

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2509

July 19, 2024

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Mayorkas:

I write to raise concerns brought to me by whistleblowers about your department's stunning failure to protect former President Trump on July 13, 2024. As Secretary of Homeland Security (DHS), you are ultimately responsible for your agency and its components, including the U.S. Secret Service (USSS).

Whistleblowers who have direct knowledge of the event have approached my office. According to the allegations, the July 13 rally was considered to be a 'loose' security event. For example, detection canines were not used to monitor entry and detect threats in the usual manner. Individuals without proper designations were able to gain access to backstage areas. Department personnel did not appropriately police the security buffer around the podium and were also not stationed at regular intervals around the event's security perimeter.

In addition, whistleblower allegations suggest the majority of DHS officials were not in fact USSS agents but instead drawn from the department's Homeland Security Investigations (HSI). This is especially concerning given that HSI agents were unfamiliar with standard protocols typically used at these types of events, according to the allegations.

As a Member of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, which has oversight jurisdiction over your department, I will continue to investigate your department's role in the staggering security failures on July 13. Unfortunately, your department has not been appropriately forthcoming with Members of Congress—abruptly ending the only call with USSS before most senators could even ask a question. This is completely unacceptable and contrary to the public's interest in transparency.

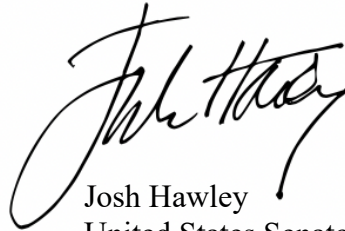
Instead, we have learned more from whistleblowers than your department's officials. I will continue to protect the anonymity and confidentiality of all who contact my office and ensure that they receive the full protections under the law to which they are entitled. So that my office can continue its investigation into the events of July 13, 2024, please provide the following information no later than 7 days from now:

1. How did DHS determine to staff the event, including any decision to rely on state or local officers?

2. What percentage of the DHS agents at the event were from HSI rather than USSS? Were a majority of officers at the event drawn from HSI or other DHS components, rather than USSS? If so, why?
3. Were HSI agents properly trained in staffing these types of events?
4. Did gaps exist in the security perimeter, and were the usual protocols followed for the use of canines and magnetometers?
5. Were agents not appropriately stationed around the podium?
6. Were the standard protocols followed for issuing designated pins to vetted personnel that are allowed backstage?
7. How long did agents physically spend on the ground surveying the site before the event? Did any paperwork obligations prevent a longer and more robust site survey?

I await your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Josh Hawley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Josh Hawley
United States Senator

CC:

The Honorable Kimberly A. Cheatle
Director
U.S. Secret Service
245 Murray Ln SW, Building T-5
Washington, D.C. 20223