

Top police group blasts Secret Service for blaming local cops for Trump assassination attempt

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The nation's largest police group on Monday night blasted the Secret Service for trying to shift blame for the weekend assassination attempt on former President Donald Trump in Butler, Pa., to local police.

"Whatever happened in Butler, this was not a failure of the local, state, or federal officers on the ground who responded to the shots fired at former President Trump, they acted heroically and put their lives on the line to protect everyone else at the event. We must recognize that," Fraternal Order of Police President Patrick Yoes said. "This is a failure at the management or command level who failed to secure an obvious weakness in the security of this event."

Yoes warned that Secret Service efforts to push blame down to local police for failing to secure a building rooftop used by the shooter would be counterproductive, especially with so many campaign events ahead in the election that will require local, state and federal officials to cooperate.

The Secret Service "will need to rely on State and local law enforcement to ensure the protection mission is successful," Yoes said. "Yet, in the wake of some of the anonymous comments from unknown officials, state and local agencies may wonder if they can rely on the Secret Service.

"I am concerned that anonymous statements or media speculation could have a chilling effect on the ability of Federal, State, and local law enforcement to work together through what will certainly be a grueling campaign," Yoes added.

The FOP is the largest police organization in the United States, with 373,000 members in more than 2,200 lodges.

A Secret Service spokesperson was quoted by media outlets as saying the agency did not check the roof of the building where the shooter took aim, and that local law enforcement was tasked with sweeping and guarding the building.

Yoes said Secret Service is responsible for ensuring the president and presidential nominees are fully protected.

“While reports and information is still being gathered and developed, a man was able to obtain a shooting perch with line of sight to former President Trump, a protectee of the United States Secret Service,” he said.

“It is the primary function of the USSS to provide for the protection and security on sites like the one in Butler, Pennsylvania. In order to carry out this law enforcement mission, the safety and security of the protectee, the USSS relies on the support and assistance of local law enforcement,” he added. “While these local officers do not all have specialized training in individual protection, they are fully capable of assisting at these large events, whomever the protectee may be.”