

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

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<https://oversight.house.gov>

August 30, 2024

The Honorable Christine Wormuth
Secretary of the Army
United States Army
101 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310-0101

Dear Secretary Wormuth:

Throughout the week, reports have surfaced about a verbal and physical altercation between members of Donald Trump’s campaign and Arlington National Cemetery staff on Monday, August 26.¹ It appears that the Trump campaign refused to abide by Arlington National Cemetery’s absolute prohibition on “filming for partisan, political, or fundraising purposes” and “abruptly pushed aside” Cemetery staff trying to “ensure adherence” to these rules.² Accordingly, I ask you to provide the Committee with the incident report and a briefing to Committee staff on the facts of this incident, including whether Trump campaign staff violated federal law or Cemetery rules and whether the Trump campaign informed the families of servicemembers buried at the Cemetery that their gravestones would be used in Mr. Trump’s political campaign ads.³

Reporting indicates that Mr. Trump and members of his campaign staff visited Arlington National Cemetery on August 26, 2024, to participate in a wreath laying ceremony and visit the gravesite of a fallen servicemember.⁴ However, it appears that the Trump campaign—which arrived at the Cemetery with a photographer and videographer—completely flouted the laws and rules they were informed of and filmed footage in the restricted area for use in a political Tik Tok video.⁵ Campaign officials also allegedly engaged in a verbal and physical altercation with

¹ *Army Says Arlington National Cemetery Worker Was ‘Pushed Aside’ by Trump Aides*, NPR (Aug. 29, 2024) (online at www.npr.org/2024/08/29/nx-s1-5092087/trump-arlington-cemetery-altercation-video)

² Department of the Army, *Media Policy for Army National Military Cemeteries* (Apr. 18, 2022) (online at www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Portals/0/ANC-media-policy.pdf); see also 32 C.F.R. § 553.

³ *Army Says Arlington National Cemetery Worker Was ‘Pushed Aside’ by Trump Aides*, NPR (Aug. 29, 2024) (online at www.npr.org/2024/08/29/nx-s1-5092087/trump-arlington-cemetery-altercation-video).

⁴ *Trump Campaign Staff Had Altercation With Official at Arlington National Cemetery*, NPR (Aug. 27, 2024) (online at www.npr.org/2024/08/27/nx-s1-5091154/trump-arlington-cemetery).

⁵ *Trump Videos at Arlington Stir More Fallout After Gravesite Visit*, New York Times (Aug. 28, 2024) (online at www.nytimes.com/2024/08/28/us/politics/trump-arlington-cemetery.html). Since the visit to Arlington National Cemetery, the Trump campaign has released political ads on social media utilizing the prohibited footage captured during the visit. *Id.*

Cemetery staff who attempted to enforce Cemetery rules that are aimed at preserving the sanctity and nonpartisan character of the Cemetery, with the Army stating that the Cemetery staff member was “abruptly pushed aside” so the unauthorized and illegal filming could occur.⁶ According to a statement issued by the Army after the incident, the Trump campaign was informed about the prohibition of political activities on the Arlington National Cemetery grounds.⁷ Film and photography are strictly prohibited in Section 60 of the Cemetery, which is largely reserved for fallen service members and veterans who served in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars.⁸ Although the incident was reported to the Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall police department, reporting indicates the employee declined to press charges for fear that Trump supporters would retaliate against her.⁹ Governor Cox of Utah, who joined Mr. Trump at the Cemetery, also used images from the visit in fundraising materials. Governor Cox has since apologized for making political and campaign use of a visit to Arlington National Cemetery—but neither Mr. Trump nor his campaign have joined Governor Cox in apologizing for these blatant violations.¹⁰

I am hopeful you can provide the Committee with a full account of the incident that occurred in connection with Donald Trump’s campaign visit to Arlington National Cemetery on August 26, 2024, including the incident report. Please reach out to Committee staff at (202) 225-5051 by September 9, 2024, to schedule a briefing.

The Committee on Oversight and Accountability is the principal oversight committee of the House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate “any matter” at “any time” under House Rule X. Thank you for your prompt attention to this request.

Sincerely,



Jamie Raskin
Ranking Member

cc: The Honorable James Comer, Chairman

⁶ *US Army Rebukes Trump Campaign for Incident at Arlington National Cemetery*, CNN (Aug. 29, 2024) (online at www.cnn.com/2024/08/29/politics/us-army-rebukes-trump-campaign-arlington-incident/index.html).

⁷ *Army Says Arlington National Cemetery Worker Was ‘Pushed Aside’ by Trump Aides*, NPR (Aug. 29, 2024) (online at www.npr.org/2024/08/29/nx-s1-5092087/trump-arlington-cemetery-altercation-video); see also Department of the Army, *Media Policy for Army National Military Cemeteries* (Apr. 18, 2022) (online at www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Portals/0/ANC-media-policy.pdf).

⁸ *Trump Campaign was Warned Not to Take Photos at Arlington Before Altercation, Defense Official Says*, Associated Press (Aug. 28, 2024) (online at <https://apnews.com/article/trump-arlington-cemetery-altercation-afghanistan-3f0331e9209336a9b696ec164be7eb1c>).

⁹ *Trump Videos at Arlington Stir More Fallout After Gravesite Visit*, New York Times (Aug. 28, 2024) (online at www.nytimes.com/2024/08/28/us/politics/trump-arlington-cemetery.html).

¹⁰ *Gov. Cox Apologizes for Arlington National Cemetery Campaign Email*, Desert News (Aug. 28, 2024) (online at www.deseret.com/politics/2024/08/28/cox-trump-arlington-cemetery-email/).