

# Trump Unveils Plans for ‘Golden Dome’ Missile Defense System

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**By Erica L. Green**  
**New York Times**

President Donald Trump unveiled plans for his “Golden Dome” missile defense shield on Tuesday, predicting that the ambitious plan to expand the country’s air defense system would be completed by the end of his term.

U.S. officials have said the Golden Dome is necessary to protect against “catastrophic attacks,” but [experts say](#) it faces logistical and financial hurdles.

The project has been a priority for Mr. Trump since he took office. [He promised during the campaign](#) to build a defense system against foreign attacks similar to Israel’s Iron Dome, with air defense capabilities that intercept rockets and missiles.

The United States is more than 400 times larger than Israel.

Mr. Trump has said the project will cost \$175 billion, although the Congressional Budget Office said it would likely cost far more, as much as \$542 billion. The president said on Tuesday that the Golden Dome would get \$25 billion in funding from his tax cut and spending bill, which has yet to pass Congress, and that Canada had expressed interest in taking part in the program, and could share in some of its cost.

Mr. Trump said he was confident that the United States could complete the project in about three years and be “fully operational before the end of my term.” He called it “as close to perfect as you can have, in terms of real production.”

“Once fully constructed, the Golden Dome will be capable of intercepting missiles even if they are launched from other sides of the world, and even if they are launched from space, and we will have the best system ever built,” Mr. Trump said.

In a January [executive order](#) titled “Iron Dome of America,” Mr. Trump gave the Pentagon 60 days to submit details for the plan, which included accelerating development of U.S. hypersonic missiles and “space-based interceptors.”

Administration officials said that Mr. Trump’s project, which the Pentagon named the Golden Dome in a nod to Mr. Trump’s favorite color and metal, would be a next-generation military system designed to guard against a variety of ballistic, hypersonic

and cruise missiles, which have been [successfully deployed by adversaries](#) such as Russia.

Mr. Trump's order said that the possibility of those and other advanced aerial attacks "remains the most catastrophic threat facing the United States."

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, who joined Mr. Trump in the Oval Office on Tuesday, called the project a "game changer" and "a generational investment in the security of America and America."

Mr. Trump also announced that Gen. Michael Guetlein, the vice chief of space operations at the Space Force, would be overseeing the project.

Mr. Guetlein said during the Oval Office announcement that while the United States has been focusing on peace overseas, adversaries had been modernizing their nuclear forces, and building their ballistic capabilities — including hypersonic missiles capable of attacking the United States within an hour and traveling at 6,000 miles an hour.

"It is time that we change that equation and start doubling down on the protection of the homeland," Mr. Guetlein said.

But shielding the United States from such attacks presents [technical challenges](#). The physics of defending America's vast territory against an incoming intercontinental missile is wildly more complicated than protecting Israel against the smaller rocket attacks it faces.

Experts also said that the cost of building one for the United States could prove a heavy financial burden. While Mr. Trump stands a chance at getting the \$25 billion in the spending bill under consideration in Congress, [estimates from the Congressional Budget Office](#) found that it could cost \$161 billion to \$542 billion to build the system.

The project gives Mr. Trump a chance to realize a vision of former President Ronald Reagan's. In the 1980s, Reagan spent billions to build a defense system, known as "Star Wars," against potential nuclear attack. The initiative ultimately failed because of technological and budget challenges.

Mr. Trump said that he didn't think his Golden Dome would suffer the same fate.

"Ronald Reagan wanted it many years ago, but they didn't have the technology," he said. "But it's something we're going to have. We're going to have it at the highest level."

*David E. Sanger contributed reporting.*