



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on July 19, 2024

Hawley: Whistleblowers Confirm Lax Security at Trump Rally

Whistleblowers have revealed that security at the rally in Butler, Pennsylvania, where an assassin [almost murdered](#) former President Donald Trump, was “loose” and that most of the personnel on Trump’s protective detail were not Secret Service (USSS) agents.

In a letter to Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, GOP Senator Josh Hawley of Missouri explained that multiple whistleblowers have contacted his office.

Hawley’s information supports what former Secret Service agent Dan Bongino told Fox News’ Jesse Watters early this week. Bongino said sources within the agency told him Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) agents composed the majority of Trump’s detail.

If true, the information is another blow to disgraced Secret Service Director Kimberly Cheatle, who is under subpoena to appear before the U.S. House Oversight Committee on Monday.

The Letter

The shocking allegation that Trump received substandard if not incompetent protection landed in Mayorkas’ lap today.

“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,” Hawley wrote:

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.

More disturbingly, the Secret Service didn’t deploy its best agents to protect Trump. Instead, it deployed HSI agents. They were the “majority,” [Hawley wrote](#).

“This is especially concerning given that HSI agents were unfamiliar with standard protocols typically used at these types of events, according to the allegations,” he continued.



AP Images
Josh Hawley



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Noting that DHS has been uncooperative with lawmakers about the Secret Service's disastrous performance at the rally, Hawley wrote to Mayorkas that he has "learned more from whistleblowers than your department's officials."

Hawley demanded to know the following in seven days:

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?

Bongino's Allegations

Ex-agent Bongino, a strong supporter of Trump, [had earlier gone over with Watters](#) much of what whistleblowers later told Hawley.

Only a few agents were Secret Service he said, and the protective detail apparently lacked the high-tech surveillance equipment it needed.

Most of the agents were "were temp HSI folks," Bongino said:

That's not what they do specifically.... We do protection and we're trained for that.... I'm also hearing that the countersniper team ... had a problem seeing over the elevation. That's why they didn't engage right away.

Bongino also said the site lacked aerial and high-tech surveillance equipment:

Where the hell was the aerial visual support? Why was there no helicopter? Why was there no drone? Why was there no FLIR? Why was there no thermal forward-looking infrared? How the hell is the crowd acting as the freaking counter-surveillance operation?

Trump was nearly murdered when would-be assassin Thomas Matthew Crooks fired from less than 200 yards away from a roof with a clear line of sight. Crooks only zinged Trump's ear, but he killed fireman Corey Comperatore and wounded two others. A Secret Service sniper killed Crooks with a head shot.



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Cheatle Subpoenaed

Cheatle is scheduled for a turn in the hot seat on Monday to answer questions from House Oversight Committee members.

Committee chief James Comer (R-Ky.) requested Cheatle's voluntary appearance. However, her superiors at DHS began running interference to block the testimony, [Comer wrote](#) on July 17.

"DHS officials appear to have intervened and your attendance is now in question," he wrote. As well, the committee hasn't received "meaningful updates," he complained. He also said DHS is stonewalling with a "lack of transparency and failure to cooperate."

Thus did the committee deliver a subpoena to command Cheatle's appearance.

[Subpoena-Binder-Dir.-Cheatle-7.17.2024Download](#)

Among the questions Cheatle will be asked is how Crooks got into position to fire at Trump.

[Multiple reports say](#) that Crooks was spotted repeatedly in the hours before Trump spoke.

[Cheatle told ABC News](#) that no agents were stationed on the roof from which Crooks fired because it was too steep to man safely.

She might also have to explain [her crackpot plan](#) to shoehorn women into 30 percent of positions at the Secret Service by 2030.



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