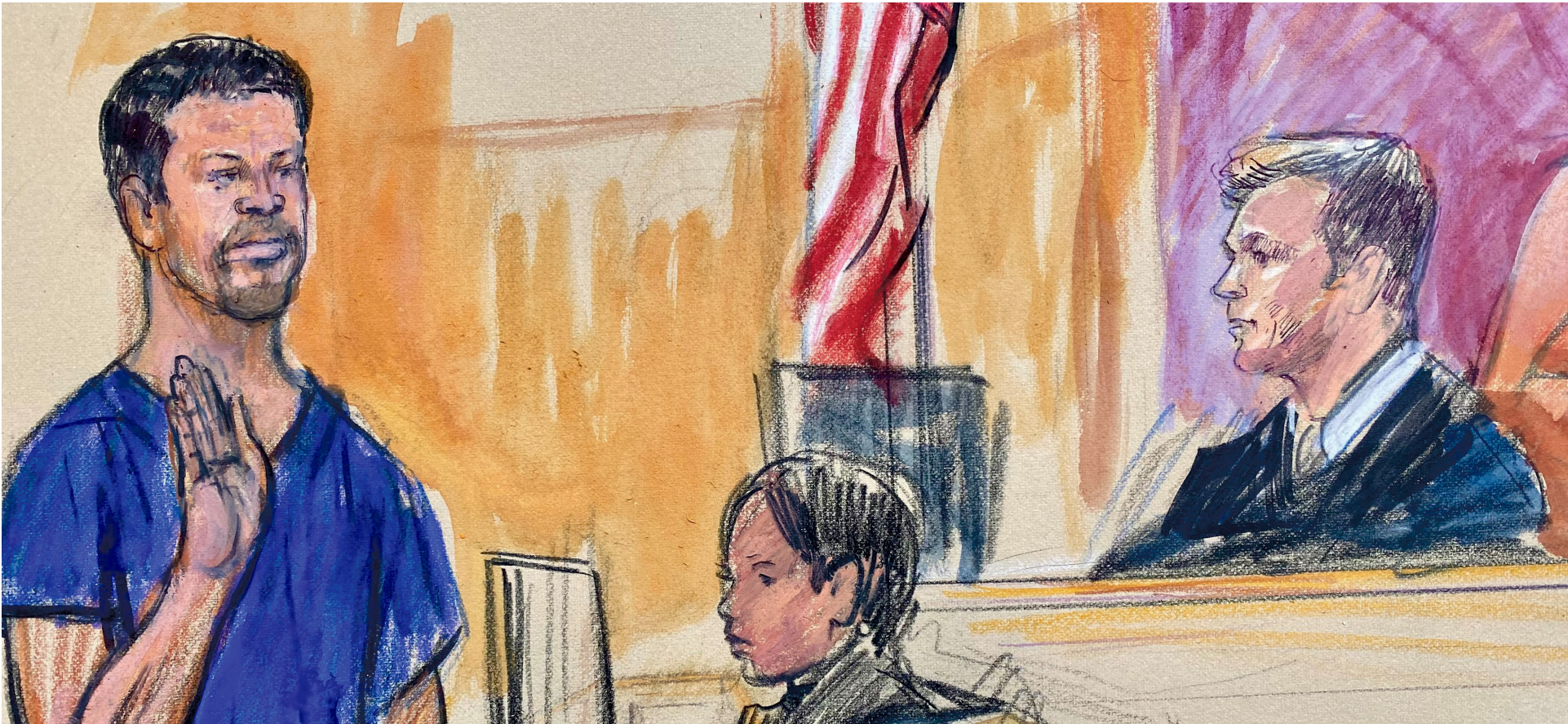




Man charged with attempted assassination of Trump in White House correspondents’ dinner shooting

(AP) — The man who authorities say tried to storm the White House Correspondents’ Association dinner with guns and knives was charged Monday with the attempted assassination of President Donald Trump as federal authorities suggested an attack that disrupted one of Washington’s glitziest events had been planned for at least several weeks.

Cole Tomas Allen appeared in court to face federal charges after the chaotic encounter Saturday that resulted in shots being fired, Trump being hurried off the stage unharmed and guests ducking for cover underneath their tables. He was ordered to remain jailed pending additional court hearings, and faces up to life in prison if convicted of the assassination count alone.

An FBI affidavit filed in the case revealed additional details about the planning behind the assault, with authorities alleging that Allen on April 6 reserved a room for himself at the Washington hotel where the event would be held weeks later under its typical tight security. He traveled by train cross-country from California last week, checking himself into the Washington Hilton one day before the dinner with a room reserved for the weekend.

CORRECTION: In Friday’s club sports article, Colin Slavin’s last name was mistakenly spelled Salvin and Nathan Zimbelman’s was mistakenly spelled Zimbleman.

With him, authorities said, were a 12-gauge pump action shotgun he bought last year and a .38 caliber semi-automatic pistol he purchased in 2023.

The event had barely begun when officials say the 31-year-old Torrance, California, man tried to race past a security barricade near the cavernous ballroom holding hundreds of journalists and their guests, prompting an exchange of gunfire with Secret Service agents tasked with safeguarding the event.

“Violence has no place in civic life,” acting Attorney General Todd Blanche said at a news conference. It cannot and will not be used to disrupt democratic institutions or intimidate those who serve them, and it certainly cannot continue to be used against the president of the United States.”

He added: “We are investigating this matter fully, we will apply the law fairly and we will ensure accountability is swift and certain.”

Allen was injured during the attack but was not shot. A Secret Service officer was shot but was wearing a bullet-resistant vest and survived, officials say.

Questions remain about how many shots Allen fired and how many officers discharged their weapons.

Blanche said investigators believe that a Secret Service agent fired five shots and that Allen discharged his shotgun at least once. But Blanche didn’t say whether authorities have confirmed it was Allen’s bullet that struck the agent in the vest, or whether any other officers used

their weapons. Blanche said ballistics experts are still examining evidence to provide more clarity on those questions.

The Justice Department charged Allen with two additional firearms counts, including discharging a weapon during a crime of violence, but the affidavit does not allege that Allen was responsible for shooting the agent.

Suspect’s email sheds light on motive

The shooting resulted in the cancellation of the dinner, the first Trump had attended as president.

White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt on Monday said the night was supposed to be one of joy but instead was “hijacked by a crazed anti-Trump individual who traveled across the country to assassinate the president and as many administration officials as possible.”

Allen invoked his constitutional right to remain silent after his arrest, but authorities say an email he sent to family members and a former employer helps shed light on a motive.

In the message, a copy of which was included in the affidavit, Allen referred to himself as a “Friendly Federal Assassin” and alluded obliquely to grievances over a range of Trump administration actions. The rambling text moves between confession, grievance and farewell, with Allen apologizing to family members, co-workers and even strangers he feared could be caught in the violence while at the same time seeking to explain the attack.

A magistrate judge granted a prosecutor’s request to keep Allen locked up pending additional hearings, including a detention hearing set for Thursday.

Allen did not speak at length during the quick appearance, as is customary, though one of his lawyers, Tezira Abe, noted that he has no criminal record.

“He also is presumed innocent at this time,” she said.

Records reveal that Allen is a highly educated tutor and amateur video game developer. A social media profile for a man with the same name and a photo that appears to match that of the suspect show he worked part-time for the last six years at a company that offers admissions counseling and test preparation services to aspiring college students.

Voter registration records from California lists Allen’s home address as his parent’s house on a tree-lined street in one of the most historic neighborhoods in Torrance, a city within the Los Angeles metro area. No one answered the door Sunday when an Associated Press reporter knocked. By the afternoon, several people who appeared to be law enforcement agents were canvassing the neighborhood, with one wearing an FBI sweatshirt.

A yard sign displayed at the family home supported a local candidate for judge who was endorsed by the Los Angeles County Democratic Party. Federal campaign finance records show Cole Allen contributed \$25 to a Democratic Party political action committee in support of Kamala Harris for president in 2024 and listed his employer as C2 Educa-

tion, which said in a statement Monday that it was shocked to learn of the shooting and was cooperating with law enforcement.

Allen is registered to vote without a party affiliation in California and voted in the last three general elections, according to the Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters.

He earned a bachelor’s degree in 2017 in mechanical engineering from the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena, according to his profile on the social networking site LinkedIn. The small university is academically prestigious with a very low acceptance rate. He also listed his involvement there in a campus group that battled with Nerf guns and a Christian student fellowship.

Allen’s profile photo on LinkedIn shows him wearing a cap and gown when graduating with a master’s degree in computer science from California State University, Dominguez Hills. The photo appears to have been taken May 2025.[8:04 PM] This courtroom sketch depicts Cole Tomas Allen, left, the California man arrested in the shooting incident at the correspondents dinner in Washington, seen appearing before Magistrate Judge Matthew J. Sharbaugh, in federal court, Monday, April 27, 2026 in Washington.

TOP: This courtroom sketch depicts Cole Tomas Allen, left, the California man arrested in the shooting incident at the correspondents dinner in Washington, seen appearing before Magistrate Judge Matthew J. Sharbaugh, in federal court, Monday, April 27, 2026 in Washington.

PHOTO BY DANA VERKOUTEREN VIA AP.

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