



**OPENING STATEMENT**

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**MEDIA CONTACTS**

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**Statement of Subcommittee Chairman Scott Perry (R-PA)  
Oversight and Management Subcommittee  
House Homeland Security Committee**

*Examining Ongoing Challenges At The U.S. Secret Service and Their Government-Wide Implications.*

Remarks as Prepared

In September, the DHS Office of Inspector General (OIG) released a report on its four month long investigation into improper access and distribution of information within the Secret Service. The findings were alarming: widespread violations of the Privacy Act and agency policy occurred by Secret Service employees who accessed and distributed information on a Member of Congress's past employment application and senior management did nothing immediately to stop it. Inspector General John Roth stated that the episode was "deeply disturbing." In addition, Director Clancy announced he had a different account of what he initially told OIG. Investigators subsequently had to reinterview Director Clancy and issue an addendum to the report.

This incident leaves numerous questions unanswered: how did this happen, why did Secret Service leadership not act, and why and how did Director Clancy change his account almost immediately after the IG's report is released? The American people deserve answers. DHS must hold all employees involved appropriately accountable. As disturbing as this incident is, it is only one example of other instances where Secret Service employees showed very poor judgment and leadership failed to act. Earlier this year, senior agents who may have been under the influence of alcohol, compromised an area at the White House being investigated for a suspicious package. Director Clancy was again not immediately informed. Late last year, OIG also reported about a 2011 incident where agents were diverted to investigate an incident at the home of the Director's assistant, which appeared to be a misuse of agency resources and violation of the Federal employee Code of Ethics.

The findings in the IG's latest report are yet another example of damage to the American people's trust in the Secret Service. When scandal after scandal emerges and management is ill informed or fails to act, the American people have cause for great concern. We entrust the Secret Service with tremendous authorities and tools. When they abuse those authorities, they violate their contract with the American people.

Because of the Service's recent failures, DHS Secretary Jeh Johnson convened a panel of experts late last year to recommend changes to improve the Service. The panel made broad recommendations in December 2014 related to training and personnel; perimeter security, technology, and operations; and leadership. The panel's report provided a broad roadmap to begin reforming the Service. I expect

Director Clancy to fully explain today what progress has been made in implementing the panel's recommendations. While Congress has a responsibility to conduct rigorous oversight of the latest incident, we must also understand what is being done to improve the overall management of the Secret Service.

I am also concerned that similar abuses and shortcomings could occur in other federal law enforcement agencies. It's important to understand what policies and safeguards, if any, are in place to prevent similar abuse regardless of whether it's a Member of Congress or one of our constituents back home. If it happened at the Service, what's to say other federal agencies are any better?

Today's hearing must be about more than pointing fingers. The American people have high expectations for the Secret Service and want the agency to be successful. Their mission is absolutely critical to our nation's well-being and as we saw from the excellent work by Secret Service personnel during the papal visit and United Nations General Assembly, the Service can succeed with the proper focus and leadership. I look forward to hearing more from our witnesses on how the Secret Service can best overcome recent obstacles to improve the management and reform the culture of this critical agency.

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