



One Hundred Sixteenth Congress  
Committee on Homeland Security  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

July 15, 2019

The Honorable Michael C. Stenger  
Sergeant at Arms  
United States Senate  
U.S. Capitol, Room S-151  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Stenger,

As a result of President Trump's most recent direct attacks on four Members of Congress, I strongly urge you to convene an emergency meeting of the United States Capitol Police Board, which you serve as Chairman, to re-examine the Board's approach to analyzing the risk environment, setting thresholds for enhanced security for certain targeted Members, and evaluating threat streams with law enforcement partners in Member districts. Your convening of this meeting is vital to the safety of all Members of Congress and should occur within the next 48 hours. I also request a classified readout of this meeting.

On Sunday, July 14, 2019, President Trump used social media to directly attack four Members of Congress.<sup>1</sup> To date, Trump continues to use social media to vilify these four Members.<sup>2</sup> Further, on Monday, July 15, 2019, during a White House Press Conference, Trump accused the four Members of Congress of "hating America" and staged a direct attack on Representative Ilhan Omar (MN).<sup>3</sup> As you are familiar, inflammatory remarks targeting individuals on social media and in the public arena were a central feature of the presidential campaign, and now, presidency of Donald J. Trump.<sup>4</sup>

The President's rhetoric may insinuate more attacks on Members of Congress. The President's most recent attack empowered a sitting United States Senator to call these Members "communists".<sup>5</sup> A

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<sup>1</sup> Trump, Donald J. Twitter. 14 July 2019, <https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1150381394234941448>

<sup>2</sup> Trump, Donald J. Twitter. 15 July 2019, <https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1150720283654938625>

<sup>3</sup> Naylor, Brian. "They Are Free To Leave: Trump Accuses Congresswomen Of Hating America." 15 July 2019, <https://www.npr.org/2019/07/15/741771445/trump-continues-twitter-assault-on-4-minority-congresswomen>

<sup>4</sup> Sommers-Dawes, Kate, and Ryall, Jenni. "Insult after insult: All of Trump's ugly campaign rhetoric in one place". <https://mashable.com/feature/trump-timeline/>

<sup>5</sup> Cole, Devan. "Graham declines to condemn racist Trump tweets and calls Democratic congresswomen 'a bunch of communists'". 15 July 2019, <https://www.cnn.com/2019/07/15/politics/lindsey-graham-communists-democratic-congresswomen/index.html>

White nationalist blog has praised the President's recent remarks toward these Members.<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately, the President's charged remarks directed toward Members of Congress have emboldened people to pursue acts of violence toward public officials.<sup>7</sup>

This is not my first time bringing my concerns about Members' safety to the Board's attention.<sup>8</sup> In April, after President Trump staged another direct attack on Representative Ilhan Omar, I urged the Board to convene an emergency meeting. To date, I have not received confirmation that this meeting occurred. Further, in June 2018, I wrote then U.S. Capitol Police Chief Verderosa about the threats to Members' safety after the President's remarks directed at Representative Maxine Waters (D-CA).<sup>9</sup> On July 13, 2018, I received a response from the then-Chairman of the Capitol Police Board, House Sergeant at Arms Paul Irving, that expressed that the Board had concluded, "based on the threat assessment and other pertinent intelligence and information...the United States Capitol Police nor my office have actionable intelligence that would indicate that a USCP protective security detail is warranted for Representative Waters..."<sup>10</sup>

Just days after Irving's response, a California man—who stated he was inspired by President Trump was sentenced for making threats against Representative Waters. Then, in October 2018, a nationwide bombing campaign was carried out against prominent Democrats and media outlets by a Trump supporter.<sup>11</sup>

In February 2019, a Maryland man was arrested for plotting to commit mass murder. According to prosecutors, the man was going to kill on a "scale never seen before," and his targets included both Members of the House and the Senate.<sup>12</sup> Then, in March 2019, a man was convicted of making threats against Representative Waters.<sup>13</sup>

The President's tweets vilifying Members of Congress, including an edited tweet about Representative Ilhan Omar, incited death threats.<sup>14</sup> In April 2019, a man in New York was arrested and charged with

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<sup>6</sup> Anglin, Andrew. "Trump Tells Brown Communist Democrats to Leave America, Return to Their Sh\*t holes" 15 July, 2019, <https://dailystormer.name/trump-tells-brown-communist-democrats-to-leave-america-return-to-their-shitholes/>

<sup>7</sup> Baker, Peter. "Trump Fans the Flames of a Racial Fire." 14 July 2019, [www.nytimes.com/2019/07/14/us/politics/trump-twitter-race.html?action=click&module=TopStories&pgtype=Homepage](http://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/14/us/politics/trump-twitter-race.html?action=click&module=TopStories&pgtype=Homepage).

<sup>8</sup> Thompson, Bennie G. "Emergency Meeting of USCP Board to Assess Risk Environment." 18 April, 2019.

<sup>9</sup> Thompson, Bennie G. "Concerns on Rep. Waters Security." 26 June, 2018.

<sup>10</sup> Verderosa, U.S. Capitol Police Chief Matthew. Received by Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson, 13 July 2018, Washington, District of Columbia.

<sup>11</sup> Avlon, John. "Here's How Many Times Trump Attacked Pipe Bomb Targets." CNN, 26 October 2018, <https://www.cnn.com/2018/10/25/opinions/number-of-times-trump-attack-bomb-targets-avlon/index.html>.

<sup>12</sup> Myre, Greg, and Romo, Vanessa. "Arrested Coast Guard Officer Allegedly Planned Attack 'On A Scale Rarely Seen'." 20 Feb. 2019, [www.npr.org/2019/02/20/696470366/arrested-coast-guard-officer-planned-mass-terrorist-attack-on-a-scale-rarely-see](http://www.npr.org/2019/02/20/696470366/arrested-coast-guard-officer-planned-mass-terrorist-attack-on-a-scale-rarely-see).

<sup>13</sup> Gold, Michael. "Trump Fan Who Made Racist Death Threats to Obama and Maxine Waters Receives 46-Month Sentence." New York Times, 19 May 2019, [www.nytimes.com/2019/05/01/nyregion/trump-fan-obama-maxine-waters-threat.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/01/nyregion/trump-fan-obama-maxine-waters-threat.html).

<sup>14</sup> Arciga, Julia. "Trump Attacks Rep. Ilhan Omar With 9/11 Video." *The Daily Beast*, New York Times, 19 May 2019, [www.thedailybeast.com/trump-attacks-rep-ilhan-omar-with-911-video](http://www.thedailybeast.com/trump-attacks-rep-ilhan-omar-with-911-video).

threatening to kill Representative Omar, whom he described as a “terrorist.”<sup>15</sup> The President, at a public event in Minnesota, stated that he did not regret posting the video and further defamed Rep. Omar.<sup>16</sup>

While the examples I have given you are not exhaustive of the amount of direct threats Members have received, the President’s most recent public, direct attacks on four Members of Congress should not be taken lightly. Given the President’s most recent charged remarks toward four Members of Congress, it is imperative that you call an emergency meeting to analyze the risk environment, set thresholds for enhanced security for certain targeted Members, and evaluate threat streams with law enforcement partners in Member districts. Being proactive in this instance is vital to the safety of not only these targeted Members, but all Members of Congress.

Sincerely,



BENNIE G. THOMPSON  
Chairman

CC: The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker, United States House of Representatives  
The Honorable Steven A. Sund, Chief, United States Capitol Police  
The Honorable Paul D. Irving, Sergeant at Arms, United States House of Representatives  
The Honorable Christine A. Merdon, Acting Architect of the Capitol, Architect of the Capitol  
The Honorable Karen Bass, Chair, Congressional Black Caucus  
The Honorable Joaquin Castro, Chair, Congressional Hispanic Caucus  
The Honorable Mark Pocan, Co-Chair, Congressional Progressive Caucus  
The Honorable Pramila Jayapal, Co-Chair, Congressional Progressive Caucus  
The Honorable Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Representative, 14<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, New York  
The Honorable Ilhan Omar, Representative, 5<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, Minnesota  
The Honorable Ayanna Pressley, Representative, 7<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, Massachusetts  
The Honorable Rashida Tlaib, Representative, 13<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, Michigan  
The Honorable Maxine Waters, Representative, 43<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District, California

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<sup>15</sup> Sonmez, Felicia. “New York Man Charged with Threatening to Kill Rep. Ilhan Omar”, The Washington Post, 6 Apr. 2019, [www.washingtonpost.com/politics/new-york-man-charged-with-threatening-to-kill-rep-ilhan-omar/2019/04/06/5bcc05a4-5890-11e9-814f-e2f46684196e\\_story.html?noredirect=on&utm\\_term=.59efb6c1cc84](http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/new-york-man-charged-with-threatening-to-kill-rep-ilhan-omar/2019/04/06/5bcc05a4-5890-11e9-814f-e2f46684196e_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.59efb6c1cc84).

<sup>16</sup> “Trump: No Regrets about Video Attacking Rep. Omar.” *Trump: No Regrets about Video Attacking Rep. Omar*, CNN, 16 Apr. 2019, [www.cnn.com/videos/politics/2019/04/16/donald-trump-no-regrets-over-video-attacking-rep-omar-sot-lead-vpx.cnn](http://www.cnn.com/videos/politics/2019/04/16/donald-trump-no-regrets-over-video-attacking-rep-omar-sot-lead-vpx.cnn).