

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 16, 2024

VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

The Honorable Merrick B. Garland
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice

The Honorable Christopher A. Wray
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation

Dear Attorney General Garland and Director Wray:

I write today about the July 13, 2024, assassination attempt against former President Trump in Butler, Pennsylvania and the subsequent investigations into the incident.¹ That day, former President Trump was almost killed, one individual was killed and two others were critically injured in this heinous attack.² Following the assassination attempt, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) stated that it “assumed the role of the lead federal law enforcement agency in the investigation of the incident involving former President Donald Trump that occurred earlier today in Butler, Pennsylvania... Special agents of the FBI Pittsburgh Field Office responded immediately, to include crisis response team members and evidence response technicians.”³ Further, on July 14, 2024, Attorney General Garland said that he “directed the FBI, the [Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives] ATF, the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Western District of Pennsylvania, and the [Justice] Department’s National Security Division to bring every available resource to bear on this investigation.”⁴ Secretary Mayorkas reported on July 13, 2024 that “DHS and the Secret Service are working with law enforcement partners to ... investigate the shooting.”⁵ To-date, the lack of information from your agencies is unacceptable. As I stated to DHS and the USSS, you owe Congress and the American people full and complete transparency in this matter.

As DOJ and the FBI work on investigations and coordinate with other agencies, I request that you provide my staff with rolling updates on your work. This is in addition to any initial member-level briefings that your agencies provide. Along with the rolling updates, please provide a copy of any report produced on the investigative findings. It is critical that a full and thorough review be conducted regarding this attack and

¹ FBI National Press Office, *FBI Statement on Incident in Butler Pennsylvania*, (Update: July 14, 2024, published July 13, 2024). <https://www.fbi.gov/news/press-releases/fbi-statement-on-incident-in-butler-pennsylvania>.

² Sarah Rumpf-Whitten, Brooke Singman, and Lucas Y. Tomlinson, *Assassination attempt on Trump at Pennsylvania rally leaves 2 hurt, 2 dead, including shooter*, Fox News (Jul. 13, 2024) <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/assassination-attempt-trump-pennsylvania-rally-2-hurt-2-dead-including-shooter>.

³ FBI National Press Office, *FBI Statement on Incident in Butler Pennsylvania*, (Update: July 14, 2024, published July 13, 2024). <https://www.fbi.gov/news/press-releases/fbi-statement-on-incident-in-butler-pennsylvania>.

⁴ DOJ Office of Public Affairs, *Attorney General Merrick B. Garland Addresses Attempted Assassination of Former President Donald J. Trump*, Speech (July 14, 2024). <https://www.justice.gov/opa/speech/attorney-general-merrick-b-garland-addresses-attempted-assassination-former-president>.

⁵ Department of Homeland Security, *Statement from Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro N. Mayorkas*, Press Release (July 13, 2024) <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2024/07/13/statement-secretary-homeland-security-alejandro-n-mayorkas>.

that the Congress be given information with respect to the scope of the investigation and its results. In the past, Justice Department personnel have destroyed records relating to the investigations they had worked on. For example, on September 11, 2020, I wrote to the DOJ and FBI and stated the following:

A recent Justice Department Freedom of Information Act release suggests that multiple members of Special Counsel Mueller's team may have wiped data from their government phones including text messages during their investigation of Russian collusion in the 2016 election. One team member, Andrew Weissmann, appears to have deleted all of the data on his phone more than once. On March 8, 2018, records show that Weissmann "[e]ntered [his] password too many times and wiped his phone." On September 27, another report reads, "AAW accidentally wiped cell phone – data lost." On two occasions, officials admitted to deleting data, and multiple individuals stated that the phone automatically wiped the data after they used the wrong password too many times.⁶

After that letter, on July 12, 2021, Senator Johnson and I wrote to Attorney General Garland noting that, at that time, the DOJ couldn't locate all phones from Special Counsel Mueller's investigation.⁷ Our letter also noted that at least 22 Special Counsel phones were not reviewed to ensure that official records were preserved.⁸ The improper conduct of the past cannot be repeated in this matter – all records must be preserved.

Accordingly, in addition to providing periodic investigative updates and as a preliminary matter, so that Congress may conduct independent oversight concerning DOJ and FBI's work investigating the attempted assassination of former President Trump, please provide the following documents and written responses to the questions listed below no later than July 23, 2024:

1. All records⁹ between and among FBI personnel, U.S. Secret Service personnel, and other law enforcement agencies related to the rally in Butler, PA.
2. Was the FBI aware of any threats relating to the rally in Butler, PA in advance of it? If so, please explain and provide all records.
3. A list of all weapons recovered, and explosives found at the crime scene, as well as in the gunman's home and vehicle, or that he may have been able to access, such as weapons belonging

⁶ Letter from Senator Charles E. Grassley to Attorney General Barr and FBI Director Christopher Wray, (Sep. 11, 2020) <https://www.grassley.senate.gov/news/news-releases/doj-foia-release-members-mueller-team-repeatedly-wiped-phones-watchdog-sought>.

⁷ Letter from Senators Charles E. Grassley and Ron Johnson to Attorney General Garland, (Jul. 12, 2021) <https://www.grassley.senate.gov/news/news-releases/grassley-and-johnson-request-more-information-from-justice-department-about-special-counsel-mueller-teams-missing-phones>.

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ "Records" include any written, recorded, or graphic material of any kind, including letters, memoranda, reports, notes, electronic data (e-mails, 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 or not they resulted in final documents).

to other members of his household. Also, please include a description of how the gunman obtained the weapon used that day.

4. Precisely when did local and federal law enforcement become aware of the explosives belonging to the gunman?
5. Provide all trace requests for the firearms used by or associated with the gunman in the assassination attempt against President Trump and the other victims.
6. Provide all FBI case files and records related to the gunman generated as part of this investigation.
7. Prior to the July 13, 2024, assassination attempt, was the FBI made aware of the identity of the gunman?

If you have any questions, please contact Brian Randolph and Silvia Symber of my Budget Committee staff at (202) 224-0642.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Grassley
Ranking Member
Committee on the Budget

cc: Director Steven Dettelbach, ATF
Matthew G. Olsen, Assistant Attorney General for National Security
Eric G. Olshan, U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Pennsylvania
Director Kimberly Cheatle, U.S. Secret Service