

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

Markwayne Mullin

Secretary

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

500 12th St. SW

Washington, DC 20536

David Venturella

Acting Director

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

500 12th St. SW

Washington, DC 20536

July 16, 2026

Dear Secretary Mullin and Acting Director Venturella:

We write to express our profound concern at the announcement of a 5-year contract with the GEO Group to operate a new Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention facility in Hudson, Colorado. The reports of this new facility moving forward are particularly concerning with the continued rise of deaths in ICE detention<sup>1</sup> and at the hands of ICE agents acting with impunity in communities across the country<sup>2</sup>. The agency's documented pattern of unlawful detentions, failure to comply with Congressional oversight, and harm to our communities makes this expansion not just misguided, but dangerous. Against this backdrop, we strongly oppose any increase in detention capacity in Colorado.

The operation of the so-called Big Horn facility as an ICE detention facility will dramatically expand ICE's detention capacity in Colorado, increasing the available detention beds from 1,532 at the Aurora GEO Detention Facility to more than 2,700 beds across the state. As we stated in our February 2026 letter,<sup>3</sup> we are deeply concerned that the remote location of the facility will hinder oversight and reduce access to legal representation for individuals in detention. The Hudson site is difficult to reach by public transportation and far from legal service providers and local service organizations.

The GEO Group and ICE have a proven track record of obstructing congressional oversight of the Aurora GEO Detention Facility, refusing Members of Congress' ability to access to the facility, withholding answers to oversight questions, and failing to respond to congressional casework inquiries. We are concerned that these actions will continue at the Big Horn Facility.

Your agency did not respond to the February 24, 2026 letter from members of the Colorado delegation addressed to then-Secretary Noem and then-Acting Director Lyons — a letter raising serious, unresolved concerns about the Hudson facility<sup>4</sup>. Once again, we are demanding answers.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2026/jul/15/man-dies-georgia-ice-detention>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/trump-administration/trump-ice-traffic-stops-shootings-maine-texas-rcna587620>

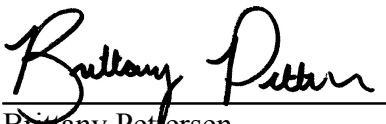
<sup>3</sup> [https://pettersen.house.gov/uploadedfiles/letter\\_to\\_ice-\\_dhs\\_re.\\_hudson\\_.pdf](https://pettersen.house.gov/uploadedfiles/letter_to_ice-_dhs_re._hudson_.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

The Department's lack of response only deepened our concerns about transparency and oversight of this facility. We request your response to the following by July 31, 2026:<sup>5</sup>

1. What steps did the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) take to share its plans for the new facility with relevant local leaders, community members, advocacy groups, and other relevant partners?
2. What steps will be taken to ensure that the Big Horn Facility will consistently meet adequate health and safety standards, as required by the Performance- Based National Detention Standards 2008, the Performance-Based National Detention Standards 2011, the National Detention Standards 2019, and the Family Residential Standards?
3. What steps will DHS take to ensure that the new facility will respond appropriately to congressional oversight as required under Pub. L. No. 118-47, div. C, tit. V 527 (a), 138 Stat 460, 619, and affirmed by Case No. 25-cv-2463?
4. How will DHS ensure that detainees within the Big Horn Facility maintain adequate access to family visitation and meetings with relevant counsel and representatives?
5. Are there any other contracts or anticipated new contracts with the GEO Group for ICE Department of Homeland Security detention facilities in Colorado?
6. Have there been any discussions with local or county governments on the opening of Big Horn? Have the Weld County Health Department and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment been made aware of their inspection duties?

Sincerely,



Brittany Petersen  
Member of Congress



Michael F. Bennet  
United States Senator



John Hickenlooper  
United States Senator



Diana DeGette  
Member of Congress

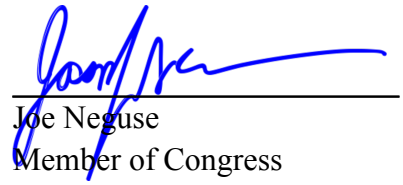
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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.



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Jason Crow  
Member of Congress



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Joe Neguse  
Member of Congress