



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on June 5, 2018

President Disinvites Eagles to White House Ceremony Over Anthem Protest

President Trump cancelled a planned June 5 White House ceremony honoring the Super Bowl champion Philadelphia Eagles after many of the team's staff and players decided not to attend.

"The Philadelphia Eagles are unable to come to the White House with their full team to be celebrated tomorrow," read a June 4 White House statement. "They disagree with their President because he insists that they proudly stand for the National Anthem, hand on heart, in honor of the great men and women of our military and the people of our country. The Eagles wanted to send a smaller delegation, but the 1,000 fans planning to attend the event deserve better."



The statement went on to say that the fans "are still invited to the White House to be part of a different type of ceremony — one that will honor our great country, pay tribute to the heroes who fight to protect it, and loudly and proudly play the National Anthem. I will be there at 3 p.m. with the United States Marine Band and the United States Army Chorus to celebrate America."

In a follow-up Twitter post, the president wrote that the entire Eagles team had been invited to the White House. "Unfortunately, only a small number of players decided to come, and we canceled the event," Trump wrote. "Staying in the Locker Room for the playing of our National Anthem is as disrespectful to our country as kneeling. Sorry!"

The president has been vocal in his criticism of players who kneel during the National Anthem at NFL football games. He applauded the NFL's recent policy update requiring players to stand for the Anthem, telling Fox News: "You have to stand proudly for the National Anthem or you shouldn't be playing. You shouldn't be there."

Following the Eagles' Super Bowl victory, a number of players stated that they would not attend any White House function if invited. However, quarterback Carson Wentz (shown, right) said he had planned to attend the June 5 ceremony, adding that he didn't consider it a political matter. Additionally, Eagles owner Jeffrey Lurie and coach Doug Pederson had both planned on attending prior to Trump's disinvite, and ESPN reported that "a lot of people in the Eagles organization are very disappointed."

Among those criticizing the president for backing out of the ceremony was Philadelphia mayor Jim Kenney, who said that disinviting his city's team "only proves that our president is not a true patriot, but a fragile egomaniac obsessed with crowd size and afraid of the embarrassment of throwing a party to which no one wants to attend."

In its own statement following Trump's decision to cancel the White House ceremony, the Philadelphia



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Eagles organization said only: "It has been incredibly thrilling to celebrate our first Super Bowl Championship. Watching the entire Eagles community come together has been an inspiration. We are truly grateful for all of the support we have received and we are looking forward to continuing our preparations for the 2018 season."

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