

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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<http://oversight.house.gov>

March 12, 2015

The Honorable Joseph P. Clancy  
Director  
U.S. Secret Service  
950 H Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20223

Dear Director Clancy:

The Committee continues to conduct a bipartisan investigation into the root causes of past security lapses, low employee morale, and incidents of misconduct at the United States Secret Service (USSS).

Yesterday, the *Washington Post* reported allegations that two senior USSS agents drove a government car into White House security barricades after drinking at a late-night party last week.<sup>1</sup> Before hitting the barricades, the car allegedly ran through security tape set up around a section of the White House grounds where a suspicious package was being investigated. The report further stated that, according to unnamed government officials familiar with the incident, officers on duty wanted to arrest the agents and conduct sobriety tests, but “the officers were ordered by a supervisor on duty that night to let the agents go home.” The agents—Mark Connolly, Deputy Special Agent in Charge of the Presidential Protection Division, and George Ogilvie, a supervisor in the Washington Field Office and former agency spokesman—had reportedly been attending the retirement party of former USSS spokesman Edwin Donovan.

We consider this incident—if accurately reported—to be extremely serious. In a situation where D.C. police officers and Secret Service officers were reportedly trying to clear the scene because of a bomb threat and suspicious package, the actions of these two individuals may have detracted from the focus on a potentially dangerous security threat. This is simply unacceptable when it comes to protecting the White House and its grounds.

This incident also raises important questions about what additional steps should be taken to reform the agency, and whether the problems at USSS run deeper than the recently-replaced top tier of management. One year ago, after an alcohol-related incident that caused two agents to

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<sup>1</sup> Carol D. Leonnig, *Secret Service agents investigated for driving car into White House barrier*, WASH. POST, Mar. 11, 2015.

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be sent home from Amsterdam and a car accident in the Florida Keys that involved suspected drinking, Ogilvie released a statement on behalf of USSS that the agency “maintains a zero tolerance policy regarding incidents of misconduct and continues to evaluate the best human capital practices and policies for the workforce.”<sup>2</sup> That standard should apply to USSS managers and leadership just as it does to rank-and-file personnel.

While the replacement of much of USSS’ upper management is a step in the right direction, incidents such as this indicate that additional steps to reform the agency must be taken. To be clear, in our view, you have much work to do. It is essential that all levels of the agency understand that they will be held accountable for their actions, and that USSS promote future senior and mid-level managers who have not engaged in misconduct. Without such steps, we do not believe agency morale will improve or that USSS will overcome the personnel retention issues it currently faces.

No later than March 18, 2015, please provide a briefing regarding this incident and the steps the agency is taking in response, including whether USSS or the Inspector General will be investigating whether other agency personnel leaving that party drove their government-owned vehicles under the influence of alcohol. Please also provide a copy of any video footage, photographs, or audio recordings of this incident. The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is the principal investigative committee in the U.S. House of Representatives. Pursuant to House Rule X, the Committee has authority to investigate “any matter” at “any time.”

Please contact Tristan Leavitt of Chairman Chaffetz’ staff at (202) 225-5074 or Valerie Shen of Ranking Member Cummings’ staff at (202) 225-5051 with any questions about this request. Thank you for your prompt attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Jason Chaffetz  
Chairman



Elijah E. Cummings  
Ranking Minority Member

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<sup>2</sup> Jim Acosta, *Secret Service makes internal changes after alcohol incidents*, CNN, Apr. 9, 2014.