

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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Opening Statement
Ranking Member Elijah E. Cummings

H.R. 6302, Overtime Pay for Secret Service Agents Act

November 16, 2016

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This bill would authorize an increase in the annual salary and overtime limit up to level II of the Executive Schedule so that Secret Service agents could receive back pay for the overtime they worked in 2016.

This would provide some much-needed relief to the men and women of the Secret Service, but I do not believe it goes far enough.

The Secret Service has been enduring a year of extraordinary demands as a result of the presidential campaign season.

This Committee has received many stories from Secret Service agents who are making tremendous sacrifices for their country. They travel on protective details for weeks and weeks at a time, missing time with their families that they will never get back.

All the while, their families wonder what they are getting in return for these sacrifices. The answer will be nothing—unless Congress decides to act.

Secret Service agents deserve to be paid for the overtime they have already worked. It is an issue of fundamental fairness.

This is not the first time this has happened, and it will certainly not be the last. We already know that every four years, Secret Service agents are expected to meet the protective requirements of the presidential campaign even though it is extremely difficult to determine what those requirements will be. Simply put, addressing only 2016 is not enough.

Yesterday, this Committee held a hearing that addressed this issue in great detail. One of the witnesses, a 24-year veteran Secret Service agent from the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, made a direct appeal to our Committee.

He testified, and I quote:

“Although this last election season was unprecedented in many respects, we do not believe it will prove to be unique in the years ahead. The possibility of multiple candidates requiring protection earlier in a campaign year or an extended presidential primary season is very real and presents valid staffing concerns for the agency. So while FLEOA greatly appreciates your efforts, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Cummings, we would also like to stress the importance of working together to find a permanent solution to the effect that the pay cap has on the USSS.”

That is why I introduced a bill yesterday with all of my Democratic Committee colleagues that would provide a permanent fix and allow fair overtime compensation in every presidential campaign year. I intend to introduce an amendment today to the same effect and urge all of my colleagues on this Committee to vote in favor. The men and women of the Secret Service deserve more than a band-aid solution.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

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