

To: President & CEO J. Elliott Summey
Charleston Regional Aviation Authority

From: Chief James A. Woods
Charleston Airport Police Department

Re: Visit of Congresswoman Nancy Mace on October 30, 2025

Date: November 12, 2025

Pursuant to your request, we have conducted an internal investigation into the incident involving Congresswoman Nancy Mace. The following are the findings of that investigation:

Background

On October 30, 2025, United States Congresswoman Nancy Mace arrived at Charleston International Airport (CHS) to board American Airlines flight 3928 to Chicago-O'Hare International Airport (ORD). When the congresswoman arrived at the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) security checkpoint, there were no law enforcement officers immediately available at the checkpoint to meet her for her escort. When she became aware of this fact, she requested that they respond to the checkpoint and officers of the Charleston Airport Police Department responded and escorted her through the checkpoint to her gate. This is a departure from our normal security posture, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] We have conducted a review of our agency's actions for this protective movement to determine how these events transpired and what can be done to prevent a similar situation in the future.

Typically, the way that these movements were scheduled was [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] If those officers were unable to handle the escort themselves, as is common, other members of Special Operations or Patrol Operations would be requested to assist. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Investigation

To determine how the events of October 30 differed from those of typical protective escorts, we started by reviewing airport security video and Communications records. The following timeline was developed, based on review of those materials, as well as other information gleaned from interviews.

October 27, 2025 – Our officer sends Congresswoman Mace’s staff a message asking if she’ll be traveling this week. They replied that she would not.

October 29, 2025 – Mace Staff Member of the congresswoman’s office sent a message to our officers that the Congresswoman would in fact be traveling the next day, October 30, and that she would arrive at [REDACTED]. Our officer sends this information to the patrol supervisors that would be working that morning, as well as the Patrol Lieutenant, who supervises all Patrol operation functions.

October 30, 2025, 6:20 AM – 2 CHS PD officers notify the Communications center by radio that they will be busy on an escort call.

6:22 AM – The officers arrive at the entrance doors [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

6:24 AM – The officers leave that door and stand curbside.

6:26 AM – CHS PD officers arrive [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] and wait in the vestibule for the congresswoman’s arrival.

6:29 AM – Mace Staff Member who was driving the Congresswoman, sends a message to CHS PD personnel that they are 10-15 minutes away from the airport.

6:33 AM – This information is relayed to the shift supervisor.

6:50 AM – The [REDACTED] vehicle in which the Congresswoman is a passenger arrives and stops [REDACTED].

6:52 AM – The Congresswoman exits the vehicle and enters the terminal [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

6:53 AM - The Congresswoman arrives at the TSA checkpoint and stops at the Known Crewmember (KCM) podium, which was staffed by a Transportation Security Officer.

6:56 AM – A Supervisory Transportation Security Officer (STSO) arrives at the KCM podium.

6:58 AM – The Transportation Security Manager (TSM) calls CRAA Communications and requests that officers respond to the checkpoint to escort the Congresswoman.

6:59 AM – CHS PD officers arrive at the checkpoint. Two of the officers immediately proceed to gate B8 with the Congresswoman, and one remains at the checkpoint.

7:03 AM – All parties arrive at Gate B8.

7:10 AM – The Congresswoman boards the aircraft, bound for ORD.

As the airport security video does not contain any audio, we sought to review any body-worn video that may have existed of the escort. We located a video, recorded by a Police Officer, that starts at 7:00:43 AM and runs until 7:10:39 AM. This video does contain audio, however, due to the ambient noise of the airport environment no intelligible audio could be detected, save for a few individual words occasionally. In this video, which begins as the congresswoman leaves the security checkpoint, the group's movement to gate B8 is shown, as well as the period in which she waited at B8 to board her flight. We were unable to locate any additional body-worn video related to this incident.

To understand what transpired, we interviewed several individuals that had firsthand knowledge of the event. These individuals were located either through the investigatory process, or they were seen on video interacting with the Congresswoman and/or the officers that responded. Following are summaries of these interviews, which were all

conducted at the Aviation Authority's administrative offices. All interviews were audio recorded.

On November 5, 2025, an American Airlines employee was interviewed. He reported that he was assigned to help on flight 3928, but that he did not speak to the Congresswoman or our officers. He reported that he observed nothing out of the ordinary with this flight.

On the same date, we also interviewed another American Airlines employee. He reported that he was assigned to work the Congresswoman's flight. He reported that as the Congresswoman presented herself for boarding and scanned her boarding pass, that he said "good morning" to her, but that she didn't reply because she was on her phone. When he finished assisting passengers, he came back up the jetbridge to the counter and reported to the officers there that the Congresswoman was "not the friendliest person" and that "she should be going to Washington, not Chicago." This was a reference to the partial government shutdown that was ongoing at the time.

Also on November 5, we interviewed a TSA Explosives Specialist. He reported that when the Congresswoman arrived at the security checkpoint, he was seated at a podium on the opposite end of the checkpoint. He saw a Supervisory Transportation Security Officer go to the KCM podium and walk back. He overheard the TSA Officer's conversation: She was expressing frustration about Congresswoman Mace and the language used by the Congresswoman. She appeared visibly upset, so he asked her if she was OK, to which she said yes, but needed to walk away from the situation, as she did not appreciate the language that was being used by the Congresswoman.

The Explosives Specialist also reported to us that he saw a Transportation Security Manager, who appeared to have walked up to the checkpoint from the direction of concourse B. He reported to the Specialist that she appeared upset and was using "choice language." He also made a statement to the effect that he would be gathering statements from his employees and making a report to his management. The Specialist also had occasion to speak with the police officers involved in the escort after it was concluded. He recounted that they appeared "downtrodden," and that whatever occurred had clearly affected them negatively.

On November 6 at approximately 9 AM, we interviewed a Transportation Security Officer who was working at the KCM podium at the TSA checkpoint the morning of October 30. She reported that when the Congresswoman arrived at the checkpoint, she was on her phone and telling someone on the other end of the line that she “shouldn’t be waiting,” and that “this is always happening.” After she finished her phone conversation, she approached the officer and asked her if she could get the person sitting at the podium to escort her. (Through other interviews, this was determined to be the Explosives Specialist.) She told the Congresswoman that she didn’t know who that was, but that she would need a police officer to escort her. After telling her that, she reported that the Congresswoman began speaking on her phone again, saying things like “she shouldn’t have to wait,” and “why isn’t she being treated like a senator?” It was at this time that a supervisor was called.

She further reported that the supervisor arrived at the KCM podium, and the Congresswoman made the same request as her, that the person sitting at the supervisor’s desk escort her. When she informed her that he was not a police officer and only a police officer could escort her through the checkpoint, the Congresswoman told the supervisor that she “wasn’t going through your TSA line, you need to go and get whoever, because I’m not going through your TSA line.” Once the police officers arrived, she reports hearing one of them say, “Hey, you must have come in a different car today.” The Congresswoman replied “I’m sick of your shit, I’m tired of having to wait. I should not have to wait. You guys are always [fucking] late, this is [fucking] ridiculous.” She then proceeded to walk through the KCM lane with the police officers following her.

At approximately 9:30 AM on November 6, we spoke with a Transportation Safety Manager. He stated that on October 30, he received a call from a TSA Officer requesting him to come to the checkpoint, as Congresswoman Mace was there without an escort. As he walked from his office under concourse B toward the checkpoint, he encountered the Congresswoman and her police escort in the hallway between the center atrium area and concourse B. He could hear the congresswoman using profane language but couldn’t tell if it was being directed at the officers or if she was talking on the phone. Once he arrived at the checkpoint, he stated that he began to request statements from his officers, as well as our police officers about the incident.

When asked to clarify that, he stated that earlier this year, possibly in April, he encountered the Congresswoman traveling with a family member. The congresswoman

presented herself at KCM for an escort but was informed that her relative would have to undergo standard screening, as the escort privilege was only extended to her. Shortly after that, there was a directive from within TSA allowing a limited amount of family and staff members to accompany her through the screening process.

At some point following this initial incident, the Congresswoman again presented herself to the KCM line with a family member and was advised that the family member would have to be screened. He related that the officers and manager working at the time were not aware of the updated procedure. The manager on-duty at the time called him, and he informed him of the updated policy. It was at this time that he learned that there had been an issue between the Congresswoman and STSO. The Transportation Safety Manager told him later that she had never been talked to like that before.

At approximately 10 AM on November 6, we interviewed another STSO. She recalled working the morning of October 30 and being called to the KCM podium by another officer. When she arrived, she asked the Congresswoman how she could help her, to which she replied, "You need to get that officer back there (the Explosives Specialist mentioned earlier), he's supposed to escort me." She explained that he was an explosives tech and not a police officer. She stated that the Congresswoman's tone was "very nasty, very rude" and that she ended up needing to remove herself from the conversation because she didn't like how Congresswoman Mace was conducting herself. She went on to explain that she was yelling and screaming at a phone, as well. She was still in the checkpoint area when the police officers arrived. She could hear the Congresswoman call them "fucking idiots" and "fucking incompetent," while stating that she's a "fucking representative." It was not clear to her whether the Congresswoman was saying this directly to the police officers, or if she was speaking about them on the phone. She told us that she believed that this sort of behavior was "very unbecoming if she's representing us ... in a political aspect." Her interaction with the Congresswoman ended when the officers escort her from the checkpoint, although she reported that she could hear her yelling as they headed toward concourse B.

At approximately 10:40 AM, we interviewed two TSA canine handlers. This interview was conducted jointly, as a pre-interview discussion revealed that their involvement in this incident was slight. One reported that after returning to the checkpoint from his vehicle, he heard someone "yelling at someone else" and "being disrespectful." When he arrived at the

KCM podium, he saw who he now recognizes as the Congresswoman standing near the podium. He checked on the TSO at the podium, and when she said that she was OK, he showed his Secure Identification Display Area (SIDA) badge to her and proceeded through the KCM lane.

The other handler reported that he encountered Congresswoman Mace near the entrance to the checkpoint, adjacent to the Delta Air Lines ticketing counter. She approached him and asked him if he was security at the airport. He responded that he was, but he could tell by the way she was looking at his shirt that she was trying to determine whether he was with TSA or the airport police. She told him that she called an airport Police Officer three times and that "I'm supposed to have an escort, but no one's here." He told her that he would get a supervisor or manager to assist her. He entered the checkpoint, found the explosives specialist and told him what happened, to which he replied that they were already aware of the issue (apparently having already spoken with the STSO). That was the extent of the interaction of the Congresswoman with TSA canine officers.

Wanting to know more about the alleged previous negative interaction with Congresswoman Mace and TSA, on November 7 at approximately 12:08 PM, we interviewed another STSO. We asked her to recount the previous encounter she had with the Congresswoman and her relative. She stated that sometime earlier this year, possibly in the springtime, she was contacted by a CHS Police Officer at the checkpoint. He was involved in escorting the congresswoman, but she was accompanied by her family member, who she believed would need to submit to the typical TSA screening process. She needed to call her supervisor to confirm whether the Congresswoman's family member needed to be screened. While waiting for a call back from him, Congresswoman Mace began "throwing out 'shit' immediately." "This is the only airport that gives me this shit," "I only deal with this shit from you guys," "It's always this shit," and that "It's a federal law" that her family member be allowed to accompany her through KCM. She stated that after she was sworn at for the third time, she walked away, stating that the way she was spoken to was "very disrespectful." Once she learned that it was OK for her family member to be escorted along with her, she provided that information to the Police Officer and he escorted them both through the checkpoint.

To better understand our internal procedures related to these escorts, we spoke with two Police Officers on November 12. They detailed the procedure that is typically

followed when these escorts are needed through the checkpoint, whether for Congresswoman Mace, or any similarly elected official. This procedure is detailed on p. 1 of this report. Additionally, we used their interview to ascertain additional entries in the timeline on pages 2 and 3 of this report.

They were very frustrated regarding this entire situation. They stated that they, and their personnel, conduct these sorts of escorts multiple times a week, sometimes daily. In addition to our local and regional elected officials, they often find themselves escorting other elected officials and dignitaries that travel through Charleston. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] They also stated that she's rarely on time and that this is often exacerbated by the fact that their communication is often relayed through multiple staffers, as the Congresswoman appears to have high personnel turnover. One stated that he mentioned this to Congresswoman Mace once, and that her solution was to add he and the other officer to a group chat on the communication app Signal, but she eventually removed herself from the group, leaving them back where they started. Messages on this app were also set to auto-delete after one day.

They also recounted that there were "countless" times where the Congresswoman was not where she said that she would be. Her staff would tell them that she'd be driving herself, and she'd show up curbside in someone else's vehicle, or vice versa. She would provide an arrival time and be an hour early, in another example. One reported that he has communicated to Congresswoman Mace's staff that our agency cannot provide a proper protective detail without better communication. He also reported that he communicated this directly to the Congresswoman on more than one occasion.

Additionally, he reports that on several occasions, the Congresswoman reported that her security staff was aware of multiple threats to her safety. He asked her each time to have her staff forward this information to us so that we could better provide her with the security she requested at our facility. This information was never provided.

Findings

It became clear through this investigation that there were several areas related to this incident on which we could improve. It was determined, through review of text messages, that the on-duty supervisor informed the three officers that the congresswoman would be arriving in a white BMW, however it was clear that she arrived in a grey/silver BMW. The supervisor admits to his error and that he read the email quickly and passed on incorrect information unintentionally.

Due to the Congresswoman's record of unreliability in arrival times and locations, the officers chose to wait at the east ticketing doors to ensure that they could see all vehicles approaching the terminal, as well as anyone approaching on foot [REDACTED] [REDACTED] They chose to face opposite directions in the vestibule so that they could observe vehicles and pedestrians from both directions. They were not prepared for her driver to park at the center atrium crosswalk, which was never communicated as a location for protectees to arrive. Additionally, the Congresswoman ignored her instructions to wait in her vehicle for officers to arrive. If it was believed that there were no officers present for the escort, waiting for them to arrive would have avoided any risk of her walking alone from her vehicle to the security checkpoint.

Additionally identified as an issue was communication. The Congresswoman chose to use the Signal app to communicate with our officers coordinating these details. When she contacted one of the officers that morning to report that there were no officers to meet her, she did so via a voice call over the Signal app. The officer stated that this causes his phone to alert in a different way than a telephone call would and as such, he missed the alert because his phone was not directly with him at the time. No other protectee insists on the usage of this app to communicate.

We have mitigated the communication issue by changing our notification procedure for all protectees. Effective November 4, 2025, all federal lawmakers and other dignitaries have been directed to coordinate their travel directly with the TSA Travel Protocol Office (TPO), which is consistent with the procedures at other airports nationwide. Once the TPO is notified of travel, they will in turn make official notification to our agency.

Conclusion

While it is clear that we hold a certain level of responsibility in miscommunicating the color of Congresswoman Mace's vehicle, it's also equally clear that her continued failure to follow established procedures at the checkpoint is what turned a minor miscommunication over the color of a vehicle into the spectacle that this issue has become for our employees and airport workers.