



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on July 22, 2024

WaPo: Secret Service Denied Trump Campaign Requests For More Protection

The near assassination of Donald Trump on July 13 at a campaign rally in Butler, Pennsylvania, wasn't just what Secret Service Director Kimberly Cheatle called a "colossal failure" before the House Oversight Committee this morning.

It might also have been the result of the agency's refusing to fortify the security around Trump.

On Saturday, [The Washington Post reported](#) that the agency "repeatedly" refused for two years to provide extra security for Trump.

Thus far, Cheatle has adamantly refused to resign despite the catastrophic failure. But the latest blow to the agency's credibility under her leadership might well end her career.



AP Images
Kimberly Cheatle

Multiple Rejections

Cheatle's ordeal began when Thomas Matthew Crooks, 20, fired multiple rounds from an AR-15 at Trump from a rooftop about 150 yards away. Crooks hit Trump's ear, killed firefighter Corey Comperatore, and wounded two others.

The agency's failures were legion. Agents encountered [Crooks when](#) he entered the Butler Farm Show Grounds with a rangefinder. Police photographed him before the assassination attempt. Crooks [hid the rifle](#) at the site before the shooting.

[Cheatle told](#) ABC News that personnel weren't stationed on the roof from which Crooks fired because it was too steep.

And now, the [Post has revealed](#), the agency refused Trump's requests for extra protection.

"Agents charged with protecting the former president requested magnetometers and more agents to screen attendees at sporting events and other large public gatherings Trump attended, as well as additional snipers and specialty teams at other outdoor events," four sources "familiar with the requests" told the newspaper:

The requests, which have not been previously reported, were sometimes denied by senior officials at the agency, who cited various reasons, including a lack of resources at an agency that has long struggled with staffing shortages, they said.

Those rejections — in response to requests that were several times made in writing — led to long-standing tensions that pitted Trump, his top aides and his security detail against Secret



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Service leadership, as Trump advisers privately fretted that the vaunted security agency was not doing enough to protect the former president.

Worse still, the agency denied earlier claims that it refused the extra protection, but “is now acknowledging some may have been rejected.”

Indeed, such was the agency’s stonewalling Trump that Cheatle denied refusing extra security when she met with Trump campaign people in Wisconsin, the newspaper continued.

As well, agency spokesman Anthony Guglielmi flat-out lied about it when asked, the [Post explained](#):

“The assertion that a member of the former president’s security team requested additional security resources that the U.S. Secret Service or the Department of Homeland Security rebuffed is absolutely false,” said Anthony Guglielmi, a spokesman for the Secret Service, in a statement on the day after the shooting.

After receiving detailed questions from *The Washington Post*, Guglielmi said the agency had learned new information indicating the agency’s headquarters may have in fact denied some requests for additional security from Trump’s detail and was reviewing documentation to understand the specific interactions better.

Though the event in Butler was not one of the events for which the agency denied increased protection, it did deny more protection for an equally dangerous rally venue in Pickens, South Carolina, the *Post* revealed.

Trump was surrounded by big buildings, and the campaign requested and was denied countersniper teams.

“The Pickens event was one of several in which Trump’s team was denied more tactical support,” sources told the *Post*. “Trump’s detail was told Secret Service headquarters had determined they could not provide the resources after the detail made an extensive argument for why the teams were needed.”

The Secret Service and Trump’s campaign people also squabbled about security at the Republican National Convention in Milwaukee. “The relationship grew so acrimonious that senior Republicans repeatedly sought meetings with Secret Service leadership in Washington after battling with agents on the ground over security and logistics,” the *Post* revealed.

Lack of Resources

The *Post* also explained that the agency has been troubled with “staffing shortages” for more than 10 years and was hit with embarrassing scandals during the Obama and Trump administrations.

“Bill Gage, a former Secret Service agent who served on presidential protection and counterassault teams during the Bush and Obama administrations, said the agency is always drowning in far more requests and events than it can possibly handle with its hiring limits, and that leads to headquarters denying requests even more frequently during the busy campaign season,” the [Post continued](#):

“I hate to dumb it down this much but it is a simple case of supply and demand. The requests get turned down routinely,” Gage said. “A director has to finally come forward to say we are way understaffed and we cannot possibly continue with this zero fail mission without a significantly bigger budget.”



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An official confessed to the *Post* that the agency doesn't have the resources to protect Trump as it did when he was president.

When Will She Resign?

For her part, Cheatle has been under fire since the day of the shooting. Her claim that the slope of the roof was too steep for agents [received richly-deserved ridicule](#).

[Also under scrutiny](#) is her 30×30 initiative that would put women in 30 percent of positions at the agency by 2030.

Republicans have pressured her to resign, and continued to do so at this morning's hearing.

Under tough questioning from GOP Representative Nancy Mace of South Carolina, Cheatle admitted that Crooks's getting a clear shot at Trump was a "colossal failure."

Cheatle also confessed that no one at the agency has been fired.



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