



COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hearing Statement of Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS)

Examining the Assassination Attempt of July 13

July 23, 2024

It has been ten days since a 20-year-old took his father's AR-15 rifle to a campaign event in Butler, Pennsylvania, shot former President Trump and two others, and took the life of an innocent bystander who died protecting his family. We are grateful for the brave law enforcement officers who responded to the heinous attack, and our thoughts and prayers continue to be with the victims and their families.

Let me be clear at the outset of today's hearing – the Secret Service has a no-fail mission, and there must be answers and accountability for what occurred. The security failures must be identified and addressed to ensure they **never, ever** happen again. That work is already well underway:

- The Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Pennsylvania State Police have active and ongoing criminal investigations
- The Secret Service has begun an internal investigation
- Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas announced a bipartisan, independent law enforcement review
- And later this week, Congress will vote on a resolution to establish a task force on the attempted assassination.

This Committee has begun its oversight as well. Yesterday, I joined a bipartisan group of Committee members on a visit to the Butler Farm Show grounds. We walked the site where the attack occurred. We saw the layout, buildings, and infrastructure for ourselves. We met with local elected officials and law enforcement.

Today's hearing is the next step in our oversight, and I hope it will be a productive one in keeping with the seriousness of the issue at hand. We must understand what happened in Butler and take corrective action to ensure the security of every Secret Service protectee. I hope to hear from our witnesses today about how State and local law enforcement work with the Secret Service and other Federal agencies at these events and where coordination and communication must be improved.

While we may have policy disagreements and ideological differences, as Americans we must be united in condemning political violence in all its forms. There simply is no place for it in our democracy.

The attempted assassination of the former president is also another tragic example of the threat high-powered weapons like the AR-15 pose to our communities and to police officers trying to keep us safe. These weapons have killed regular Americans from all walks of life – concert-goers, church-goers, movie-goers, grocery shoppers, office workers, and school children.

I am an avid hunter and law-abiding gun owner but believe strongly that we **must** do more to keep these weapons off our streets and out of the wrong hands. As we continue our oversight of the events of July 13, I hope the Committee will look at the terrible toll these weapons are taking on our Nation.

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