

Federal authorities investigating shooting of congressman, others

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — Federal authorities are investigating a shooting that resulted in injuries for Catholic congressman and Republican Steve Scalise and others when a gunman opened fire on him and the others during a June 14 practice for an annual congressional baseball game.

Scalise's injuries are not life-threatening, authorities said. The suspected gunman was identified as James Hodgkinson of Illinois, and President Donald Trump said in a briefing that the shooter was dead.

Five people were medically transported from the scene at Simpson Park in Alexandria, shortly after the 7 a.m. shooting, said Michael Brown, police chief for the city of Alexandria, in a press briefing. He would not say whether the gunman was one of those transported.

Scalise is the U.S. House Majority Whip and represents Louisiana's 1st Congressional District. He and his wife, Jennifer, belong to St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Metairie, a suburb of New Orleans. The couple's children attend the parish school.

New Orleans Archbishop Gregory M. Aymond said in a statement: "We are saddened by this act of violence. Our prayers are with Congressman Scalise, for his healing, his wife, Jennifer, and their children, and for all involved in this shooting."

“Our prayers go out for @SteveScalise, the Capitol Police and others wounded or affected by this morning’s attack,” said Washington Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl via Twitter.

Multiple news reports said two U.S. Capitol Police officers who were part of the Catholic congressman’s protective detail also were shot, as well as an aide to Texas Congressman Roger Williams.

Arlington Bishop Michael F. Burbidge said in a statement he was “profoundly saddened” by the events and offered prayers for those wounded in “this senseless attack.”

Scalise, who suffered a hip injury and is expected to recover, was with a group of House members and staff at a baseball practice to prepare for the 56th annual Congressional Baseball Game, played each summer by members of Congress, when the shots rang out.

Congressman Mo Brooks of Alabama was on third base during the practice when the shooting occurred.

“All of a sudden I notice a guy’s got a rifle and he’s shooting at us,” he told a news station.

Brooks said the weapon looked to be a semi-automatic. During a break in the gunfire, he said he ran for cover and went to render help to those injured. While he was helping, he said he heard security detail open fire on the shooter.

“On days like today, there are no Democrats or Republicans, only Americans united in our thoughts for the wounded,” tweeted Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, a Catholic and Democrat representing California.

Scalise was first elected to the U.S. House in 2008. He represents Louisiana's 1st Congressional District. Before that, he was a member of the Louisiana House and the Louisiana Senate, serving from 1996 to 2008.

"Prior to entering surgery, (Scalise) was in good spirits and spoke to his wife by phone. He is grateful for the brave actions of U.S. Capitol Police, first responders, and colleagues," said a statement released by the congressman's staff. "We ask that you keep the Whip and others harmed in this incident in your thoughts and prayers."

Schools in the area near the shooting were immediately put on lockdown and bomb-sniffing dogs monitored the grounds of the U.S. Capitol at mid-morning. Federal authorities in a press conference said it was too early to tell anything about the incident, whether it was terrorism, targeted toward Congress or Scalise, or what exactly motivated it.

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