

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

August 22, 2025

The Honorable Kristi Noem
Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr Ave SE
Washington, DC 20536

Mr. Todd Lyons
Acting Director
Immigration and Customs Enforcement
500 12th St. SW
Washington, DC 20536

Dear Secretary Noem and Acting Director Lyons:

I write to express my deep concern about the immigration raids that the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) conducted in Chaffee County, Colorado. These raids have created widespread terror in immigrant communities.

While local law enforcement did not assist ICE in the immigration enforcement activity in Chaffee County, we know that immigration enforcement actions wreak havoc on communities and make it more difficult for state and local law enforcement to build and maintain trust with the communities they serve. According to a 2024 study by the CATO Institute, policies that increase information sharing between immigration enforcement and state and local law enforcement increased the targeting of Hispanic people for crime by 16 percent. In other words, these policies resulted in an additional 1.3 million crimes against Hispanic people over a two-year period.¹ There is longstanding evidence that undocumented immigrants are less likely to contact the police if they have been the victim of a crime out of fear the interaction will result in immigration enforcement actions.² It is for this very reason that many police chiefs and sheriffs oppose laws and policies that force local law enforcement to enforce federal immigration Law.³

There are an estimated 6.1 million U.S. citizen children who live in households with an undocumented family member.⁴ These children suffer tremendously when their parents or their

¹ Felipe M. Gonçalves, Emily K. Weisburst & Elisa Jácome, *Immigration Enforcement and Public Safety*, CATO INSTITUTE (Jul. 3, 2024) <https://www.cato.org/research-briefs-economic-policy/immigration-enforcement-public-safety>.

² Nik Theodore, *Insecure Communities: Latino Perceptions of Police Involvement in Immigration Enforcement*, University of Illinois at Chicago, 2013.

³ See, e.g., Letter from the Law Enforcement Immigration Task Force to the Honorable Tom McClintock, Chairman, Subcommittee on Immigration Integrity, Security, and Enforcement [hereinafter “Subcommittee on Immigration”] & the Honorable Pramila Jayapal, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Immigration (Sep. 19, 2024) <https://leitf.org/2024/09/law-enforcement-immigration-task-force-letter-on-h-r-5717>.

⁴ American Immigration Council, “U.S. Citizen Children Impacted by Immigration Enforcement” (Jun. 2021) <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/us-citizen-children-impacted-immigration-enforcement>.

friends' parents are taken away. The fear of potential enforcement actions causes anxiety among children, hurting their ability to succeed in the classroom. In addition, the detention and deportation of a parent, has a profound effect on a child's health. Children whose parents are detained and/or deported are likely to suffer from mental health issues including post-traumatic distress disorder, exhibit behavioral problems such as anxiety and withdrawal, and experience higher rates of poverty and diminished access to food.⁵

Further, previous raids have resulted in serious harm to communities. Following raids in August 2019 in Mississippi, reports emerged of young children returning to empty homes. Sheriff's deputies had to go door-to-door looking for kids who had no one to care for them. At the time, the local Sheriff said his agency would cooperate with the federal government if required to carry out mass deportations, but that these actions "would severely hurt this area of Mississippi" by diminishing trust between the Sheriff's department and the community.⁶ Small businesses also reported a sharp decrease in sales.⁷

In the interest of exercising proper Congressional oversight of DHS and ICE, I request that you immediately provide the following information:

- A list of locations where enforcement actions took place. If any enforcement actions occurred at a school, hospital, religious site, community center, courthouse or other sensitive location, provide the agency's rationale for conducting raids at any of these locations.
- Details on individuals ICE encountered during the enforcement action, including the number of people who were taken into custody, broken down by gender, age, nationality, immigration status, and rationale for targeting them in a raid.
- Provide information on how many of those arrested had previously received a stay of removal, order of supervision or other form of prosecutorial discretion pursuant to prosecutorial discretion guidelines in place prior to January 2025.
- ICE's methods to assume custody of individuals. For instance, did ICE agents directly ask for the individuals they sought, or did they present themselves as local law enforcement agents searching for another individual?
- Among individuals taken into custody, how many were collateral pickups (i.e. individuals encountered during the raid who were not intended targets).
- The manner in which ICE may or may not have collaborated with state and local law enforcement agencies.
- The manner in which ICE is following the Parental Interests Directive to ensure that mothers and fathers are able to make accommodations for their children.

⁵ Sara Satinsky, Alice Hu, et al., *Family Unity, Family Health*, Human Impact Partners, 2013.

⁶ Sergio Martínez-Beltrán, *Mississippi communities scarred by ICE raids fear future under Trump*, NPR (Dec. 9, 2024) <https://www.npr.org/2024/12/09/g-s1-35931/mississippi-ice-immigration-workplace-raid-deportation-poultry>.

⁷ *Id.*

- The manner in which ICE ensured access to appropriate care in cases where ICE encountered individuals with medical or mental health issues.

I hope you will carefully reconsider the use of immigration raids in our communities and order an immediate halt to any future actions. If you have any questions, please have your staff contact Ryan Passas at Ryan.Passas@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Brittany Pettersen".

Brittany Pettersen
Member of Congress