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# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON  
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

CHRISTOPHER R. HIXON, STAFF DIRECTOR  
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April 5, 2017

Mr. William J. Callahan  
Acting Director  
United States Secret Service  
950 H Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20223

Dear Mr. Callahan:

Thank you to you and your team at the United States Secret Service (USSS) for arranging a briefing for Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee staff last week to discuss recent security events at the White House and other public reports regarding matters within USSS jurisdiction. We look forward to receiving additional information from your staff, including Mission Assurance Reports and other documents related to the incidents discussed last week.

We write now to request information about how the USSS is working to meet its operational demands. The USSS is one of nation's oldest federal law enforcement agencies and has maintained its protective mission of American presidents and other dignitaries for more than a century.<sup>1</sup> This mission is vital to defending our American democracy and it is incumbent upon Members of Congress to ensure that this work is done in an effective and efficient manner.

The Committee continues to examine workforce and attrition issues within the USSS. The agency has faced significant resource and staffing challenges in recent years. For example, almost 1,000 Secret Service agents and personnel maxed out on annual overtime and salary allowances weeks or months before the November 2016 election.<sup>2</sup> According to various reports, working conditions, hours, and morale are persistent challenges that continually plague the agency.<sup>3</sup> While the USSS is now in the midst of its "most ambitious hiring campaign in more than a decade" to add more than 1,000 agents and uniform officers, the agency's responsibilities continue to expand following one of

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<sup>1</sup> United States Secret Service, USSS History (online <https://www.secretservice.gov/about/history/events/>).

<sup>2</sup> Hundreds of Secret Service Agents Maxed Out on Overtime, USA Today (Oct. 23, 2016) (online <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2016/10/23/hundreds-secret-service-agents-maxed-out-overtime/92526456/>).

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

the busiest election seasons in history.<sup>4</sup> A Blue Ribbon panel assembled in the wake of several recent security lapses noted, “[t]he Secret Service is stretched to and, in many cases, beyond its limits. Perhaps the service’s greatest strength — the commitment of its personnel to sacrifice and do the job ‘no matter what’ — has had unintended consequences.”<sup>5</sup>

The USSS has a critical mission that not only includes ensuring the protection of the President and other dignitaries, but enforcing counterfeiting laws and safeguarding the financial systems of the United States against computer-based crimes. Therefore, the Committee seeks to ensure that the USSS can succeed, while also using taxpayer funds as efficiently and effectively as possible.

In order to better understand how the USSS has used its existing resources to meet its operational demands, we ask that you please arrange a briefing for Committee staff no later than close of business on April 10, 2017. USSS personnel should prepare to provide the following information and address the questions below:

1. What are the current operational demands and constraints facing the USSS?
2. How is the USSS meeting its current operational demands based on its FY 2017 and supplemental appropriation?
3. What progress has the USSS made in increasing the number of agents and officers, and what challenges does the agency face in accomplishing this goal?
4. What steps has the USSS taken to address workload and morale concerns raised by various independent reports?
5. What actions can Congress take to assist the USSS in meeting operational demands and maximizing resources available?
6. What additional actions can Congress take to strengthen the USSS in pursuit of its larger mission?

Should your staff have any questions regarding this inquiry, please contact Christopher Boness of the majority staff at (202) 224-4751 or Donald Sherman of the minority staff at [Donald\\_Sherman@hsgac.senate.gov](mailto:Donald_Sherman@hsgac.senate.gov) or by phone at (202) 224-2627. Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this request. We look forward to your response.

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<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> Joseph Hagin, Thomas Perrelli, Danielle Gray, & Mark Filip, *Executive Summary to Report from the United States Secret Service Protective Mission Panel to the Secretary of Homeland Security*, DEP’T OF HOMELAND SECURITY (Dec. 15, 2014)

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Sincerely,



Ron Johnson  
Chairman



Claire McCaskill  
Ranking Member