating coin.

In closing, we urge you to follow the intent of the law and choose designs for the Semiquincentennial quarter and dollar that honor images and concepts foundational to American history, not those honoring or promoting the current President of the United States.

Sincerely,

Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator

Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator

Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator

Ron Wyden
United States Senator

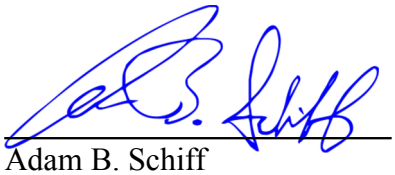
Andy Kim
United States Senator

Jack Reed
United States Senator

[4] *Id.* at 134.
[5] The Presidential $1 Coin Act of 2005, Pub. Law No. 109-145, 119 Stat. 2664 (2005), https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/PLAW-109publ145/pdf/PLAW-109publ145.pdf

Lisa Blunt Rochester
United States Senator

Ruben Gallego
United States Senator



Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator

CC: Dr. Peter van Alfen, Chairperson, Citizens Coinage Advisory Committee

Mr. Thomas Luebke, Secretary, U.S. Commission of Fine Arts

Rosie Rios, Chair, U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito, U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski, U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission

The Honorable Alex Padilla, U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen, U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission

The Honorable Robert Aderholt, U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission

The Honorable Maria Elvira Salazar, U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission

The Honorable Dwight Evans, U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission

The Honorable Bonnie Watson Coleman, U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission