

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 11, 2025

Mark P. Pittella
Acting Director
United States Marshals Service
1215 S. Clark St.
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Acting Director Pittella:

We write to request a briefing at your earliest convenience on the U.S. Marshals Service's (USMS) response to threats against federal judges. These increasing threats of violence may endanger our system of government as well as the lives of these judges and their families—including in our home states.

In February 2024, former USMS Director Ronald Davis testified that “[t]he number of verified threats against federal judges has doubled in the last three years.”¹ Additionally, in January 2025, the USMS's Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Report noted an increase in “the need for protective services” and “the number and intensity of concerning and potentially threatening electronic communications related to” judges and other persons involved in the judicial process.² Since then, federal judges at all levels of the judiciary and appointed by presidents of both parties have expressed concern for their and their colleagues' safety as a result of this threat environment.³ The level of these threats was sufficient to spur the federal judiciary to establish a Judicial Security and Independence Task Force.⁴

The USMS, as the agency primarily responsible for the federal judiciary's safety, must protect against these threats. As family members increasingly become targets, USMS should be prepared to provide protection as needed for targeted family members. USMS must also proactively investigate the sources of these threats, both for a full understanding of the threat environment and to determine whether civil or criminal remedies are appropriate, including potential violations of 18 U.S.C. § 1503.

We would like to ensure that USMS has allocated its resources to fulfill these missions and to ensure that the USMS's work has not been damaged by DOJ personnel and funding cuts. Please let us know if additional USMS resources are necessary to guarantee the protection of our federal judges and their families.

¹ *Oversight of the United States Marshals Service: Hearing before the Subcomm. on Crime and Fed. Gov't Surveillance, H. Comm. on Judiciary*, 118th Congress, at 7 (Statement of Ronald Davis, Acting Director, U.S. Marshals Service).

² U.S. MARSHALS SERVICE, FY 2024 ANNUAL REPORT 47-48 (Jan. 2025), <https://www.usmarshals.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/Pub-2-2024-Annual-Report.pdf>.

³ Mattathias Schwartz & Abbie VanSickle, *Judges Fear for Their Safety Amid a Wave of Threats*, N.Y. Times (Mar. 19, 2025), <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/03/19/us/trump-judges-threats.html>.

⁴ Abbie VanSickle & Mattathias Schwartz, *Federal Judiciary Creates New Task Force With Threats on the Rise*, N.Y. Times (Mar. 26, 2025), <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/03/26/us/politics/judges-threats-task-force-trump.html>.

To prepare for the briefing, we request answers to the below questions related to USMS's work on this front.

1. How has USMS responded to the threat environment with respect to federal judges?
2. What steps has USMS taken to ensure the safety of judges' family members as part of this threat environment?
3. What is USMS's current capacity to investigate threats against judges and their family members?
4. What is USMS's current capacity to analyze trends related to threats against judges and their family members, including the sources of those threat trends?
5. Have any recent executive branch personnel or funding decisions affected USMS's capacity to investigate or respond to threats against judges and their family members?
6. Does USMS need any additional resources to investigate and respond to threats against judges and their family members?
7. Has USMS, whether in conjunction with U.S. Attorneys' Offices or otherwise, evaluated whether any threats against judges or their family members constitute potential obstruction under 18 U.S.C. § 1503 or any related federal statute? What is the investigation protocol USMS follows for such threats?

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we look forward to your response and a briefing.

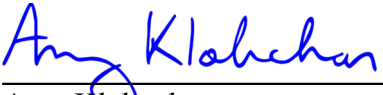
Sincerely,



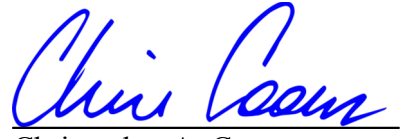
Sheldon Whitehouse
Ranking Member,
Subcommittee on Federal
Courts,
Oversight, Agency Action,
and Federal Rights



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



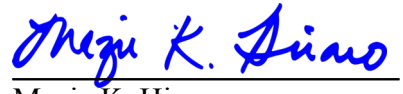
Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Peter Welch
United States Senator



Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator