

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 13, 2024

VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

The Honorable Lloyd Austin
Secretary
U.S. Department of Defense

Dear Secretary Austin:

My ongoing investigation into the July 13, 2024 assassination attempt against former President Donald J. Trump as well as a recently uncovered plot by Asif Merchant, a Pakistani Native with ties to Iran, to assassinate former President Trump and other high-ranking U.S. government officials has exposed significant security weaknesses and outright failures in how key U.S. agencies ensure the safety and security of U.S. leaders.¹ I write to you today to learn more about what support and resources the Department of Defense (DOD) is providing the Secret Service.

On August 29, 2024 Deputy Pentagon Press Secretary Sabrina Singh said DOD “has approved a request by the Department of Homeland Security [DHS] to provide assistance to the Secret Service for presidential and vice-presidential candidates during the 2024 campaigns through Inauguration Day 2025.”² Press Secretary Singh also stated that you directed “the commander of U.S. Northern Command to plan, provide, and execute increased support to the United States Secret Service at various locations across the United States during the 2024 election campaigns”.³ Further, Anthony Guglielmi, U.S. Secret Service Chief of Communications reportedly stated DOD is providing “additional assistance including logistics, transportation, and communications through the 2024 campaign season.”⁴ The American public and Congress deserve full transparency into what assistance DOD is providing to the Secret Service to ensure the safety of protectees during 2024 campaign season.

¹ Letter from Sen. Charles E. Grassley, Ranking Member, Senate Budget Committee to the Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas, Secretary, Department of Homeland Security and USSS Director regarding the Trump Assassination Attempt (Jul. 16, 2024), https://www.grassley.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/grassley_to_dhs_usss_-_trump_assassination_attempt.pdf; United States Attorney’s Office Eastern District of New York Press Release. Pakistani National with Ties to Iran Charged in Connection with Foiled Plot to Assassinate a Politician or U.S. Government Officials (Aug. 6, 2024). <https://www.justice.gov/usao-edny/pr/pakistani-national-ties-iran-charged-connection-foiled-plot-assassinate-politician-or> (Last accessed: Sep. 11, 2024); Jasmine Baehr, *Grassley releases new details of Iran-backed assassination plots against Trump, Biden and others*, Fox News (Sep. 5, 2024) <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/iran-backed-new-details-assassination-plot-against-trump-others>.

² C. Todd Lopez, DOD News. *DOD Will Provide Homeland With Support During Presidential Campaigns* (Aug. 29, 2024). <https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/3890884/dod-will-provide-homeland-with-support-during-presidential-campaigns/>. (Last accessed: Sep. 6, 2024).

³ Mike Brest, Washington Examiner. *Austin Approves DHS Request for Pentagon to Aid Secret Service Presidential Campaign Security* (Aug. 29, 2024). <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/campaigns/presidential/3138185/austin-approves-dhs-request-pentagon-secret-service-presidential-campaign-security/>. (last accessed: Sep. 6, 2024).

⁴ Lorraine Taylor, Fox News. *DOD providing Secret Service ‘additional assistance’ in wake of Trump assassination attempt* (Aug. 29, 2024). <https://www.foxnews.com/us/dod-providing-secret-service-additional-assistance-wake-trump-assassination-attempt>. (Last accessed Sep. 6, 2024).

Accordingly, so that Congress may continue its independent oversight over procedures to ensure the security of presidential and vice-presidential candidates during the 2024 campaign season and understand inter-agency cooperation, please provide answers to the following questions no later than September 27, 2024:

- 1) Please provide, in detail, all resources that DOD will be providing DHS including technologies (such as unmanned aerial systems), information and intelligence sharing, logistics, transportation, and communications equipment.
- 2) With respect to personnel assignments, answer the following:
 - a. Has DOD placed any personnel on Temporary Duty (TDY) with DHS and Secret Service? If so, please provide the number of DOD personnel assigned TDY and their DOD service branch.
 - b. For each TDY assignment please provide information on: the duration of each assignment, the purpose of each TDY, whether overtime pay is capped, and whether or not it is a reimbursable detail. If it is a reimbursable detail, please provide the funding agency.
- 3) Please explain, in detail, if DOD will provide support in advance of and during events and whether the support will encompass all protectee campaign visits during the 2024 campaign season.
- 4) Is DOD able to meet all of DHS' requests for support during the 2024 campaigns through Inauguration Day 2025?
- 5) Is DOD allotting equal resources to all presidential and vice-presidential candidates? If not, how does DOD determine the resources it plans to provide?
- 6) What support and resources is DOD providing to joint government efforts tracking threats from Iran and other foreign adversaries, including providing intelligence and resources to the FBI and Secret Service?
- 7) Please provide, in detail, records on all financial costs associated with DOD providing support and resources to the Secret Service.⁵

⁵ “Records” include any written, recorded, or graphic material of any kind, including letters, memoranda, reports, notes, electronic data (emails, email attachments, and any other electronically created or stored information), calendar entries, inter-office communications, meeting minutes, phone/voice mail or recordings/records of verbal communications, and drafts (whether they resulted in final documents).

Secretary Austin
September 13, 2024
Page 3 of 3

Thank you for your prompt review and response. If you have any questions, please contact Brian Randolph and Silvia Symber on my Committee Staff at (202) 224-0642.

Sincerely,


Charles E Grassley
Ranking Member
Committee on the Budget