

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 23, 2024

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary of Homeland Security
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Mayorkas,

We write to express our grave concerns regarding the recent attempt by two Jordanian nationals to break into Marine Corps Base Quantico (“Quantico”) in Virginia.¹ This incident and a number of similar incidents in recent months are in stark contrast with your statements to Congress that the border is “secure,” “no less secure than it was previously,” “closed,” and that DHS has “operational control” of the border.² The military community at Marine Corps Base Quantico and the American people deserve answers regarding the terrorism and counter-intelligence threats posed by the Biden administration’s open border policies.

As you know, on May 3, 2024, two Jordanian nationals drove up to the gate at Quantico in a box truck, posing as Amazon subcontractors, and disregarded instructions to go to a holding area for standard vetting.³ Instead, the pair attempted to drive directly onto the base.⁴ The pair were stopped only after base law enforcement raised barriers blocking the truck from further entry. Criminal investigators at Quantico detained the pair for trespassing and notified Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO), who arrested them and placed them into custody pending removal proceedings.⁵

According to a news report, multiple sources state that one of the individuals recently entered the U.S. via the southern border and one of the individuals is on the U.S. terrorist watch list.⁶ ICE, however, has declined to release the identities of the pair to the public.⁷

¹ Irene Loewenson, *Pair who tried breaching Virginia Marine base are Jordanian nationals*, MARINE CORPS TIMES (May 17, 2024), <https://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/your-marine-corps/2024/05/17/pair-who-tried-breaching-virginia-marine-base-are-jordanian-nationals/>.

² H. Res. 863, 118th Cong. (2024).

³ Loewenson, *supra* note 1.

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ Kelly Sienkowski, *Exclusive: Driver’s Attempt at Breaching Quantico Gate Echoes Deadly Incidents at White House, U.S. Military Bases*, POTOMAC LOCAL NEWS (May 10, 2024), <https://www.potomaclocal.com/2024/05/10/exclusive-drivers-attempt-at-breaching-quantico-gate-echoes-deadly-incident-at-white-house-u-s-military-bases/>.

⁷ Adam Shaw, *ICE declines to reveal names of Jordanians nabbed for Marine base breach; former officials weigh in*, FOX NEWS (May 18, 2024), <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/ice-declines-reveal-names-jordanians-nabbed-marine-base-breach>.

This deeply concerning incident occurred mere weeks after a Chinese national who was in the country illegally broke into Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms on March 27.⁸ This individual attempted to enter the base without valid identification and, despite being instructed by base security to exit, proceeded onto the installation until he was caught and detained by military law enforcement.⁹

As of September 2023, Chinese nationals have attempted to access U.S. military bases and other sensitive sites up to 100 times.¹⁰ In one instance, a group of Chinese nationals, claiming that they were tourists, attempted to push past guards at Fort Wainwright, a U.S. Army installation in Alaska, saying they had reservations at a commercial hotel on the base.¹¹

All of these events occur in the context of increasing U.S. Border Patrol encounters of aliens on the terrorist watchlist as well as a record number of Chinese national encounters at the southern border during the Biden administration. In fiscal years 2017 to 2020 combined, 11 noncitizens on the terrorist watchlist were caught attempting to enter via the Southern border between ports of entry.¹² That number increased to 15 in FY 2021, 98 in FY 2022, 169 in FY 2023, and 80 in FY 2024 as of May 15. This attempted breach also occurs in the context of multiple accidental releases of aliens on the terrorist watchlist into the United States, such as Afghan national Mohammad Kharwin, who was allowed to roam free in the U.S. for eleven months before his capture.¹³

Lastly, FBI Director Christopher Wray recently testified to Congress, “Now increasingly concerning is the potential for a coordinated attack here in the homeland, akin to the ISIS-K attack we saw at the Russia concert hall a couple weeks ago,” in reference to ISIS-Khorasan, that is, ISIS’s Afghan affiliate.¹⁴

Due to the serious nature of these threats and the danger not just to our military installations but the American public, we request that the Department of Homeland Security brief the undersigned senators or their staff, and respond to the following questions by June 6, 2024.

1. What are the identities of the two Jordanian nationals?
2. When and where did they enter the U.S. and for what purpose?
3. Did these Jordanian nationals claim asylum? If so, how was their asylum claim resolved?

⁸ Irene Loewenson, *Chinese national detained after breaking onto Marine base in California*, MARINE CORPS TIMES (Apr. 4, 2024), <https://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/your-marine-corps/2024/04/04/chinese-national-detained-after-breaking-onto-marine-base-in-california/>.

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ Gordon Lubold, Warren P. Strobel, Aruna Viswanatha, *Chinese Gate-Crashers at U.S. Bases Spark Espionage Concerns*, WALL ST. J. (Sept. 4, 2023), <https://www.wsj.com/politics/national-security/chinese-gate-crashers-at-u-s-bases-spark-espionage-concerns-cdef8187>

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² U.S. Customs and Border Protection, CBP Enforcement Statistics, <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/cbp-enforcement-statistics> (last modified May 15, 2024).

¹³ Todd Bensman, *Terrorists Welcome*, THE AMERICAN MIND (Apr. 22, 2024), <https://americanmind.org/salvo/terrorists-welcome/>.

¹⁴ Jeff Seldin, *FBI fears ‘coordinated attack’ on US homeland*, VOICE OF AMERICA (Apr. 11, 2024), <https://www.voanews.com/a/fbi-fears-coordinated-attack-on-us-homeland/7565964.html>.

4. What was the vetting process for these Jordanian nationals when they entered the U.S.? Did DHS have information indicating that these Jordanian nationals posed a national security threat when they entered the U.S.? Did DHS accidentally release them into the U.S.?
5. Does DHS assess their actions were motivated by terrorism? Do they support Hamas or another designated foreign terrorist organization? Do they oppose U.S. support for Israel?
6. Was this an attack or a test run/dry run for an attack?
7. Were weapons, explosives, or other dangerous items found either on the truck or on the persons of these Jordanian nationals? Did they intend to use the truck itself as a weapon?
8. How did these Jordanian nationals obtain this truck? Did they steal this truck or obtain it under false pretenses?
9. Did these Jordanian nationals present credentials indicating that they were Amazon subcontractors? If so, how did they obtain these credentials?
10. Did these Jordanian nationals have driver's licenses? If so, how did they obtain them?

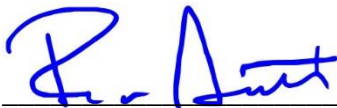
Sincerely,



Ted Budd
United States Senator



Kevin Cramer
United States Senator




Rick Scott
United States Senator



Josh Hawley
United States Senator



JD Vance
United States Senator



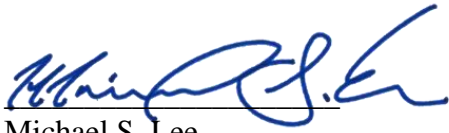
Roger F. Wicker
United States Senator



Mike Braun
United States Senator



Marco Rubio
United States Senator



Michael S. Lee
United States Senator



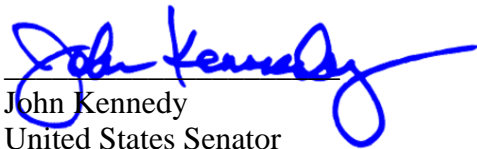
Roger Marshall, M.D.
United States Senator



Ted Cruz
United States Senator



John Hoeven
United States Senator



John Kennedy
United States Senator

cc: Christopher Wray, Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation