



FRANK J. LARKIN, Chairman
PAUL D. IRVING, Member
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KIM C. DINE, Ex-Officio Member

March 12, 2015

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid
Democratic Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Boehner, Leader McConnell, Leader Reid, and Leader Pelosi:

The Capitol Police Board and U.S. Capitol Police have recently completed a review of the security, life safety and facility impact on the U.S. Capitol associated with large-scale events. This review largely focused on the annual concerts held on the West Front of the Capitol. As part of this review, the Capitol Police Board also reviewed the practice of using Statuary Hall for the purpose of hosting Memorial Day and July 4 post-concert holiday receptions. As always, our primary goal is to maintain and enhance the security posture of the Capitol to ensure that large scale public events are able to be held in the most secure manner possible.

In furtherance of this goal, the Capitol Police Board requests that joint Congressional Leadership adopt the recommendation to move the post-concert receptions held on Memorial Day and July 4 to the U.S. Botanic Garden, a venue that has direct nexus to the both the concert stage and primary VIP seating. This recommendation is made in light of the current heightened threat environment which continues to challenge our security posture. The Capitol Police Board further recommends that the Upper West Terrace be restricted to Members and their personal guests only, and that the Lower West Terrace be restricted to Congressional-staff only. It is also imperative that we maintain the Member and staff access rule for the U.S. Capitol; namely, access to the Capitol itself is permitted only to Members and their invited guests (with a guest list provided to the South and North Entrances), and staff who have offices in the Capitol.

The following information regarding past concert activities provides background regarding these recommendations:

U.S. Capitol Police Security Resources – One of our areas of greatest concern during each concert is managing the large crowd *outside*, while ensuring the Capitol itself remains hardened and well-protected. In order to facilitate West Front guests moving to a post-concert reception, Capitol Police must devote a tremendous number

of personnel to security screening. It would be far more effective for Capitol Police to concentrate their personnel on ensuring that the crowd disperses safely and making the necessary security sweeps to return the Capitol Grounds to routine access.

Capitol Security Screening – Routine security access restrictions into the Capitol have been lessened in recent years during the concerts, thus rendering secure access protocols of the building unenforceable. For instance, there are many items which are strictly prohibited inside the Capitol – such as liquids – which credentialed staff with offices in the Capitol are permitted to bring into the building. However, on the evening of the concerts, numerous guests of staff arrive at the Capitol with bags and coolers containing liquids. These liquids are very frequently sanctioned as ‘staff property’ and allowed to bypass the regulation to expedite the security screening process.

Administrative Costs – The Capitol Police Board review also helped to verify that the scope and scale of the concerts has increased dramatically in recent years, and as a result, administrative costs to the Capitol Police for both the Memorial Day and July 4 concerts have increased. In 2014, Capitol Police used a combined *12,174 hours* in overtime during setup, rehearsals and the concerts themselves (\$735,252). Both Visitor Services and the Office of Congressional Accessibility Services were also required to use overtime for employee staffing at both concerts. Relocating the concert reception activities to the Botanic Gardens would not only relieve safety, security and respectability concerns, but would also serve to reduce the heavy burden and associated costs on Capitol Police and other supporting Capitol resources.

West Terrace – The Upper West Terrace has been open to Members, staff and guests for the past several years to view the concerts. What started as a small accommodation for staff with offices in the Capitol has grown to the point where it is virtually impossible to control and/or limit numbers to achieve safe evacuation levels. The enormous number of attendees inside the Capitol and on the terrace on both Memorial Day and July 4, places undue pressure on the Capitol Police and therefore increases the risk not only to the Capitol, but to Members, staff and attendees alike.

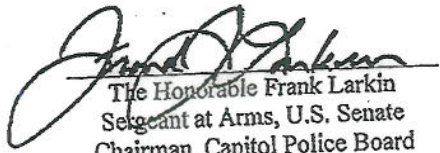
Statuary Hall – The post-concert receptions hosted by the concert organizers have outgrown Statuary Hall. Corridors and halls leading into Statuary Hall and the Rayburn Room are blocked for both receptions. In 2014, the issue of overcrowding was compounded by the use of the Rayburn Room for a second concert reception. Guests roaming such a large area, encompassing two floors, make it very difficult, if not impossible, for the Capitol Police to monitor everyone effectively and thus prevent persons from wandering into restricted areas and private Congressional spaces.

Decorum – The enormous growth in the sheer number of people inside the Capitol on the evening of both concerts has made enforcement of the basic rules of decorum extremely difficult to manage or enforce. It is especially difficult to monitor and enforce restrictions on the House Floor, private hallways and Leadership and Committee offices. Due to the large number of unescorted guests inside the Capitol, it is virtually impossible for Capitol Police to maintain the integrity of all private areas and offices within the building.

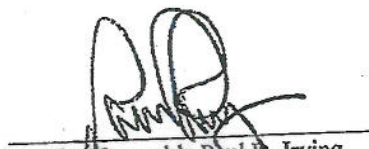
It is our strong belief that implementation of these Capitol Police Board recommendations will enhance safety and security during both concerts. It will also reduce the potential for a breach of decorum or conduct that could potentially prove embarrassing to the Congress. With specific regard to these two holiday events, the Capitol Police Board wants to ensure that the focus remains on our wounded service members and other special visitors, and that they receive the special access and recognition they deserve as they tour the Capitol free of disturbance or distraction. It will also ensure the Capitol Police focus and manage their resources and manpower on the threat instead of on the facilitation of these events.

Thank you for your support.

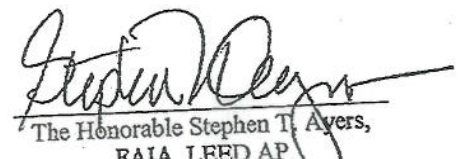
Sincerely,



The Honorable Frank Larkin
Sergeant at Arms, U.S. Senate
Chairman, Capitol Police Board



The Honorable Paul D. Irving
Sergeant at Arms
U.S. House of Representatives
Member, Capitol Police Board



The Honorable Stephen T. Ayers,
FAIA, LEED AP
Architect of the Capitol
Member, Capitol Police Board



Kim C. Dine
Chief of Police
U.S. Capitol Police
Ex Officio Member, Capitol Police
Board