

**WRITTEN STATEMENT**

**OF**

**CONGRESSMAN TROY E. NEHLS**

**TEXAS 22<sup>ND</sup> CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT**

**BEFORE THE**

**COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION**

**UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION**

**MEMBER DAY**

**MARCH 8TH, 2023**

Chairman Steil, Ranking Member Morelle, and members of the House Administration Committee, I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak before you today.

First, it has come to my attention that the overwhelming desire for the public to enter our nation's Capitol—following it being closed during the COVID-19 pandemic—has created significant delays for advocates, constituents, and Congressional staff to enter the buildings.

In fact, it now takes my staff upwards of 25 minutes to make their way through security, in order to do their jobs and the work of the American people. My constituents have also missed their meeting times as a result of these prolonged wait times.

Without jeopardizing the safety and security of the Capitol complex, I recently sent a letter to the Sergeant at Arms requesting the creation of a “fast pass” designation on full-time Congressional staff badges, after being granted written permission by a member of Congress.

This would allow staff with the designation to enter the House buildings without having to go through a security screening.

I urge this Committee to work with the Sergeant at Arms and my office to implement this designation, in order to ensure the American public can fully participate in our legislative process and our staff can enter the House buildings in a timely and efficient manner. Staff being able to bypass security will help unclog the lines for our constituents.

Next, I would like to address the inappropriate and likely illegal actions that Capitol Police conducted in my office in the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress.

On November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021, Capitol Police entered my office without my knowledge and photographed confidential legislative products. USCP leadership said the officer entered a “wide-open door” to my office to ensure no one had wandered into an unattended office. However,

anyone in this room will tell you, those doors do not stay open on their own.

While looking for an “intruder,” this officer decided to take pictures inside my personal office. As a former sheriff, I can tell you: Training is needed.

Two days later, on Thanksgiving week of that year—a week that few staffers are on Capitol grounds— three intelligence officers attempted to enter my office while the House was in recess. Upon discovering a member of my staff, special agents dressed in plain clothes began to question him as to the contents of a photograph taken illegally two days earlier. Again, I tell you: training is needed.

So why was the Capitol Police Leadership maliciously investigating me in an attempt to destroy me and my character? Maybe it is because I have been a vocal critic of former Speaker Pelosi, Yogananda Pittman, and other Capitol Police Leadership about their handling of January 6<sup>th</sup>.

Whatever the reason is, I urge this Committee to reinvestigate this event themselves, in order to ensure members of Congress and their staff are not subject to biased investigations by USCP leadership.

More training is also needed to ensure the USCP is a protection force, as opposed to an investigation force.

Having taken the majority in the House, it is up to House Republicans to ensure accountability of Capitol Police leadership.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak before you today and I look forward to answering any of your questions.