

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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July 25, 2025

The Honorable Kristi Noem
Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Noem:

Federal agencies have an obligation to uphold the Constitution in carrying out their duties. For every person within the United States, the Fourth Amendment guarantees protection from unreasonable searches and seizures and the Fifth Amendment guarantees a right to due process under the law.¹ In direct violation of these principles, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has allowed its agents—primarily from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)—to conceal their identities and use unmarked vehicles while conducting immigration enforcement activities. This causes a dangerous erosion of public trust, due process, and transparency in law enforcement. It also makes it nearly impossible for individuals to determine whether they are being detained by legitimate law enforcement agents or unlawfully abducted. These tactics contradict longstanding democratic principles such as the public's right to accountability from those who enforce the law and pave the way for increased crime, making our communities less safe.²

Alarming reports from cities including Los Angeles, New York, and Chicago show that ICE agents are conducting enforcement operations using masks and unmarked vehicles. In Los Angeles, agents were photographed in June 2025 wearing face covers during residential raids.³ In Chicago, witnesses reported masked agents detaining individuals without identification.⁴ Similarly, in New York City, then-mayoral candidate Brad Lander was arrested by masked federal agents.⁵ While there may be some legitimate reasons for law enforcement to take steps to

¹ U.S. Const. amend. IV; U.S. Const. amend. V.

² See Christopher E. Stone and Heather H. Ward, *Democratic Policing: A Framework for Action*, U.S. Department of Justice, National Criminal Justice Reference Service (1999) (online at www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/democratic-policing-framework-action).

³ See *Los Angeles ICE raids fuel controversy over masked agents*, Reuters (June 9, 2025) (online at www.reuters.com/world/us/los-angeles-ice-raids-fuel-controversy-over-masked-agents-2025-06-09/).

⁴ See *Several People Detained in Chicago After Immigration Check-Ins, Witnesses Say*, Washington Post (June 5, 2025) (online at www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2025/06/05/chicago-ice-immigrant-detention/).

⁵ *New York City Mayoral Candidate Brad Lander Arrested by Ice Agents*, The Guardian (June 17, 2025) (online at www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/jun/17/brad-lander-arrested-new-york-city-comptroller).

conceal their identities, such as undercover work, those reasons do not apply when ICE and other DHS agents conduct mass arrests of undocumented people—many of whom have no criminal records or criminal convictions—as part of President Trump’s mass deportation agenda.⁶ Rather, these operations exemplify the troubling resurgence of aggressive tactics that erode public trust and fundamental constitutional rights.

In recent months, there have been several documented incidents in which individuals posing as ICE agents have leveraged the opacity and fear surrounding immigration operations to commit serious crimes. On June 8, 2025, in Philadelphia’s Mayfair neighborhood, a man wearing a tactical vest labeled “Security Enforcement Agent” and a mock badge, and armed with a handgun, entered an auto repair shop, restrained a female employee with zip ties, and stole about \$1,000. Prosecutors later identified this as directly exploiting the ambiguity of masked ICE-style operations.⁷ In Houston, just weeks ago, a 37-year-old man blocked another driver using his vehicle, claimed to be an ICE agent, flashed a badge, and forcibly took \$1,800 along with the victim’s Guatemalan ID.⁸

Similarly, in Florida this April, a woman wore an “ICE” t-shirt, flashed a sheriff’s business card, and used a handheld radio to kidnap her ex-boyfriend’s wife, threatening her until she managed to escape.⁹ And in Anaheim, California, two teenagers in a blue SUV impersonating ICE agents approached Hispanic victims, presented fake badges, and robbed them—just one example of a wider series of such crimes targeting immigrant communities.¹⁰ These cases starkly illustrate how the use of masks, unmarked vehicles, and minimal identification by actual ICE agents does not just erode trust—it effectively hands bad actors a roadmap to exploit vulnerable communities.

Although these enforcement methods have been justified under the broad banner of national security or public order, they represent an alarming deviation from accepted and effective standards of policing. Professional law enforcement associations have consistently

⁶ *As Trump’s Immigration Crackdown Continues, Ethics Questions Are Being Raised Over the Use of Masked Federal Agents*, CNN (Apr. 8, 2025) (online at www.cnn.com/2025/04/08/us/ice-masks-federal-agents-arrest-students).

⁷ *Fake ICE Agents Exploiting Fear, DA Says After Mayfair Robbery*, Metro Philadelphia (June 17, 2025) (online at <https://metrophiladelphia.com/northeast-philly-ice-impersonator-robbery>).

⁸ *Houston Man Pretended to Be ICE Agent to Rob Driver, Court Docs Allege*, Houston Chronicle (June 26, 2025) (online at www.houstonchronicle.com/news/houston-texas/crime/article/houston-ice-agent-robbery-20395157.php).

⁹ *Florida Woman Accused of Impersonating ICE Agent to Kidnap Ex-Boyfriend’s Wife*, USA Today (Apr. 25, 2025) (online at www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2025/04/25/ice-agent-impersonate-kidnapping-florida-woman/83271541007/).

¹⁰ *Two Men Impersonated ICE Agents to Rob Latino Residents, Anaheim Police Say*, Los Angeles Times (June 24, 2024) (online at www.latimes.com/california/story/2024-06-24/two-men-impersonated-ice-agents-to-rob-latino-anaheim-residents-police-say).

emphasized the need for transparency and for measures that build trust in their communities as critical to public safety.¹¹

In a further erosion of transparency and accountability, the identities of ICE attorneys appearing before immigration judges are also being concealed. According to one immigration law expert, “Part of the court’s ethical obligation is transparency, including clear identification of the parties. Not identifying an attorney for the government means if there are unethical or professional concerns regarding [DHS], the individual cannot be held accountable.”¹²

To better understand DHS’s policies and tactics, as well as the extent to which they undermine public safety rather than uphold it, we request that you provide the following information and documents by no later than August 8, 2025:

1. All memoranda, directives, guidance, communications, or other materials created, transmitted, or received by DHS or ICE from January 20, 2025, to the present concerning the use of unmarked vehicles, facial coverings, or lack of identifying information in enforcement operations;
2. All memoranda, directives, guidance, communications, or other materials created, transmitted, or received by DHS or ICE—including from or to the Department of Justice or the Executive Office of Immigration Review—from January 20, 2025, to the present concerning the concealment of executive branch attorneys’ identities in immigration proceedings;
3. Documentation regarding DHS or ICE’s protocols and internal policies governing agent identification and accountability during operations in civilian settings;
4. Records of complaints received by DHS or ICE concerning detentions conducted by agents who failed to identify themselves or used unmarked vehicles, including any internal investigations or disciplinary actions taken;
5. Any assessment or review by DHS or ICE of the legal and constitutional implications of deploying unmarked or unidentified agents in public-facing enforcement activities;
6. A detailed and comprehensive explanation of DHS’s rationale for permitting the use of unmarked vehicles and concealed identities during immigration enforcement operations;

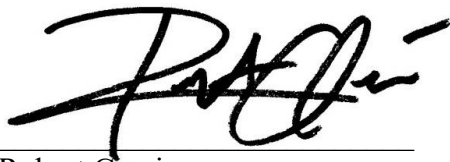
¹¹ International Association of Chiefs of Police, *Navigating the Path to Public Trust* (online at www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/Trust%20Building%20Campaign/25-NavigatingThePathToPublicTrust-309603-508C.pdf) (accessed on July 15, 2025).

¹² *ICE Lawyers are Hiding Their Names in Immigration Courts*, The Intercept (July 15, 2025) (online at https://theintercept.com/2025/07/15/ice-lawyers-hiding-names-court/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=The%20Intercept%20Newsletter).

7. A detailed and comprehensive list of the steps DHS is taking to ensure compliance with the Fourth and Fifth Amendments in the conduct of immigration enforcement;
8. A detailed and comprehensive account of how DHS evaluates and monitors the potential impact of current immigration enforcement tactics on civil rights, due process, and public trust; and
9. A detailed and comprehensive list of any and all oversight mechanisms that are currently in place to ensure that ICE officers are acting lawfully and are held accountable when violations occur.

The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is the principal oversight committee of the House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate “any matter” at “any time” under House Rule X. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Democratic Committee staff on the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform at (202) 225-5051.

Sincerely,



Robert Garcia
Ranking Member



Summer L. Lee
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Federal Law
Enforcement