

Opening Statement for witness Edward Lenz, appearing in front of the Task Force on the Attempted Assassination of Donald J Trump, at The Ongoing Investigation of the Butler, Pennsylvania Security Failure: The Secret Service's Reliance on State and Local Law Enforcement hearing, September 26 2024.

Good morning, My name is Edward Lenz, I am a patrol sergeant for the Adams Township Police Department in Butler County, Pennsylvania, and the Commander for the Butler County Emergency Services Unit. I was the commander of the local tactical units operating at the Butler, PA presidential rally on July 13.

Butler ESU was initially requested to assist the US Secret Service at the Butler Rally by providing 2 counterassault teams and a quick reaction force. Later, 2 sniper teams were added to that request during the planning process. We were assisted at the Butler Rally by the Beaver County Emergency Services Unit, the Washington County Regional SWAT team, and prehospital staff from Allegheny Health Network. Beaver County ESU provided a second armored vehicle with a counterassault team and 2 police snipers, Washington Regional SWAT provided 4 tactical operators and 2 police snipers and Allegheny Health Network provided an EMS physician and a paramedic to assist the tactical EMS providers already embedded with our teams. Across the 2 counterassault teams, quick reaction force, 3 sniper teams, and support personnel we provided a total manpower of 44 persons, exceeding the amount requested by the Secret Service.

At no point during the planning process was Butler County ESU asked to secure the AGR complex, nor the perimeter surrounding that area. At no point during the planning process was Butler ESU asked to deploy a sniper team to the roof of the AGR complex, and at no point in our operations plan did we ever say that we would deploy a sniper team to the roof of the AGR complex. From their positions inside the AGR building, the snipers were not able to see the roof where the shooter was located, and again, that was not within their area of responsibility.

Butler County is our home. Some of those attending the rally were our residents, our friends, our families, and our co-workers, and in fact, my wife was one of the paramedics embedded with our team at the rally, and she provided treatment to those that had been shot. Each and every team member took their jobs, and their responsibilities seriously.

Illustrative of this, a member of the QRF had observed several suspicious persons in the area of the AGR building, one of whom ended up being the shooter. This information was relayed to uniformed patrol officers assigned to posts along the perimeter, and was discussed with the snipers posted inside the second floor of the AGR building. A Beaver County sniper in the AGR building was able to take a photograph of the suspicious male while he sat near the AGR building, and again later saw him using a rangefinder pointing towards the stage area, which was promptly reported to the Pennsylvania State Police and the Butler County Sheriff's Office. Had these officers not picked up on the suspicious behavior, we likely would not have known anything was wrong until shots had been fired.

Prior to shots being fired, an operator from Butler ESU had exited the red barn behind the stage and was monitoring the AGR area due to the suspicious person reports. When shots rang out, he was able to quickly identify where the shots were coming from, he observed the shooter, he shouldered his rifle, he acquired his target, and fired 1 round at the shooter, which caused him to recoil and briefly fall out of sight. He did this less than 6 seconds after the shots began, using his short-barrel M4 platform rifle chambered in 5.56mm, with an EoTech weapon sight, at a distance of approximately 110 yards. He remained on target prepared to engage with additional rounds, and as the shooter slowly came back into view a Secret Service Countersniper fired a round striking the shooter, ending the active threat. No other rounds were fired by the shooter after being engaged by the Butler ESU operator.

Since July 13th we have cooperated with multiple investigations, and our members have been interviewed by the Pennsylvania State Police, the FBI, the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs investigative committee, Secret Service Mission Assurance investigators, the Homeland Security Independent Review Panel, Senator Grassley's Office, and of course, this House Task Force. We have done so without subpoena. I am here today without being subpoenaed. Butler County ESU has nothing to hide, and I believe that the American people deserve the truth. The events that occurred at the Butler Rally are nothing short of a tragedy. Evil will always be a threat, and we must continually review our own actions, adjust our operations, and constantly strive for perfection that we can never achieve.