

July 25, 2024

Acting Director Ronald L. Rowe, Jr.
United States Secret Service
245 Murray Drive, SW, Building T5
Washington, DC 20223

Free and fair elections are the cornerstone of our republic. By protecting elected leaders and candidates for political office, the Secret Service plays a vital role in safeguarding American elections and the voices of American citizens. On July 13, 2024, the Secret Service failed this fundamental mission by allowing a preventable assassination attempt on President Donald Trump.

In the 12 days since this assassination attempt which killed Corey Comperatore, critically injured two others, and struck President Donald Trump, the Secret Service has obfuscated the decisions and failures that led to this stunning operational failure. The American people deserve transparency. I must have a thorough explanation of how and why the Secret Service allowed an assassination attempt on President Donald Trump and what steps the agency is taking to ensure such a tragedy does not happen again.

Specifically, I must know how a shooter, acting alone, was allowed to climb a roof with direct line of sight to President Trump completely undeterred by the Secret Service. Prior to the rally, law enforcement and spectators flagged the gunman as suspicious. During the rally, the shooter engaged in suspicious, threatening behavior and was seen using a rangefinder to measure the distance to his target: President Trump. Despite this and law enforcement alerting the Secret Service to the threat at 5:51 p.m. and the sniper team being informed at 5:53 p.m., no action was taken to halt the rally or protect President Trump and bystanders.

When questioned about this threat to President Trump and the Secret Service's responsibility, Former Director Cheatle deflected blame. She was wrong. The Secret Service neglected its foundational duty, failing to secure the site of the rally and slow-walking a response to an active threat on the former President. As a direct result, an innocent bystander was murdered and three, including the Republican nominee for President, were injured.

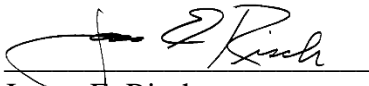
While appropriate that Director Cheatle resigned, this incident nonetheless raises serious questions about the effectiveness and decision-making of the Secret Service's leadership and protocols. I request detailed answers to the following questions:

1. Did the Secret Service identify the structure from which the assassin shot as a potential threat? If it was, who and why was it decided to be outside the Secret Service's security perimeter for President Trump's rally?

2. Whistleblowers have reported that a Secret Service agent abandoned their post on the gunman's roof due to excessive heat. If this allegation is accurate, why did Secret Service leave their station?
3. Did the Secret Service follow standard protocol when it came to the number of agents for this event?
4. Despite awareness of an active threat to President Trump, why did the Secret Service permit him to take the stage?
5. Will the Secret Service provide Congress with all relevant documents and communications related to the Secret Service protection for President Trump's campaign rally?

I will closely monitor your investigation and expects decisive action to rectify the Secret Service's failures and security protocols. The safety of our nation's leaders must be ensured, and the confidence of the American people must be restored.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Risch", written over a horizontal line.

James E. Risch
United States Senator