

United States Senate

July 18, 2024

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden Jr.
President
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden:

I have been hearing from Floridians and folks across America asking questions about what is happening with the federal government's investigation of the assassination attempt on President Donald J. Trump, the murder of an innocent American and serious injury of others during the rally in Butler, Pennsylvania, on Saturday, July 13th. There is a lot of information out there, some real and some not, and when there is a lack of transparency, people naturally assume the worst. I write today to urge you and your administration to take every action necessary to share updates with President Trump, Congress and the American people, and answer questions about what happened, who is being held accountable and how we make sure it never happens again. Now is the time for absolute transparency and accountability.

While we are grateful beyond words for the heroic actions of the Secret Service agents and law enforcement officers on the ground who put themselves in danger that day to protect President Trump, it is now clear to every American that there were gross failures in leadership of the U.S. Secret Service (USSS), Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and other federal law enforcement agencies that led to the assassination attempt, murder and severe injuries that occurred at this event. It is a miracle that President Trump is alive and well, but absolutely inexcusable that the deranged would-be assassin had a direct line of sight to the former president and the leading candidate for President of the United States.

Just hours after the shooting, I called on Chairman Gary Peters to immediately hold a U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs (HSGAC) hearing, before August 1st, with testimony from these agencies, as well as the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and deliver the answers that we as U.S. senators and the American people demand and deserve from our government. I am glad that Chairman Peters and Ranking Member Rand Paul have announced that HSGAC will be conducting a bipartisan investigation into this matter, but you must also take daily action to show accountability to the American people. That is why I have asked, and I implore you to ask, that FBI Director Christopher Wray, USSS Director Kimberly

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Cheatle, and DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas hold a daily public press conference to share updates and answer questions from the American people.

It is imperative that the American people know that the U.S. government is answering questions and holding people accountable for the failures that led to this totally preventable tragedy. Therefore, I ask that you immediately answer the following questions:

1. Are you and/or members of your administration providing regular updates to President Trump regarding the investigation?
2. Have you directed USSS Director Kimberly Cheatle, DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas and FBI Director Christopher Wray to hold a daily press conference to update the press and American people on this investigation and answer questions?
3. Has anyone employed by the U.S. government had disciplinary action taken against them, including being placed on leave, for action or inaction connected to the assassination attempt, murder and severe injuries that occurred on July 13th?

I also ask that you instruct USSS Director Cheatle to immediately answer the following questions, and ask that public responses are provided where possible and classified responses are provided where necessary:

1. If the buck stops with you, and this has clearly been established as a colossal USSS breakdown and national embarrassment of historic proportion, why haven't you resigned?
2. Please detail the protocol for stationing USSS personnel, including counter sniper teams, on graded roofs.
3. It is well documented that the would-be assailant was identified at least 20 minutes before any shots were fired. What transpired from the time that a shooter was identified to shots being fired at the rally?
4. Was the Trump campaign made aware of the increase in credible security threats received by the USSS prior to the rally in Butler, Pennsylvania?
5. Why was President Trump allowed to take the stage after USSS and law enforcement on-site identified, but had not yet neutralized, a credible security threat?
6. Was there a standing shoot-to-kill or shoot-to-wound/maim order given to USSS teams and participating law enforcement for the rally in Butler, Pennsylvania?
7. What was the use-of-force policy and was there a stand-down order given to any law enforcement officer at the July 13th rally in Butler, Pennsylvania?

8. Why didn't the USSS employ the use of drones or other airborne assets to survey the area during the July 13th rally in Butler, Pennsylvania?
9. Was the building that the shooter fired from identified during the USSS advance as a location presenting a security risk?
10. Were any USSS or other U.S. government law enforcement resources diverted from the outdoor Trump rally in Butler, Pennsylvania, to the indoor event held by First Lady Jill Biden in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on July 13th?
11. Have any requests for additional protective resources by the Trump campaign been denied or gone unanswered since November 15, 2022?
12. What is the USSS standard operating procedure (SOP) for an outdoor rally involving a former president? What is the SOP for a presumptive nominee and leading candidate for President of the United States? How does that SOP differ from that used for a sitting president?
13. Was the SOP for protection of a former president followed and correctly executed during the July 13th rally in Butler, Pennsylvania?
14. If there were deviations from the standard SOP for an outdoor rally held by a former president, please detail those deviations and the reasons for each.
15. Please list the law enforcement agencies that were involved in protective services for the July 13th rally in Butler, Pennsylvania, and how many officers from each of these agencies were on site, both inside and outside of the USSS perimeter.
16. Was the number of law enforcement personnel present at the rally in Butler, Pennsylvania, more or less than the average number of law enforcement personnel present at previous outdoor rallies held by President Trump?
17. Was the number of USSS agents present at the rally in Butler, Pennsylvania, more or less than the average number of USSS agents present at previous outdoor rallies held by President Trump?
18. Which law enforcement organizations (USSS, State, Local) were responsible for each security ring?

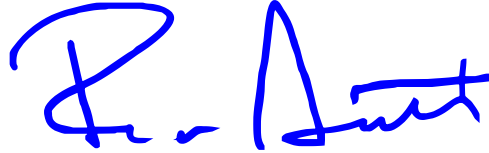
I expect to receive an immediate response with answers to these questions and hope that you share my belief that maximum transparency and accountability are absolutely critical to establishing and maintaining trust between the U.S. government and the American people following this historic security failure and tragedy. As I have stated multiple times since Saturday, the security of our Republic is being questioned and we, as a nation, deserve answers.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rick Scott". The signature is stylized with a large initial "R" and a prominent "S".

Rick Scott

United States Senator

Cc: The Honorable Kimberly Cheatle, Director, U.S. Secret Service

The Honorable Christopher Wray, Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas, Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security