Statement from Secret Service Director of Communications Cathy Milhoan on the Process and Preparations of Candidate Protection.

Recent media reporting characterizing the U.S. Secret Service as unprepared for candidate protection is categorically false. The Secret Service has over 100 years of expertise in ensuring the safety and security of protectees. The Agency remains fully prepared to execute this vital mission and any suggestion to the contrary breeds unfounded public concern and irresponsibly misrepresents the skill and professionalism of our workforce.

CANDIDATE PROTECTION PREPARATIONS
The Secret Service’s preparations for candidate protection begin immediately after each Presidential election – in this case, January 2017. The Secret Service’s Dignitary Protective Division oversees Presidential candidate protection and began specific training preparations in early 2019. In March 2019, leadership identified thousands of Secret Service Agents, Uniformed Division Officers and administrative support staff who will specifically support the candidate protection mission. From April through October 2019 these employees rigorously trained as teams at our facility in Beltsville, Maryland, and in field offices around the country. The comprehensive training included instruction related to physical protection, threat assessments, emergency medicine, and constitutional law.

CANDIDATE PROTECTION DESIGNATION AND AUTHORIZATION
At this time, no candidates have requested protection. The Department of Homeland Security in 2017 established a formal process for candidates to request U.S. Secret Service protection. The first step of the process is for a candidate to meet established criteria and formally request protection through the Department of Homeland Security. Following a candidate’s formal request, the bi-partisan Candidate Protection Advisory Committee, which consists of the Speaker and Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, the Majority and Minority Leaders of the Senate and an additional member selected by the committee, makes a recommendation to inform the decision of the Secretary of Homeland Security. To date, the Department has not received a request for protection.