



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

June 2, 2020

Mr. James M. Murray
Director
United States Secret Service
Washington, DC 20223

Dear Director Murray:

Over the past week, Americans across the country have expressed their anger, fear, and frustration at long-standing patterns of brutalization, dehumanization, injustice, and state violence against African Americans. I understand that Secret Service employees have had to make difficult decisions in responding to acts of violence that have interrupted the peaceful demonstrations in Washington, D.C. I pray that all injured Secret Service employees make a quick and full recovery and that no further injuries occur.

However, I write to you stunned, disturbed, and furious at the sight of federal authorities tear-gassing peaceful protesters in Lafayette Park, outside the White House, last night, in order to clear the way for the President to walk over and hold a Bible in front of St. John's Episcopal Church.¹ It is shameful that the President used the power of the federal government to attack Americans exercising their Constitutional right to protest just so he could stage a photo opportunity.

I request to receive a briefing no later than June 5, 2020, to understand the role of the United States Secret Service in planning, coordinating, and executing these actions.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bennie G. Thompson".

Bennie G. Thompson
Chairman

CC: The Honorable Chad Wolf, Acting Secretary, Department of Homeland Security

¹ Ashley Parker, Josh Dawsey, Rebecca Tan, *Inside the push to tear-gas protesters ahead of a Trump photo op*, WASHINGTON POST, June 1, 2020, https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/inside-the-push-to-tear-gas-protesters-ahead-of-a-trump-photo-op/2020/06/01/4b0f7b50-a46c-11ea-bb20-cbf0921f3bbd_story.html.