

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 30, 2024

VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

Mr. Ronald Rowe
Acting Director
United States Secret Service

Dear Acting Director Rowe:

Legally protected whistleblower disclosures provided to my office show that Secret Service management sent emails to employees in August 2024, with the subject line “DHS OIG Inquiries.” The email noted that Secret Service employees could receive requests for information or interviews from DHS OIG relating to its July 13 investigation. It also said, in part:¹

Generally not an issue however, this is NOT the normal course of action and the Service needs awareness...to ensure an organized response...²

The email also says that Secret Service staff should tell their supervisors if they’re contacted by the DHS OIG so management is aware of the communication.

If this email is an accurate representation of the actions taken by Secret Service management, it could have a chilling effect on its employees from fully cooperating and providing information to the DHS OIG as well as congressional investigations out of fear of retaliation since supervisors will apparently be keeping tabs on their communications. The

¹ Email is on file with committee staff.

² Given the Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) reported history of whistleblower retaliation and interference in DHS Office of the Inspector General (OIG) investigations, out of an abundance of caution for protecting whistleblower anonymity, the text of the email is quoted. *See*, Letter from Senator Grassley to Department of Homeland Security, (Oct. 25, 2024) https://www.grassley.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/grassley_johnson_to_dhs_-_nondisclosure_agreements.pdf; Press Release, Grassley, Loudermilk: DHS Must Stop Interfering in Inspector General Investigations, (Aug. 20, 2024) <https://www.grassley.senate.gov/news/news-releases/grassley-loudermilk-dhs-must-stop-interfering-in-inspector-general-investigations>; Pete Williams and Julia Ainsley, *DHS watchdog has launched criminal probe into destruction of Jan. 6 Secret Service text messages, sources say*, NBC News (Jul. 21, 2022) <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/dhs-launched-criminal-probe-destruction-jan-6-secret-service-text-messages-rcna39392>; Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General, *Whistleblower Retaliation Report of Investigation Regarding Alleged Reprisal Against a Secret Service Special Agent*, RN: I15-USSS-SID-01777 (Sept. 22, 2017) <https://www.oig.dhs.gov/reports/2017-09/whistleblower-retaliation-reports-investigation/whistleblower-retaliation-report-investigation-regarding-alleged-reprisal-against>; David Nakamura and Carol D. Leonnig, *Investigator of Secret Service prostitution scandal also linked to prostitution*, Washington Post (Oct. 28, 2014) https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/investigator-of-secret-service-prostitution-scandal-also-linked-to-prostitution/2014/10/28/7446a53c-5f0f-11e4-8b9e-2ccdac31a031_story.html.

Secret Service should be encouraging its employees to come forward to provide truthful information to the DHS OIG and Congress so that lessons can be learned to prevent future assassination attempts. Accordingly, provide all records³ between and among Secret Service personnel regarding communications related to providing information to the DHS OIG and congressional investigation into the July 13 attempted assassination. Please provide records no later than November 12, 2024.

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

³ "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).