

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2509

April 27, 2026

Honorable Rand Paul
Chairman
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
United States Senate
340 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-6050

Dear Chairman Paul:

On the evening of April 25, a crazed gunman charged past security at the Washington Hilton and attempted to attack attendees of the White House Correspondents' Dinner, including President Trump and members of his cabinet. Thankfully, the threat was swiftly neutralized by the Secret Service; one brave officer was injured in the response. But this latest incident—the third apparent attempt on President Trump's life in less than two years—raises questions about presidential security arrangements, potential resource needs, and the degree to which reforms previously proposed by Congress have been adopted. I urge you to convene a hearing on this topic in the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee (HSGAC).

Information is still emerging, but the Justice Department believes the shooter was targeting the President and has charged him with attempted assassination.¹ We know from public reporting that the assailant was armed with multiple weapons, including knives, a handgun, and a shotgun.² And although he was not able to gain access to the ballroom where the event was being held, the shooter did apparently manage to breach a checkpoint area, and appears to have fired at least once before being subdued by Secret Service agents.³

As you know, HSGAC's jurisdiction includes the Secret Service, and the Committee has historically played a critical role in presidential security matters. Following the attempted assassination of President Trump in Butler, Pennsylvania on July 13, 2024, HSGAC conducted a bipartisan investigation, held a public hearing,⁴ produced detailed reports documenting serious deficiencies (including communications failures, technical issues, and resource shortfalls) and developed proposals to address these.⁵ This was an important part of a broader effort to understand

¹ <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/todd-blanche-suspect-white-house-correspondents-dinner-target/>;
<https://nypost.com/2026/04/26/us-news/whcd-gunman-cole-allen-sent-anti-trump-manifesto-to-family-just-before-opening/>

² <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/04/26/us/politics/what-we-know-white-house-correspondents-dinner-shooting.html>

³ *Ibid.*

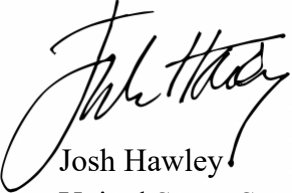
⁴ <https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/hearings/examination-of-the-security-failures-leading-to-the-assassination-attempt-on-former-president-trump-2/>

⁵ <https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/media/dems/peters-paul-blumenthal-and-johnson-release-bipartisan-report-examining-u-s-secret-service-security-failures-and-assassination-attempt-on-former-president-trump/>

and fix what had gone wrong. The Department of Homeland Security itself convened an independent review panel, which published a report offering various reforms in October 2024.⁶ And my office also conducted a separate investigation, using whistleblower-provided information to identify numerous intelligence and leadership failures.⁷

Given these recent events, I believe it is necessary for the Committee to convene a hearing to assess the adequacy of presidential security arrangements and resources in the current threat environment. A hearing can review the degree to which post-Butler reforms have been implemented, the efficacy of interagency coordination and protocols, and the resource needs of all relevant agencies to sustain appropriate protection for the president and members of his Cabinet. The American people deserve full transparency following yet another apparent assassination attempt of President Trump.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Josh Hawley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "H".

Josh Hawley
United States Senator

⁶ https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/2024-10/24_1017_opa-Independent-Review-Panel-Final-Report-and-Accompanying-Materials.pdf

⁷ <https://www.hawley.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Hawley-Whistleblower-Report-re-USSS-Failures-2024-09-16.pdf>