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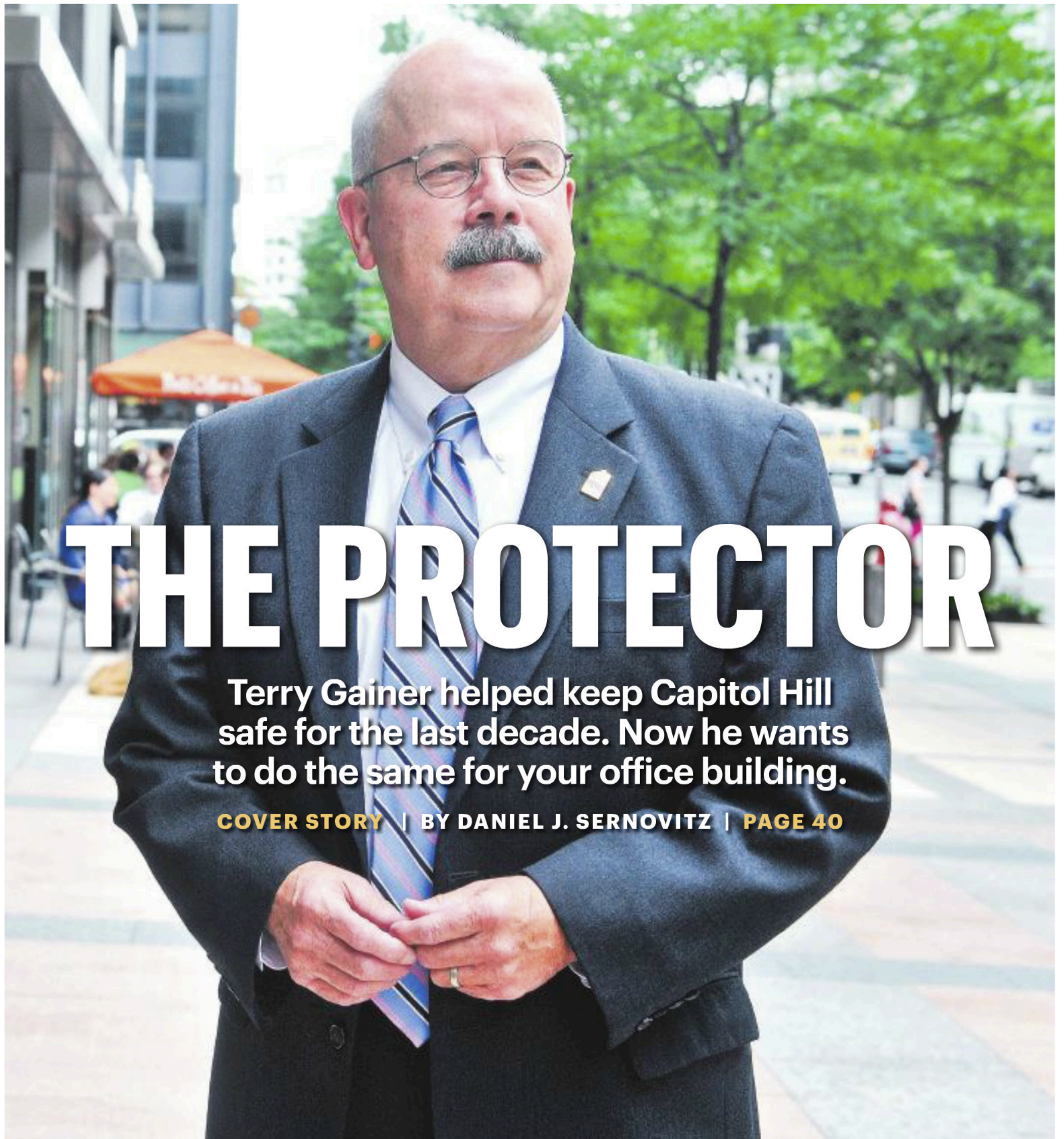
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THE PROTECTOR

Terry Gainer helped keep Capitol Hill safe for the last decade. Now he wants to do the same for your office building.

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COVER STORY

FROM LEGISLATORS TO LANDLORDS

EX-CAPITOL COP TERRY GAINER AIMS TO MAKE WASHINGTON OFFICE BUILDINGS SAFER

BY DANIEL J. SERNOVITZ | DSERNOVITZ@BIZJOURNALS.COM | @WASHBIZDAN

After more than a decade keeping Capitol Hill secure, former Senate Sergeant-at-Arms Terry Gainer is taking his skills protecting federal buildings and lawmakers to private buildings and tenants across the region.

The straight-shooting Chicago native served as the Senate's top law enforcement officer and in top roles with the U.S. Capitol Police and Metropolitan Police Department during a period that included 9/11 and the anthrax attacks. He retired this spring from nearly five decades of law enforcement service to take a new post as senior adviser with Securitas USA, a building security firm with about 3,500 local employees and 310,000 globally.

Gainer talked with the Washington Business Journal about his high-profile roll on the Hill, how he responded to major threats to the federal government and his plans to apply that experience in the private sector.

What will you be doing for private building owners? Building owners and property managers want Securitas to be the subject-matter experts and tell them what best practices are. That's the same conversation I had with staff and senators on the Hill. It really was "leave the worrying to us and we'll give you the best information to prepare you, if there is an emergency, how to respond." We'll talk to you about how to prevent it, we'll keep an eye on intelligence, we'll work with local law enforcement, and I would hate to use the term "we'll let you know what you need to know when you need to know it," but that's in essence what we're trying to do.

What do you look for in a building in terms of security? My skill set is going in to look around, make some observations as to how I'm treated when I'm in a particular building, what the officers seem to be doing, what equipment they have, what equipment they might need, how mail is handled, is it screened or not screened. And then sit down and talk to the people who are responsible and say, "Look, here are my observations."

What are the challenges when a building has both federal agencies and private companies? In a federal building, there are 10 different federal agencies. We all have different ID cards. How are we going to work through that? It is no different than the private sector, and sometimes it was ugly. I suspect that any security expert, Securitas or a police department, we'd love to lay down a set

of rules and say everybody has to live by this. But that's pretty unpractical, and up on the Hill you did not want to make it look like an armed fortress, but you also had to be concerned that we were a constant threat target.

What do building owners need to consider when weighing the right level of security? The first thing is you don't want to appear as a soft target, but the fact is that you're dealing with VIPs and you're dealing with business professionals. It's difficult to have that hard-edged security posture, where you have armed guards in the lobby but then also have the concierge. So it's a fine balance. The beginning of the process is really talking to the prospects and finding out what your tenant mix is made of, what do you really need.

What's an example? If they have a law firm, that's a 24-hour tenant, they're in there all hours of the day. We have clients that do have congressmen in their buildings and have different high-level people, so maybe we need to take a harder-edge stance on that.

In retrospect, do you think the post-9/11 security standards were the right measure, too much or too little? Using the retrospective scope, it's pretty easy to make some of these calls. Unfortunately, connecting the dots prospectively is a lot more difficult than it is looking back. After 9/11, I was the No. 2. I was in charge of operations of the D.C. police department, and we simply didn't



Terry Gainer, looking at one of Securitas' online security products with Tyreeka Tillery, retired after his son, a D.C. cop, was part of the team that entered the Navy Yard building during the 2013 shooting there.

JOANNE S. LAWTON / STAFF

know – especially in those first days – what was the threat, where it was coming from and what was to follow.

What was the day like? That morning, after the second plane hit, we went to general quarters in the police department and opened our communications center and set up operations with the calls coming in – that there were attacks at Union Station, there were attacks on the Mall, there was a fire on the Mall, just trying to figure all that out. So locking down made perfect sense until we sorted it all out. Then, as more information was gathered and America did its counterattacks, everybody locked down.

And if you knew then what you know now? If I had all of the information I now have today, 13 years later, I would

have been suggesting some different things. That's why, I think, over these years, we're all in the business of trying to figure out what the right balance is. But you have to go back and figure out what we knew over those years. What were our adversaries trying to do? Well, the first one was mass casualties. Fiscal impact. Political impact. And you can get some of those things and not just do it to a governmental building.

What about the Capitol that day? I believe we have a great defensive system up there. We're linked to intelligence. It would be very difficult, if not impossible, to stop the legislative process. But it is not beyond the possibility that a suicide bomber with a backpack could walk up to a door and do damage to the people in and by the door. And then the headlines in the paper would read: "United States

Capitol attacked." And then that has the financial impact, the market impact, the psychological impact. So it's trying to figure out that balance. That goes back to the risk assessment – and in the profit sector, that's a dollar-and-cents determination.

And so what is the response in a situation like the Navy Yard shooting? What the security professionals do is say, "OK, let's slow down, take a deep breath, find out what the threat is and what else is going to happen." After different ricin attacks, everybody said, "Geez, what about our mail? What's going on with the mail at my house?" I'll bet a dollar to a doughnut they turned to Securitas in their building and said, "What should we do about mail?"

What's the biggest challenge to finding

that balance? The other conversation, at least we had in the public sector, is: What's the level of hurt you're willing to take? Those are tough conversations to have with people. You can't shut everything down. I believe we should be open and free and assembling, so you've just got to find the right balance.

Is there a tendency among private landlords to underestimate the threat level of their buildings? It is a push and pull with the private sector to determine how much money they want to put into it. It was a sales job for me as the Senate sergeant at arms and my staff to convince a landlord that I think you ought to do A, B and C, and we would negotiate that.

How does the security in private buildings compare with that of federal buildings here? As a rule, there is less

► CLOSER LOOK

TERRY GAINER

Title: Senior adviser
Company: Securitas USA
Age: 67
Work experience: Sergeant-at-arms, U.S. Senate; chief, U.S. Capitol Police; executive assistant chief, Metropolitan Police Department; director, Illinois State Police
Residence: Annapolis
Education: Bachelor's in sociology, St. Benedict's College; master's in management of public service and law degree; DePaul University
Family: Married, six children

threat, so you've got to be reasonable about this stuff. I do think there's all those minimums. Open or closed? Do employees feel comfortable coming in and going out? Having been a policeman all those years, you don't like unlocked public washrooms. There are just so many of those things. I guess I'm beating around the bush. I think most of the commercial owners around here are sharp enough, moral enough to know they have to have the minimum.

What do you mean by minimum?

Under the law, they have to have certain requirements. And they're in business, so they don't want their reputations sullied, they don't want their clients hurt and they'll meet those. Then they decide, I believe rightfully so, the next level: If I'm going to have X in my building, do I need to do X-plus?

Your son was one of the Metropolitan Police Department officers responding to the shooting at the Navy Yard last September. Knowing my son is in the special operations division of the police, I called him, and him being my son and seeing it was Dad on the phone, he answered it. And I said, "Tom, do you know what's going on at the Navy Yard?" He said, "Yes," and I said, "Where are you?" [He said,] "I'm in the building."

What were your thoughts at that point?

I won't go into all that he said or start choking up, but he was in the midst of this. And so from then on, I knew he was in the building and knew what he was going through. And probably that was one of the [reasons] I started thinking it was time for me to go. When my son is doing this stuff and his Dad is interrupting him in the middle of doing his work, then maybe it's time for the next generation.

That was on a supposedly secure military base. Are there procedures that

private landlords are putting together to prepare for something like that?

There are procedures. I've talked to the senior leadership at Securitas on what they want to do to strengthen that. So as the FBI has been working with local law enforcement to strengthen their active shooter [protocol], Securitas will be working with their clients and building owners in general. Based on my conversation with leadership, they're going to train everybody that wants to come in the door.

Can you tell me any more about that?

All I can tell you is I'm in the midst of helping Securitas plan that, and they want to do something in the fall.

What has been the response from building owners so far?

A program has been put together for a particular client and the client hasn't exercised that option. So I don't want to get out of my corporate element here, but it strikes me, I'm guessing, that the client is making a financial decision, because these things are costly. If you take the 2,000 police officers up on the Hill, if you're going to run them all through a two-day school, there's a huge cost to that. I might say, as a security expert, there's a bigger cost not to do it.

Last question: Can I hear you say

"Mr. Speaker, the president of the United States," the State of the Union introduction? You know, if you did it would be incorrect. Many, many people think that the Senate sergeant-at-arms says that. So here's the quick, proper primer: That's the job of the House sergeant-at-arms. And the truth of the matter is, no one's paying much attention to what's going on until those words are uttered.

But you did have a role in the process, right?

So the House sergeant-at-arms will leave where we're holding the president and bring him around. The president may be anxious and saying, "What's the delay?" And I would usually kid and say, "It's your Cabinet, they're always slow and the last one's getting in." But we'd get up to the Senate door to the House, and the members are all standing, and the regular ones crowd the aisle and want an autograph – they've staked their position out. There's pandemonium, and the House sergeant-at-arms will stand up to each queue line and he will say in this case, "Mr. Speaker, the president of the United States." Now, everybody suddenly pays attention, the TV stations go on and the next person they see is me, or was me. And then I try to get out of the way of the president. ❧