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December 5, 2016

Donald J. Trump
President-elect of the United States
Trump Tower
725 5th Avenue
New York, NY 10022

Dear President-elect Trump,

I write to express my deep concern regarding reports that the Kingdom of Bahrain will host its 2016 Bahrain National Day celebration at the Trump International Hotel in Washington, D.C., this coming Wednesday, December 7th.

In less than two months, you will take the oath of office and be inaugurated as the 45th President of the United States. With the immense power that comes with the presidency, it is essential that the individual in that office is held to the highest standards of ethics and transparency. Each president must ensure that there is not even the appearance of impropriety and using the office for private gain. There must be no question about whether the president's decisions are influenced by foreign businesses and governments. It is therefore deeply troubling that the government of Bahrain would be spending untold sums of money at a hotel that you are leasing from the federal government to host a major public event intended to influence U.S. policy.

Bahrain is widely recognized as an increasingly repressive monarchy that has repeatedly imprisoned and tortured peaceful critics. As early as mid-December, Bahrain's courts could sentence human rights defender Nabeel Rajab to 15 years in prison for social media posts critical of their government. Peaceful opposition leader Sheikh Ali Salman may have his already unjust four-year prison sentence lengthened due to a re-trial on charges for which he was previously acquitted. Prominent human rights lawyer Mohamed al-Tajer faces more than five years in prison for alleged offenses that violate his right to free expression. Former leader of the Waad party, Ibrahim Shariff, confronts charges for expressing concerns in an interview with the Associated Press that a visit by Britain's Prince Charles would serve to "whitewash" human rights abuses. These are just a few examples; there are many more.

To protect the presidency from foreign influence, I urge you to take the following immediate steps:

- Reject all business income from the Bahraini monarchy and any other foreign government.

- Release all correspondence between the Bahraini monarchy and your businesses, including price negotiations and final contracts.
- Release all correspondence between any foreign government and any of your businesses since you announced your campaign for president.

The American people deserve a president and White House that will act solely in our country's interests, not those of any foreign government or business. Your private commercial dealings with repressive governments endanger this fundamental expectation of the president and deeply trouble many who care about human rights. I urge you to immediately and completely end your business dealings with the Bahraini and other foreign governments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jim McGovern", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

James P. McGovern
Member of Congress