

Formal Statement of Sean P. Gallagher
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United States Capitol Police
For the United States House of Representatives
Committee on House Administration
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Chairman Loudermilk, Ranking Member Torres, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the invitation to testify about the January 6th pipe bombs. The Department greatly appreciates the Committee's continued support of the women and men of the U.S. Capitol Police, who courageously carry out their duties of protecting the Members of Congress, staff, visitors, the Capitol Complex, and the legislative process each and every day. Congress' support has been invaluable as we continue our work in building on the lessons learned from January 6th while also meeting dramatic workload increases in an increasing volatile threat environment.

As you know, the United States Capitol Police is unique among federal law enforcement agencies. We patrol a campus that is completely open. The public has a constitutional right to visit, protest, and petition their Representatives on Capitol Grounds. Our officers and civilians work 24/7 to keep you safe, whether here on Capitol Hill, or when you travel to your home districts. Our mission is vast and our responsibilities have expanded immensely over the years. The threat picture has morphed from securing our buildings, to the threat of a 9/11 scenario, to the lone offender and now to an unprecedented increase in threats to Members and their families.

On January 6, 2021, however, that safety was threatened in a number of ways including the placement of two pipe bombs, one in an alley behind the Capitol Hill Club, which is adjacent to the Republican National Committee (RNC) and one at the Democratic National Committee (DNC). I'd like to walk through the events of that day with regards to the pipe bombs, briefly discuss some improvements to our bomb squad since January 6th and then I would be happy to answer any questions members of the committee may have.

On January 6th, at approximately 12:44 p.m. one of our uniformed officers was notified by a security guard at the RNC that there appeared to be a pipe bomb located at the rear of the Capitol Hill Club in an alley. A command post was established by 12:49 p.m. and the device was located during a secondary search of the area. Around the same time, one of our K-9 Technicians identified a pickup truck that looked suspicious due to it appearing to be weighted down and saw a weapon on the front seat, in plain view. This pickup truck was parked directly across the street, approximately 30 feet from the RNC. Assets from our Department's Hazardous Device Section, more commonly known as a bomb squad, responded and began to assess the device at approximately 12:52 p.m. The pipe bomb was disrupted and cleared by our bomb squad at approximately 3:00 p.m.

The earlier pickup truck our K-9 technician located was declared suspicious and members of the bomb squad began to assess the vehicle at approximately 3:25 p.m. This vehicle was found to contain eleven Molotov cocktails, several firearms, ammunition and multiple machetes. The owner of that vehicle was later identified, arrested and ultimately sentenced to 47 months in prison. The scene at the RNC was eventually cleared at approximately 6:30 p.m.

As a result of the discovery of the pipe bomb at the RNC, members of the Department's Counter-Surveillance team, as they have been trained to do, began searching other locations for potential bombs. At approximately 1:00 p.m., the Department requested Metro Transit to have trains bypass the Capitol South metro station due to the presence of the pipe bomb and the suspicious pickup truck. At 1:07 p.m., approximately 23 minutes after the USCP was alerted of the pipe bomb at the RNC, two of our agents from our Counter-Surveillance team located what appeared to be a similar pipe bomb underneath a bench in front of the DNC. The Cannon House Office building was evacuated at 1:11 p.m. and officers began notifying nearby residents at 1:14

p.m. At 1:30 p.m., DNC and Fairchild Building personnel were told to shelter in place. The DNC pipe bomb was also disrupted and cleared by the USCP bomb squad.

The scene at the DNC was cleared at 4:36 p.m. After our bomb squad disrupted and cleared the pipe bombs, the FBI took possession of both devices and is the lead agency on the investigation. It is my understanding that both of these devices were fully functional and viable pipe bombs. However, it is unclear whether they would have gone off on their own had they not been rendered safe by our bomb squad.

As I noted earlier, our Bomb Squad successfully handled an extremely dangerous situation on January 6th, but since that date, we have determined that additional improvements are necessary. Thus, the Department has continued to seek ways to improve its operations by overhauling many of its policies and processes and making numerous changes related to intelligence gathering, our civil disturbance unit, operational planning, training and equipment, internal communications and a host of other areas. All of the bomb squad directives and standard operating procedures have been reviewed and revised as necessary since the 6th. The bomb squad is currently in the process of modernizing and increasing its vehicle response capability. Since January 6th some of our bomb squad technicians have begun receiving advanced specialized training from the ATF's Certified Explosive Specialist Program, and the Department has a bomb technician training with an elite FBI team which is one of only 14 such teams in the country. Our bomb squad is also participating in the Raven Challenge which includes public safety bomb squads (PSBS) and military explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) units performing in realistic operational environments.

Our bomb squad remains one of the largest and most capable squads in the region and the changes noted above will ensure that the Department is even better prepared to respond to any

similar incidents. Indeed, every year the Department responds to approximately 30-40 suspected hazardous devices and those devices are consistently either rendered safe or determined not to be a threat. Finally, I want to make sure I note, and this is important, I am extremely proud that none of the two pipe bombs nor any of the Molotov cocktails found that day exploded or harmed anyone. This is without a doubt directly due to the outstanding efforts of our team.

We now know based on video surveillance that both devices appear to have been placed the night before, on January 5, 2021. While there is vague footage of the suspect, to date, no one has been arrested for the offense despite a \$500,000 reward and many hours of hard work by the FBI and other law enforcement agencies. I hope one day that the person or persons responsible for planting these devices will be brought to justice by the FBI.

The Department thanks the Committee for its support and we greatly appreciate our continued partnership with the Congress. I welcome any questions or comments.